



THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY'S

MERISTEM

July/ Aug 2017



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THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY

**July Meeting– Sunday, July 16th
August Meeting-- Sunday, August 20th**

**Our new meeting place is the Ft. Myers– Lee
County Garden Council Building
2166 Virginia Ave. Fort Myers.**

**It is north of the Edison Gardens parking lot and about 1/2
miles north of our previous meeting location— Covenant
Presbyterian Church. Virginia Ave is approximately 3 miles
north of the intersection of Colonial Blvd. and McGregor
Blvd. and the 2nd Street north of the Edison Gardens**

**Doors open at 12:30PM for Meeting Setup
The Workshop begins at 1:15PM
Please bring food, Raffle and Show and Tell Plants**

**Membership Sales are permitted
at the July Meeting**

**Membership Sales are permitted
at the August Meeting**

The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society is an active Affiliate of:



Cryptanthus Society



BSI



FCBS



FM/LC GC

July Program

**“Florida Natural Environments and the Bromeliad Niche”
Or “Hohenbergia”**

As sometime happens there was miscommunications. Member Kyle Wade was asked to present a program by Program Chair Bruce McAlpin at our December Sale. Although he agreed to do so, Kyle is currently out of the US and may not be back in time for our July meeting. We will hope that he will be able to return before the date. He has prepared a program that identifies the various environments within Florida and where the native bromeliads fit into these spaces.

If, however, Kyle is unable to attend, Bruce McAlpin has volunteered to give a program: “Hohenbergia”. This genus consists of a group of unusually appearing and colorfully marked plants. Regardless which program is given it should be very entertaining.

July and August Workshops– To Be Announced

August Program

“Exploration in Belize”

By Bruce Holst

For over 4 decades, first for his own enjoyment and then as his occupation, Bruce Holst has been involved with plants. Few of us can say we work at something we would love to do even if we were n’t working. Bruce has participated in more than 25 international plant research and collecting expeditions.

Bruce who is the Director of Botany at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens is a prior Peace Corps Volunteer in Honduras. His lengthy resume includes numerous publications as editor and contributing author. He is a past editor of the Journal of the Bromeliad Society International and currently serves as a BSI Regional Director.

His program will expose us to some of the three years of research in which he has participated during his time in Belize.

SWAMP WALK: Carly is organizing another Fakahatchee swamp walk. It will be on Thursday October 19th. There is room for 14 people. The cost is \$60 per person. To reserve a spot give Carly money by the September meeting. We haven't worked out with Patrick (the guide) if it will be the same hike as last year, but we will figure that out when we get a feel for what the group wants. Ask those that went last year, it was a lot of fun.

The 2017 Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society's Sale and Show

The decision has finally been made. We are having our
Sale and Show this year!

Dates: Friday, December 1stShow and Sale open to Judges and Workers

Saturday 9AM-4PM, December 2nd.....Show and Sale open to the public

Sunday 10AM-3PM, December 3rd....Show and Sale open to public

We have a lot to do in the next 4 1/2 months.

Location: ARABA SHRINE TEMPLE

2010 Hanson Street Fort Myers, Fl 33901

Please submit a THEME and/or TITLE for the Show

to help with advertising and decoration!

Aechmea 'Little Harv' By Dr. Larry Giroux

When my *Aechmea* 'Little Harv' bloomed this month, I decided that I would feature it in this issue of the Meristem. Although I had some basic knowledge of the plant, I decided to investigate it a bit more.

I knew that the plant had originated at Bullis Nursery in South Florida over 30 years ago. It had been my impression that it was a sport of *Aechmea chantinii*. This meant that it was a spontaneous mutation from the *Aechmea species*. The mutation mostly involved the foliage. Instead of any intense barring of the mother species (see picture on page 9), this new cultivar appeared to be a solid blue green color with heavy silver scurf, but with a similar *chantinii*

inflorescence.

To my surprise, many of the Internet reporters of this plant claim it was a hybrid of *Aechmea chantinii* and *Aechmea rubens* and that it was a “polyploid select cultivar” of this hybrid.

For many of us who don't know what that means let me summarize the gist. In the commercial horticultural world, both for food crops and ornamentals, sometimes when a cross is made a resultant plant will retain more than one set of chromosomes making them polyploid. Often the disadvantage is that there will be less



The first of the triad of the *Aechmea* ‘Little Harv’ collection discovered and distributed by Harvey Bullis, Jr. consists of ‘Little Harv’. (See front cover of this issue.) This was discovered before 1982 at the Bullis Nursery in South Florida. The second is the variegated sport of ‘Little Harv’ that was discovered about 1987 and patented by Bullis as *Aechmea* ‘Loie’s Pride’ in 2001 (above photo). Front cover and above photos by Dr. Larry Giroux.

