

## 11. VIEW POINT ROCKERY VII A



This is a raised rockery about 175 cm high. From the top of this rockery you have a grandstand view of the large Rockery VII in front. Stone steps at the back help you to climb to the top. After a shower, the ‘Golden Barrels’ on Rockery VII present a view not easily forgotten. Rockery VII A has a large number of Cacti and Succulents. As you approach this rockery along the path from Rockery No VII, you see two large, about seventy cm high, *Ferocactus herrerae* on this feature. Large groups of *Mammillaria beneckeii* are the next one. The large group of *Astrophytum ornatum* plant has one of the specimen size plant about seventy five cm in height. Other *Astrophytums* too have very robust growth. There are large groups of *Mammillaria magnimama* as well. A group of *Ferocactus glaucescens* has one large specimen which has started offsetting. A large *Aloe ferox* plant

about two meters in height also graces this feature. Two plants of *Nopalea cochenillifera* are also on its top near the far end. A very tall *Yucca argentea* is on this top. A smaller *Yucca filifera* grows next to it. On one end is a plant of *Alluaudia procera*, which is showing robust growth and is already one and a half meter high. *Dideria madagascarensis* has been planted at the back along with a plant of *Fouquieria madagascarensis*. Two plants of *Adenium obesum* in front provide the floral display in front. There are small groups of *Kalanchoe suarazensis* and *Kalanchoe gastonis-boneri* which give plenty of flowers during winter. *Aloe arborescens* also grows at the rear. This rockery provides a good grandstand view even when you are not photographing the main Display Rockery VII.

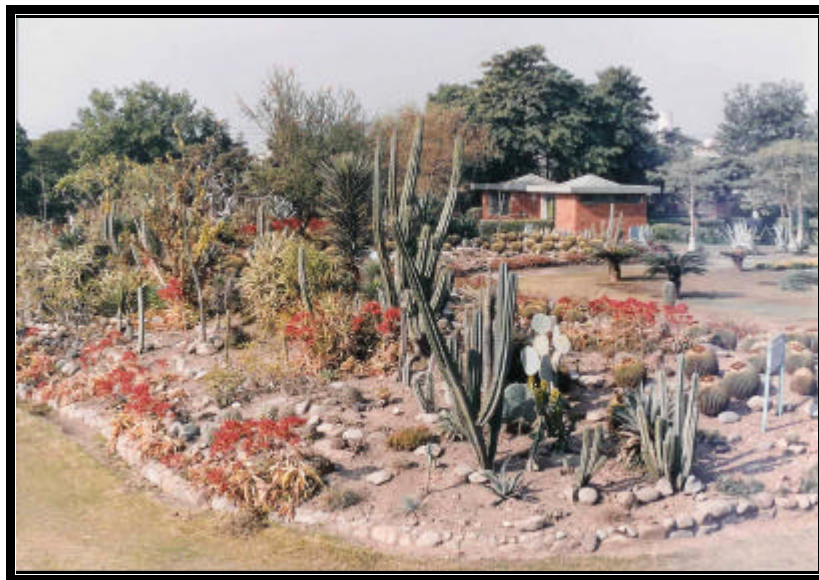


## ROCKERY VII



This is the largest feature in the garden and gives a massive display of the glory of Cacti and Succulents. It runs in a Northerly direction with a slight tilt to the West at the broader Northern end. It is fifty meters long and about twenty meters wide at its broader Northern end and about fifteen meter wide at the Southern narrower end near View Point Rockery VIIA. This rockery is divided into two sloping halves from the middle, where a two meter wide plantation of taller growing Cacti and Succulents, form the backdrop for the landscape on both sides. Taller growing *Cerei*, *Yuccas*, *Aloe arborescens* groups, *Aloe ferox*, *Pereskia grandiflora*, *Opuntia* groups, some longer growing *Agaves* and *Kalanchoe behariencensis* grow alongside

each other. Several plants of *Pachypodium lamieri* too have been planted which are quite small so far. On the Eastern sloping face more than 275 very large *Echinocactus grusonii* dominate the middle of this feature throughout its whole length. Most of these are from the batch grown from seeds sent by DAVE GRIGSBY in 1976. Now the majority have grown very large and 27 plants have started offsetting and have formed large groups. The beauty of this massive plantation is difficult to describe. The visitor is advised to have a look at them against early morning or late afternoon sun, when the golden beauties look their best. This beauty is enhanced several fold after a shower.



