

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, February 14, 2016 1:30pm.

Sugar Mill Gardens in Port Orange
950 Old Sugar Mill Rd.

February 2016

Happy Valentine's Day!

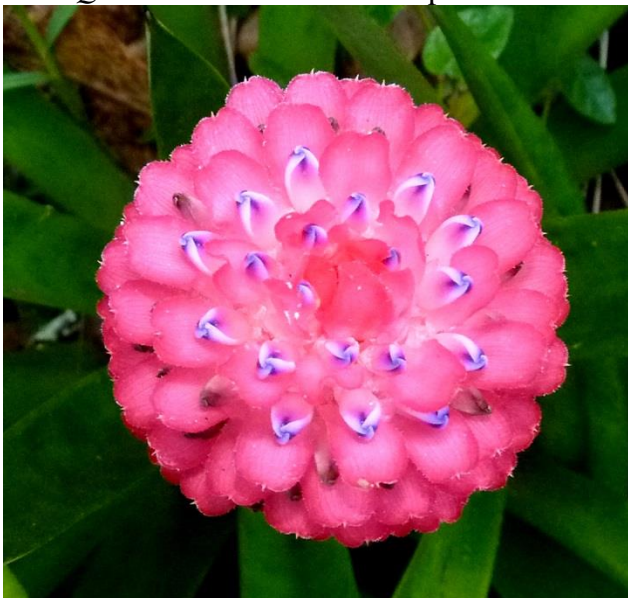
President – Bill Hazard 386/882-3850

Vice President – Rick Ryals 386/679-8700

Secretary – Calandra Thurrott 386/761-4804

Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/871-1041

80 degrees F on New Year's Day – now that's something to brag about to our friends and relatives who live in colder climates! Whether this unseasonably warm Winter weather is due to El Nino, global warming, or president Obama (why not?...we blame him for everything else...) I will be perfectly happy if it continues on into Spring! If I don't have to drag out the frost cloth and cover all of my bromeliads this year because of approaching freezing weather, I will consider this to be a most excellent Winter. I'm not complaining mind you, but this lack of cold weather seems to have prompted some unusual blooming behavior in some of my bromeliads. Take *Quesnelia testudo* for example:



Quesnelia testudo's bright inflorescence is always a welcome sight.

This tough and spiny plant usually begins to bloom in late January to early or mid-February in my yard. This year they started in early December. *Quesnelia augusto-coburgii* also began its bloom cycle a month early. *Billbergia 'Flamenco'* - nearly one month to the day early with its short but nonetheless beautiful bloom.

Other bromeliads in my yard seem to be on their usual schedule for blooming, so I have to wonder whether the blooms of some of these plants are triggered by photoperiod (how many hours of daylight they see), by maturity (when they're old enough, they bloom) or by average temperature. I suspect that the answer depends entirely on the Genus and species of plant, but with at least some bromeliads, unusual weather conditions can be a factor.



Billbergia 'Flamenco' makes a nice display for any home.

Editor's note – And, as soon as I finished writing about how unseasonably warm it has been, the temperature plummeted to freezing in my backyard and I had to cover everything with frost cloth! Hope everyone was able to protect their plants from that sudden cold snap.

Last Month's Meeting –

Our own Rose Vincel not only showed us how to make a beautiful wreath using bromeliads, but she also demonstrated that you can't believe everything you hear concerning *Cryptanthus* and their appropriate care!



Wreath completely covered in *Cryptanthus* plants

Case in point: *Cryptanthus* are strictly terrestrial in their natural habitat and are generally considered a poor choice to mount on wood. Rose, however showed us that by lining a plastic tray with newspaper and soaking the paper with water, a wreath made of vines provides the perfect support for a mass planting of *Cryptanthus bivittatus*.



The plastic tray is first lined with old newspapers to retain moisture.

The plants not only survived, but produced such large numbers of offsets that the wreath was soon completely covered with these small bromeliads.



The back side of the wreath shows how *Cryptanthus* roots have worked their way through the wreath to reach moisture – securely anchoring the plants to the entwined vines.

Imaginative?...Ingenious! Thank you Rose for sharing your technique with us!

FECBS made a contribution

this past holiday season that went to the Council on Ageing "Santa for Seniors" drive. The following excerpt is from the Colony in the Woods newsletter:

Another huge 'thank you' goes out to all the residents that donated items for seniors in need this year. We delivered a car full of items, from handmade blankets to toiletries and robes. The Bromeliad Club (FECBS) went above and beyond with another large donation as well.

