

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, October 13th, 1:30pm.
Colony in the Wood – club house
4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

October, 2013

Fairwell to Summer 2013!

President – Rick Ryals 386/679-8700
Secretary – Jillian Ragia 386/801-2500
Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/763-2084

This year's Extravaganza...

was hosted by the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society (the first bromeliad society to be formed, by the way!) and they did a terrific job in putting on this event at Indian Rocks Beach. Very nice venue – the hotel overlooked their intracoastal waterway and was just a short walk away from the beach. Our own club was well represented by Rick, Francisco, Bill and Tree Hazard, Joan Campbell, Jane Upham, Ed Meiser, Michelle Kelley, Jillian Ragia, and Calandra and I, but the big surprise was the large number of attendees from the Bromeliad Society of South Florida. It's very nice to see such participation! It was great seeing everyone and seeing a beautiful selection of plants for purchase, and then of course, the rare plant auction.



A few of our club members pose for a photo by Calandra Thurrott – Joan Campbell, Francisco Cardosa, David Johnson (Sarasota Brom. Society – where'd he get that shirt?), Rick Ryals and Michelle Kelley



Holiday Inn at Indian Rocks Beach – photo by Calandra Thurrott



FECBS members at the Indian Rocks Beach Extravaganza
Rick and Francisco hosted a social hour in their room and many of our names that you are familiar with were in attendance including Dr. Terrie Bert, Tom and Carol Wolfe, artist Pen Goff, hybridizer Grant Groves, artist Steven Littlefield, and Dennis and Linda Cathcart along with Brian Weber

and Ray Lemieux of Tropiflora. Our own Michelle Kelley was there to take photos of the event. Thanks Michelle!



Brian Weber and Linda Cathcart of Tropiflora

The next meeting of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies will be the day before our October meeting and up for discussion will be the next Extravaganza – who will host it and if that will be in 2014 or in 2015? There has been quite a bit of speculation lately about whether this event shouldn't be every 2 years rather than annually. What are your feelings about this? Let your representatives know.

Last month's meeting -

Calandra and I were very sorry that we couldn't be there to hear Terrie Bert's program.



I am told that it was certainly up to her usual standard of being educational, informational, and entertaining ...all at the same time! I've already heard how we 'shoulda been there!'



On our way to Dallas, Tx. Photo by Calandra

but we had other obligations and were in Dallas for the annual BSI Board meeting, the SW Guild show and sale and the International Cryptanthus Show.

While there we learned that the folks in Texas are having a Summer that is just the opposite of ours – they're in a severe and prolonged drought. Texas is no stranger to drought, but this one is so severe that even the trees are dying from lack of water! Meanwhile, we're having just about the wettest Summer that anyone can remember and the South Florida folks are having rain even more frequently than us! Anyway, thank you Terrie and we certainly hope to see you again in the future.

While we were in Texas our own Rick Ryals was elected to the BSI Board of Directors at this year's annual meeting. Congratulations Rick! And at that same meeting the BSI unanimously approved Steve Provost's (also a BSI director!) motions to establish a permanent archive of items of significant and historical interest to the bromeliad community at UCF in Orlando. All clubs face this problem as officers come and go - documents are passed along year after year and often wind up under beds and in garages where they are forgotten and effectively, lost. Once in the UCF facility after items are cataloged they will be

stored in a climate-controlled archive, scanned, and eventually available to everyone in digital format. Already in the archive at this location are many papers of Mulford Foster as well as much of his original art work and the works of Michael Spencer, a contemporary of Foster and co-worker of Lyman Smith - who identified and described many bromeliads while working at the Smithsonian Institute.

This month's meeting:

Everything you always wanted to know about growing bromeliads from seed...and wear your Halloween outfit to match Hedy's theme for decorations!

October Raffle with a Special Purpose – Billy McBride

Our club holds some very exciting (and profitable) raffles each month. While June was an exceptional raffle with the celebration of our 20th Anniversary, each month adds to your bromeliad collections' and our club's small treasury.

From this, one of our most admired members, Ann Marie Alberti has suggested and so voted on by our membership at our last general meeting in August to hold a special raffle for our good friend and member, Billy McBride. You might recall that Billy suffered a debilitating stroke several months ago and has been convalescing at Ridgecrest Nursing and Rehabilitation in Deland.

So we're going to organize a special raffle at our General Meeting, October 13th at 1:30pm to benefit Billy. We're asking that you participate in several ways:

#1 - Bring some clean and healthy plants (or other bromeliad related items) for the raffle.

#2 - Bring some money to spend on raffle tickets, as always, they're \$1 a piece or 6 tickets for \$5.

#3 – Arrive early to assist in setting up this raffle and checking out all the wonderful possibilities you can add to your personal collection.

Several folks have asked if we'll have the Silent Auction portion, like we did in June. And at this time (going to newsletter publishing) we're not yet certain.

The generosity of our club members over the last 20 years has been truly inspirational; please join us for this special raffle to benefit, Billy McBride.

-Rick

Birthdays for October:

Christina Little	Brad Rauch
Bill McBride	Carolyn Schoenau
John Quirk	Ron Schoenau
Jane Sedelmyer	Ray Trzeciak

Happy Birthday everyone!

