

Schütziana

The Gymnocalycium Online Journal



Volume 11, Issue 3, 2020
ISSN 2191-3099

This journal was published on December 1st, 2020

Content

Wick, Mario	Editorial	p. 2
Papsch, Wolfgang	Notes on two <i>Gymnocalycium</i> taxa collected by A. V. Frič: <i>Gymnocalycium michoga</i> and <i>Gymnocalycium knebelii</i>.	p. 3-13

Published: December 1st, 2020

Legal notice

Publisher: WORKING GROUP SCHÜTZIANA, Mario Wick, Am Schwedderberg 15, 06485 Gernrode, Germany

Editorial team and responsible for the content: <https://www.schuetziana.org/index.php/contact-us>.

SCHÜTZIANA is the journal of the WORKING GROUP SCHÜTZIANA.

Source of supply: SCHÜTZIANA is available only as a pdf-file via World Wide Web and can be downloaded here:

<https://www.schuetziana.org/index.php/downloads>.

The content of the respective article expresses the opinion of the author and is not necessarily that of the WORKING GROUP SCHÜTZIANA.

The issues of SCHÜTZIANA are free of charge and may be distributed freely. The content and the pictures of the articles of SCHÜTZIANA are property of the author and may not be used for other purposes than reading, printing and storing without permission.

© 2020 WORKING GROUP SCHÜTZIANA. All rights reserved.

ISSN 2191-3099

Cover photo: *Gymnocalycium schickendantzii* WP 612/1163, Argentina, Province La Rioja, RP 6, 16 km west of the intersection with RN79, Sierra Brava (photo: W. Papsch).

Editorial

Dear *Gymnocalycium* friends,

Mario Wick



Preoccupation with the genus *Gymnocalycium* does not have to be restricted to caring for the plants, watching flower and fruit features, measuring bodies, flowers and seeds. It is often worthwhile taking a look at the literature published in the past referring to the individual taxa. Small remarks or marginal notes, slight details in the travelogues by people collecting field data or annotations on their seed and plant lists can yield valuable hints for the identification of insufficiently described names. Naturally, this kind of activity is time-consuming and rather resembles a puzzle. But it is indeed satisfactory to insert achieved information into the gap of knowledge about the plant. Quite often the problem arises that plant collectors and traders deliberately give wrong particulars as to localities from selfishness and commercial calculations. A case in point is the locality Mendoza for *Gymnocalycium oenanthemum*.

When researching old descriptions, we should not forget that in the period of the early 20th century the annex “spec. nov.” to the name of a new finding was enough to stimulate interest in these plants. This means buying, studying and possibly collecting more information and publishing them. Therefore, it takes a future investigator a detective-like instinct to assemble the respective information and draw conclusions.

As usual, enjoy yourselves reading!

We would like to express our warmest thanks to Mrs Iris Blanz (Austria) who supports us with the translation into English, to Mrs Larisa Zaitseva (Russia) for the translation into Russian, to Mr Victor Gapon (Russia) for the content corrections of the Russian edition, to Mr Takashi Shimada (Japan) for the translation into Japanese, to Mr Jiahui Lin (China) for the translation into Chinese, to Mr Václav Johanna (Czech Republic) for the translation into Czech and to Mr Daniel Schweich (France), who mirrors our publications under <https://www.cactuspro.com/biblio/>.

Notes on two *Gymnocalycium* taxa collected by A. V. Frič: *Gymnocalycium michoga* and *Gymnocalycium knebelii*.



Wolfgang Papsch

Ziehrerweg 5, 8401 Kalsdorf (Austria)

E-Mail: wolfgang.papsch@cactusaustria.at

ABSTRACT

Gymnocalycium michoga Frič and *G. knebelii* Frič nom. nud. are two cactus species hardly or rather not at all present in cactus collections. Both of them were first found by A. V. Frič from Prague in Argentina and then imported to Europe. Their taxonomic position and thus their situation with regard to nomenclature were viewed in varying ways in the past.

KEYWORDS

Gymnocalycium, michoga, knebelii, Province Santiago del Estero.

INTRODUCTION

Seven out of eight of his journeys with the intention to collect plants took A. V. Frič, a cactus merchant from Prague, to a number of Latin American countries. All in all, he put nine years into these adventures. In the course of his travels he collected many plants in Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. The better part of his discoveries went to the garden centres Johannsen in Denmark and De Laet in Belgium, later also to the company Haage in Erfurt/Germany. Many plants were taken to his own business in Prague-Smichov, where they were subsequently used to provide seeds. Until the beginning of the Second World War he housed more than 30,000 fully-grown cacti in his garden centre, however, they did not survive the extremely cold winter of 1939/1940.

Thus, numerous new and so far, unknown cactus species reached Europe. Despite the fact that Frič assigned them names, most of them remained unidentified or undescribed. Frič ignored the rules of ICBN (International Code of Botanical Nomenclature), hence a large number of Frič's names are not validly published, mainly due to missing descriptions. The bigger part of the new names found their way into the collections of persons interested in cacti between 1926 and 1936, due to a total of eight price lists of seed and plant offers.

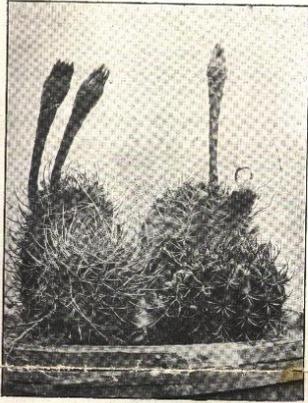
These price lists are a substantial source of Frič's names and, in the past, have caused discussions concerning their names' validity. This refers in particular to those names to which Frič had added short comments. Some authors consider them in certain cases as in accordance with

the rules and are therefore of the opinion that some names were validly published. Others suppose that these remarks were just meant to provide additional information for customers and hence believe the names not to be validly published.

DISCUSSION

1. *Gymnocalycium michoga* Frič

In 1928 Frič offers under seed item 20: *Gymnocalycium michoga*, Frič, spec. nov. (fig. 1) in his catalogue “*Cacti The Coming Fashion*” for the first time. Its locality is referred to as St. Jago (Province Santiago del Estero) (Frič 1928). On account of a lacking description this name is a nomen nudum. Frič found this plant during his seventh tour of Latin America between January and June 1927. A letter of June 13th, 1927, to the editor of the Prague magazine “*Praktischer Berater für Wohnungs- und Kleintierhaltung*” (“*Practical guidebook for indoor cultivation and animal keeping*”) gives a short summary of this journey. The letter was written in Buenos Aires (Crkal 1983: 159).



A. V. FRIČ,
PRAHA-SMÍCHOV 148.
CZECHOSLOVAKIA.

CACTI

THE
COMING FASHION

Be prepared and grow Cacti from Seed

CHEAP SEETS ARE
VERY EXPENSIV

No. 22. Different vars. of *Echinopsis campylacantha*, Pfeiff. and *E. leucantha*, Lem. Seeds of these varieties produce many variations as shown on the picture, some of them are called *E. campylacantha*, others *leucantha* or *salpingophora* etc. though they have the same seed-parents.

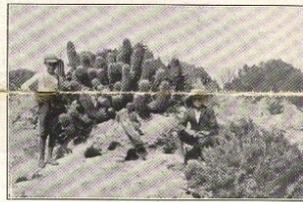
We are glad to hand you an offer of the most beautiful and rare varieties of South America, which have nearly disappeared in the European and American collections, as there was nobody who could find and collect these varieties in their native-country. Now we can offer the results of a botanic expedition of the wellknown explorer A. V. Frič through Brazil, Uruguay, Argent. Patagonia, St. Jago, the Cordillera, Chaco and Paraguay.

The South-American varieties are by far not so delicate as the Mexican varieties. They are of robust growth and are very suitable for cultivation and seed-growing because many of them can stand severe cold and are preferred for seed-growing. Many varieties are specially fit for private collections, as they grow very quickly and flower very soon.

CORR.: ČESKY, DEUTSCH, ENGLISCH, ESPAÑOL, FRANÇAISE, PORTUGUEZ.

PRICE - LIST FOR 1928

No.	The South-American Varieties	Origine	U.S. \$ Price per	
			10 seeds	100 seed
Cereus				
*2	aerhiops, Haw	Bahia blanca	0,12	1,—
*3	coeruleus, S.-D. f. Paragones		0,12	1,—
*4	coeruleus v. melanacantha, Sd.	Rio Negro	0,10	0,80
*5	Dayami, Spag. Fruit-tree, makes every year long sprouts about 35/50" long. Fruits are eatable. Especially fit for grafting			
*6	(Monvillea) Spagazini, Wch. a true <i>Cereus</i> ! Fruits with red flesh (not white as Rose believed) of pleasant flavour. Flowers nocturnal, smelling sweetly. Blue and white marbled body.	Chaco	0,15	1,25
*7	validus, Haw	St. Jago	0,15	1,25
8	validus forma alpina	St. Jago	0,10	0,80
9	validus forma brevispina	St. Jago	0,15	1,25
10	validus forma pruinosa	St. Jago	0,40	—
*11	validus from Humus-soil	Las Breñas, Chaco	0,15	1,25
12	validus from Humus-soil	Saens Peña, Chaco	0,18	1,50
*13	Stenogonus, Sd.	Paraguay	0,10	0,80
14	Paraguayensis, Sd. (not alacrip)	Paraguay	0,18	1,50

