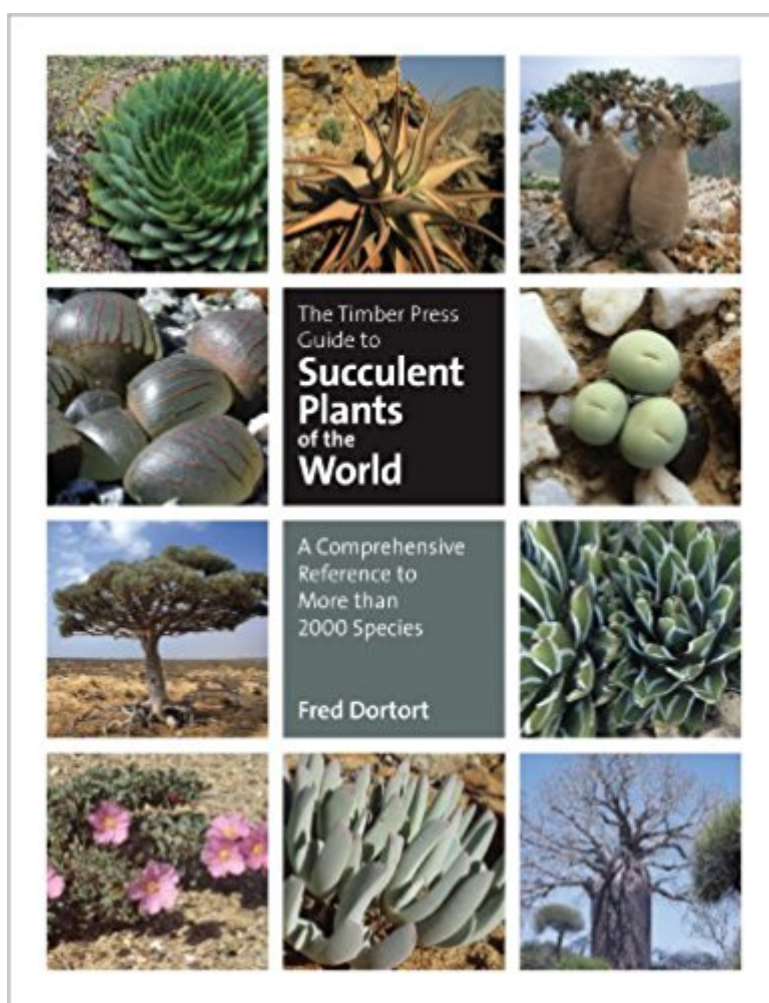


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# The Timber Press Guide To Succulent Plants Of The World: A Comprehensive Reference To More Than 2000 Species



## Synopsis

The plants are organized into 28 intuitively logical groups, such as succulent euphorbias, mesembryanthemums, bulbs, succulent trees, aloes, agaves, and haworthias. Each entry includes information on the plant's native habitat, its cultivation requirements, and its horticultural potential. As useful to novice growers as to collectors and those with an existing interest in succulents, this will be the standard reference for years to come.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Cactus and succulent expert Dortort, a lecturer at the University of California Botanical Garden, has assembled an attractive and user-friendly guide to succulent plants. The book begins with overview chapters on succulents in nature and in cultivation. Subsequent chapters, organized by family and genus, contain an overview of the families and then move into essays on individual species. More than 2,000 succulents are featured, with descriptions, climate information, trivia, and a note on similar plants, if any. There are 750 full-color photographs of plants, most in their natural habitats. Each entry includes information on the plant's native habitat and its cultivation requirements. Both familiar species and more exotic varieties are showcased. In the final chapter, Dortort covers "odds and ends" plants not normally known as succulents, such as begonias and philodendrons. A genera-specific reading list is offered, for those seeking further information. Novice plant enthusiasts and those who are already well familiar with succulents will appreciate this comprehensive and accessible volume. Recommended for all public and academic libraries,

particularly those with strong gardening or plant collections. --Rebecca Vnuk

• A book like this is as restorative as a three-week vacation, minus the hassles with airplanes. •  
• "The New York Times • Sure to be valuable for botanists and gardening  
enthusiasts. • "Library Journal • Comprehensive and accessible volume. . . . Recommended  
for all. • "Booklist • A fascinating compendium and homage to succulence, amply repaying  
exploration to both expert or experienced novice who thirsts to know more. • "The Garden • A  
great companion book for beginners as well as avid collectors of these fabulous  
plants. • "Detroit News • You'll learn about more than 2,000 succulents, their natural  
history, and how to enjoy them in your garden or in your home. • "Halifax Chronicle Herald  
• A new reference for newbie fans and avid collectors. • "San Diego Home and Lifestyle  
Gardens • Without question, the best contemporary presentation of this vast group of plants that  
are primarily from southern Africa and Mexico. • "The Desert Sun

