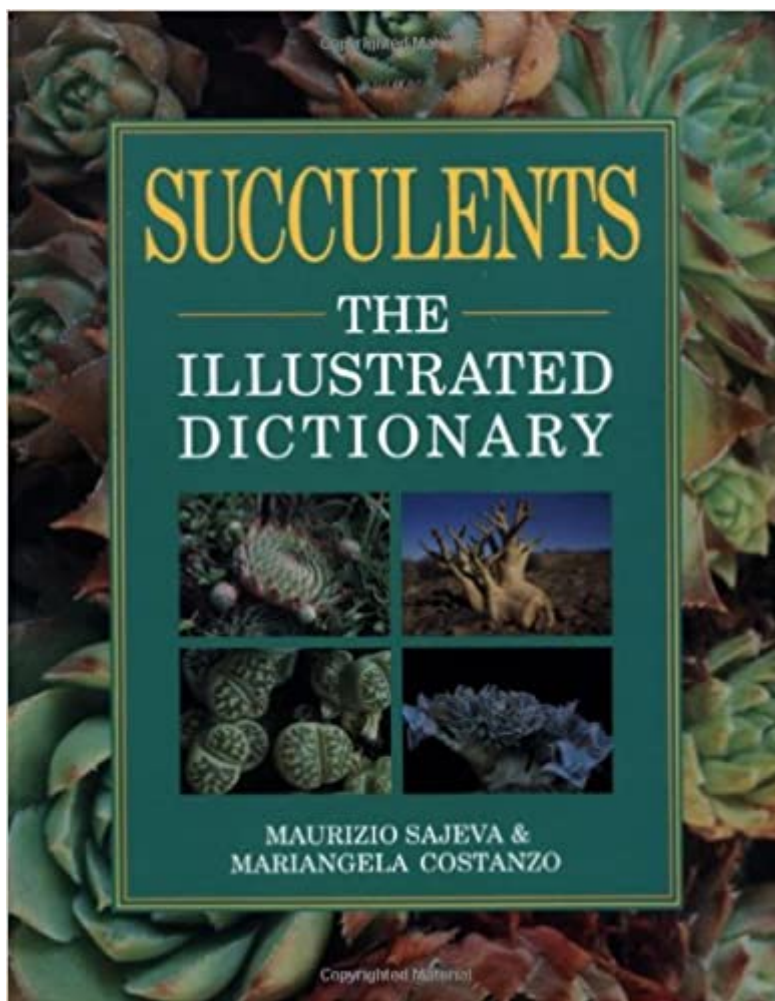


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Succulents: The Illustrated Dictionary



Synopsis

A time-tested reference, this first volume includes some of the best-known and most cultivated genera such as Agave, Haworthia, Kalanchoe, and Yucca.

Book Information

Paperback: 240 pages

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Customer Reviews

This illustrated dictionary of succulents, excluding cacti, covers species from 35 plant families and 195 genera worldwide in distribution. Alphabetically arranged species entries include a brief description and place of origin. This work by Sajeve (Univ. of Palermo, Italy) and Constanzo, both active members in the Italian Cactus and Succulent Society, is unique in its use of 1200 high-quality color 3 1/8" x 2 1/8" photographs arranged six to a page to accompany each entry. Although up-to-date and better illustrated than other botanical dictionaries that include succulents, this specialized work is for libraries with comprehensive botanical and horticultural collections. Teresa Elberon, Lafayette P.L., La. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Succulents are plants that are able to withstand drought because of their ability to store water. This book is essentially a catalog illustrating varieties from 195 genera. Designed as an identification tool, it should fill the needs of growers and collectors. The core of the work is the "Illustrated A-Z of Species," which consists of 1,200 sharp, close-up color photographs. Six two-by-three-inch photos per page enable accurate identification and easy searching. The photo captions include descriptions