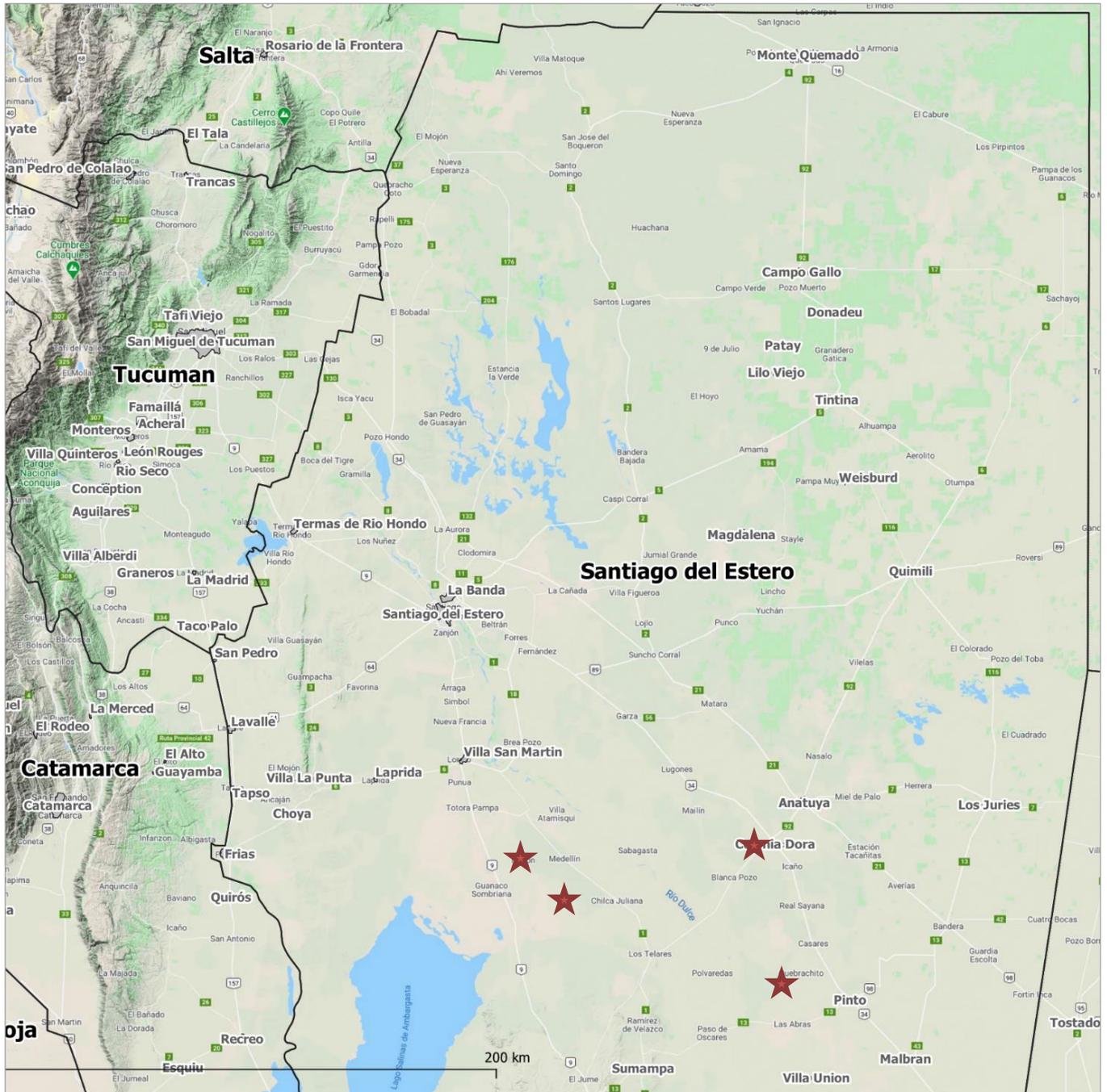
No. 18. *Gymnocalycium gibbosum*, Haw. (*Echinocactus gibbosus*).

No. 61. *Trichocereus gladiatus*, Rh. Growing on small hills in the salt-desert. Plants must have some sea-salt in cultivation, else they will loose their brilliant light-green color and become creeping and corky. There is no better grafting-stock. Plants have orange-like fruits of pleasant taste.

