

# The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, December 9th, 12:00 noon.  
Colony in the Wood – club house  
4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

December, 2012

## Come Join the Party!

**President – Rick Ryals 386/679-8700**  
**Vice President – Eretta Morris 386/677-9557**  
**Secretary – Kimberly Ridenour 386/212-2781**  
**Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/763-2084**

### I see bromeliads...

Sometimes bromeliads turn up where you least expect them! Take, for example, the Ellen DeGeneres show – here's a popular comic and talk show host who apparently is a bromeliad enthusiast since there is often quite a display of bromeliads and orchids in evidence when guests first walk on stage...not that I watch daytime tv or anything...I'm just saying'. Jill Thurrott noticed the following bromeliad display on the Volusia County website and brought it to my attention:



This was their notice of holiday refuse pickup, but behind the garbage bin is a very nicely landscaped arrangement of bromeliads. Where else have you seen bromeliads that was a bit unexpected? Take a picture, send it to me and I'll try to put it in the next newsletter.

### More from Everybody's Flower Show-

For those of you who didn't have the opportunity to attend Everybody's Flower Show – we reported last month on the number of bromeliad entries from our club. Well, the show wasn't just bromeliads. Jane Villalobos sent the following photos to attest to the quality of horticulture entries that were not bromeliads:



Judith with her blue ribbon fern



Jane with an outstanding begonia display

### **More on Frost Blanket (aka Frost Cloth) -**

We're seeing the first hints of cold weather approaching now (42 degrees F in my yard on one morning last week!), so it's definitely time to be thinking about cold-protection for your bromeliads. Last month we mentioned "frost cloth", and I don't know if that is the proper term or not since I've also heard it called "frost blanket", but the material is the same. Although we sometimes think the world revolves around bromeliads, frost cloth wasn't developed because of our concerns. Instead it was developed for the large vegetable growers who wanted to get their crops in the ground as early as possible in the Spring, but feared the possibilities of a late frost damaging or killing those tender sprouts. Industry responded with a material that is specifically designed to trap ground heat under it (providing 3-5 degrees higher temperatures than outside the covering), yet still allow the passage of moisture and light so that it can be left as a covering over plants for extended periods of time. Truly a

remarkable development by researchers, I have experimented with the material and found that at temperatures in the upper 20s, plants under the frost cloth suffered no damage, while identical plants left outside the covering developed white leaves and died soon after. I know of people who have left frost cloth over bromeliads for up to a month with their plants suffering no ill effects, so this may be worth considering if you are away on vacation during the winter months and worry about protecting your plants.

### **This month's meeting –**

There isn't one – it's our Christmas party!.. ok, there is one item of business that needs attending. We will be voting for next year's officers.

Please note the starting time for the party is 12 noon and not the usual 1:30. Don't arrive at 1:30 or you're liable to go hungry! Like in past years, the club will provide the main items and you indicated on the sign-up sheet at last month's meeting what you would be bringing as either side dishes or desserts. If you didn't make it to last month's meeting...no worries mate! Just bring whatever you think would be appropriate ( I like my filet mignon done medium well thank you very much).

Don't forget about the center piece contest – everyone is asked to come up with a center piece involving bromeliads and we'll vote on which one we like the best!

### **Last month's meeting –**

We were treated to some beautiful photos that were taken by club members during the recent field trip to Tropiflora and Michael's Bromeliads. Thank you Michelle and Julius for sharing those with us!

### **Birthdays for December:**

Jane Hill  
Sherry Bonnell  
Sherri Landanyi

Ed Meiser  
Joan Campbell

Because December is our party, these folks don't need to bring refreshments for this month's meeting, but when you get the chance why not just wish them a Happy Birthday!