A very large number of Cacti and other Succulent plant species have been used on this rockery. Before describing them I will like to bring to

your notice some of the outstanding specimens. There are three *Carnegie gigantea* (SAGUARO, *Cereus giganteus*) plants on this rockery. The first one is located in the middle about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> the way from the Southern end and the second one, the tallest in the garden is located in the middle and the last one is at the Northern end. All three are from 1976 batch of seeds received from DAVE GRIGSBY. The tallest one is now 1.25 meters tall and about thirty cm in diameter. Just in front of this plant is a very big offsetting plant of *Notocactus leninghausii*. This plant was on low graft which due to vigorous growth became decumbent and started offsetting and rooting from the trunk. Now it is spread over one square meter area. The offsetting larger stems 30 in number are over 35 to 40 cm high, and 7-8 cm in diameter. A very large numbers of smaller offsets are also present. When in flowers this specimen plant gives a glorious display of its golden yellow flowers. I have not come across description of such a large *Notocactus leninghausii* plants in the literature. Near this giant size specimen, is a group of *Ferocactus glauscensis*. One of the plants showing robust growth has started offsetting and should form a good specimen in next three to four years. Another attraction is a large *Bursera hindsiana* tree at the Northern broader area. The gnarled, twisted trunks of this tree have been trained in a topiary style. The trunk is already nearly fifty cm in diameter. This plant is from seed grown in 1977. In nature this species develops very thick trunk over the

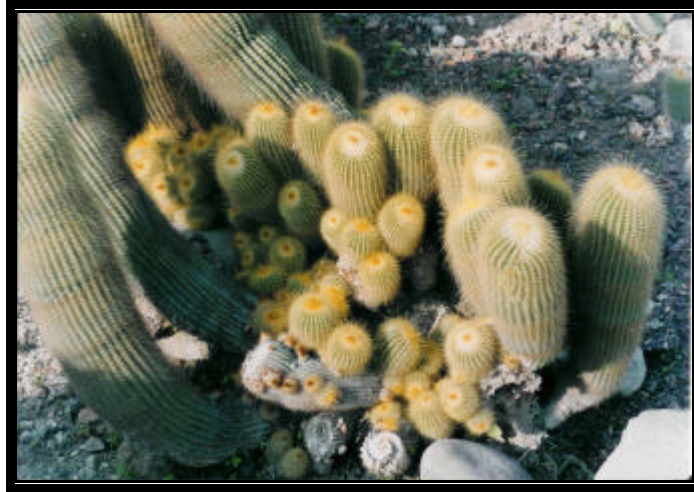
years. A very large *Fouquieria splendens* plant is growing in front of the *Bursera hindsiana*. The plant has grown to small tree like dimensions. It has plenty of spikes of red flowers during summer. In nature it habits semi desert arid areas and after spring showers the whole desert may look aflame due to abundance of flowers. Here due to excessive availability of water the vegetative growth dominates and the flowering is not so profuse.



There are several *Adenium obesum* plants on this rockery. One of these from amongst the first batch of *Adeniums* grown outdoors now has a caudex about 75 cm in diameter, with a large number of branches growing from it. The plant of *Adenium multiflorum* planted next to it has a caudex which is only fifty cm in diameter with thick one and a half meter high branches from it. This latter plant is a shy bloomer. There are many more *Adenium obesum* plants on this face of the rockery to add to the colour during summer. Two large plants of *Pachypodium saundersii*, with large

caudexes are noteworthy. At the far end note plants of *Alluaudia procera*, and *Dideria madagascarensis*. There is a group of *Cleistocactus jujeensis* and *Cleistocactus smargdiflorius* at the broader end. There are two large plants of *Cephalocereus azureus* near this group. Unfortunately these two do not show good growth. A large branching plant of *Espositoa lanata* is in front of this group. There are three large groups of *Caralluma umbellata* which show robust growth. They flower profusely during the summer. The large chestnut brown umbels of flowers are attractive. These groups also help to check soil erosion. Several groups of a *Bromeliade* probably *Abromeitiella brevifolia* are very attractive and flower profusely during summer. Smaller growing *Agaves* are dispersed throughout this rockery. They are *Agave parryi*, *Agave toumeyana*, *Agave stricta*, *Agave striata* and *Agave ocahui*. Except *Agave ocahui*, the others form large groups. *Agave ocahui* has proved to be the most desirable landscaping plant. It offsets sparingly and comes into flower after seven to eight years. The long golden green inflorescence spike forms a spectacular sight. It has not set seeds in this garden. Luckily most of the plants develop small plantlets near the terminal end of the inflorescence spike. Now this species has been planted on all rockeries in this garden. There are three large plants of *Agave victoria-reginae* as well. Along the margins of this rockery at the Northern border end are several groups of larger growing *Agave*. One can easily

identify *Agave americana* and its variegated form, *Agave sisilana*, with narrow flexible leaves is also here. There are a couple of unidentified species as well.