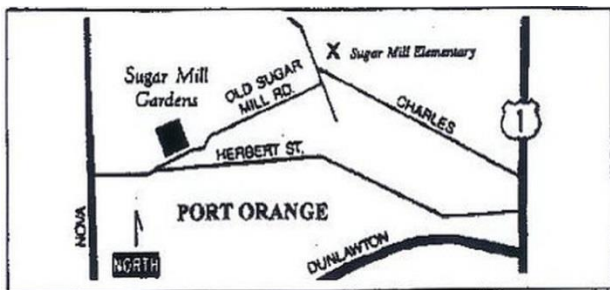
This was our fourth year in a row to contribute to "Santa for Seniors" drive and we are so humbled by the amount of generosity in our community. Thank you!

...and thank you Colony in Wood for allowing us to meet at your wonderful community!

This month's meeting –

Since our regular meeting place won't be available this month, we will gather at Sugar Mill Gardens in Port Orange and view the bromeliads that can be found in several places around the gardens. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this local treasure, Sugar Mill

gardens is a 10 acre parcel maintained by the all-volunteer organization of Botanical Gardens of Volusia, Inc. The Dunlawton Plantation located at this site once produced sugar and molasses until the plantation was burned during the Seminole Indian wars in the 1800's and the original kettles used in molasses production can still be viewed here. The site has had various owners and gone through several name changes over the past several hundred years, including a brief stint as an amusement park called "Bongoland" in the 40s and 50s, so don't be surprised if you come across several concrete dinosaurs as we wander through the park! It's easy to find your way to Sugar Mill Gardens – if you are familiar with following Clyde Morris Blvd. to our usual meeting place at Colony in the Wood. Simply follow Clyde Morris south from that location (toward Dunlawton Avenue) to the traffic light at Clyde Morris and Herbert Street and take Herbert Street to the east (toward the ocean) until you cross Nova Road. Continue on Herbert Street to where Old Sugar Mill Rd. forks off to the left and follow Old Sugar Mill Rd. to the visitor parking area for the gardens.



President's message –

Hey Guys and Gals - There are two topics I want to tackle this time around.....weather and politics. Firstly, the weather. When the weatherman forecasts the future for just the next 24 hours I would like to think they could be accurate. Well, maybe somewhat accurate? As a grower of tropical plants, I make decisions by what they predict. On January 17th Mr. Meteorologist said the low for Ormond Beach would be 38 degrees. I brought some plants inside that are very sensitive. Turns out it was 32 degrees for a couple of hours! In my tropical

world that's a BIG difference. I know their profession is not an "exact" science, but 6 degrees???? C'mon man!! The problem for bromeliads, as you well know, is if they get leaf damage they don't just grow new leaves like other plants. That plant is now shot and we have to wait for the next generation in many cases. Not good if you want to sell that Ananas. Nidularium or Neoregelia. Maybe they should stick with National Lampoon's version of the extended forecast... "Cold with gradual warming, followed by hot temperatures and then gradual cooling followed by cold". I'd say that pretty much covers it.

Next. I think that since I breezed into my second term as FECBS President, maybe I should set my sights on loftier goals. POTUS! All I need is a few campaign dollars (half a billion) which could be raised through a couple plant sales. And then I would need a good slogan. I have taken the liberty of borrowing some slogans from previous campaigns and enhanced them into winning slogans with fresh, bold and pertinent changes. How about "Tippecanoe and Bromeliads too" or Don't Swap Bromeliads Midstream"? Maybe "A Bromeliad in Every Pot" or "I like Bromeliads"? But maybe using a more recent slogan like - "It's the Bromeliads Stupid" "Bromeliads First" or "Let's Make Bromeliads Great Again" would be the phrase that could take me all the way to the White House or possibly the green house? Only time will tell.

Bill

And a few words from the Vice President: Road Trip to Gardenfest in Vero Beach-

There is still some space for folks to car pool on Saturday, February 6th down to Gardenfest in Vero Beach. If you're interested in tagging along for this first big gardening event of the year please contact Rick Ryals and he can put you in contact with one of the two drivers who said they would drive their vehicle. At least one of the vehicles will leave at 8:00am and return around 5:00 from the club house at Colony in the Wood.

FECBS Library

Yes, we have a small library of bromeliad books. And next month we'll publish a list of those books in the newsletter, so everyone knows what we have. But first, we need for everyone to return the books they have to Rick Ryals, so they can be accounted for. The club owns some great reference and culture books, collected over the years in both hard and soft back. Last year, club member Ann Marie Alberti lovingly covered the large hard back books to preserve them for years to come. Later this year, we have plans to purchase additional books while attending the World Bromeliad Conference in Texas from international attendees.

