

FALL 2023

INSIDE THE DOMES



Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory

200,010: DOMES VISITORS LAST YEAR
GROOVING UNDER GLASS

Sept 28, 2023

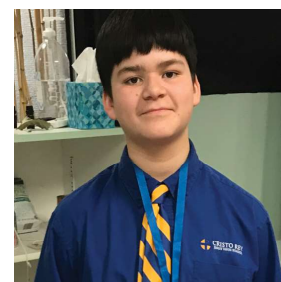


A PIECE OF HISTORY COMES
TO THE DOMES: PAGE 3

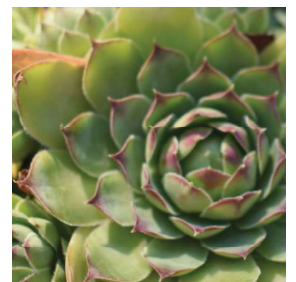


EXCITING ADDITIONS TO THE
DESERT DOME: PAGE 4

WE'RE
CELEBRATING
SUCCULENTS!



CRISTO REY WORK STUDY
PARTNERSHIP: PAGE 5



SUCCULENT CARE AND
PROPAGATION: PAGE 6

NEWS FROM THE DOMES



Fall is here, and Friends of the Domes is excited to present a wonderful lineup of events and activities to help you connect with nature.

Membership

- ◇ The member lane reopens during the fall. Remember to watch for the sign, which is an indication to skip the line!
- ◇ **Save the Dates:** Holiday Show Member Preview Night: Nov 17, 2023; Train Show Member Preview Night: Jan 19, 2024. Watch your email for registration information.

Education

- ◇ The Symposium takes place Sept 14, 2023, with media-personality Melinda Myers as speaker and emcee. Join us as we dive into why safe water is becoming scarce in Milwaukee.

- ◇ Visit www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/education for the fall line-up of workshops and programs for all ages!

Plants and Facility

- ◇ The next Show Dome theme, *eARTh: Art of Nature*, will open Sept 23, 2023.
- ◇ We are excited to welcome a new region in the Desert Dome! See page 4.

Events

- ◇ The annual orchid show, *Fall in Love with Orchids*, will be Sept 16-17, 2023. This event is free for members.
- ◇ Join us Sept 28, 2023, for *Grooving Under Glass*, featuring BriTins, Milwaukee's favorite Beatles tribute band. Thanks to Uncle Wolfie's Breakfast Tavern for providing burgers and fries, with food sales benefiting The

Domes. Admissions is \$25 for members and includes one drink ticket. Visit www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/GUG.

- ◇ The annual *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) celebration, featured above, will be Fri, Oct 27, 2023, from 6-9PM. See page 5.

Other

- ◇ The community survey, offered in both Spanish and English, had 5,600+ responses. The results varied, but there was one clear message: Our community loves our Conservatory! Watch your email for more updates.
- ◇ We released the Friends of the Domes' FY23 Impact Report (watch your mailbox). Thanks to you, we were able to accomplish so much! ■

Historic Statues Return to Public Display After 30 Years

The Mitchell Park Sunken Garden was constructed in 1904. It featured seven fountain heads: two lions and five dragons. The gardens were removed in 1994 due to maintenance challenges and budget constraints. Two of the heads were placed on display in the Show Dome and the others were placed in storage.

“When I joined The Domes in 2021, I was struck by their beauty,” said Emily Lambrecht, Mitchell Park Domes Horticulturist. “It saddened me that these beautiful stone heads were not out where people could appreciate them.”

In 2022, Emily became the lead

horticulturist in the Show Dome and finally had the opportunity to plan a way to use them. The Domes’ horticultural team decided to install all seven heads in the permanent perimeter garden in the Show Dome.

The funds to purchase the large plant pots that sit on the historical heads were donated by Friends of the Domes. Membership fees as well as fundraising activities make these types of projects possible.



Next time you visit the Show Dome, challenge yourself to find all seven heads! ■

Bader Philanthropies Grant Supports Older Adult Programming

Two new exciting programs will help older adults connect with nature, thanks to a grant from Bader Philanthropies. The *SPARK! at The Domes* and *Growing and Thriving* programs offer unique opportunities for participants to enjoy nature. Today’s article focuses on *SPARK! at The Domes*.

Started in 2009 at cultural organizations across the country, SPARK! is a program for people with memory loss and their caregivers. Bader Philanthropies aims to make Wisconsin a leader in how challenges posed by Alzheimer’s are addressed. The foundation has funded several programs, including the new program offered at The Domes.

SPARK! at The Domes provides participants nature-based activities and experiences at Milwaukee’s most beautiful indoor setting: The Domes! It is available at no cost to those experiencing memory loss and their caregivers. Each session is 1.5 hours and takes place monthly, Sept-June. The fall sessions are Sept 24, Oct 24 and Nov 28, 2023.