Plant Profile – The 'blues' and those great Bullis hybrids



Aechmea 'Del Mar' – it's hard to look away from those vibrant colors as seen in this photo in Calandra Thurrott's front yard.

I noticed that my Aechmea 'Del Mar' had recently come into bloom in my yard. What a great plant! Del Mar is a bit smaller than

the more popular Aechmea 'Blue Tango', which fits my yard much better, but still has that 'eye-popping' inflorescence. Blue is a difficult color to find in much of the plant world. Develop a good strong blue in a flower and the world will beat a path to your door...at least that was the idea behind the currently popular blue phalaenopsis orchids. Beautiful color, but eventually you realize that the color was put there artificially by means of an intense blue dye and find that the next generation of these orchids... not so blue!

So, what about blue colors in the blooms and leaves of some bromeliads? It's tempting to say that those plants have blue genes (blue jeans?) in their makeup, but that would be incorrect. Instead, it's a group of organic compounds (you should have paid better attention in organic chemistry class!) called *anthocyanins* that are responsible for colors ranging from light red to dark red and from pale blue to purple. Depending on how these compounds are chemically bound, varying shades of colors are produced. The combination of hydroxylated and dehydroxylated anthocyanins as well as the level of these compounds present in the plant lead to color development in varying intensities and cause those colors to shift in the spectrum from red to blue and back again. Hit on the right combination and you get very intense blue colors, but no - you can't just add alum or sulfur to the potting mix to change colors of bromeliad blooms from pink to blue like you can with hydrangeas. Things just aren't that simple and many failures were involved before a good, intense blue color was developed in an Aechmea hybrid. Two plants already found in the wild (*species* plants) with blue coloring in their inflorescences are Aechmea *dichlamydea* var. *trinitensis* and Aechmea *fendleri*. Bullis Bromeliads, right here in Florida, took advantage of these plants as a starting point in a hybridization program, culminating with the registration by Patricia

Bullis in 1998 (and the acquisition of a patent on the plants)



Aechmea dichlamydea var. *trinitensis*

Courtesy of FCBS website – photo by Bromeliario Imperialis

for the hybrid Aechmea 'Blue Tango' and, from the same group (grec) of seeds – Aechmea 'Del Mar'.



Aechmea fendleri

photo by Eric Gouda

Courtesy of FCBS website

The rest is history. Aechmea 'Blue Tango' is one of the most sought after of the large Aechmeas and fifteen years after it was first registered, prices continue to be very high for a good specimen of this beautiful plant. I like the somewhat smaller Del Mar, but that's just my preference. If you don't already have one

or both of these great plants in your collection, I suggest that you give them a try – you won't be disappointed!



Aechmea 'Del Mar' with dark form of Aechmea Orlandiana on right



Aechmea 'Blue Tango' Shown by Bullis Bromeliads
14th World Bromeliad Conference, San Francisco, California June 26 - July 5, 2000
Photo courtesy of FCBS website – photo by Michael Andreas

Looking ahead:

October 12, 2013

Quarterly meeting of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies – hosted by the Bromeliad Society of Broward County

October 13, 2013

FECBS meeting –The plant raffle will be dedicated to club member Bill McBride to help out as he continues to recover from his medical problems.

October 20, 2013

Seminole and Tropical Plant Society to host: A Gala Celebrating the 85th Birthday of The Garden Club of Sanford and A Salute to Central Florida Bromeliad Pioneers. 200 Fairmont Dr. Sanford

October 26, 2013

Garden Ramble in Palm Coast – details at this month's meeting.

October 26, 27, 2013

Brevard County Orchid Society's 53rd Annual Fall Orchid Fair. Saturday, and Sunday from 9:00am to 5:00pm.
THE MELBOURNE AUDITORIUM
625 E. Hibiscus Blvd
Melbourne, FL
Admission \$4.00 (visit our website-
thebcos.org -for a \$1 coupon off the price
of admission - print as many as you need)
Free Parking

November 11, 2013

Indian River Bromeliad Society auction –
7pm at the Garden Club of Indian River
2526 17th Ave., Vero Beach (772)713-6007

December 6-8, 2013

Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society show and sale at Terry Park, 3410 Palm Beach Blvd., East Ft. Myers, Fl

February 27-March 2, 2014

Bromeliad Society of South Florida show and sale.

March 28-30, 2014

Everybody's Flower Show returns to the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach. Watch for more details in the future!

September 8-14, 2014

Bromeliads in Paradise – the 21st BSI World Bromeliad Conference hosted by the Hawaii Bromeliad Society

For more information go to www.bsi.org

Have you registered yet for the 2014 BSI World Conference? You won't want to miss this event next September (9/8-9/14, 2014). Look for registration forms on www.bsi.org



If you've ever been to Rick's house, you can't help but notice the large and beautiful bromeliads prominently displayed in the front and back yards. He's sent a few pictures of some of these and I've been trying to fit them in the newsletter where space allows. This month I was all set to go to the printer and realized that there were 5 pages to the newsletter this month. Well, 6 pages is almost as cheap to print as 5 since they're double sided, so I thought this is the perfect

opportunity to fit a couple of those photos into the newsletter.

The first is Aechmea 'Peaches and Cream', a cultivar of Aechmea rubens – same great bloom, but instead of the plain green leaves of rubens this plant has a very nice leaf color.



...and this is the outstanding bloom of Billbergia rosea:

