



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Rattail Cactus *Aporocactus flagelliformis*

DESCRIPTION: Rattail Cactus (also known under the scientific name of *Disocactus flagelliformis*) has slender trailing stems that can grow 3 to 5 feet long and gracefully hang down over the sides of its pot. Stems of this handsome cactus are covered with short, reddish brown spines. New growth has brilliant pink spines. In spring, its stems bear dozens and dozens of reddish to fuchsia-pink tubular flowers that stand perpendicular to the stems. They are two to three inch long and can last for several days. In Mexico they grow at high altitudes where the night temperatures are very brisk. In rural areas the dried flowers are used medicinally. In the winter, old or discolored stems may be cut out at the base to encourage new growth.

RECOMMENDED USE: Because of frost tenderness, Rattail Cactus is best grown in a container.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Best protected below freezing.



Sun tolerance: Best in light shade for at least the afternoon. Blooming and growth will suffer in darker conditions.



Watering and feeding: Once the plants are established, keep the soil from completely drying out from April to October; less water is required from November until March, just enough to keep the stems from dying back. In winter, keeping the plants cold and dry encourages blooming. Feed with a weak fertilizer solution every month when in growth.



Soil requirements: Best kept in a container with rich, but fast-draining potting soil. They should be repotted every other year because their soil tends to sour.



Pruning: Can be nipped any time