

NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY OF TEXAS

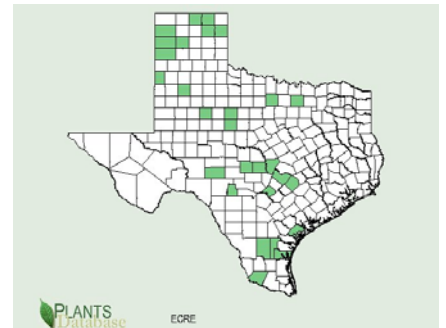
Lindheimer Chapter

PLANT OF THE MONTH APRIL, 2012

LACE CACTUS, *ECHINOCEREUS REICHENBACHII*



Lace Cactus in Bloom



USDA Range Map: Texas

The Genus *Echinocereus* is one of the largest group of cacti, members of which are commonly known as “Hedgehog Cacti.” The botanical name derives from the Greek *echinos*, meaning spiny hedgehog, and the Lace Cactus is also sometimes called the Lace Hedgehog Cactus. It occurs in scattered regions in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Colorado, where it is found in sunny locations in rocky, well-drained caliche, sand or limestone soils. It is occasionally found growing out of small pockets of soil in rocks.

Lace Cactus seldom grows to more than 8” tall. As a young plant, it forms a small ball that gradually elongates as it gets older. Some plants retain a single stem, while others form clumps of a dozen or more stems. The brilliant purple-pink flowers of this cactus can be 2-5” tall and almost as wide. They are made up of 30 – 50 petals with ragged edges. The flower buds grow slowly, gradually expanding in size. However, when they open the flowers only last one day.

Lace Cactus makes an attractive plant in a xeric or cactus garden in an area where its spectacular bloom can be enjoyed at close range. If you find one on your property, they are not difficult to transplant. Hold off watering newly transplanted plants for several weeks, to avoid rot. They can also be started from seed collected from dried and shriveled fruits. Deer leave the plant and flowers alone.