

Wendell S. (Woody) Minnich Biography



Woody at LA Convention Center

Woody was about five years old when his dad introduced him to the cacti of the Mojave Desert. Soon after that, he started his own cactus garden, and a coveted collection of rare potted specimens. By the late 1960's he was a totally addicted cactophile, joining several cactus and succulent societies. He quickly dedicated himself to doing extensive field work to study and photograph the cacti and other succulents from all around the world. Because of his contributions to various American C & S societies, he received honorary life memberships from 14 clubs.

After college and grad school, Woody became a full-time teacher of graphic arts, photography and silkscreen at Antelope Valley High School in Lancaster, CA. Living in the high desert, he started roaming the entire Southwest United States. His focus was on rare and sometimes endangered species of cacti from California, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico and Colorado. After years of searching these amazingly beautiful regions, he turned his interest to the incredible diversity of cacti from Baja California and the mainland of Mexico. This seriously turned his focus to the genus *Mammillaria*. After almost 40 years of exploring all of Mexico he developed a giant documented collection of this genus. The Agaves, *Ariocarpus*, *Astrophytums*, *Echeverias*, *Echinocereus*, *Fouquierias*, *Turbinicarpus*, and so on, were all soon to follow. While doing all this field work and photography, he developed a strong interest in the great majority of the other C & S genera from most of South America. Many trips to Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Peru opened his eyes to countless other wonderful C & S such as: *Copiapoas*, *Gymnocalyciums*, *Neochilenias*, *Neoporterias*, *Rebutias*, *Sulcorebutias*, etc. His dedication to the study of all of these genera grew, prompting trips to South Africa, Namibia, Yemen, Socotra and Madagascar. He became a student of many of the succulent genera, including: *Adenias*, *Adeniums*, *Aloes*, *Asclepiads*, *Chyphostemmas*, *Conophytums*, *Crassulas*, *Euphorbias*, *Lithops*, and many more, including the fantastic sculptural caudiciforms. He fell in love with them all!

He started his nursery Cactus Data Plants in 1975, where he grew almost all the above-mentioned genera. After numerous years as a grower and a field worker, he learned from these combined disciplines how important the nursery trade is to help in the conservation and protection of so many of our favorite species. As a passionate lover of all life, he has shared many of his world experiences through his photography and publications. Much of his work is published in various books and journals, including the *Cactus Lexicon*, *The Xerophile*, *The Copiapoas*, *Mammillaria Handbook*, and others. During his 55 years of growing and studying all of these plants, he has been lucky enough to have gained a great deal of wisdom about their cultivation and conservation. Resulting from over 128 major field trips around the world, he has been fortunate enough to have discovered seven species and even had one provisionally named in his honor, *Mammillaria minnichii* nn. Working with friends Glass, Lau, and Reppenhagen in their field studies allowed him to share six other new species he had discovered. His cactus-crazy friends and other fellow explorers eventually described them all.

His favorite byproduct of numerous years of teaching and learning is sharing the many wonderful experiences he has enjoyed. The stories told and the photography we will see hopefully will make us true lovers of these plants, animals and their habitats. He hopes that together all of us will do our best to protect and preserve our amazing and precious wild world.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woody_Minnich

www.cactusdataplant.com

<http://g52p.2.vu/2> (images)