*15	Cleistocactus			
	aureispinus, Frič, spec. nov.	St. Jago	0,12	1,—
16	Discocactus			
	placunculiformis	Matto Grosso, Brazil	3,—	—
17	Gymnocalycium			
18	caespitosum, Frič, spec. nov.	S. Ventana	0,40	—
19	gibbosum, Haw. (see illustration)	Paragones	0,25	2,—
19a	Mihanovichii, v. stenogona, spec. nov.	Chaco	0,40	—
20	michoga, Frič, spec. nov.	St. Jago	0,25	2,—
21	Knebelii, Frič, spec. nov.	St. Jago	0,15	1,25
		Salta	0,40	—
*22	Echinopsis			
23	campylacantha et leucantha (see illustration)	Rio Negro	0,10	0,80
24	nov. spec. from Paraguay	Cambitretá	0,25	2,—
24	rhodotricha, Sd.	St. Jago	0,15	1,25
25	tucumane, Frič, nov. spec. Similar to allispinosa, Sd.	Tucuman	0,20	1,75

Fig. 1: Frič catalogue 1928 “*Cacti The Coming Fashion*” with *G. michoga* on offer.

Between 1927 and 1928 Frič published reports of his experiences during this journey with the heading “The Plant Hunter” in Möller’s *Deutscher Gärtner-Zeitung* (MDGZ). After short stays in Brazil and Uruguay he travelled to Argentina in order to look for *Gymnocalycium gibbosum*, first in Patagonia and the Sierra de la Ventana. Around mid-March he arrived in the Province Santiago del Estero and set up a staging post in Colonia Dora. At this site Frič collected his *G. michoga* in the salt desert at the north-eastern rim of the Salinas de Ambargasta. He sent them to Europe for the first time (Crkal 1983: 169).



Map 1: Author's localities of *G. michoga* (Map: Mario Wick, Source: Google Maps)

After a detour into the Province Tucumán (see also below) he returned to Colonia Dora and reported in a letter:

“Exodus and rain, I returned to Dora in order to pack my cacti. The workers responsible for packing the cacti did not do what I had expected. On the other hand, my friends had prepared some G. michoga for me so that I could dispatch more dried specimens of that.” (Crkal 1983: 171).

So, it results from Frič's reports without any doubt that he collected *G. michoga* in two tranches around Dora (nowadays Colonia Dora, on the RN 34 southeast of Añatuya, Prov. Santiago del Estero) between the end of March and mid-April 1927.

The year of publication of Frič's catalogue of collections "Kakteenjäger" is given in a number of variations, as it was published without mentioning the year and in different versions (fig 2). As two illustrations of this catalogue bear the annex "Cop.A. Frič 1929", the publishing year 1929 seems the most likely one (Frič 1929).

