

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, March 13th, 2016 1:30pm.
Colony in the Wood – club house
4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

March 2016

Spring Forward!

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

...March ahead?..., don't look back?...clock-to-the-right?...whatever memory device works for you, just be sure to set your clocks ahead one hour when you go to bed on Saturday, March 12th - the night before our club meeting.

Whatever time your clock shows, your bromeliads won't know the difference. What they will notice however, is that the days are getting a little bit longer now and the sunlight that they are receiving is getting a little bit stronger each day. This means that you need to begin separating and potting up those offsets if they are large enough to be removed from their mothers. I tried a bit of an experiment a few years ago with a Neoregelia 'Cheers' that had several good sized pups attached. It was late October and I separated and potted up one of the offsets and waited until March before separating and potting the others. The pup that was potted in October never caught up to the others that were separated in March. Those March babies grew to maturity quicker and overall looked more robust than that poor orphan from October. What does that tell me? Not much really. After all, it was just one experiment with one variety of hybrid from one of many possible Genera, but it tended to reinforce what I had heard from local hobbyists and had observed myself through the years: the best time to separate Neoregelia offsets in the Port Orange area is from March until September. If you separate offsets outside of this window, the plants don't seem to do as well as they should.

And, while we're on the subject of that March through September window – if you are a person that fertilizes their bromeliads, this is also the time to practice your trade. Fertilizing after September probably doesn't hurt the plants (although it may stimulate some unwanted new growth during the time when we may experience bouts of very cold weather), but it also doesn't do them any good. Of course, if you don't fertilize your bromeliads they will still grow to maturity and bloom so if you belong to the camp that says "don't bother fertilizing your bromeliads" the fact that we are entering that window of opportunity doesn't really matter now does it?

Last Month's Meeting –

That was a really nice visit to Sugar Mill Gardens in February.



The weather earlier in the week had been a bit dicey, but it turned out to be a beautiful day and we had good attendance for our stroll through the gardens!



That's a large clump of Neoregelias growing on this live oak.



The gang's all here – dressed for cold weather!

This month's meeting –

Did you ever walk into a theater late, only to find that the movie had already started - leaving you to figure out what the heck was going on? You probably missed a few key scenes along the way and it took a while to understand the plot. Well, it's the same thing with bromeliad societies. You join because you're new at this, you don't know much about them, and you want to learn more about this interesting group of plants. Then at the meetings everyone assumes you know what they are talking about when they throw around terms like "Genera", "caudex" and "inflorescence". That's why every club needs to take the time each year to go back to some of the

basics and provide some of the foundations for those new club members to build on. So, for those of you who missed the few key scenes along the way and are still trying to understand the plot – this month's program will be "Bromeliad Basics". And for those of you who have been with us for a while and have become very knowledgeable about bromeliads -stick around. You may be able to contribute to the discussions ...and you just might learn something new along the way.

Raffle!

Look for lots of plants in this month's raffle. This will be a great opportunity to obtain some very nice plants for just the price of a raffle ticket!

FECBS on Facebook!

Thank you Tree Hazard for setting up a new Facebook page for FECBS! Take a look at it when you get the chance. This is a great opportunity for members to post some of their bromeliad photos to share with others!

President's message –

March is the best month of the year. It's the month we leave the possibility of frost and freeze behind. The Azaleas are blooming and the lime green color of new leaves on the trees are everywhere. The scent of citrus blossoms fills the air. The mornings are still crisp. These are some of the obvious reasons March is the best month but let me list a few others: March Madness for college basketball fans, spring training for major league baseball fans, World Cricket Championship for... who knows? Then there's International Pancake Day which has a free short stack for anyone who makes it to IHOP. No better way to celebrate St. Patrick's Day than guzzling a shamrock shake at McDonald's. There's Pi Day. (3/14 get it?) Daylight savings time finally starts. Spring is officially here but the best reason of all... it's my birthday month!

They say March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb - at least that's how it works in

the U.S. But did you know that March behaves differently in other parts of the world? The philosopher John Belushi voiced his thoughts this way, "In Norway March comes in like a polar bear and goes out like a walrus. Or Honduras where it comes in like a lion but goes out like a salt marsh harvest mouse. Compare that to the Maldives where March comes in like a wildebeest and goes out like an ant. How about South Africa where it comes in like a lion and goes out like a different lion. There are parts of South America where March swims in like a sea otter and slithers out like a giant anaconda." But for our purposes March comes in like a *Bromelia balansae* (ouch!) and goes out like a *Vriesea fenestralis*.

What more can I say? March is the best month hands down. And did I mention it's my birthday this month?

Bill

Birthdays for March:

We're transitioning from February, when we had only a single birthday to recognize now to March, which has the most FECBS members' birthdays of any month in the year!

Happy Birthday to the following FECBS members:

Mimi Boronsky	Rosie Byard
Francisco Cardoso	Judith Davies
Louise Dianto	Mike Fink
Bill Hazard	Tree Hazard
Jim Irvin	Eve Krauth
Anita Peale	Vicki Teel
Jane Upham	

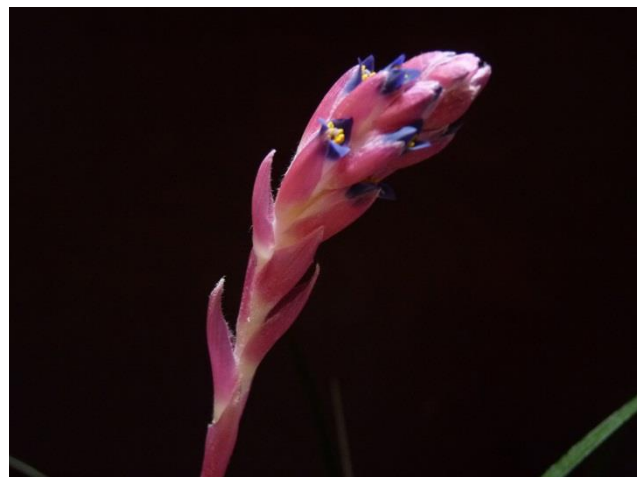
Here's a bit of an oddity...