flowers and sometimes sterile flowers and they don't get to make a lot of seeds. The advantage is that the flowers, seeds and fruits, which they do make can be larger and the foliage (which provide energy to the plant) can be more robust. Larger inflorescences and fuller foliage can be a good thing for bromeliads, and since growing bromeliads



The third addition to the collection is the plant pictures above.: Aechmea 'Harvey's Pride'. Again this plant was discovered at Bullis Nursery either among a batch of tissue cultured 'Little Harv's or as a vegetative offset of the original 'Little Harv'. On the back cover of this issue is a closeup of the offset of the 'Harvey's Pride' seen above. The pink blush toward the center of the plant is more evident. The inflorescence tends to have more red colored bracts than those salmon colored bracts of 'Little Harv'. This is also a patented plant by Bullis, registered about the same time as 'Loie's Pride'. Photo by Larry Giroux.

from seeds is not always easy, growing by producing offsets (which are usually perfect clones) or growing in tissue culture for commercial purposes is preferred.

Regardless of the origin of ‘Little Harv’, which was first discovered and propagated by Harvey Bullis, Jr., we now have a nearly full sun loving plant to grow in our gardens. At least this is what I thought up until these last couple of years. ‘Little Harv’ usually enjoys partial shade up to full sun. For the last three years I have brought my ‘Little Harv’s out of my shadehouse and into the sun on my driveway in pots. I knew that I had to adapt them to the greater light; however, I didn’t expect it to be a problem since they only received a limited amount of full early sun from about 10:00 AM to about 1:00 PM. I wish they made sunscreen for plants! Finally this year I began to accept the moderate bleaching of the leaves and it seemed that each consecutive offset tolerated the obvious change in our heat and intensity of the sun here in Southwest Florida. Last week the long anticipated blooming for the new year occurred. This event is on the front cover of this issue. The two pictures show the emergence of the bloom. Hoping for the bright salmon colored bracts, I went out this morning to find that at 10:30 AM the bracts were all burned. Sunny Florida has turned into a hell for my tropical and subtropical plants. But some of it is my own fault, I gave in to my neighbor next door and cut down two of my 30 year old oak trees to alleviate the deluge of leaves three times a year and the cracking driveways from their roots. When I told my neighbor about the effect of losing the shade from the trees, he told me that I was smart enough to switch over to sun tolerating bromeliads! I went back into the house and cried.

I’ve included some pictures of cultivars of ‘Little Harv’, namely the two patented cultivars ‘Harvey’s Pride’, the albomarginated sport and ‘Loie’s Pride’, the variegated sport. It is reported by some sources that ‘Harvey’s Pride’ was discovered in a batch of tissue cultured plants of ‘Little Harv’, while ‘Loie’s Pride’ was a vegetative sport of ‘Little Harv’. Other sources (the BCR of the BSI) state both are vegetative sports. Like any newly released unusual cultivars, these two plants were initially in high demand and low in supply. Today they are readily available at a good price and are recommended for addition to your collection. Be careful if you buy on the internet, mis-labelling seems to be common!

This Harvey Bullis, Jr’s collection of three plants, although listed as full sun to partial full sun plants, should be adapted to your specific micro-environments within your property. Let’s just hope that they don’t have to continuously adapt to the so called “non-existent” drastically changing climatic upheavals.



There are many different cultivars of *Aechmea chantinii*. However, given the appearance of *Aechmea* 'Little Harv' with its basic underlying lime green color and its intense thick silvery scurf, which gives the plant its unusual blue-green appearance, the plant from which it probably sported was a form like the one pictured here.

The inflorescence shape of *chantinii*, 'Little Harv' and its sports are very similar; the colors vary somewhat from pink to salmon to red. Photo by Larry Giroux.

CBS Meeting Minutes for May 21st, 2017

Location: Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council Bldg., 2166 Virginia Ave., Fort Myers, FL 33901

Meeting called to order at 1:15 PM. By President Peter Diamond

Attendance total: 59

New members: 2, Bill Sheffield and Amy Blakeley

Guest: 6, Joe Smith, Caroline Winters, Gail Wilder, Bruce & Connie Dresbach and Addison Denty

Workshop: "Separating Tillandsia Clumps" by Peter Diamond and Bruce McAlpin

An off-set needs to be at least $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ ^{rds} the size of the mother plant before you separate it. However some *tillandsia* look better as clumps such as *Tillandsia ionantha*, which forms a nice ball. A large tillandsia with long inflorescences can be hung by their inflorescence with a non-copper wire from anywhere. Bruce feeds with half strength liquid fertilizer. Dr. Larry mentioned that in a show judges love big clumps of *Tillandsias* and they can win top awards. He also says spreading

exploded seed pods on a tree trunk during rainy season grows much faster than on a screen or in a pot. Pete demonstrated that just cleaning out the dead foliage makes some look better and gives more room for new growth and you may see an obvious area that's perfect for splitting. *Tillandsia cyanea*, a terrestrial clumping variety, pulls apart easily to remove the shriveled up mother, but it won't produce pups till it flowers. *Tillandsia krukoffiana* will tolerate hot summers in the shade until it is bigger. The grass pups produced roots slowly so tightly stuffing them in a pot with sphagnum moss not only helps them not fall out it also retains water better to aid in rooting. Bruce brought in a large clump of *Tillandsia* that normally grows on the desert sand with only the water it receives from the fog. He was surprised that when he took the wire shelf down on which it was growing it had not really attached itself. It grew on top like it would in the desert sand.

