

**ASTROPHYTUM CAPRICONE
SSP NIVEUM**

By Sue Haffner



This subspecies differs from the species in having curly, twisted, upward-trending black spines. They are also thinner and wispier than those of the *A. capricorne*. Elton Roberts writes, "In the most part, the plant is covered with flocking that looks like fields of mealy bugs. The flocking reflects the sunlight which helps keep the plant body cool."



The flowers are 8 cm in diameter ... The center of the flower is red or carmine. The plant starts blooming about mid to late spring and bloom off and on till early November ... I give the plants my regular soil mix and I keep them dry over the winter. They have taken temperatures down into the teens and shown no adverse effects. For best spine growth and dense flocking, give the plants the most heat and light you can. Remember that healthy plants will remain that way longer if given acidic water and fed regularly."

Photographs by Elton Roberts