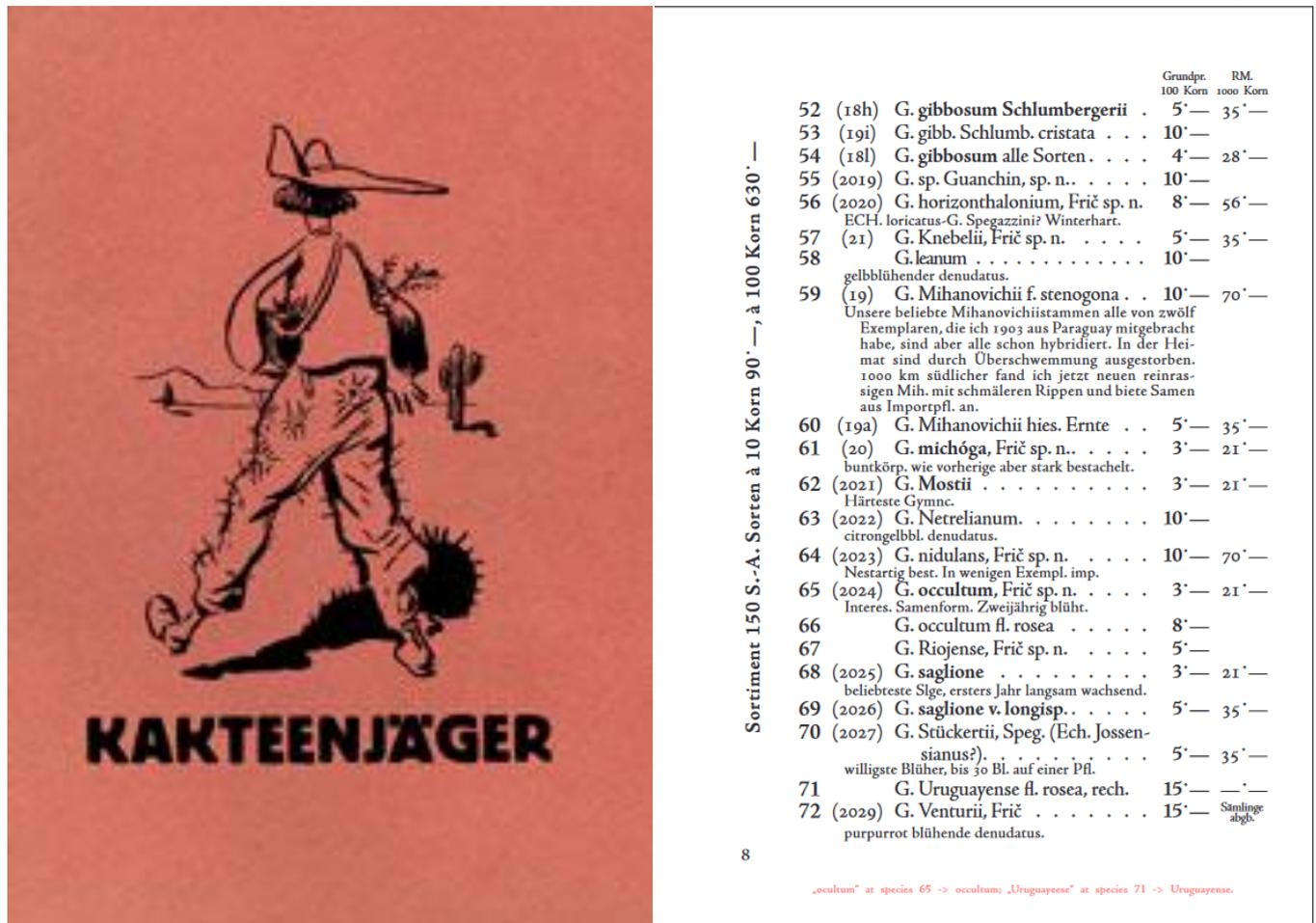


Fig. 2: "Kakteenjäger" 1929, offering *G. michoga*.

On page 8 Frič offers seeds of *G. michoga*, sp. n. again under the number 61 (20 = reference to *Cacti The Coming Fashion* 1928). With regard to this offer he notes "coloured body like the latter (referring to *G. mihanovichii*), but densely spinated" (1929). This annotation can be considered as a description and differential diagnosis, however short. Thus, the new name is in accordance with the rules of ICBN (Art. 23.1, Rec. 32.A, Art. 38.1 and Art. 38.2) and must therefore be quoted as *Gymnocalycium michoga* Frič 1929. Pažout (1964), Schütz (1992) and Till (2020) already held this opinion, too. The description by Ito in *Explanatory Diagram of Austroechinocactae* must hence be considered a more recent homonym (Ito 1957).

As his prices in this catalogue (RM 3 for 100 grains and RM 21 for 1.000 grains) can be classified as belonging to a lower price range, Frič must have had seeds available in abundance as opposed to other novelties like e.g. *G. mihanovichii f. stenogonum* or *G. nidulans* (100 seeds for RM 10). In the catalogue "Kakteenjäger zu Hause" of 1932 he is already able to offer seedlings of *G. michoga* at a price of RM 0.50 per plant (Frič 1932). The garden centre Baumgartner in Vienna is as well able to sell seedlings of the new species at a price per item of between ÖS 2 and 20 (Baumgartner 1933, 1934).

Kreuzinger lists *G. michoga* Frič 1926 under no. 242 and notes: “*Protuberance around areole with dark dots*”. It could not be verified how Kreuzinger specified the year 1926 (Kreuzinger 1935). Ito (1957) and Charles (2008), too, quote this year erroneously because they certainly took over *G. michoga*’s specification of the year from Kreuzinger.

Frič already mentioned that *G. michoga* might be related to *G. schickendantzii*. He writes in a letter about his journey from Dora onward to Chaco Austral via Las Breñas (Province Chaco):

“Although I found plants from the genus Gymnocalycium they quite resembled the ones I had collected in Sant Jago and which I had called G. michoga for the time being. It also seemed to me that it was related to G. schickendantzii, except for the fact that they had pronounced protuberances instead of ribs. If I found this plant in Mexico, I would definitely identify it as T. tulensis. I found neither flowers nor fruits. It could probably be a new species, but up to now I have not decided yet. It is three weeks since I packed the last G. michoga.” (Crkal 1983: 175).

The surroundings of Ft. Union (today Villa Union?), around 80 km south of Colonia Dora is mentioned as another locality by Pažout. This indication of a locality might be derived from plants provided by Fehser. Possibly the reproduction of the plant goes back to this imported delivery. Pažout also assumes that with these imports *G. michoga* was rediscovered.

