



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Agave Cactus

Leuchtenbergia principis

DESCRIPTION: With its long, slender, grayish-green tubercles with purplish-red blotches at their tips, Agave Cactus is an unusual appearing plant. It is slow-growing but can eventually grow up to 2½ feet tall. The tubercles are topped with papery spines, making the plant resemble an small *Agave*. Amazingly, it is a true cactus, not an *Agave*. As the plant grows, the old tubercles dry up and fall off, leaving a bare, corky trunk. Yellow to pinkish, funnel-shaped flowers around 3” in diameter are borne in the warm season. Agave Cactus has a large, tuberous taproot to hold moisture in its arid habitat. It is native to San Luis Potosi and Chihuahua in north-central Mexico. In this area, the spines of Agave Cactus camouflage it with grass, and the tubercles resemble the fiercely-spined Hechtias (of the pineapple family) which it is associated with.

RECOMMENDED USE: Can be used in a rock garden or kept containerized.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Hardy to 20° F.



Sun tolerance: Full sun to light shade



Watering and feeding: Water carefully, as lack of water will make the tip of the tubercles yellow. Too much water will make it rot. Feed potted plants yearly.



Soil requirements: Well-drained



Pruning: None needed. Aged, dry tubercles can be brushed off for a cleaner look