



Haworthia



Aloe



Euphorbia

any plant, use depends on one very important thing— identification. If you are not sure of the plants identity, DO NOT USE IT. Remember that there are numerous species of Aloe on the market and many other plants that resemble Aloe but are completely different plants.

The succulent Euphorbia pictured looks like a cactus and warrants that I explain the difference.

David Naylor taught me many years ago that all cacti are succulents, but not all succulents are cactus. It seems a moot point now that we are almost through the article, but recall that succulents are plants that retain water/moisture in parts of the plant. Of course cactus retain water. They need to in order to thrive in their native habitats, which are usually quite dry.

Cacti have areoles and it is areoles that are the defining characteristic, which sets the cactus apart. Clearly visible, they are small woolly cushions from which may grow spines, hairs, wool, leaves, flowers or offsets. Note that I'll deal with cactus in another article.

The euphorbia or spurge family includes lots of popular houseplants like crown-of thorns (E. millii), croton (Croton tiglium), and poinsettia (E. pulcherrima); economically significant products like Tung oil, castor oil, natural rubber and tapioca; and finally many garden perennials such as donkey-tail spurge (E. myrsinites) and cushion spurge (E. polychroma).

The last of the dust-collecting houseguests that I want to mention is the succulent **begonia**, yes, you

read correctly, begonia. The one pictured (on page 38) is begonia dregei var. partita syn. B. dregi. You can see it has quite the swollen stem and I understand that it makes a superb bonsai.

Looking as we are to the spring and warmer weather, I must recommend three great succulents for your garden. You likely grow Sedum spectabile 'Autumn Joy' already. It has been a mainstay in gardens for tens of years but now there are great cultivars that don't flop in the garden.

**Sedum 'Mr. Goodbud'** is one that has done well for me and has great big blooms. Or add Sedum 'Elsie's Gold' with her light green and yellow variegated foliage. Both are drought tolerant sun-lovers. And another, Sedum 'Postman's Pride' is one of the best in the maroon foliage group. It has a semi-up-

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