

April Cactus of the Month

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Echinocereus papillosus



https://www.cactus-art.biz/schede/ECHINOCEREUS/Echinocereus_papillosus/Echinocereus_papillosus_angusticeps/Echinocereus_papillosus_V_angusticeps_SB1787_810.htm

Echinocereus papillosus is a small clumping cactus found in Northern Mexico and in a rather small area of South Texas. Its historical range in Texas is from Laredo thru Freer--eastward to near Alice, then south thru Hebbronville to near Edinburg, then back toward the Rio Grande River. I would guess much of that habitat has been converted to agriculture. The soil there is mainly a limestone based sandy loam and the typical landscape is one of many thorny shrubs, mesquite and massive *Opuntia*. *Echinocereus papillosus* is most commonly found growing under all this mass of thorns and brush.

The green stems of *E. papillosus* are generally less than 2 inches across and mainly upright to 3-5 inches tall, although some will grow taller and become more prostrate. The main species of this plant usually has 3-12 stems. There is also one other variety found within its range - var. *angusticeps*-- which stays short but can have up to 50 stems. The inch long spines are fairly sparse and are multi colored with a dark base and light-

er tip. It is the flowers that make this cactus so attractive !!! They are bright yellow with a dark red center-- much similar to many *Opuntia* flowers!!

Though hard to find in the wild and just as hard to find available in cultivation, grab one of these cute little cactus if you get a chance. They claim to be easy in culture, but I find they have an attraction for falling in love with MEALY BUGS !!! So if you do ever get to grow one-- keep a close eye for those critters !!

