



*May-June  
2015*

# THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY'S CALOOSAHATCHEE MERISTEM



# CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OFFICERS

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# THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY

**May Meeting– Sunday, May 17th, 2015**  
**June Meeting– Sunday, June 21st, 2015**

## **Covenant Presbyterian Church**

**The church facility is located near downtown Fort Myers, Florida, at 2439 McGregor Blvd., just one block south of the Edison Home parking lot and about 1 1/2 miles north of our previous meeting location—**

**St. John the Apostle Church. The facility is approximately 2.5 miles north of the intersection of Colonial Blvd. and McGregor Blvd.**

**Doors open at 12:30PM for Meeting Setup**

**The Workshop begins at 1:15 PM and the Program begins at 2PM Please bring food, Raffle and Show and Tell Plants**

**Membership Sales are permitted at the May meeting**

**Membership Sales are not permitted at the June meeting**

**The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society is an active Affiliate of:**



**Cryptanthus Society**



**BSI**



**FCBS**



**FM/LC GC**

# May Program

## “Don Beadle Talks About Billbergias”

### By Don Beadle

Although Don Beadle’s academic training prepared him for a career in petroleum engineering, his obsession with bromeliads and especially Billbergias, together with his self taught botanical knowledge made him the world’s foremost Billbergia expert and earned him the name ”Mr. Billbergia”.

Until 1986, Don lived in Corpus Christi Texas. Here he was a neighbor of another world famous Bromeliad collector, John Anderson. It was John who encouraged Don to attend a Bromeliad Society meeting, which started his lifelong passion for these plants. In Texas, Don initiated his hybridizing program, which produced such outstanding *Billbergia* hybrids as ‘Hallelujah’, ‘El Capitan’ and ‘Afterglow’.

In 1986, Don moved to Venice Florida, where he established his new nursery called ‘Los Milagros’. It was here that over the next 14 years that Don continued to create hundreds of outstanding *Billbergia* hybrids, which now beautify gardens and nurseries throughout the world. In 2000, Don decided to spend more time with his other hobbies and the love of his life, Joann. He sold his nursery to Michael Kiehl, who moved his operations to this new site. Michael’s Bromeliads is still the depository of the immense Don Beadle Collection of Don’s numerous hybrids. In Don’s life with bromeliads he is an accomplished BSI Judge and exhibitor, photographer extraordinaire, speaker at venues throughout the country and the author of many articles on the internet and in publications. One of his most impressive accomplishments is the authoring of the 1998 BSI Bromeliad Cultivar Registry. This publication identifies every known Bromeliad hybrid and cultivar as of 1998 in relatively great detail, all documented with first hand conversations, letters and connotations from hybridizers, nursery owners, collectors and hobbyists.

Don returns to the CBS with a presentation about his life with Billbergias. I encourage you to attend this meeting and view Don’s collection of extraordinary photographs. Don has graciously donated his slides to the FCBS and they can be reviewed at [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org). We hope that there will be many of his hybrids available at membership sales at the May meeting.

# **June Program**

## **“Exploring Brazil”**

### **By Dennis Cathcart**

Dennis and Linda Cathcart, owners and operators of the Tropiflora Nursery in Sarasota, are no strangers to the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society. More recently they provided the CBS with the program “Singapore Gardens by the Bay”. This was the incredible story of how Tropiflora provided thousands of exotic plants for the newly developing Singapore Gardens and the spectacular results of this endeavor.

Tropiflora was established in 1976 and since then Dennis and Linda have been providing bromeliads to other nurseries, gardens, conservatory, collectors and hobbyists around the world. In the pursuit of different kinds of plants and especially bromeliads, they have made more than 100 collecting trips to more than two dozen countries throughout the world.

Besides the bromeliads, over the years Dennis has also been providing us with the stories of his travels. On this third Sunday of May, Dennis returns to the CBS with a composite program of his travels to Brazil, including great stories and photos.

### **May Workshop**

Pete Diamond had been previously scheduled for our February Workshop, but due to a scheduling conflict, he agreed to postpone his program until May. He will be discussing with the help of the audience, “The Why and the How to Label Your Plants”. Many thanks to Pete for accommodating us and we look forward to hearing his presentation.

### **June Workshop**

We are still looking for a Workshop Chair to organize a set schedule for our Workshops. In the meantime, we are asking members to please volunteer to give a brief presentation. Contact Dale Kammerlohr if you have an idea or wish to discuss one of the topics we received from polling the membership.

# 35th CBS Birthday Party

Apr 19th 2015 Michael's Bromeliads

Venice, Florida

The CBS is truly blessed. Our first time using Michael's Bromeliads for the site of our Anniversary Party and everything, I mean everything went off without even a single spine in a finger. I have been to Michael and Donna's place many times; I really didn't think I could be more impressed as when I was last there, but I was totally wrong. I couldn't keep my upper and lower lips together, I was so in awe. We hold these parties at members' homes and at gardens hoping that we will get to enjoy both the people and the venue. I don't think anyone can deny that we had it all at Michael's.

Many thanks to Michael and Donna and their staff for their hospitality. Also want to commend the organizers, the chefs and all those who brought items for the raffle. I want you to know that we sold more tickets than at any event we have ever sponsored. Thank you.



