

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

This month's meeting will be on Sunday, January 10, 1:30 p.m.
At Myrna Moore's home
3016 S. Peninsula Dr.
Daytona Beach Shores, FL 32118

January, 2021

We are Meeting Again!

Co-Presidents – Jack Dunlop and Chuck Mamale
386/317-0054 386/402-4830
Vice President – Bill Hazard 386/882-3850
Secretary – Ruth Gessner 386/767-3499
Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/871-1041

January meeting

The FECBS January 10 meeting will be held at Myrna Moore's home in Daytona Beach Shores starting at 1:30 PM. Myrna's address is 3016 S. Peninsula Dr. (1.3 miles North of the Dunlawton Bridge, or 0.7 miles South of the Longstreet Elementary School).

South Peninsula Dr. runs North and South along the East shore of the Halifax River.)

There will be a parking attendant, Boomer, on a golf cart out front of the house to assist with parking. Please follow his directions.

Our program will be presented by Myrna. Her topic will be Desert Roses. Re-potting, pruning, culture, identifying, grafted vs. non grafted, seed vs. cuttings, and anything else you would want to know about Desert Roses. We will be outside in her garden where she has many orchids, succulents, and bromeliads to enjoy.

Drinks will be provided, but we will not be serving any food at this meeting. We will have the raffle and door prizes, so bring all of those bromeliads that have been piling up over the last 10 months for the raffle. Masks

and social distancing will be the order of the day.

Cold Weather Care

I know this information is late since we already have had several bouts of cold temperatures, so I hope you have covered your tender bromeliads to prevent damage. Frost cloth is the best material, but sheets, burlap, beach towels will work to keep the plants warm and prevent direct frost from the leaves. The best protection is frost cloth which is a light weight, breathable material that helps retain warmer temperatures and provides a layer of insulation between the plants and the outdoor air. Cover the plants one to two hours before sunset on the evening of the predicted frost. I use clothespins to secure the cloth to the plant and weigh it down with stakes or even rocks to retain the warm air. When used properly, a frost cloth protects a plant to temperatures as low as 20 to 30 degrees.

For those of you who have enjoyed mounting their plants on driftwood and other decorative materials, keep in mind that those

plants do not have the benefit of any insulation value that is provided by potting mixes and therefore will be the first to be damaged by extreme cold – followed by those in pots, and lastly those planted directly in the ground. Those in the ground will generally feel temperatures several degrees higher than what is showing on your thermometer due to the ground retaining some heat before the cold front arrived.

Below is a generalization of some of the more common genera:

Aechmeas: Most individuals in this group are generally considered hardy to 32°.

Billbergias: With some exceptions this group is hardy down to the low 30's.

Cryptanthus: Known as “Earth Stars” it is better to provide for min. temps. above 45 °.

Guzmanias: This group generally are considered more tropical and do not like temps. below 45°.

Neoregelias: Another hardy group with most members able to withstand lows to 32°.

There are several lists available on cold sensitivity of some bromeliads. Check out these lists (Tom Wolfe and Eileen Kahl from the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay and Dale W. Jenkins from the Sarasota Bromeliad Society) on the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies (fcb.org). The Big List of Freeze Tolerant Bromeliads can be found on The Rain Forest Garden (therainforest.com).

Monthly Feature: Aechmeas

The name *Aechmea* is derived from the Greek word *Aechme* meaning spear-point as many species tend to have rather spiny leaves. Aechmeas are found in the wild from Argentina to Mexico and in the Caribbean islands. In their natural habitats they may be seen growing in trees, on rocks or on the forest floor at altitudes ranging from sea-level to over 6,500 ft. They tend to have leaves arranged in a very upright rosette, often forming a tank. Some blooms form berries which can continue to display color

long after flowering. Generally they like bright light, tolerate hot weather, and some will tolerate full sun such as *A. blanchettiana* and *A. rubens*.