Participants have the opportunity to learn about music, plants and nature—and share their memories of The Domes. Advanced registration is required. To find out more, visit www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/olderadults or call Paula at (414) 708-5265. ■



New Geographical Region to Be Represented in Desert Dome

By Justine Miller, Mitchell Park
Domes Horticulturist

This past July, I had the opportunity to attend the Cactus and Succulent Society of America (CSSA) Convention in Colorado Springs, Colorado. As a horticulturist who grew up and developed my skills in Wisconsin, this was my first experience with cacti and succulents in their native habitat. Observing these plants within their ecological community, geology and climate was eye opening. The experience gave me a deeper understanding of the growth and requirements of such unique species.

In addition to seeing wild plants in their habitat (many right behind the hotel where the convention was held!), I was able to tour three public desert gardens and attend presentations from cactus propagators, researchers and public horticulturists.

Several speakers described their travels to remote areas where rare species grow (including some as yet uncatalogued). The visuals, knowledge and personal stories they shared were a valuable resource for those who have not climbed the Sierra de Talagapa in Patagonia or camped cliff-side among rare *Gasterias* in South Africa. It made me think of one of our goals as horticulturists here at The Domes: to put plants in the context of their natural environment, allowing visitors to explore parts of the world that

they may not be able to see in person.

To that end, I am happy to share that, while at the conference, I was able to acquire specimens for a new geographical region that will be added to the Desert Dome. Next year, we will be creating a new display with species from Southern and Western Asia, primarily India, Pakistan, and the Arabian Peninsula. Here is a brief introduction to the first two acquisitions: *Adenia venenata* and *Commiphora wightii*.

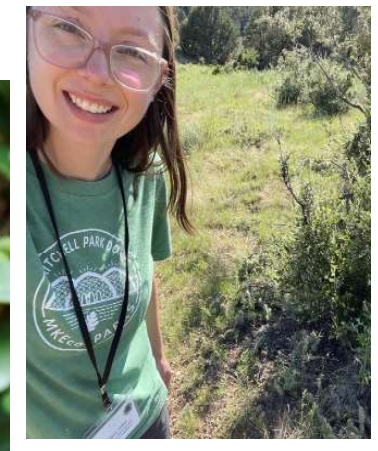
Adenia venenata is a stem succulent with a shape referred to as caudiciform. This means it has a large swollen trunk to store energy during seasons of drought. It is a member of the passion flower family and has green leaves growing from vine-like branches at the top of the trunk. The native range of this species spans from parts of Africa to the Arabian Peninsula. It is cultivated in Africa for its

anti-parasitic properties.

Commiphora wightii is a shrub whose native range is the southern Arabian Peninsula, Southern Pakistan, and West and Central India. It has papery exfoliating bark and (like many plants in its family, Burseraceae) it has a fragrant resin. The resin contains valuable medicinal properties, including anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and anti-arthritic compounds. Unfortunately, the plant is critically endangered in the wild.

I am excited to start utilizing the knowledge and resources I gained at the CSSA convention and to continue developing the Southern and Western Asia region in the arid dome.

I am grateful to Milwaukee County Parks and Friends of the Domes for sponsoring this trip and providing funds to bring back a new desert experience for our visitors to enjoy! ■



Commiphora wightii (left); Domes Horticulturist Justine Miller enjoys seeing desert plants in their native habitat during the conference (right)

Partner Highlight: Cristo Rey Students Learn Life Skills at the Mitchell Park Domes



Neighborhood to provide opportunities for students to work one day a week at the Mitchell Park Domes.

Francisco, who grew up in Milwaukee and is the oldest brother of four sisters, was one of two students placed at The Domes this past year.

Cristo Rey's Corporate Work Study Program enables students to learn real-world skills and get work experience before they are out of high school. Once a week, the students go to their assigned job to perform work tasks that will help build professional skills. Students may work at hospitals or local businesses such as banks.

Francisco likes the program and appreciated the opportunity to work with Mr. Pete and Erica Veto, two of the educators at The Domes. "When the opportunity to work at the Domes came up, I felt really lucky as I had been there with my family and we enjoyed it," says Francisco.

He worked in the Education Center, greeting visitors and helping Mr. Pete and Erica with children's programs. He also helped to test out some of the field trip guides to make sure they were clear for visitors. A few times, he led children's tours for The Domes School Field Trip Program.

Francisco truly enjoyed working in the Education Center. "Greeting people definitely helped my people skills. I am more comfortable speaking to people," he explains. After high school, he plans to go to college to become an electrical engineer.

Friends of the Domes appreciates Francisco's help and great attitude. He was a tremendous asset and wonderful addition to the Education Center.

