

ENDORSEMENTS

Fascinating, educational, and a great read! Chasing Centuries fills a large void in our understanding of how humans and agaves have coevolved . . . well done!

—Tony Avent, Owner of Plant Delights Nursery, and founder of Juniper Level Botanic Garden in Raleigh, North Carolina

Chasing Centuries is probably about the most comprehensive overview of Arizona agaves likely to be created. The information on distributional ranges of the various species, possible hybrids between them, and ethnobotanical history of the naturalized cultivars formerly utilized by Native Peoples is by far the most thorough I've yet seen. Accompanied by numerous detailed and interesting photographs, this book is a worthy addition to the library collection of any agave enthusiast and lovers of succulents in general.

—Jan Emming, Creator of Destination: Forever Ranch and Gardens, and owner of Desert Sense Nursery in Yucca, Arizona

This is an exciting time for agave research, involving researchers from all disciplines and interests, including archaeologists, botanists, Native Peoples, and others. This book, with its many fine photographs, helps make the science of this fascinating but complex group more accessible to the public, who can better appreciate and care about these wild and domesticated, unique Arizona gems.

—Wendy C. Hodgson, Curator of the Herbarium and Senior Research Botanist, Desert Botanical Garden, and author/illustrator of *Food Plants of the Sonoran Desert*

Whether you are an agave enthusiast or have a passion for anthropology of the American Southwest, Chasing Centuries provides an informative and visually stunning synthesis of both disciplines. A longtime devotee of the genus, Parker has done the research and fieldwork, culminating in a beautifully designed book. Gorgeous images of the plants and pre-Columbian ruins are supplemented with maps to paint a thorough picture of agaves and their importance to the native cultures. One quick look-through and I knew it belonged in my library.

—Jeff Moore, owner of Solana Succulents in Solana Beach, California, and author of *Aloes and Agaves*, *Soft Succulents*, and *Under the Spell of Succulents*

This book synthesizes the scientific work carried out mostly by a team of researchers at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, supplemented by the author's own fieldwork in Arizona. The text carefully identifies each of the five indigenous pre-Columbian Native American cultivars that have survived to the present as well as the dozen naturally occurring Arizona Agave species. Hybridization between various taxa is also covered. . . . After more than five centuries, most of these cultural relics are today threatened with extinction. The author's superb photographs depict every Agave known so far in Arizona.

— Amadeo M. Rea, Research Associate, University of San Diego, and author of *At the Desert's Green Edge*

A must read in the tradition of John McPhee and Edward Abbey. Archaeological-botanist Ron Parker's highly illustrated Chasing Centuries is a one-of-a-kind travel-adventure-botanical-history-book that properly elevates one of the Southwest's most iconic and life-sustaining plants to its proper place culturally and anthropologically.

— Stuart Rosebrook, Senior Editor, *True West Magazine*

Chasing Centuries is an intriguing insight into the world of amazing agaves found in Arizona and is a must read for any agave enthusiast. Parker introduces the reader to long lost cultures of Arizona and their use of agaves in their daily life, and he provides valuable information on the wild agaves of Arizona with excellent distribution maps and knowledge he has learned during his extensive travels into the rugged back-country seeking out these fantastic plants.

— Greg D. Starr, owner of Starr Nursery in Tucson, Arizona, and author of *Agaves: Living Sculptures for Landscapes and Containers*

This lavishly illustrated and meticulously researched work takes the reader on a fascinating adventure through thousands of years of history of human-agave coevolution in the rugged landscapes of Arizona. Chasing Centuries is a book to be savored, carried into the field, kept as a reference and gifted to anyone interested in gaining a deeper understanding of how Arizona's ancient peoples played an enduring role in shaping the natural habitats of the region.

— Michael Wilken-Robertson, anthropologist and author of *Kumeyaay Ethnobotany*