

Why do I have a Work sheet?

1. I use it as a prompt to help me identify an unidentified plant. I then write down my findings.
2. All species plants must be described when they are named. Some portion or all must be in Latin. This protologue is the best to refer to but sometimes you have to rely on a second hand description such as in Smith and Downs. If you are really desperate you may even use the description in Padilla's books or really desperate desperate look at the photos in Shane Zaghini's books!
3. Tillandsia plant descriptions can vary between the long drawn out and detailed ones like those done by Renate Ehlers and the short ones done by Harry Luther. The problem with a short description is that you do not know if a factor is missing, been forgotten, or the answer is no! My work sheet is based on Renate Ehlers work.
4. When I have completed my worksheet I then check it against what written information I have. Before I had a worksheet I used to presume or anticipate answers and got lead awfully astray.

5. ALBURY GUINEA PIGS

- a. I believe using a worksheet teaches you a lot about taxonomy and where things are to look for. Few Bromeliad growers do this and only know about their plants superficially and what they look like from the outside!
- b. When I first started dissecting Tills and things I used to run to Harry and say "I've found something different to what is in the description. Have I found a new species?" Harry would say, "Wait until you find at least 3 or 4 real differences!" "One or two means you are probably within the range of the species!" Herein lies the problem, because if you do not catalogue these differences you never find out the true range of characteristics for the species.
- c. I will supply a worksheet for each working group of 2 (Three might be a crowd!). You can work on your own if you want! AND a drawing of the various parts of a Tillandsia to help you remember what their names are!
You bring a Tillandsia or two in flower (any one YOU have not dissected before!) to Albury, with a biro, a measuring stick, a magnifying glass if you are really old, a sharp knife and your brain.
- d. When you have completed the worksheet you can check it against the description I have on file!
- e. WHAT WILL IT ACHIEVE? More people than myself prepared to butcher a plant in the name of science!