

# The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2015 1:30pm.  
Colony in the Wood – club house  
4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

July, 2015

## Bromeliad Weevils Threaten Plants at Colony in the Wood!

**President – Bill Hazard 386/882-3850**  
**Vice President – Linda Stagnol 386/212-8138**  
**Secretary – Ed Meiser 386/785-4830**  
**Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/871-1041**

### **If you weren't at last month's meeting...**

...Bryan presented evidence that Mexican Bromeliad Weevils are presently in the large cedar tree by the north entrance to the Colony in the Wood clubhouse. Many fallen plants that he had picked up by the bromeliad garden showed evidence of the leaf bases having been chewed off. In with the fallen leaves that he had collected were a cocoon (pupa) and an adult weevil. Since last month's meeting we have been in contact with Dr. Teresa Cooper of the University of Florida and learned that this may be the first time that the weevil has been found in *Tillandsia x Floridana* – the main species of *Tillandsia* that we have seen in the cedar tree by the clubhouse. The bromeliad garden has now been sprayed with Merit (Imidacloprid) as a preventative measure, but we need to stay vigilant to be sure that weevils don't get into these plants. Also, keep a close eye on your own bromeliad collection and don't hesitate to treat your plants with an insecticide at the first sign of trouble. What should you look for? 1. Leaves falling away from bromeliads that look as though the base has been chewed. 2. Center leaves of a bromeliad that pull away easily when you gently tug at them. These leaves will show ragged edges at their bases if weevils have chewed them.

3. Bromeliads that fall from the trees or out of their pots and that have left their bases and roots behind - look up into the tree for places where you can still see the roots from where the plant was once attached to the tree. You may find that when you peel away the remaining leaves of the fallen plant that there is a brownish cocoon in a leaf axil. There may be a whitish colored grub near the chewed portions of the leaf or you may even see an adult weevil scurrying around in the leaves.



*Tillandsia x floridana*

Regarding the plants in that cedar tree near the clubhouse; there is a bit of mystery associated with this plant. First of all, notice the "x" in its name. This tells us that the plant is considered to be a natural hybrid and, in this case, it is reputed to be the result of a

cross of *T. bartramii* (which is found in great numbers in our area, but rarely south of Volusia County) with *T. fasciculata* (which is only found south of Volusia County, virtually never found in our area since it's so cold tender. It's more sensitive to cold than *T. utriculata*, which is killed back in our area periodically when severe freezes sweep through). That these two managed to get together and produce offspring that exhibit the same cold hardy characteristics as *T. bartramii* and then spread throughout the county is a little hard for me to believe. Is *T. x floridana* really a natural hybrid? If so, where did it come from originally, was it's second parent really *T. fasciculata*, and how did it get dispersed so widely extending even into Flagler County? Just one more of those things that make you go "hmmm...".

#### **What's in bloom in your garden?**



On June 16th, I noticed this big bud appearing on a *Billbergia rosea* I had in a large pot on my back patio. It's not the first time one of the plants has bloomed in the pot, but each time I'm excited to see the huge beautiful bloom.

By June 20th, I had already forgotten about it, hiding behind some other plants on

the patio. But it was no disappointment. With a bloom over a foot and half long, it was still blooming and still maintained the great pink/peach color. I'm not sure when this species was discovered or by whom, but I can only imagine how awe struck the discoverer must have felt. It's an impressive bromeliad, easy to grow and bloom. Not to mention how easy it is to germinate the thousands of seeds. The only problem about growing it from seed is the length of time it takes to grow it to blooming size.



- Rick Ryals

#### **Many Thanks...**

I know that we don't express thanks often enough to those club members who so often contribute to our meetings and it seems like everyone has been helping in the many aspects of our activities so thank you all, but I would particularly like to acknowledge Bryan Manion's tireless work in setting up the room each month for our meetings, organizing the clean-up after each meeting and managing the plant raffle in a very

efficient way. Thanks also to Harriet Herrin for her frequent donations of trays for carrying and growing bromeliads as well as other items that she has acquired and is so generous in sharing with our members. We truly have a wonderful group in FECBS and everyone has contributed in some way toward the club's success!