Some of the Hat Contest Contestants.



**Donna Kiehl's new retail store. Much more than bromeliads.**

**15 years of growth in the trees throughout the property of Michael's Bromeliads. Bromeliads everywhere.**



**Financially, our best Raffle ever. Our donors and members out did themselves.**

## Front and Back Covers Photos by Larry Giroux

Just recently my next door neighbor asked if I had a moment for her to show me something. We jumped in her jeep and drove over to another neighbor's house within my subdivision.

Several years ago, Hidden Acres resident Tina Baker purchased a small Bromeliad from the annual Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society's Sale. To my utter amazement in front of Tina's house stood a clump of three *xAndrolaechmea* 'Dean' specimens; two of which were in full bloom. This bigeneric hybrid was created from *Androlepsis skinneri* and *Aechmea mariae-reginae* by Dean Fairchild, while he was at Bullis Bromeliads of Miami.

On the front cover of this issue is a picture of Tina standing behind one of the blooming plants; the second picture is the inflorescence. On the back cover of this issue is the entire clump with the two blooming plants. She says that this is the second clump of plants which have bloomed for her in this location and that she has given numerous pups to other neighbors and friends... all from the one plant.

There are several other bigeneric crosses that utilize *Androlepsis skinneri*. In the following article; I discuss those that are currently registered.

## *xAndrolaechmea*

The genus *Androlepsis* is a somewhat unique Bromeliad genus. At the current time there are only two species included in this genus. One of these species, *Androlepsis skinneri*, which is native to Southern Mexico and the countries of the central portion of Central America, is dioecious. This makes it one of the few *Bromeliad species* that has the male and female reproductive structures on separate plants. This unusual arrangement therefore requires separate male and female plants blooming at the same time and in close proximity for the natural vectors to pollenate the female flower in order to produce fertile seeds.

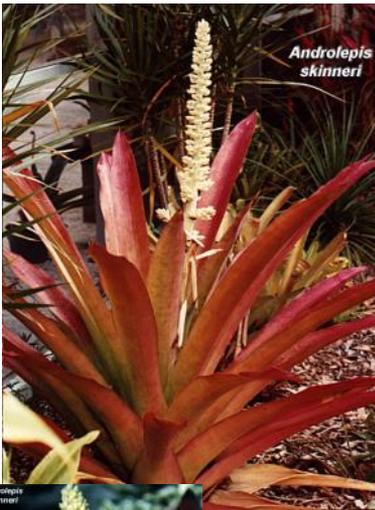
Maybe it was the lack of both a male and female plants in the hybridizer's garden that encouraged the creation of the first bigeneric using *Androlepsis skinneri*. This cross *xAndrolaechmea Crateriformis* was described by Dutrie in the first third of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Although it is described as a large vase

shaped plant with an inflorescence resembling its pollen plant *Aechmea fasciata*, but more red, there are no photos or drawings I could find to confirm its appearance.

Chester Skotak recreated the cross using *Aechmea fasciata* as the seed plant and *Androlepsis skinneri* as the pollen plant at his Costa Rican nursery about 60 years later (see photo). This hybrid was named by Chester-*xAndrolaechmea* ‘Leonard Skinnard’. (If you get the chance Google or ask Chester about this name, you might get a good laugh about the origin of names.)

During the next twenty years, only about five other bigenerics were registered. Below are photographs of these hybrids with details included within their captions.

Many thanks are given to the Florida Council Bromeliad Societies’ and the BSI’s Bromeliad Cultivar Registry websites for the information and photographs within this article.



Left– *Androlepsis skinneri* (F)  
Right– *Androlepsis skinneri* (M)

Photo credit (L to R, T to B)  
Moyna Prince  
Michael Andreas  
John Catlan  
Michael Andreas





*Androlaechmea* ‘Cyclops’

*Androlepsis skinneri*  
X  
*Aechmea lueddemanniana*

Hybridizer—Mike Michalski

Photo by Mike Michalski

*Androlaechmea* ‘Leonard Skinnard’  
*Aechmea fasciata* X *Androlepsis skinneri*

Hybridizer—Chester Skotak

Photo by Eloise Beach



*Androlaechmea*  
‘Paradise’

*Aechmea* sp. (?) X *Androlepsis skinneri*

This plant is being sold by Bullis of Miami Florida as *Androlepsis* ‘Paradise’; however its anatomy suggests that it is a bigeneric of *A. skinneri* and an unknown *Aechmea* sp.

Photos from Bullisbrom.com



*Androlaechmea*  
'O'Rourke'

*Aechmea distichantha*  
X  
*Androlepsis skinneri*

Hybridizer  
Mulford Foster (?)

Photos by  
Shirley Grille-Konefal  
Michael Andreas



*Androlaechmea* 'Sampson'

*Aechmea tessmannii* X *Androlepsis skinneri*

Hybridizer—Sam Smith

Photo by Sam Smith



*Androlaechmea*  
'Sensation'

Tissue culture  
mutation of  
*Androlaechmea*  
'O'Rourke'

Registered by  
Dennis Cathcart

Photo by  
Dennis Cathcart



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**This is your May and June Newsletter.  
If you know that other members are not receiving their e-mail or hard copy of the Newsletter, please let me know.**