



Illustrated Handbook of Succulent Plants: Asclepiadaceae

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With the constant flow of plant species that reached Europe in the times of the great expeditions in the 18 and 19 century, the demand for any form of cataloguing the steadily growing diversity became inevitable. Succulent plants always fascinated plant-loving people above average, and the first handbooks devoted to succulents were published in the 19 century. Initially, however, interest was focussed on the Cactaceae. It was only in 1954/55 when Herman Jacobsen (1898 - 1978), the former curator of the Botanic Garden of Kiel, made available a first handbook devoted to succulents (excl. Cactaceae), the "Handbuch der sukkulenten Pflanzen." An abridged version of this handbook was published by Jacobsen as "Sukkulentenlexikon" in 1970. It included descriptions, synonymies and numerous illustrations. The "Sukkulentenlexikon" represented the long-awaited reference work supporting both Botanical Gardens as well as amateur or professional growers in the navigation through succulent plant diversity. An English edition followed in 1975 as "Succulent Lexicon," and a revised German edition was published in 1981. This second edition had been finished by Jacobsen's successor in Kiel, Klaus Hesselbarth, who, with regard to the Asclepiadaceae, was supported by the senior editor of the present publication. Over twenty years have passed since then, and the knowledge of succulent plants has increased permanently. We saw monographs of formerly little-known groups and many revisions and re-revisions, which often change the taxonomy within single groups considerably. A large amount of new taxa has been published on one hand, and on the other hand, many taxa have been sunk into syno

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