In modern literature *G. michoga* is regarded simply as a synonym of the considerably variable *G. schickendantzii*, which is an assessment corroborated here. *G. michoga* can only be considered a local form of *G. schickendantzii*, occurring at the north-eastern border of its huge distribution area.

Apart from a little significant drawing without reference to origin by Ito, no reproduction of a plant collected by Frič has been found so far. One picture of a plant (fig. 3) in Fričiana Rada is called *G. michoga* without any further information. It depicts a plant from the *G. schickendantzii* group (Pažout 1964).

As for the appearance of the plant, the hint of its similarity to *G. schickendantzii* is helpful. A record in Herbarium Wageningen (WAG) could also be convenient (fig. 4). The herbarium sheet 1879307 is labelled “*G. michoga* Fric; leg. d.d. 29.6.1961, loc. Wageningen, coll. De Goor C 696, uit coll. Buining, die hem kweekte uit zaad van de originele plant van Frič”.

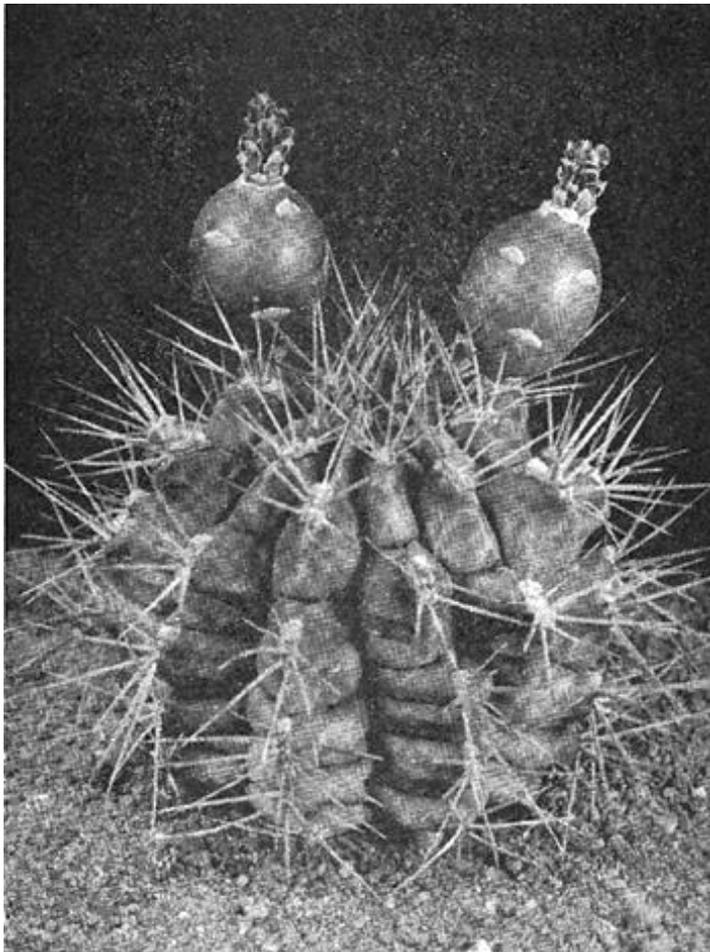


Fig 3: *G. michoga*, copy from Fričiana Rada 23: 33, photo: Ing. P. Havránek.