**Business Meeting called to order at 2:00 PM. By Peter Diamond
Announcements:**

Cate Peterson ask for donations of bromeliads to put in an oak tree and volunteers to work a few hours in the Peace River Botanical & Sculpture Garden opening this year. If we decide to participate she would also like to have a sign for the bromeliad part of the garden. You can look online at Peacrivergardens.org. Betsy reminded us that the Taste of Lee tropical fruit fair will be on June 24th at the church on Jackson Street downtown Fort Myers. Donna will be a vendor there, so contact her if you want to purchase a specific tree. Carly is organizing another Fakahatchee Swamp walk on October 19th. There is room for 14 people and the cost is \$60 per person. Please contact her to reserve your spot as soon as possible. A good time was had by all who attended the field trip last year.

Program: "Some of Our Favorite Cultivars" Presented by Grant Groves owner and operator of "Color Zone Tropicals" and Kelli Ahnen

Grant and Kelly shared the very entertaining and endearing story of their lives including how they were sweethearts in high school but went their separate ways, and then after a lot of life experiences found their way back to one another. Kelly credits her grandmother for her love of plants. Grant got interested in plants in the 3rd and 4th grade when in school they grew plants from seeds. He then rescued a blooming *Billbergia pyramidalis* from a trash pile and thought it was the only kind of bromeliad. In high school he found the Bromeliad Society in Orlando. Eloise Beach and others were helpful and gave him many plants. Chester Skotak was a good friend and Grant started hybridizing in High School. He was a manager for Bert Foster and when he sold his business Grant went out on his own. When they reconnected Kelly only had one bromeliad and upon seeing Grants vast collection of plants began to learn everything she could about brome-

liads. He has over an acre of covered green houses and although an avid hybridizer and collector his commercial endeavor now is mainly hybrid *Guzmanias* for interior scapes. Over the years he has created many signature hybrids of all types. They each brought a large collection of their favorite and most beautiful plants to talk about, a lot of which are one of a kind. He shared that *Neoregelias* are easy to force to pup by poking their center with a skewer. Foliage *Vrisesas* are more finicky because they are night pollinated by moths or bats and can take a long time (3+ years) to grow to size. They have many of their favorites for sale in the back.

Refreshment Break: 2:15 - 2:40 PM. Thank you Mary McKenzie and volunteers for all the wonderful treats

Door Prize: 9 *Orthophytum gurkenii* were donated by Bruce McAlpin and won by Diane Cornelison, Ashley Singleton, Ken Repple, Bonnie Hunkins, Addison Denty, Lee Whittington, Geri Prall, Dolly Dalton and Don Robertson.

Raffle: Led by Dr. Larry Giroux, assisted by Dolly Dalton, Betsy Burdette and Carole Sweat

Adjournment: 4:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Sharalee Dias Co-Secretary



You are invited to the 2017 Bromeliad Extravaganza

Friday, August 4, 2017, & Saturday, August 5, 2017
& Sunday, August 6, 2017

Clarion Hotel

2701 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33612
www.clariontampa.com
(813) 971-4710

Ask for Bromeliad Extravaganza Rate
\$75.00 for single/double
\$85.00 for triple/qued
Complimentary hot breakfast
Free Parking

Seminar Guest Speakers

Pam Koide Hyatt of Bird Rock Tropicals, California;
Dr. Larry Giroux of Fort Myers, FL, BSI Judge &
Editor of The Cryptanthus Society Journal;
Bruce Holst, Taxonomist/Scientist and Director of
Botany, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota;
Ken Stokes of Tampa, Bromeliad expert/grower

Registration: \$100.00 per person

After July 25, 2017: \$110.00

Registration includes 2 full meals:

Friday Night Barbeque Buffet &

Saturday night Banquet Buffet

Saturday: Plant Sales 9 AM to 4 PM

Raffle, Silent auction

Seminars with guest speakers

Rare Plant Auction

Sunday: Optional Bus Garden Tours \$12
8:30 AM to Noon - For those attending
Garden Tours in their own vehicles there
is no charge. Water, cold drinks and re-
freshments will be served at the Gardens.



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This is your July-August 2017 CBS Newsletter