

Mammillaria karwinskiana subs. nejapensis

Common Name(s): Royal Cross , Owl Eyes

Synonym(s): *Mammillaria praelii*, *Mammillaria multiseta*, *Mammillaria collinsii*,

Origin and Habitat: *Mammillaria karwinskiana* has a very wide range in Guatemala and Mexico (Chiapas, Colima, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Morelos, Michoacán, and Puebla). This species is common and abundant in tropical deciduous forest and xerophyllous scrub along with *Ferocactus robustus*, *Heliabravoa chende*, *Agave karwinskii*, *Agave lechuguilla*, *Agave salmiana* and *Yucca periculosa*. It is threatened by deforestation for small-holder agriculture and goat-ranching.



Altitude: 850 - 1.650 metres above sea level.

Description: This species forms globular stems with silvery white spines up to 5 cm in length, and dense wool and bristles at the areoles. Each single stem begins to divide dichotomously to form two stems, and will slowly form large clusters. Some consider this synonymous with *Mammillaria karwinskiana*.

Mammillaria karwinskiana subs. *nejapensis* (*Mammillaria nejapensis*) is very variable, especially for the length of the spines, and at the beginning there were two recognized varieties: var. *brevispina* (short spined form) and var. *longispina* (long spined form), with respectively short and long spines, but they are merely local or individual variations. This species branches basally or more frequently forms large colonies by dichotomous division.

Stem: Globose to short cylindrical, somewhat wider in the upper part, blue-green to dark green, to 15 cm high and 5 - 7.5 in diameter, with latex. A cream coloured 'snowy' tomentum is present on the top of the plant.

Tubercles: Tubercles firm, pyramidal with the lacteal juice, arranged spirally with 13-21 parastichys the axil is very woolly with many tortuous bristles.

Radial spines: Only 3 - 5, awl-like, straight to slightly curved, ivory with reddish-brown tips, becoming chalky white with age, the upper shorter, 2 - 5 mm long, the lowermost the longest, to 25 or even 50 mm (or more) long.

Central spines: Absent.

Flowers: Diurnal, funnel-form, 18 mm long, 10 mm in diameter, pale cream with red-brown to scarlet midstripe on each petal. Blooms adorn the crown of the plant, usually in a ring, in the growth of the previous year.

Blooming seson: Spring to summer.

Fruits: Bright or clear red elongated and quite attractive.

Seeds: Brown.

Fruits: Red, elongated, and quite attractive.

Cultivation and Propagation: They are easy to cultivate, and make interesting specimens for any collection. Over time they will produce large clumps. It grows by dichotomously dividing, and also by producing offsets and doesn't require any special treatment, but needs as much light as possible without burning the plant, to keep the stems compact.

Propagation: *Mammillaria nejpensis* is best propagated from seed. Seed readily germinates at 20°-22°C, or by offsets if available.