You need to know which species are cold hardy (i.e. *A. gamosepa*, *caudata*, ‘Fulguramosa’) and which are not (*A. chantinii*, *fasciata*, *orlandiana*, ‘Blue Tango’, ‘Samurai’).

Next month:

The featured genera will be *Acanthostachys*, *Alcantarea*, *Ananas*, and *Androlepis*. Please send photos of these genera you have in your garden by the end of the month.

Out and About:

Last month the photo of the Neoregelia under the tree at Leu Gardens was not ‘Pink Sensation’, but ‘Passion’. Thank you Irene Aldrich for the correct ID.



We love to see pictures of bromeliads in our members' gardens.



Calandra Thurrott's *Cryptanthus Calandra*

Here are some Aechmeas.



Aechmea recurvata var. 'Artichoke' in my garden. This is a small version of *A. recurvata*. The plant forms a bulbous base at maturity. Flowers are pink; likes shade/part sun; cold hardy.



This *Aechmea* 'Bert' makes a beautiful clump in Judith Davies' garden.

Aechmea 'Bert' is a M. B. Foster cross of *orlandiana* x *fosteriana*. It grows larger than either of its parents and is an especially hardy specimen. 'Bert' can be grown in full or partial sun and is especially striking when mounted. It's very tough roots will cling to wood or rock with amazing tenacity. When mounted, the shape and color are especially striking.



Aechmea blanchettiana on Jane's west side. *Aechmea blanchettiana* is a large plant (up to 36" across and wide) which makes a great

specimen plant. Plant in either full sun to have redder leaves or part sun. During cold spells it is best to cover with a frost cloth to prevent leaf damage. There are many cultivars.



Another in Judith's garden is *Aechmea rubens*. *Aechmea rubens* is a species from Brazil that has a very colorful and long lasting inflorescence. Mostly green to lime-green, this hardy species can blush red when grown in full sun. Excellent landscape plant that can get to 36" high and 36" wide.



The hardy *Aechmea distichantha* growing in Marinus Grootenboer's garden.

Aechmea distichantha is a cold hardy species for bright light with long-lasting flowers. The flower spikes have several blue, white or purple flowers about an inch long and subtended by showy pink bracts. It is very spiny with pointed tips and small brown spines along the leaf margins. It can be mounted.



Jack Dunlop's *Aechmea* 'Flamingo'
Aechmea 'Flamingo' is a cross of *fendleri* x *chantinii* that has a strong overall pink on the upper leaves and deep red on the lower ones. The large flower stalk is very colorful.



Another of Jack's beauties *Aechmea* 'Pinot Noir'
Aechmea 'Pinot Noir' makes a great landscape plant as it can grow in either sun or shade and maintain its red color. A large plant (3' tall & wide) similar to *A. blanchetiana*.

Send in your photos and articles about bromeliad events, blooms in your garden, or newspaper and magazine articles that may be of interest to our members. Email to Jane at saravillalobos387@gmail.com or mail to Jane Villa-Lobos, 29 Clearview Ct. North, Palm Coast, FL 32137.

Videos to Watch:

The Internet is a wealth of information and in this section each month I will include some videos I find interesting. Send me yours!

The Beautiful Bromeliad: A Growing Passion - a tour of the 2019 San Diego

World Conference, Bird Rock Tropicals and other nurseries.

Birthdays for January:

Happy Birthday to the following members:

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|-------------------|--------------------|
| Virginia Dornbach | Erna Jones |
| Chuck Mamele | Jacque Mamele |
| Belinda McCarthy | Lois Miller |
| Fiona Murphy | Krickett Petrovich |



Happy Birthday All!

Looking ahead:

March 13-14, 2021

Leu Gardens Annual Plant Sale
Harry P Leu Gardens
1920 N. Forest Ave, Orlando, FL 32803
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Free admission all weekend to the gardens. Over 50 plant vendors.

March 26-28, 2021

Tropiflora 21st Annual Spring Festival and Open House. 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Tallevast, FL

June 8-12, 2021

BSI World Conference
Sarasota. Watch future newsletters for more details!

