EUPHORBIACEAE (Spurge family)

- 307 genera; 6900 species
- **Herbs, shrubs, small trees; some succulent + cactus-like**
- **Milky latex** often present (poisonous)
- **Leaves alternate, simple, lobed or compound**, entire to serrate, with pinnate or palmate venation; stipules present
- **Inflorescence often highly modified, forming pseudanthium** (false flower) called 'cyathium' in *Euphorbia*
- **Flowers unisexual** (plants dioecious or monoecious), **actinomorphic**, often inconspicuous; sepals usually 5, petals 5, or often absent; stamens 1 to many; **carpels 3, connate; ovary 3-lobed, superior**, with axile placentation; **styles 3, entire or bifid** to several times divided; ovules 1-2 per locule
- **Fruit a schizocarp** with 3 segments (mericarps) dehiscent from a persistent central column
- **Examples:** *Euphorbia* (spurge, poinsettia), *Croton, Hevea* (rubber), *Manihot* (cassava, manioc, yuca)

Greenhouse

Desert room
The plants in here should be starting to look familiar...

Head over to Table 7-3, walk down the side of the table closest to the door you entered the room through. These plants are euphorbs. Not all euphorbs are succulent, but many of these are...

Notice how the stems look very much like cactus stems. The stems and the spines are a classic example of convergent characters (the common ancestor shared by cacti and euphorbs wasn’t succulent nor did it have spines, each lineage evolved these characters independently). Take a close look at the euphorb spines. Name the feature that **cactus** spines arise from __________ (1 pt). Note that euphorbs don’t have this feature.

Walk around to the other side of the table, the side closest to the front windows. Look for a largish plant, *Jatropha podagrica*, with flowers at the top. This family has flowers that are unisexual and very different from other angiosperm flowers, we use the term, ________________ (1 pt), to describe the repeating unit within the inflorescence. This unit usually possesses both types of unisexual flowers plus nectaries.

What is the number in the top, right corner of this plant? __________ (1 pt)