## Cacti Have Little Leaves

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Cacti have little leaves, according to a report in ABC (Australia) News in Science, 22 Aug 2007. James Mauseth of the University of Austin, Texas has examined 147 cactus species and found that cacti have microscopic leaves at the base of their spine clusters. Almost all the leaves lacked blades, but had conducting tissue for moving food and water in the plant. Mauseth suggests that cacti "began as regular leafy plants in the Americas, with many species later evolving spines." In other types of plants leaves are the main site of photosynthesis and are sites of gas exchange, but these functions occur in the stems of cacti, so what is the function of the microscopic leaves? Mauseth suggests that cacti "need even the tiniest of leaves for the plant to establish its axillary buds, which emerge near where leaves attach to the main stem." He commented: "So the plants cannot lose leaves altogether, or they might then not be able to produce buds, or would produce them in the wrong spot." He explained that "cacti genetically control their leaf size, in part, through release of plant growth hormones, such as auxin." He hopes that cacti may provide a good model for testing theories about plant genetics and hormonal control.

## <u>ABC</u>

**Editorial Comment**: So the evolutionist theory is that cacti used to have leaves but lost them, and they once had no spines and they gained them. Does that sound familiar? The Biblical picture is the same even if the reasons are different. The Biblical history is that God made a "very good" world, one that did not have dangerous plants, but after man rebelled against his Creator, God cursed the ground and said that thorns and thistles would grow. (See Genesis 3:18) Therefore, we would not be surprised to find that present day spikey cacti are the degenerate descendants of once leafy plants. (Ref. botany, succulents, degeneration)

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