

DECEMBER

ECO-BLITZ CHALLENGE

FISHHOOK BARREL CACTUS

PHOTO BY: ERIC HOUGH, INTERPRETIVE RANGER



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FISHHOOK BARREL CACTUS



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This month we are focusing on the Fishhook Barrel Cactus (*Ferocactus wislizenii*). Here are some fun and key facts:

- Barrel cacti can be identified by their two-foot diameter barrel shape with long hooked spines.
- Barrel cacti contain water-like liquid; however, drinking it will make you sick! The plant poisons the water with oxalic acid to protect it.
- Often only two feet tall, these cacti reach ten feet under the right conditions and live as long as 100 years.
- Their genus name, *Ferocactus*, means 'ferocious cactus' in Latin, and their stiff needles have been used as fishhooks and sewing needles.

Sources:

[Fishhook Barrel Cactus Fact Sheet \(desertmuseum.org\)](https://desertmuseum.org)

[Barrel Cactus \(usda.gov\)](https://usda.gov)