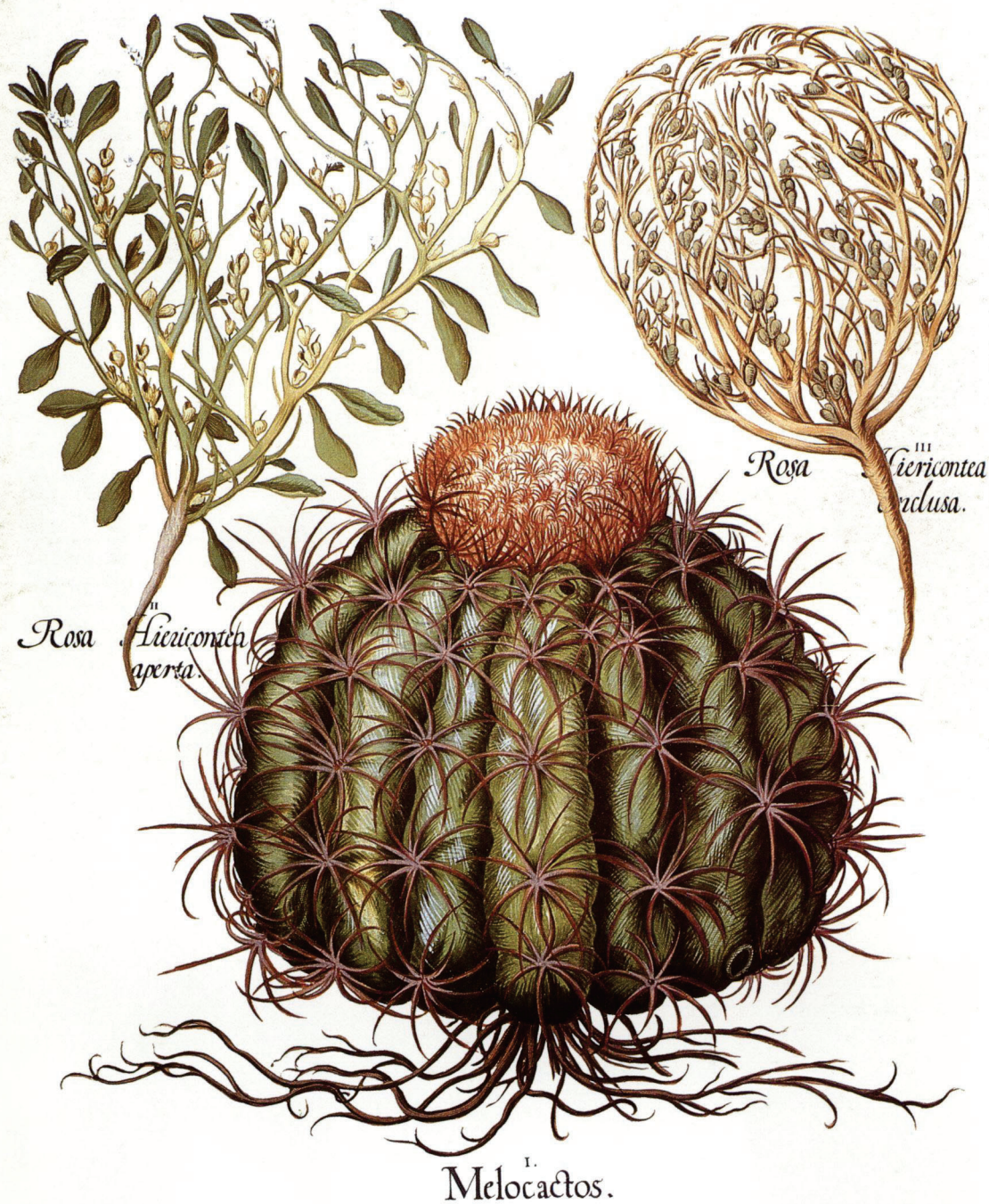


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## SANSEVIERIA PATENS

MARILYN ROSSOVICH

669 Spruce Ave., So. San Francisco, CA 94080

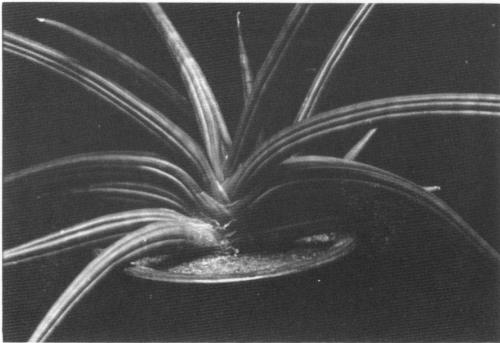


Fig. 1. Alice Waidhofer's plant of *Sansevieria patens*, showing the deep grooves on the cylindrical leaves.

