

The following articles was prepared years ago by members of the Central Oklahoma Cactus&Succulent Society. All photos in this document are by Michael W. Douglas

Winter Hardy Succulents in Central Oklahoma

Most of the species listed here are from drier and somewhat warmer climates, but may experience similar extremes of cold as occurs in central Oklahoma. Their survival and vigor will be enhanced by providing good soil, drainage and good sun exposure. More sensitive species may benefit from locations protected from the extremes of cold, such as near a south wall.

Cactus family Cactaceae

Coryphantha missouriensis (Syn. *Neobesseya missouriensis*, *Mammillaria similis*).

Short stemmed, tightly clustered into dome shape. Salmon or beige flowers. Slow growing. Has been found in Central Oklahoma.

Coryphantha vivipara

Often found as a single stem, rocky areas, sometimes associated with Junipers. Rose-colored flowers.

***Cylindropuntia* sps.**

Although called chollas, most have an arborescent or shrub like habit, cylindrical stems and dangerous spines.

Cylindropuntia kleinae

Shrub like to 3' with long spines and stems 1/4 in diameter.

Cylindropuntia imbricata

A big cholla that is the source of the "skeleton" wood found at roadside souvenir shops. It may reach 8' and can be found throughout west Texas and eastern New Mexico. Pink flowered. Slow to moderate growth.



Cylindropuntia whipplei* and *C. wigginsii

These two species are intermediate in size, herblike, moderate to fast growth.

Cylindropuntia clavata

One of the non-arborescent chollas, this species forms a cluster of creeping stems with attractive white spines. Found in the mountain foothills and high desert of New Mexico.

Cylindropuntia leptocaulis

The common “pencil cactus” found in the west and central Texas and into Southwest Oklahoma. Shrub like, dense growth, attractive red fruits. Rapid growth.



Echinocactus texensis

The “horse crippler” of central and west Texas. A ribbed barrel cactus usually wider than tall, 1-6” tall and 3-12 wide. South, very rigid spines making it a hazard to horses and cattle.

Echinocereus reichenbachii* subsp. *Baileyi



Common in the Wichita Mountains. Stems 1-3” in diameter; usually in clusters of a few to several; 2-8” tall. Spines usually golden, occasionally white. Lavender to purple 3’ blooms in May.

Echinocereus caespitosus* var *caespitosus

Common in limestone hills of southern and southwest Oklahoma and central Texas. Stems 1-2 “ in diameter. Single or in clusters of several; 2-10” tall. Very short spines suppressed “pectinate” against the surface. Spines white or occasionally reddish purple. Lavender to purplish 3” blooms in May.

Echinocereus triglochidiatus

The “claret cup” cactus native to southern New Mexico, brilliant red 3” blooms. 3-5 “ diameter. Stems in clusters of several, up to 18” tall and 3’ across.



Echinocereus viridiflorus

Small plants, lime green color blooms.

Mammillaria* sp. See *Coryphantha

***Opuntia* sp.**

Flat stemmed cacti often sub grouped as *Platyopuntia*. May have prostrate or ascending growth habit. Some winter damage may occur but they tend to recover in spring. Impressive flowers, ranging from lemon yellow, golden yellow, apricot, pink and purple. Showy edible fruit.

Other succulents. No cacti are included here.

Agaves (in the *Agavaceae*/*Liliaceae* family)

***Agave* sp.**

Also known as century plants, the winter hardy species generally are smaller and more compact than their more tropical cousins. Some species include: *Agave guadalupensis*, *Agave kaibabensis*, *Agave lechugilla*, *Agave parryi*, *Agave utahensis*.



Dasyliirion sp.

Also called sotol or desert spoon. Long, narrow, serrated leaves originating from single base. Spherical form sends up a tall flower stalk to 15'. Species include: *Dasyliirion wheeleri*, *Dasyliirion lindhermerii* and *Dasyliirion texensis*.

Yucca sp.

Arborescent and non-arborescent forms. Leaves may be narrow or wide, rigid or flexible. Some species include: *Yucca alfolia*, *Yucca baccata*, *Yucca elata*, *Yucca torreyi*.



Crassulas in the Crassulaceae family

Sedums

The genus sedum encompasses a diverse group of succulent plants, ranging from diminutive mats to 2-foot shrubby mounds. They are most often grown for their colorful, clean foliage and ease of culture. There are a number of winter

hardy sedums. Below is a photograph of *Sedum nuttallianum* taken in the Wichita Mountains. They are annuals, thus you can only see them in the growing season. They flower profusely.



Portulacas in the Portulacaceae family

Portulaca sp.

Annuals. Portulacas re-seed prolifically *Talinum sp.* Herbaceous, semi-woody base.

Aizoaceae

Mesembryanthemum sp. There are few species of this large genus that are winter hardy.