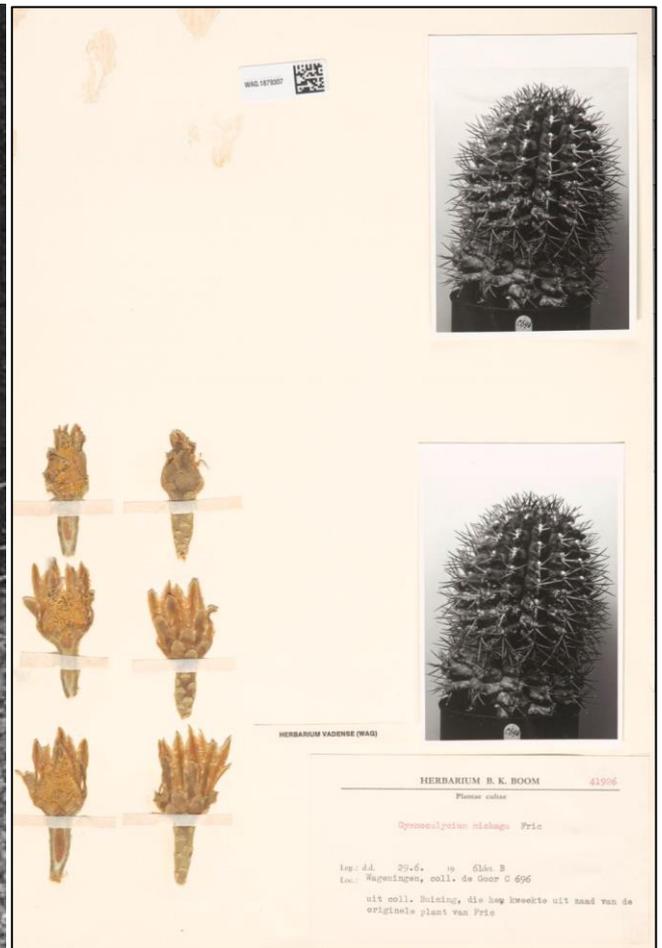


Fig 4: Herbarium sheet of *G. michoga* in Herbarium Wageningen (www.gbif.org/species/3953294) 2020.

Colonia Dora is situated at the eastern edge of Bañado de Añatuya, origin of Rio Salado, and to the west of the drainage area of Rio Dulce, with Arroyo de Mailin, Arroyo Utis, Arroyo Saladillo among others. Sparse Chaco vegetation prevails in this huge alluvial area, which is devoid of vegetation in places (fig. 5-6, 9-10). Frič describes this scenery very vividly (Frič 1928b). Also grows sporadically in small areas with patches of shrubs consisting of *Opuntia quilimo*, *O. aff. sulphurea*, *Echinopsis leucantha*, *Stetsonia coryne*, *Cleistocactus* spec. However, judging from the facts given above, *G. schickendantzii* can be regarded as the *G. michoga* which was collected by Frič (fig. 7-8, 11-13).



Fig. 5-6: Locality of *G. schickendantzii* (*michoga*) south of Colonia. Dora, Prov. Santiago del Estero.



Fig. 7-8: *G. schickendantzii* (*michoga*) south of Colonia. Dora, Prov. Santiago del Estero.



Fig 9-10: Locality of *G. schickendantzii* (*michoga*) west of Pinto, Prov. Santiago del Estero.



Fig. 11-13: *G. schickendantzii* (*michoga*) west of Pinto, Prov. Santiago del Estero.

This *G. schickendantzii* type can also be found farther to the east on Ruta National 9 between San Gregorio and Rio Salado. Along this section of the road masses of cacti are collected by the local people and put up for sale at the roadside. (fig. 17-20).



Fig. 14-16: *Cleistocactus spec.* (left), *Echinopsis leucantha* (centre), *Opuntia aff. sulphurea* (right).



Fig. 17-18: Plants offered along Ruta Nacional 9 in the northern part of Salinas de Ambargasta (*G. schickendantzii* in the right picture right front).



Fig. 19-20: Plants offered along Ruta Nacional 9 in the northern part of Salinas de Ambargasta.

Till and Amerhauser refer to two proof specimens from the herbarium of Tucumán University. These originate from the utmost north of Province Santiago del Estero, not far from the border triangle Salta-Tucumán-Santiago del Estero. The localities mentioned (Est. Rapelli und Cerro del Remate) are approximately 300 km away from Colonia Dora.

2. *Gymnocalycium knebelii* Frič nom. nud.

In his catalogue "Cacti the Coming Fashion" Frič offers another new *Gymnocalycium* under the quotation number 21 *G. Knebelii*, Frič, spec. nov. He specifies Salta as the locality. As a detailed description is missing, this new name is invalidly published. (Frič 1928a).

With reference to the locality only vague respectively inaccurate statements can be found in literature and Frič's articles. Under the subheading "*Road to Tucumán and farther north*" he reports about the finding of his *G. knebelii*, although without mentioning a precise locality.

"Finally, we found the place where the much-desired "Tiento del Zorro" grew. It was possible to find about twenty plants under various shrubs and there were ripe fruits on the nectaries. It was a Gymnocalycium which rather resembles G. michóga, discovered in Sant Jago, than G. saglione. It is neither round nor cylindrical, but compressed, less green, with large protuberances between the areolas. The number of spines is the same as with G. michóga, but they are much stronger. As far as I can remember the young plants are very similar, but I lack material for comparison because all G. michóga have already been dispatched to Europe. All I can compare are the seeds, both are red and yellow, although their size and shape is different. In any case, there is a new species, which I name Gymnocalycium knebelii Frič sp. n., in memory of the enthusiastic member Mr Curt Knebel from Erlau.