**President's message –**

*SO.....how's your summer going? Hot enough for you? Are you acclimating your shade loving Bilbergias to the full sun of July? I hope not! Have you protected all your plants with imidacloprid....the active insecticide in Bayer products? If not, you should do so ASAP. The weevil could be lurking somewhere nearby!*

*Funny you should mention imidacloprid, I sprayed my plants around the 1st week in June, but today I noticed an Alcantarea imperialis "rubra" didn't look right. I walked over, saw that the center was brown so I gave it a tug and it came right out. Now that's not what I want my bromeliads to do. The imperialis generally looks healthy but without a healthy center that stays in the plant, it's as good as dead. What caused its demise? Cold damage, rot, the weevil? I contacted Jay and he said that one other club member had already lost two of the same plant after spraying them. Hmmmm....could it be the insecticide? Stay tuned for more on this subject from Jay as information becomes available. Even though the center of my plant is a "goner", I may just stick a screwdriver down the center for a jab or two and hope for pups. Cross your fingers!*

*As I endure the heat and humidity of summer, strange things happen to my body (more so as I get older). I had to chuckle when I thought of those ailments and how Gilda Radnor/Roseanne Roseanna Danna (from Saturday Night Live) might address it if I wrote her ".....Roseanne Roseanna Danna, when it gets hot, I sweat a lot, I have red splotches, my face breaks out, my feet swell, my joints hurt, I get sun blisters, my*

*legs itch and I have gas. What should I do?" I can hear her answer with "Mr. Hazard, you sound like a real attractive guy!" Actually, for the heat rash I've found witch hazel with lavender does the trick for me.*

*As I look at some of my attempts to root plants onto different objects for our mounting competition, I have finally noticed roots starting to reach out. Maybe in a month or so they will actually grab hold. We will see. I hope you are working on your own bizarre mountings which we will enjoy viewing in November.*

*- Bill*

**This month's meeting –**

Marty Folk will be our speaker this month with his program "Why Bromeliads?" Marty is an outstanding grower and will be bringing plants for sale with him...so you know what that means? Bring your wallets and purses – this will be a great opportunity to acquire some well-grown plants for your collection at excellent prices!

**Birthdays for July:**

Happy Birthday to the following FECBS members:

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Tinker Massey     | Nancy Rogers     |
| Charlotte Mueller | Jane Villa-Lobos |

**Out and about -**

Since Rick and Francisco had their successful sale (selling and giving away hundreds of plants) last month, what have they been up to? How about planting 20 Alcantarea reginas and tons of other pups they had on the property. While visiting Cryptanthus hybridizer Steve Hoppin in South Florida, they were offered a handful of hair pups that Steve had recently removed from his own plants in the landscape. It wasn't until they were unwrapped a day later that they found the package surprisingly contained 20 Alcantarea pups. A medium grower (not as large as Alc. imperialis), they

are potted in 5 gallon pots, growing in full sun. Which is exactly the way the Moms were growing, full sun, planted directly into the ground, around the salt water pool. And Rick has another species now! We'll hope to see more photos of them at summer's end to see how much they've grown.



*Alcantarea regina* pups – photo by Rick Ryals

Looks like another sale and food festival may be on its way by spring of next year!

Rick

As if we haven't already heard and seen enough about the Mexican weevil – Calandra and I recently visited a site in Mims to help with identification of some bromeliads along a nature trail and there we encountered more evidence of what this invader can do. Although we saw impressive numbers of bromeliads in the trees, they were mostly juveniles and when we found a very large fallen *Tillandsia utriculata* – it was full of weevil cocoons (pupae).



Many immature *T. utriculata* in Mims – can they survive the weevil's onslaught?



Calandra inspects a fallen *T. utriculata* at Fawn Lake in Mims

### Looking ahead:

#### **July 11, 2015**

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies quarterly meeting, hosted by the Sarasota Bromeliad Society.

#### **August 28-30, 2015**

Volusia County Fall Home and Garden Show at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach.

#### **September 26, 2015**

Bromeliad Extravaganza hosted by the Bromeliad Society of South Florida. "Bromeliads in the Magic City".

711 NW 72<sup>nd</sup> Ave.

Miami, Fl. 33126

Double Tree Hilton Miami Airport and Convention Center

Room rate of \$107/night plus parking

For more information about reservations, go to

<http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/M/MIAMADT-BRO-20150923/index.jhtml>

