

Superb Succulents

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Superb Succulents



▲ *Kalanchoe thyrsiflora* is usually a green plant with reddish-edged leaves. I'm reasonably certain that a variegated specimen such as this has never been seen in its native habitats of Botswana or adjacent areas of South Africa. When Greg DeChirico displayed this eye-catching beauty in a Southern California show, observers were begging for a leaf to begin growing their own specimen. Fortunately, this taxon is now more readily available. As a genus within the family Crassulaceae, caution should be used in applying insecticides that may damage sensitive tissue. The genus name is phonetically derived from Chinese words meaning to fall and grow, probably as a result of new plants that can grow from leaf cuttings.

◀ *Gerrardanthus macrorhizus* is a Southern African member of the Cucurbitaceae family. The specific epithet *macrorhizus* translates to "large root"; this is a fitting name as the diameter of the disk-shaped caudex can reach 150 cm. The genus name is derived of two non-related subjects — William Gerrard (? - 1866) a British naturalist and traveler, and "anthos" meaning "flower" in Greek. These plants are dioecious, requiring separate male and female plants to produce viable seed. Vines from this taxon can grow to several meters in length; however, the specimen seen here has been staged with the shoots carefully cropped for show aesthetics. This magnificent succulent is in the collection of Laurel Woodley.