*I discovered the following cactus species in the country *Gymnocalycium saglione (cubera del negra)-*Gymnocalycium knebelii Frič. sp. n. (tiento del zorro)-*Echinopsis shaferi ? (cardon macho)-Echinopsis tucumanense Frič sp. n. (cardoncillo)-Harrisia tortuosa (?)-*Trichocereus terscheckii (cardon..)-*Hickenia microsperma (penguita)... The species tagged with an asterisk gave me a few seeds" (Crkal 1983: 169-170).*

According to Frič's statements it is a fact that he found *G. knebelii* during his trip starting from Dora in northern direction via Tafi Viejo and San Miguel de Tucumán as far as into the Province Salta. Pažout thinks that Frič collected the plants near Trancas, Province Tucuman (Pažout 1964).

In 1929 Frič offers *G. knebelii*, Frič sp. n. once more, under the quotation number 57 (21 = reference to his catalogue of 1928). Here again he presents no description and thus the name remains a nomen nudum (Frič 1929).

Kreuzinger cites *G. knebelii* with the year 1926. The same facts that have already been stated for *G. michoga* apply here as well.

Supposedly Frič got problems with the original plants later on, otherwise his expensive seed offer "460. GC. *Knebelii*, Frič" (price raised due to dying out of seed providers) in his catalogue of 1933 cannot not be explained. With the exception of *G. mihanovichii* he charges a price twice the amount of all the other *Gymnocalycium* species (Frič 1933). Schütz also mentions that this species is somewhat more complicated and that there is hardly any material left which can be traced back to the original collection (Schütz 1992).

CONCLUSION

The exact locality of *G. michoga* must be established as the surroundings of Colonia Dora. This taxon's distribution area stretches as far as Pinto to the south and in western direction it extends into the Salinas de Ambargasta. This plant is undoubtedly associated with *G. schickendantzii*, while an infra-specific position of its own in the rank of a subspecies or variety is inappropriate.

G. knebelii can hardly be identified by the current state of knowledge. Neither a picture nor any detailed description has been found so far. Some authors consider a relationship with *G. schickendantzii* less likely than with *G. marsoneri*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I want to express my thanks to Messrs. Jiří Zázvorka, Institute of Botany, Průhonice, and V. Sedivý, Prague, as well as to Dr Gottfried Gutte, Berlin, for their generous supply of literature by A. V. Frič, which is difficult to access.

All photographs by the author.

LITERATURE

Baumgartner, G. (1933): Kakteenpreisliste 1932/33. - Eigenverlag Baumgartner-Wien.

Charles, G. (2009): *Gymnocalycium* in Habitat and Culture: 251. - Eigenverlag Charles-Stamford.

Crkal, K. (1983): Lovec Kaktusů (Der Kakteenjäger). - Verlag Academia-Prag.

Frič, A. V. (1928a): Cacti The Coming Fashion. - Eigenverlag Frič-Prag.

Frič, A. V. (1928b): Der Pflanzenjäger. Die Wüste in Grün, Rot und Gelb. Argentinien, St. Jago del Estero. - MDGZ 43(23):265-266.

Frič, A. V. (1929): Kakteenjäger. - Eigenverlag Frič-Prag.

Frič, A. V. (1932): Kakteenjäger zu Hause 1931-1932. - Eigenverlag Frič-Prag.

Frič, A. V. (1933): Akklimations- und Versuchsgarten A. V. Frič 1932-1933. - Eigenverlag Frič Prag.

Ito, Y. (1957): Explanatory Diagram of Austroechinocactinae: 175, 292-293. - Japan Cactus Laboratory.

Kreuzinger, K. (1935): Verzeichnis amerikanischer und anderer Sukkulente mit Revision der Systematik der Kakteen. - Eigenverlag Kreuzinger-Eger.

Nicholas J. Turland et al. (Hrsg.): International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants (Shenzhen Code) adopted by the Nineteenth International Botanical Congress Shenzhen, China, July 2017 (= Regnum Vegetabile. Band 159). Koeltz Botanical Books, Glashütten 2018, ISBN 978-3-946583-16-5.

Pažout, F. (1964): *Gymnocalycia* skupiny Muscosemineae. - Fričiana Rada IV (23): 8

- Schütz, B. (1992): Monografie der Gattung *Gymnocalycium*. - Eigenverlag Hold & Papsch-Graz/Knittelfeld (deutsche Übersetzung von Schütz, B.: Monografie rodu *Gymnocalycium*-Brno 1986).
- Till, H. & Amerhauser, H. (2020): Eine kaum bekannte, klein bleibende *G. schickendantzii* Variante. - *Gymnocalycium* 33(2): 1365 ff.
- Zázvorka, J. & Sedivý, V. (1991): Jména kaktusů A. V. Friče (Die Kakteennamen von A. V. Frič). - *Aztekia* 14: 3 ff.