As mentioned earlier there are several species of cacti on this rockery. Groups of *Ferocactus glaucensis* are at two locations. One group of smaller plants is at the southern end and the other group of bigger plants with offsetting plant has been already described above. A large group of *Echinocereus procumbens* is at the Southern end and an equally large one is near the Northern end. A group of *Echinocereus engelmannii* also grows near the later. These groups have plenty of flowers in April at the beginning of summer. Starting from the Southern end large groups of *Mammillaria mazatlanensis*, *Mammillaria beneckeii*, *Mammillaria magnimamma*, *Mammillaria compressa*, *Mammillaria haageana*, *Mammillaria klissingiana* and *Mammillaria nivosa* are spread along the Eastern border of this feature.



A large group of *Astrophytum ornatum* plants cannot escape notice. The robust thirty to fifty cm tall plants bloom regularly during the summer and their large lemon yellow flowers are a good attraction. A very large group of big offsetting plants of *Coryphantha elephantidens* is near the *Astrophytums*. During the winter months several groups of *Kalanchoe suarazensis* and *Kalanchoe gastonis-boneri* planted behind the *Echinocactus grusonii* set the whole rockery aflame with their long lasting reddish pink flowers. Recently a large number of *Euphorbia milii* hybrid plants have been planted which will provide plenty of colour during winter. This description more or less completes the listing of tremendous wealth of these exotic plants in a massive plantation at one place on the Eastern face.

The Western slope of Rockery VII has a very large number of cactus and succulents. At the Southern end there is large group of *Stenocereus marginatus* (Syn. *Marginatocereus marginatus*), a very big group of *Ritterocereus prunosus* and several other smaller *cerei*. Among these is a smaller plant of *Lophocereus schottii* var. *monstrose*. This bluish green cereus with a totem pole like appearance always attracts new comers. A small monstrate *Cereus pereuvianus* plant is also here. Another attraction at the Southern end is a large plant of an *Opuntia* species with very large over 50 cm diameter circular joints (pads) purplish green in colour. The joints

(pads) resemble *Opuntia santarita*, but are very big. Another interesting *cereus* group with about ten branches, about three to four meters high is probably *Cereus sheeri*. A very large plant of *Euphorbia cooperi* also grows here. Two smaller plants of *Backebergia militaris* were also planted here. It is difficult to find them as their labels have disappeared.



There are several groups of low growing *Aloe juveana* on this slope. They form attractive yellowish green mats. A single stemmed *Cereus azureus*, about six to seven cm thick and two and a half meters high can also

be spotted near the middle. There are several large groups of *Aloes arborescens* plants in the middle. On this slope there are several groups of *Ferocacti* and *Echinocacti*. Amongst the groups one can identify several large plants of *Ferocactus herrerae*. A group of six plants of *Ferocactus covellei*, about thirty-five cm diameter can also be spotted. There are groups of *Ferocactus hamatacanthus* and *Ferocactus glaucescens*. A couple of plants of *Ferocactus acanthodes* are also there. These are not in very good shape. A small plant of *Echinocactus palmeri* is near the middle. *Echinocactus grusonii* forms a small group of about fifteen plants. There are several groups of *Euphorbia dideriodes* on this slope.



Smaller growing *Agaves* such as *Agave stricta*, *Agave striata*, *Agave toumeyana* and several plants of *Agave ocahui* are also on this slope. There are two interesting species of *Yucca*. One has long strap like leaves, and the other probably *Yucca filifera*, has long hair from the margins of its leaves.

This plant is in bloom. The inflorescence is a long thin shoot which divides into several branches terminally. A large plant of *Agave victoria-reginae* is also present. There are some groups of *Agave parryi* as well. Near the northern end there is a plantation of *Euphorbia milii*. Two *Nolina longifolia* plants are also there, along with a plant of an Indian species of *Bursera*.



Several large groups of *Mammillaria* are also spread over this face of the rockery. They are *Mammillaria beneckeii*, *Mammillaria mazatlanensis*, *Mammillaria magnimamma* and a few other species. The most interesting

feature is five large beds of *Adenium obesum*. All these plants have been developed from cuttings. Some of these are from clones which are very floriferous and others from a clone with very deep red flowers. During summer there is a riot of colour due to profuse flowering of these plants. During the winter groups of *Kalanchoe* give their floral display.

At the Northern end there is a plant of *Dideria madgarcanesis*. There are two large plants of *Plumeria rubra* in the central thicket dividing the two slopes.

There are several group of low growing *Opuntia depressa*, which make their presence felt when they bloom profusely producing abundance of large yellow flowers. A couple of groups of *Opuntia macrodaysis* are also there. This completes a picture of this display Rockery VII.