Not much information is readily available regarding this bromeliad and it's not often that I come across plants in the Genus *Fernseea*. That's probably because there are only two species in this Genus. I don't think that I had ever seen any bromeliads representing this group before, so when I had the opportunity to acquire a *Fernseea bocainensis*, I couldn't resist. This plant comes from SE Brazil and looks very

much like a *Pitcairnia*. Regarding its care, I was advised to treat it like other *Pitcairnia*s to keep it happy and apparently the plant was relatively happy in my yard as it produced this distinctive inflorescence. The bloom is not really long lasting and, of course bloomed at I time when I couldn't bring it in for Show and Tell. At any rate I thought that you might be interested in a photo or two of this unusual plant:



The plain green grass-like leaves remind me of a *Pitcairnia* - that is, until it blooms.



Inflorescence of *Fernseea bocainensis*

The bloom on *Fernseea bocainensis* typically bends sharply to the right (or is it to the left?) as it reaches its maximum height. The flowers are quite attractive and the bloom seems to hold its color for a few weeks before fading.

Out and about –

Recently I had occasion to visit the Garden Club of Palm Coast where our own Jane Villa-Lobos (editor of our beautiful FECBS roster booklet) was recognized for her outstanding contributions to that group and the gardening community.



Tom McKean and Kathleen Terlizzo recognizing Jane's hard work with the Palm Coast group and her contributions to garden clubs throughout Florida.

Last month we were able to include some great photos and text from Rick Ryals in this section of the newsletter. There just wasn't enough room to include them all, so this month you can enjoy more photos that he took of bromeliads in beddings and arrangements in places where you wouldn't expect to find them:

A recent visit to the Bellagio Las Vegas found a beautiful display in the Conservatory, celebrating the Chinese New Year. The garden changes each season and this special display will be shown from January 8th through March 12th. In addition to many Chinese inspired features of the 14,000 square foot garden is a huge collections of bromeliads.



Celebrating the year of the monkey, the display (below) contained hundreds of Neoregelias, Vrieseas, x Vriecantaras and easily over 500 Guzmania's. Live orange trees, azaleas and of course bright yellow chrysanthemums covered the display.



Over a half dozen of these beautiful arrangements adorn the front desk of the Bellagio. Each one standing over 20 feet tall. Containing fresh yellow cymbidium orchids, lucky bamboo, Chinese tassels and firecrackers, monstera leaves and of course, bright red Guzmania blooms. - Rick Ryals

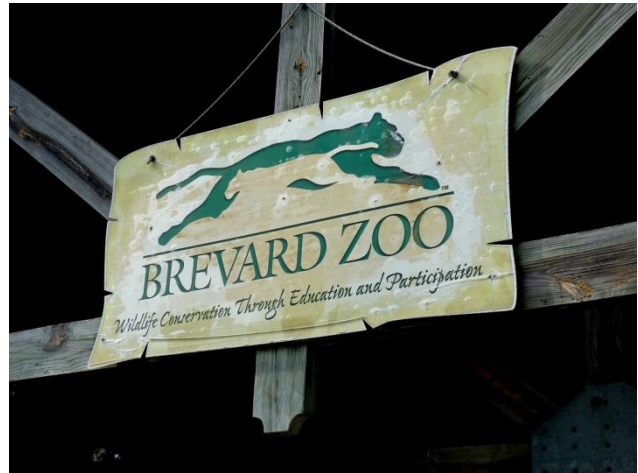


We met with the 35 members of the Gainesville Bromeliad Society who were there for Jay Thurrott's program at their Sunday meeting. He did a PowerPoint about the BSI Hawaiian World Conference of 2014. Among the members we met Larry Hice and his grandson, Ryan Barrera. It was great to meet someone so young (11 years old) who is so enthused with bromeliads. He makes a bee-line to the bromeliad collection at Larry's house when he visits him and has a collection of his own. He likes to choose the plants to bring for the GBS monthly raffles and as you see, likes to pick out his winning plant.



Gainesville Bromeliad Society members Ryan Barrera, Gail Cook, and Bobby Ing.
- Photo and article by Calandra Thurrott

...and, finally – we are really fortunate to have so many wonderful parks, gardens, and in this case zoos to visit within an easy drive. Calandra and I had visited the Brevard Zoo a few years ago and were very impressed with the quality of park so we were anxious to return this year to see if they were able to maintain such a nice attraction. We needn't have worried. Not only were the grounds even better than at our last visit, but this time we noticed the many plantings of bromeliads that drew visitors' attention.



For an interesting day-trip try visiting the Brevard Zoo!



Bromeliads were used in many places in the landscape at the zoo.

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:

March 5th, 2016

The Utilities Commission's 5th annual Water-Wise Garden Fair will be from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Saturday March 5, in the Utilities Commission parking lot, 200 Canal Street, New Smyrna Beach. Gardening clubs, enthusiasts and vendors will be on display to demonstrate how to grow Florida-friendly plants and conserve water in landscaping.

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 4-6th and 11-13th

18th Annual Spring Plant Extravaganza
Searle Brothers nursery
6640 SW 172nd Ave.
SW Ranches, Fl. 33331
Bromeliads, palms, cycads, crotons, aroids, etc,
etc, etc! Lots of great plants!

March 12-13th, 2016

Leu Gardens Spring Plant Sale at Leu Gardens
1920 North Forest Ave., Orlando
9-5 each day.

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!

