

## May Succulent of the Month

### *Chlorophytum suffruticosum*

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**Synonyms:** *Anthericum suffruticosum*  
*Chlorophytum rhizomatosum*  
*Anthericum acuminatum*  
*Anthericum campestre*  
*Dasytachys polyphylla*  
*Anthericum inexpectatum*  
*Anthericum longisetosum*  
*Chlorophytum polyphyllum*

**Family:** ANTHERICACEAE

**Origin:** Kenya, Tanzania

The genera name from Greek; chloros; 'yellowish' and Latin; phytom; 'plant'.

There are over 150 species within *Chlorophytum*. Out of those, only two that are succulents: *C. suffruticosum* and *C. orchidastrum*. One fact about the *Chlorophytum* species is that it contains one of the most popular plants— *C. comosum*, the common spider plant.

**Habitat:** *C. suffruticosum* is found in eastern and central Africa. The plant is not found in the rainforest regions, but in drier areas.

**Description:**

*Chlorophytum suffruticosum* is a stem succulent.



It grows in well draining soil, needs some water and sun. Stems grow up to 4 cm in diameter and 60 cm long. The leaves grow from the ends of the stems and can reach 30 cm. They are similar to the leaves of the spider plant, narrow and long. The flowers are white and are also similar to those of the spider plant. They are small (3 cm across) and white, and each stalk can have up to 25 flowers. The flower stalks grow from the ends of the stems. Blooming can occur any time of the year and multiple times. Plant needs regular watering. If it is too dry for a period of time it will go dormant, winter or summer. Plant is not cold hardy and if too wet in cold temperatures roots can rot.

**Propagation:** seed or cuttings

**My experience:** I got this plant many years ago, I think it was a HCSS door prize. It was labeled, but the label has long faded and I never could find a plant by that name on the internet. So either it was bad handwriting or just wrong. But recently Echo Pang helped me identify it and I am convinced she is right with the ID. As the plant in itself is pretty ugly I often neglected it and it was dormant for a long time. Then a few years ago in summer I repotted and put it in the rain and sun and it grew a lot, bloomed and I think it is quite pretty. I repotted again this year and hope for some more growth.

References:

Bihrmann's caudiciforms: <http://www.bihrmann.com/caudiciforms/subs/chl-suf-sub.asp>

Henry Shaw Cactus and Succulent Society: <https://hscactus.org/resources/plants-of-the-month/chlorophytum-2017/>

Illustrated Handbook of Succulent Plants: Monocotyledons, Urs Egli, p. 229