

CACTUS MAXONII, A NEW CACTUS FROM GUATEMALA

By J. N. ROSE

In 1905 Mr. Wm. R. Maxon, an Assistant Curator in the National Museum, was detailed by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for field work in Guatemala, and while there he acquired a fine series of living specimens of a new cactus, which is here described. The same year Prof. W. A. Kellerman of the Ohio State University sent another specimen of the same from Guatemala. Some of the larger plants have flowered and fruited, which has enabled me to ascertain fully the characters and preserve specimens for the herbarium. The two photographs here reproduced are of the same plant taken at an interval of just 24 hours. Among other things they show how quickly the fruit is pushed out.

CACTUS MAXONII Rose, sp. nov.

PLATE VI

Plant body simple, deep green, broadly cone-shaped or short-cylindrical, 10 to 15 cm. high; cephalium rather small, consisting of a mass of white wool and brown bristles: ribs 11 to 15, rather broad, either mottled or plain: spines generally 9, rarely only 8 or sometimes with several smaller ones making 11 in all, the central one (rarely 2) short, standing nearly at right angles to the rib, 1.5 to 2 cm. long; radial spines spreading or even recurved, pale red or rose-colored with a whitish bloom, but when old colored amber; flowers small, rose-colored; fruit narrowly oblong or club-shaped, red, resembling that of *Mamillaria*; seeds black, shining.

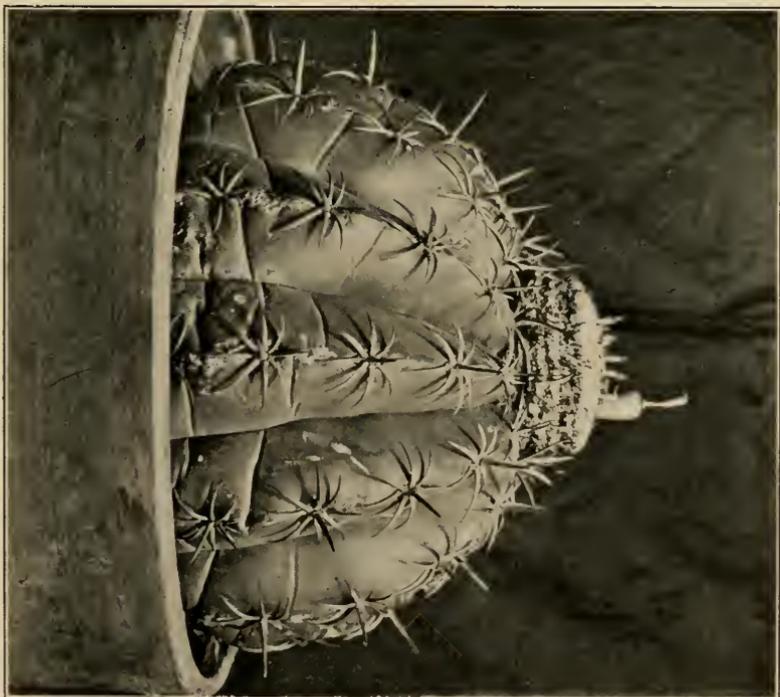
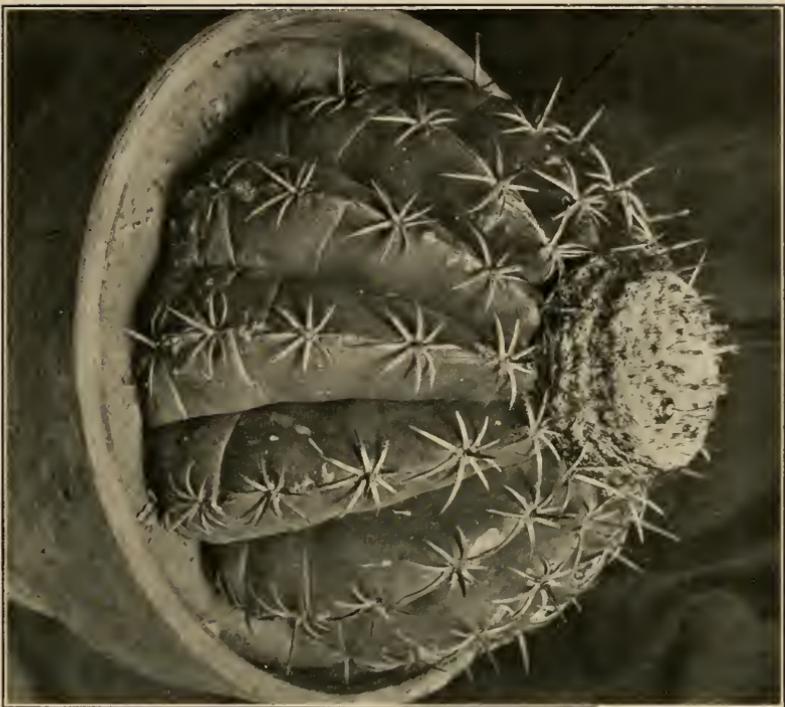
Collected in Guatemala near El Rancho by W. R. Maxon in 1905 (no. 3766, type) and near Salama, January 22, 1905 (no. 3378); also collected in Guatemala by Prof. W. A. Kellerman. The description is drawn up from living plants in Washington.

Type in U. S. National Herbarium no. 535,059.

Perhaps nearest *C. neryi* but with more ribs, with a smaller cephalium, and with the spines almost always 9.

This species is of the *Melocactus* type, under which name it would be placed by most cactus students. My reasons for using the generic

name *Cactus* will be explained in full in a more extensive paper on the *Cactaceae* to be published later. It is well known that the late Otto Kuntze not only referred *Melocactus* to *Cactus* but also *Mamillaria* and even *Cereus*, *Echinocactus*, and similar genera. The present use of the name *Cactus* is not to be understood as countenancing this wholesale reduction of genera, which in my view has no justification whatsoever.



CACTUS MAXONII, PHOTOGRAPHED AT AN INTERVAL OF 24 HOURS