This is a handsomely produced volume which, alas, will be of limited practical usefulness for the home gardener, or even for the reasonably informed succulent enthusiast. The jacket states that it contains "detailed descriptions of more than 2000 plants" and "more than 750 photographs", which is one of the main problems: more than half of the species mentioned are not illustrated, and since those mentions are usually unaccompanied by more detailed information they're not very helpful in identifying particular species. And while it's interesting to see many of these plants photographed in their natural habitat, the small size and often cluttered nature of the photographs makes identifying particular species difficult - to say nothing of the fact that many of the species photographed in situ are ones that the average succulent enthusiast are unlikely to encounter at a nursery or botanic garden. What practical information there is is overwhelmingly directed at the Californian gardener (which comes as no surprise since the author is based in the Bay Area) and will be of very limited usefulness for those living elsewhere. Overall, the book feels too specific in some areas (taxonomies, geographic descriptions) and not specific enough in others (practical knowledge for home gardeners, particular differences between species), so it's difficult to understand who it's intended for. I consider myself an "advanced amateur" when it comes to succulents, and it wasn't for me.

This book contains some great reading of Mr. Dortort's travel adventures, where he seeks the rare succulent for his botanical gardens. Kind of an Indiana Jones of the Weird Plant World. I really want

to go to South Africa now and see some of these amazing plants in situ. The book is vast and comprehensive, with many pictures of the plants in their native habitats. I particularly value this because it makes it clear how the plants normally live and how we can help them adapt to our world. I will be reading this from cover to cover several times at least, and referring to it often. Lots of good advice on caring for these fascinating plants, also. He even includes a number of geni that are not usually covered in "arid plant" books, like *Bursera* and *Boswellia* (copal and frankincense trees). Great stuff!

I was very pleased with this book. It is amazing to look at all the unusual plants around the world. I found the info very helpful and wish I could buy some of the weirdest plants for myself. The book is put together very well. Easy to read and lots of nice pictures to look at. It was better than I hoped for and will be a nice addition to my coffee table books and I will be looking at it and reading it for years to come.

I bought the book because I am very much interested how to improve my part of the desert. The author was able to travel the world over and observe succulents in native stands. I do recommend this book for students and people who have a yen for succulents. I have a high respect for these plants because they must survive in the most harshest environments and when they get sufficient moisture they put on an awesome display of colorful flowers. Living in the desert I need plant that are survivors, the book gives me some ideas which succulents will make it. Great book for students who study such plants.

The layout, the photos, the information were all spendid! I bought it for my brother who collects these plants, but I enjoyed it tremendously before sending it to him. My family has a background in horticulture, particularly exotic plants, and we have collected succulents and cacti for decades. This book blew my brother over!

This is an excellent reference book, especially given that its topic is very far from being a well-defined category. It's quite readable, nicely printed, and seems likely to be durable (for a normal paperback book, that is). However, its aims make it less than satisfactory for someone interested in choosing or identifying succulents for the garden, houseplants, etc. As others have commented, most of the photos are of succulents in habitat. Some of these are spectacular; in others, it's almost impossible to distinguish the plant under discussion from other vegetation, rocks,

etc. Generally, they don't help either to identify an unknown succulent or to picture how it might appear if you grew it. Furthermore, the selection of plants covered is clearly slanted toward the rare, hard-to-access, or distinctive. This allows for very little coverage (much less photos) of the proliferation of hybrids and visually distinctive cultivars produced by nurseries and sold for the garden or as houseplants. So, I'm glad I bought the book: it is cool to know about where these plants come from & get an idea of what they look like in their native habitat. The author describes some of the more extreme places where commonly-grown as well as unheard-of plants come from vividly, making the book an armchair voyage to some of the planet's most inhospitable terrain. Socotra sounds horrible, but I was fascinated to read about it. But I wish someone would write an equally authoritative reference work on succulents in the garden. (And leave out the categories that have no place in a landscape & are unlikely to be grown successfully by someone without a greenhouse, etc. - living stones are cool, I personally find "root succulents" repulsive, neither is a landscape plant.) No-one could keep up with the proliferation of wild & crazy hybrid Echeveria, sedums, etc., never mind all the cross-generic hybrids, not to mention the radically different appearance of genetically identical plants under different cultural conditions (with / without rain, etc.). But I'd really like to have a book that covered the top 10 most common Aeonium species / established varieties in cultivation, with clear pictures of each one - and the equivalent for the main species & standard hybrids of the other prominent succulent genera used in the garden. I don't want to buy multiple volumes per genus - I'm not planning to open a nursery - and there are already \*plenty\* of books on landscaping with succulents, choosing and arranging succulents for containers, crafting with succulents, etc. Meanwhile, I'm still not sure what species several of the aeoniums I'm growing are, even though I'm a plant person (and a Latinist), and I've been obsessively propagating & slightly less obsessively researching these things for a year. So, buy this book by all means. It's very cool, and the author is both a top expert and a lively writer. But don't expect it to answer all or even most of your questions about succulents you encounter in gardens, nurseries, etc.

Love this book just recently had yard redone with succulents and this is a great reference guide, for the plants I have and ones I might want in the future.

Detailed and serious. Pictures are rather small.

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