This current school year, there are six Cristo Rey students helping with both educational programming as well as administrative tasks. ■

If you were in The Domes' Education Center last year, you may have met high school freshman Francisco. This past school year, Friends of the Domes worked with the Corporate Work Study Program at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Milwaukee's Clarke Square

Día de los Muertos Returns to The Domes on October 27th

Enjoy a spectacular celebration of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), a cultural event that celebrates our deceased loved ones. This year's celebration will include traditional ofrendas (altars in honor of loved ones), music, local artists, dancers and food vendors. All proceeds benefit educational programming at The Domes.

No tickets sold at the door. Please visit our website, www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/DOD, or use the QR code to purchase tickets. ■



FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

Propagating Succulents: A Fun and Easy Past-time

Succulents have experienced a surge of popularity over the past several years with cacti and other types adorning everything from socks to office supplies! Keeping succulents as houseplants is a popular choice due to the many varieties and sizes that can be a fun addition to any decor.

Whether a seasoned botanist or just starting, this article will help you tend and propagate a house full of succulents!

Succulent vs. Cacti

The word succulent means full of juice, which is fitting since these plants have adapted to store moisture. Succulents are not one plant family, but can be found growing in arid regions around the globe. All cacti are succulents, but not all succulents are cacti. Cacti store water in their stems, pads or branches. They are also differentiated by small bumps called areoles that, at times, have spines, leaves or hair growing from them. Aloe is a popular succulent plant that is not a cactus.

Keeping Your Succulents Alive

There are thousands of varieties of succulents, so your first step should be to identify the plant and take a few minutes to research the conditions it prefers.

1. Generally, provide as much light as possible (six or more



Offset propagation is as easy as separating and repotting the pups.

hours), rotating the plant whenever you see it start to lean toward the light. If you are in Wisconsin, rooms with south and eastern windows are ideal.

2. Make sure the plant has good drainage (holes in the pot). If not, repot with high quality soil suited for succulents in a pot with good drainage at the bottom. Terra cotta pots are a great option.
3. Water the soil directly, lightly, when the soil is dry, not more than once a week. During growing or flowering seasons (generally the spring and summer) you can give the succulent a little more water and even a fertilizer designed for succulents.

Propagating

Your cactus is thriving and you want more! Propagating involves taking an element of a mature succulent and using it to grow a new plant. It results in a cloned cactus. It is relatively easy with succulents as their roots are designed to grow in shallow and difficult conditions.

Offset Propagation: For some cactus varieties, offsets (pups) will grow next to the parent plant, and you can simply remove and pot the offsets.

Leaf or Stem Propagation: Succulents with leaves or pads, or those that grow in a clustering fashion, can usually be propagated easily with a cutting.

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

You can remove a leaf, branch, or part of a stem and follow this process:

1. **Cut:** It's a good idea to sterilize the scissors you are using to remove the segment, leaf or pad. Sometimes pieces will even wiggle off with touch.
2. **Callous:** Place the cutting in a clean, dry, light place for about 3 days. It will have enough stored water to survive. The callous that forms will protect the cutting from bacteria and fungus once you place it in soil.
3. **Prepare:** Fill a terra cotta or other well-draining pot with soil designed for succulents.
4. **Plant:** If you have some on hand, you can dip the cutting in root stimulator to help get your succulent started, but it is generally not a necessity. Place the cutting in the soil so that it is sticking out of the



soil, but will not fall over. Give it a little water and put in a spot where it will get moderate sun.

5. **Nurture:** Very lightly water the soil in the pot every day or two. This process will take 2 to 3 weeks. After a few weeks, gently move the cutting to see if you feel resistance, indicating roots have taken hold. Move the plant to a spot where it will get more

light and shift to watering about once a week.

Once your plant is established, you will switch to watering it when the soil is completely dry.

If you would like to learn more, the Friends of the Domes offers classes on succulent propagation and houseplant care. Visit our website and click "Learn" to view the schedule of adult education classes. ■

GIFT SHOP GALORE



After seeing the new succulents in the Desert Dome, you might be inspired to bring a little bit of succulent love home with you! Gifts Under Glass has cacti, cacti-related gifts and books, and plant care items for all of our succulent friends. Members always receive 10% off! ■





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2023 FALL SHOW: eARTH: THE ART OF NATURE

Sept 23—Nov 5, 2023

This fall, explore the beauty of eARTh. The Show Dome will feature a beautifully curated autumnal palette of marigolds, rudbeckias, celosia and exhibition chrysanthemums.



TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE GROOVING UNDER GLASS

Sept 28, 2023, 6:00—9:00PM

An evening of live music, local food and fun with the Midwest's premier Beatles cover band, The BriTins. Learn more and purchase tickets at www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/GUG.



TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

Oct 27, 2023, 6:00—9:00PM

Don't miss our family-friendly Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos) celebration! Learn more and purchase tickets at www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/DOD.