**Name that plant...**

This month's photos are as follows:

**#1 – This first photo is of a plant that usually comes into bloom around Christmas time...and what better application of multiple plants than in a decorative holiday wreath!**

by Hatsumi Maertz

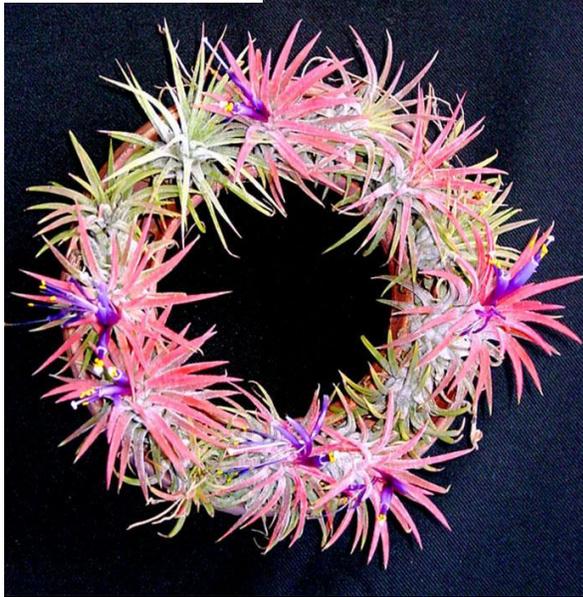


Photo courtesy of FCBS website

**#2- Here's another Christmas jewel that provides some holiday color with its pendant inflorescence and red berries tipped in yellow!**



Photo courtesy of FCBS website

photo by  
Reginaldo Baião



**#3- I've found the above-pictured plant to be a very reliable bloomer, cold hardy, and just a pleasure to have in the landscape. As a bonus...it blooms right around Christmas time!**

Last month's "Name that plant" photos were:  
1. *Tillandsia utriculata* – this plant is found in our area. You may have to search to find a tree harboring this, the largest of the Florida native bromeliads, but some trees hold quite a few nice examples.

2. *Aechmea Mexicana* is a bit cold sensitive, but this and variegated forms are outstanding additions to anyone's collection.

3. *Tillandsia capitata* is a medium sized plant, native to Mexico, Honduras and Cuba. It is commonly available in quite a few different sizes and colors, but they all are eye-catchers and are easy to grow.

How did you do – did you identify them all?

**By the way...**

I don't know how many of you subscribe to Florida Gardening magazine (great magazine – it comes out every 2 months and is full of interesting articles pertaining to Florida gardening rather than the more generic magazines that have articles about growing vegetables in Alaska or cactus farming in Arizona) but I see that the Dec./Jan. issue has an article on a “surefire” way to make your reluctant pineapple plants bloom and set fruit. I've never had a problem with pineapples not blooming before, but I have noted that these bromeliads tend to either bloom in the Spring and produce a wonderful and delicious fruit that can be picked in the late Summer or they bloom in the Fall and produce a far inferior fruit that ripens in the Spring. The author of this article uses Florel routinely to make her plants bloom during the Spring cycle to avoid any possibility of Fall flowering. An interesting idea, although I've got to wonder how often her pineapples would have bloomed in the Spring anyway without chemical treatment. Maybe it's just the chemist in me coming out, but I would suggest that the home-hobbyist avoid routine use of Florel (or any other chemical) unless blooming has been a problem in the past and instead, reserve this chemical treatment for those reluctant bloomers that have been growing for years, appear full grown, but still refuse to produce a bloom spike.

**Looking ahead...**

**September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

Bromeliad Extravaganza – Hosted by the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society Indian Rocks Beach, Clearwater at the Holiday Inn Harborside. Free parking! For more information, contact Judy Lund at 727/439-7782 [glund@Tampabay.rr.com](mailto:glund@Tampabay.rr.com)

The following dates haven't been confirmed, but you might want to note them for planning purposes. More details will be provided as they become available:

**March 23, 24 2013** -- Bromeliad Society of Broward County show and sale

**April 13, 14 2013** – Bromeliad Society of South Florida show and sale

**April 20, 21 2013** – Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society sale

**September 7, 8 2013** – SW Bromeliad Guild show and sale in Dallas, Tx

**2014** – BSI World Conference...Hawaii!!!