of growth and flowering habits, size, place of origin, alternate name, and CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) status. A brief overview of succulent families and genera opens the work. Appendixes include a bibliography, CITES codes, and the code of conduct for the International Organization for Succulent Plants Study. The checklist of alternate plant names does not include popular names. The elephant foot palm/ponytail palm will need to be located by browsing the photos, as will jade trees and living rocks. Also not included are lists of societies, journals, or suppliers. Succulents is descriptive only; it does not provide growing information. As an identification tool, it is superb. For collectors who have encountered dealer's lists that consist primarily of species and varietal names, this catalog will be invaluable in making selections. The collector can leaf through, for example, lithops (16 species), aloe (25 species), or crassula (14 species). There is no comparable work. *The Wonderful World of Succulents* by Werner Rauh (Smithsonian, 1984, o.p.) describes many species, but most are not pictured. Gordon Rowley's *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Succulents* (Crown, 1978, o.p.) has fine photographs but does not approach this illustrated dictionary in scope. Succulents are a widely collected, diverse group of plants. The appearance of this work will be welcomed by houseplant gardeners and succulent specialists. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After reading through both *Succulents I* and *II*, I am still confused about what exactly these texts were hoping to accomplish. As another reviewer has already pointed out, these texts are neither useful as identification guides nor are they as cultivation guides; their images are not truly conducive for plant characterization and the text does not touch on plant care in any real capacity. While you may occasionally be able to identify certain unique succulents simply through the likeness of the images that you see in the text, it is all but impossible to make positive identifications of species with more common forms such as the generic rosette form of many sempervivums; this is especially true of species with highly variable color. Even more frustrating are the woefully brief descriptions which are unfortunately generic and vague. Although, together, both texts cover upwards of 2 000 species of succulents and serve to demonstrate extreme diversity (its most laudable feature), it is by no means a catalog, in the true sense of the word, as it is not complete or exhaustive by any stretch of the imagination. So what is it? The text states that it "constitutes a unique work of reference for succulent enthusiasts and collectors." While I do enjoy the simple fact that these texts are likely to be the most extensive collections of succulents in print, at the end of the day I feel largely unsatisfied; as though I haven't really gained any knowledge having read them. When I look something up in a dictionary, I aim to close the book having newfound insight and clarification. I

don't feel these texts accomplish that. This, in addition to its price and datedness, makes these texts disappointing, given its reviews of high praise. 3 Stars - It's okay. I think most enthusiasts yearn for more than just "Bodies to 4 cm long and 15 mm wide with lighter spots; yellow flowers," a typical description, and a documentary image.

I am a beginner with succulent plants and rock gardening. This is a very pretty book with information & photos for identifying plants. I find the pictures a bit small (about 2"x3.25"). For me, differentiating some of the *Sempervivum* species (or *Jovibarba*) would be difficult with the description and photos provided (someone more expert may find the descriptions quite sufficient). I really NEED more information on habitat and cultivation. For me, sun exposure, soil & water requirements, pest problems and such are what I want right now. Also of interest, how variation in sun exposure and water will effect color & habit, cold and heat tolerance, winter protection. Once again, for a more experienced gardener, or someone wanting to move into more exotic succulents (I am working with *Sedum*, and "hens & chicks" (common name)) this may rate five stars. I did learn that what I know as "hens & chicks" could be *Sempervivum*, *Jovibarba*, or *Graptopetalum*. This is an example of why it would be nice to have a common name cross reference, as mentioned by another reviewer. Initially, I thought I would return the book, but have decided to keep it. I have learned about some species that I would like to grow, if I can get information on their culture & habit. This reference will allow me to get new species to experiment with. (This may mean special orders, as local nurseries have limited supplies of common plants.) So far, the *Crassulaceae* family is where my interest lies - See, I have learned something of value!

Unfortunately so many nurseries don't properly identify their plants or use made up or incorrect common names. This book helped me identify so many plants that were in my collection. Some of the photos are a little dark but at least with a name I can do more follow up over the internet. The book contains many *Euphorbia*, *Agave*, *Aloe* and *Lithops* to name a few. As the title says it is an illustrated dictionary, so no growing tips, but a great pictorial succulent reference nonetheless.

Looks great but it just arrived today 15th Nov. Looking forward to next one

The succulent plant family is so broad that it is difficult, as a beginner, to categorize and identify all the various species. I bought this book to learn more, and it is a good resource to discover the heritage of succulent plants in the wild brought which become cultivated plants. I learnt more!

However, I would suggest that if "houseplant" gardening, identification of the hybrids found in stores and/or cultivator information is your sole focus this book may not be the best starting point.

This & Vol. II are really beginners "musts"! You got to start somewhere if you think you want to learn about succulents you might want to grow. Of course, there's never just 1 or 2 texts if you start to get a little deeper, but a great overview!

A+++++ thanks

This book was in good condition and worth the price. Because it was produced in Europe it is missing a few local (California) varieties but great photos.

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