Future Meeting Speakers & Topics

At our January meeting we circulated a piece of poster paper allowing for those present to vote for the bromeliad topics and speakers they would like to see and hear at our 2016 club meetings. And the response was huge! In addition to some of our favorite regulars; Dr. Terrie Bert, Denise Cathcart from Tropiflora we are looking to schedule some totally new speakers. Ranking high on the list was Cryptanthus with hybridizer Steve Hoppin and two pollinator topics: hummingbirds and bees. Our February 14th meeting (yes – that's Valentine's Day. Don't forget!) will be at Sugar Mill Gardens with a tour led by Jay Thurrott.

And Jay will be our speaker on March 13th, when we have 'Bromeliad Basics'. This meeting will of course be at our regular meeting location, Colony in the Wood. And it will be a great meeting to invite your friends and neighbors to learn about these easy to grow plants. In addition to our ever popular raffle we may just have some additional giveaways. Please set your clocks properly as this is daylight savings weekend.

Birthdays for February:

Until recently we haven't been able to recognize any club members with birthdays in February, but that's all changed now with our new club member Linda Haworth.

Happy Birthday Linda!

Out and about –

Rick Ryals has been travelling quite a bit and has been kind enough to share some of photos of a recent trip along with these very interesting captions:



While taking a cruise in January, Francisco Cardoso and I participated in several winery tours in Santa Barbara, CA and Ensenada, Mexico. Always on the lookout for bromeliads, I found these two beautiful (3 feet tall) ceramic pineapples made by skilled artisans in Michoacan, Mexico in the private art collection of long time wine maker, Fred Brander.



And by the way, archeological evidence shows that there has been human habitation within the territory of the Mexican state of Michoacan for at least 10,000 years. Please note: wine and bromeliads are very fascinating while enjoyed together.

Thanks Rick, and, by the way, what's growing in your garden? Take a picture and send it in for our next newsletter!

Rick sent in the following photo of a bromeliad in his collection that is not often seen in this area:



I couldn't resist taking a picture of this beautiful (and large) species, Androlepis skinneri just before I put it away for safe keeping during our cold spell, January 23rd. The picture doesn't do it justice for the pinky-peach coloring, caused by cooler temperatures or being in bloom, or perhaps even both.



Editor's note – here's another photo of an inflorescence of Androlepis skinneri from our Australian adventure in 2008 showing a sunbird studying the bright yellow flowers.

Here's another great photo of a club member's bromeliad in bloom:

In the yard of club member Virginia Mae Whiting this healthy clump of Billbergias could be found just blooming away. Perhaps Billbergia nutans var. schimperiana?



And finally...

Who says we can't grow Deuterocohnias in Florida? This healthy (and prickly) species lorentziana was grown by Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society member, Bruce McAlpin. It took 'Best of Show' in the December 2015 Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Show & Sale, in Ft. Myers. FECBS members Eve Krauth, Jay Thurrott and Rick Ryals served as judges and Francisco Cardoso served as a clerk.



Deuterocohnia lorentziana – photo by Rick Ryals

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: cajat@aol.com or mail to Jay Thurrott, 713 Breckenridge Dr., Port Orange Fl. 32127

Looking ahead:

February 6th and 7th, 2016

Gardenfest – Free admission, parking
Over 90 vendors. Hope you can make it!
Calandra and I are planning on going there on Sunday, the 7th.
3250 Riverside Park Drive
Vero Beach

February 14, 2016

FECBS monthly meeting – this month we'll be visiting Sugar Mill Gardens in Port Orange.
Back to our usual meeting place in March!

February 27, 2016

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies (FCBS) meeting – hosted by the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay. See any of our officers for details.

March 4-6, 2016

Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay show and sale at Tampa Federation of Garden Clubs located at Tampa Garden Club, 2629 Bayshore Boulevard, Tampa, FL 33629

March 5, 2016

Water Wise Garden Fair in New Smyrna Beach.
10am to 5 pm along Canal Street.

March 11-13, 2016

14th Annual Orchid Festival at Fairchild Botanic Gardens in Coral Gables.

March 12-13, 2006

Spring sale at Leu Gardens in Orlando
Free admission, lots of vendors

April 9th, 2016

Volusia County Master Gardeners Spring Sale
Volusia County Fairgrounds, ½ had only!

April 16-17, 2016

Bromeliad Society of South Florida
Annual show and sale at Fairchild Botanical Garden 9:30a.m. – 4:00p.m.

April 16-17, 2016

Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society
Spring plant sale at the Sanford Garden Club

June 13-19, 2016

Bromeliad Society International World Conference. Hosted by the Houston Bromeliad Society in Houston, Texas
Don't miss it!

