

DICK WRIGHT AND HIS ECHEVERIAS

RUTH WRIGHT
Fallbrook, California

A striking addition to succulent collections is the new hybrid, *Echeveria* 'Dick Wright', earlier known under number W90A. The medium-size rosette is bluish-glaucous, with a multicolored, heavily-embossed protuberance near each leaf-apex. These and the coral-colored, crenate or ruffled edges make this an outstanding cultivar. Bright filtered sunlight is necessary to produce the bumpy or warty carunculations and to enhance the color. *Echeverias* tend to lose much of their character when grown in too much shade.

Dick has been hybridizing *echeverias* since 1958. He has named over 48 of his hybrids, distributing them all over the world through his wholesale lists in the 1960's through the 1980's. Although his preference is *echeverias*, he is also experimenting with *Euphorbia milii* crosses with flowers that range from bright red to coral, pink, white, yellow and all shades inbetween. Miniature thimble-size aloes are also in the works.

His hybrid epicactus, 'Clarence Wright', which has won trophies for its large bright-yellow blooms, and \times *Sedeveria* 'Harry Butterfield' (often referred to as "Super Burro's Tail") are other crosses that are in many succulent collections. These were developed while he was in devel-

opment and experimental work for Howard Hughes, as well as while he served as a Park and Recreation Commissioner for the City of Los Alamitos and as a Water Director for the De Luz Water District.

In 1975 he and his family moved to Fallbrook, California, where they devoted full time to their wholesale succulent nursery. He was forced to retire in 1985 due to injuries suffered in a fire that destroyed his home and nursery. Although he tried to re-establish the nursery, it was too difficult to recoup from the loss of years of research that went up in smoke. In poor health and with all of his hybrids and rare succulents destroyed, he tried to quit, but, like most plant-people, he could not quit entirely; his newest hybrids will continue to give joy to plant fanciers.

The following is the first published list of Dick's *echeveria* hybrids.

Echeveria 'Alta May', 'Arlie Wright', 'Aurora', 'Barbillion', 'Baron Bold', 'Bittersweet', 'Bouquet', 'Cameo', 'Camisole', 'Candy Wright', 'Chantilly', 'Cinderella', 'Clarence Wright', 'Culibra', 'Daniella', 'De Candolle', 'Derena', 'Dick Wright', 'Domingo', 'Fleur d'Or', 'Florentina', 'Flying Cloud', 'Frosty', 'Golden State', 'Gusto',



Fig. 1. *Echeveria* 'Dick Wright'.

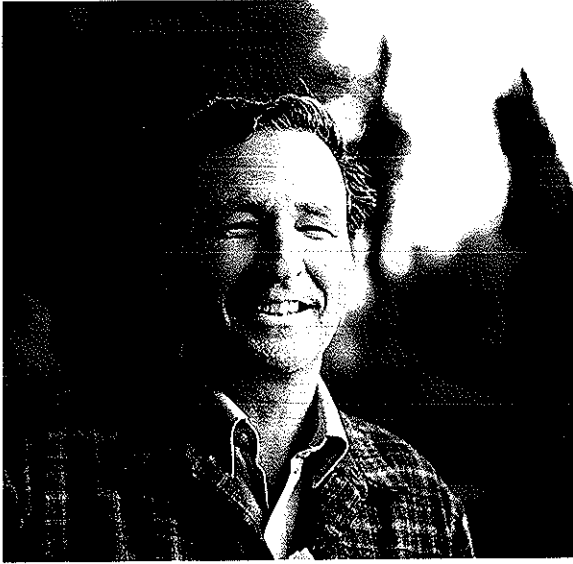


Fig. 2. Dick Wright.

'Gypsy', 'Harrietta', 'Katella', 'La Femme', 'Lemonade', 'Lola', 'Mademoiselle', 'Mahogany Rose', 'Marcus Jones', 'Marvella', 'Mauna Loa', 'Meridian', 'Oceana', 'Pappy's Rose', 'Party Dress', 'Paul Bunyan', 'Petticoat', 'Rain Drops', 'Ramillete', 'Red Sapphire', 'Red Trump', 'Rosa Lee', 'Ruth Jane', 'Silveron Red', 'Strawberry Heart', 'Sundancer', 'Tippy', 'Twilight', 'Valentine'.

FROM CACTI ETC

Grafting onto Pereskiosis

Steve Barton recently asked me about grafts, with pereskiosis mostly: "Any hints for me? The first dozen have not gone too well. The scion bonds overnight, but as time goes on it shrivels and the area of the graft shrinks. Cullmann, Götz and Gröner say to wash the razor-blade in soap and water; I'll try that next. They also say "clammy atmosphere", so now am proceeding under a "grow-dome" in a California garage with seed-mat bottom-heat and fluorescent or HID light . . . fairly dry at this season.

"Is it important to match the diameter of the stock and the scion? Or to play games by trying to position the scion on a vascular bundle? Is the softest wood o.k., or hard stock? I'm still on the rocky part of the learning curve . . ."

I think it was Nietzsche who said, "That which does not kill me, makes me stronger", or it might have been Sartre . . . anyway, you're on the right track on *Pereskiosis*: Man, all I can say is it takes speed . . . I generally water everything well in advance and make sure the pereskiosis is

"pumping"; you can tell by the way it cuts. Even the woodiest parts become sort of lignified, and you can feel it with your blades (which I wouldn't treat with soap, as that might leave a residue. Try alcohol with lots of paper towels to keep stuff really clean!). Scion/stock diameter doesn't make much of a difference, but speed and very clean cutting does. I generally cut the seedling scion and count "one-one-thousand, two-one-thousand", etc., and if I don't have a good union by the time I count five, I start all over.

The majority of my failures are from:

1. An imperfect cut on the scion, or bruising it in the process of cutting.
2. Working with material that's already too dehydrated to withstand the evaporative effects of being cut.
3. Not having the whole mess in an area where it isn't going to be vibrated, or worse yet, blasted off its perch before its callus develops.
4. Dull blades. These will tear the hell out of either stock or scion, greatly increasing transpiration and eventual dehydration.

Some suggest that higher humidity helps, but I disagree; I think it only invites more opportunistic fungal problems and the like. I keep fresh grafts out of direct sun but where they'll receive good air circulation (without vibrating the pedestal, of course).

Another thing that seems to work better for me is grafting really fresh seedlings. Prime time for this type of a graft is within the first eight to ten weeks after germination (or sooner—I've had success with two-day old *Ariocarpus*!!!), before the seedling starts to make "wood" near the core. The same applies to the pereskiosis: cut closer to the apical tip where the growth is really happening, and then the tissue cuts "like buttah" . . .

Mark Fryer
(spnova@aol.com)

SUCCULENTA '96

The Succulent Society of South Africa has announced Succulenta '96, its fourth international congress, to be held September 23–27 in Johannesburg. Among the speakers will be Steven Hammer, Mike Kimberley, Len Newton, Ralph Peckover, Ernst van Jaarsveld and Graham Williamson. Pre- and post-convention tours will visit the Namib (14 days, with Williamson as guide), Kenya (14 days, led by Len Newton, the bushveld of S. Africa (8 days, led by Peckover), and Kruger National Park (4 days).

For further information, contact Succulenta '96, Private Bag X10, Brooklyn 0011, Pretoria, S. Africa.