We are a group of seven people belonging to Sansevieria Robin #12.

In an attempt to further clarify certain species of sansevieria, we have undertaken the considerable job of a robin study. Each person has contributed to this endeavor according to the individual's degree of knowledge and experience.

Our aim is to offer pertinent information to the beginning sansevieria collector. It will provide a simple frame of reference, so that they will be more readily able to identify their unnamed plants.

This, then, is what we hope to accomplish: 1) A simple layman's description that can be easily understood by everyone. 2) Pictures we have taken of our plants. 3) The source of our plant/plants if available. 4) Collection data, if available. 5) Any other information concerning the study plant that is considered valuable such as growth habits, differences in juvenile vs. mature plants, etc.

It is our hope that these admirable plants may be rediscovered by plant fanciers who are looking for dramatic shapes and variegations, beautiful fragrances and textures, yet also want plants without difficult cultural requirements. Participating in the Sansevieria Study Group are Marilyn Rossovich, Alice Waidhofer, Sue Haffner, Braden Engelke, Ed Eby, B. Juan Chahinian and Keith Cahoon.

The first plant that we have begun to study is *Sansevieria patens*. Our robin has completed two rounds and each member has contributed. We have not always agreed on all of the fine points, but we have certainly acquired much valuable information.

Easily grown, even in low light, *Sansevieria patens* is a dark green, stemless plant with a slightly rough texture. It spreads in a fan-like manner. The leaves are graceful, somewhat recurving, fat and cylindrical in the mature form. They are furrowed down the length of each leaf and end in thin soft points of papery cartilage. Each succeeding leaf is a little longer than the last one.

In the immature leaf, there is an acute channel having rounded edges running from the base to the apex. On each newer leaf, the channel is progressively shorter, until the newer leaves have almost none.

The pale green flower stem may be from 1'-2' long. The flowers are white with a fragrant smell and appear on spikes with clusters of tiny blooms on the top half of the stem. Flowers open during the night and remain open well into the following day. Once a rosette has bloomed, it will not flower again or add new leaves. It will continue to remain attractive and send out new

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Fig. 2. *Sansevieria patens* with 17" bloom stalk. Photo courtesy of Alice Waidhofer.

## SANSEVIERIA PATENS

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offsets by means of underground stolons or fat roots.

As with most sansevierias, propagation may be made from a mature plant. You may begin with a single cylindrical vertical leaf that is followed by cylindrical leaves on each side to produce the fan-like shape. Offsets from rooted leaves are fat-leaved rosettes with a beautiful reddish edge. These rosettes are very similar to offsets from the rooted leaves of *Sansevieria ehrenbergii*, *S. deserti* and other cylindrical leaved species. Rooted leaves produce offsets rapidly and abundantly. If the offset from a rooted leaf is removed, the leaf will produce another offset.

Although the origin of this plant is said to be East Africa, all of the *S. patens* on the West Coast were grown from a plant rescued by Ed Eby from Koko Crater in Hawaii. There had been large areas planted with sansevierias in Koko Crater

gardens, but they had received little care due to lack of funds.

In 1981, Alice Waidhofer visited the crater and located a small group of four plants of *S. patens*. The next day, she visited Foster Botanic Gardens in Honolulu and made copies of their sansevieria information. The card on *S. patens* showed the USDA source, the USDA accession number and the Foster Botanic Garden accession number. It also stated that the *S. patens* at Koko Crater were obtained from Lucknow Botanic Gardens in 1965. Alice then wrote to Ed Eby and told him how to locate the plants. With a single plant, Ed was the person who actually made it available to collectors through his skill in propagating. There were no dealers who listed *Sansevieria patens* until he supplied them with it.

Thanks to Ed and Alice for this beautiful plant!