



Orlandiana

Newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida

Volume No. 31

Issue No. 11

November 2006

Next Meeting: Monday, November 27, 2006

6:30 pm Refreshments, Members G - M

Where: Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Ave. Orlando

NO Member Market

7:00 pm Meeting Starts

Speaker: Tom Wolfe of Tampa

Program: "What's Blooming in the Wolfes back yard?"

It's Party Time!

You are cordially invited to the Annual Bromeliad Society of Central Florida Holiday Party, Saturday evening, December 9th at 6:00 PM. **Please note:** The party this year will be in a **different location**, not at Leu Gardens. The party will be held at Azalea Lane Recreation Center, 1045 Azalea Lane, Winter Park, FL 32789.

Maps with directions will be available at the November meeting. Come and enjoy a festive night of good fun and friends. This is the last event of the year and always an enjoyable one. We will be tantalizing our taste buds, installing our new 2007 officers and exchanging plants.

Please RSVP to Betsy McCrory to let her know you will be attending. She can be reached by phone **after 6:00 p.m.** at 407-348-2139 or by email at betsymccrory@aol.com

What to Bring: Please bring a covered dish to share, such as an appetizer, salad, vegetable, or dessert and a serving utensil. Bring cold dishes "cold" and hot dishes "hot".

We would appreciate a card by your dish listing the ingredients such as meat, seafood, vegetarian, nuts, sugar, spicy, etc. for those who have a dietary concern.

The society will provide the turkey, baked ham, drinks, plates and dinnerware.

Plant Exchange: At our holiday party we have a plant exchange. If you would like to participate bring a nice, clean, labeled plant, a plant that you would enjoy receiving yourself. Please bring your plant **completely wrapped up to disguise its identity** so it will be a surprise! Be creative by using gift-wrap, paper bags, boxes, etc. You will receive a ticket when you bring your plant in and the numbers will be drawn at the end of the party. Note: There will not be a plant show and tell, raffle drawing or silent auction.

There will be a Silent Auction this month, please donate a plant.

There will be NO Member Market this month.

A Letter from Diane Racine

Hello,

I am Mulford B. Foster's great granddaughter. As you may or may not be aware, he was quite active and renowned for his work with bromeliads as well as his artistic works. After his widow's death his extensive collection of paintings was apparently dispersed via donations and an estate sale to various locations and unfortunately many in his family never received any of his works. His son, Bert Foster's widow, Grace believes that some of the paintings may have gone to the "Southern Florida Bromeliad Society". I am trying to locate as many of the paintings as possible as I would ultimately like to get prints or at least photo documentation of his works. I have located one painting at the Hunt Institute and 8 paintings at the Leu Gardens, Grace herself has several and a second cousin has two but there are many more unaccounted for. If you can be of any assistance I would be most appreciative.

Thank you,
Diane Racine



***Neoregelia ampullacea* and its Neighbors**

by A. Herndon

Among the miniature bromeliads, the *Neoregelia ampullacea* complex is a source of both great charm and great frustration. Thirty years ago, life was simple – there were only four plants available in the group (*ampullacea ampullacea*, *ampullacea tigrina*, *ampullacea zebrina* and *ampullacea variegata*), and they were all readily distinguishable (although I am not sure I remember exactly what plant was called *ampullacea ampullacea*). Now several of the plants from the olden days are known by different names; there are many more distinct types of plants available in this group; and an uncertain number of the species are treated as *ampullacea* cultivars in the trade.

The core group of *Neoregelia ampullacea* is characterized by the narrow, cylindrical shape of the water holding cup formed by the leaf sheathes and slender stolons that are generally long enough to keep the water holding cups of individual rosettes from each other. Leaves are decorated by dark patches, generally in the form of bars running partway across the leaf blades. Plants produce pups before flowering, so they tend to form clumps quickly. The flower petals are relatively large – two to three open flowers fully cover the top of the cup – with purple tips and a white throat. This group includes *Neoregelia ampullacea ampullacea*, *N. ampullacea* cv. 'Bert', *N. ampullacea* cv. 'Midget' (known long ago as *N. ampullacea zebrina*), and *N. lilliputiana*. These cultivars differ in size and the darkness of leaf bars. *N. ampullacea ampullacea* has the lightest coloration,

and with ample fertilizer, may show no trace of the leaf bars at all, *N. ampullacea* cv. ‘Bert’ is slightly smaller than *ampullacea ampullacea* and has darker leaf bars. The leaves on this cultivar are more pointed towards the tip in contrast to the rounded leaf tips on other cultivars. *N. ampullacea* ‘Midget’ as the name implies, is smaller than *ampullacea ampullacea*. It also has very dark leaves, including both bars and a multitude of small dark dots under all conditions. *N. lulliputiana* is even smaller than *ampullacea* ‘Midget’, and has prominent leaf bars, but is not nearly as dark as ‘Midget’. Plants currently sold as *N. ampullacea tigrina* (or *N. tigrina*) in the trade differ from the plants called *n. ampullacea tigrina* 30 years ago. They are also totally different from the core species of the *ampullacea* complex. This plant has a funnel-shaped water holding cup and the bracts along the stolons of rapidly growing plants are loose, so the stolons appear “leafy”. In addition the petals are wholly white and much larger than those in the core group. The plant called *N. albiflora* in the trade is almost indistinguishable. These two differ only in the presence of a yellow brown color in the leaves of *tigrina* and its complete lack in *albiflora*. To complicate matters further, the current *N. albiflora* was treated as *ampullacea ampullacea* in the trade for a time.

Neoregelia zonata has the same general characteristics as *N. ampullacea*, but is at least twice as large. Still, *N. ampullacea variegata* of the trade belongs here and the plant we used to call *N. ampullacea tigrina* appears to be a hybrid between *N. ampullacea* and *N. zonata*. It is even possible that the plant we called *N. ampullacea ampullacea* is another *ampullacea-zonata* hybrid.

Finally, I have a plant called *N. ampullacea* cv. ‘Marion Oppenheimer’ that does not appear to have any relationship to the group. This plant has no stolons. The leaves have no dark bars and the pups are not produced until the parent blooms. How the name came to be applied to the plant is a complete mystery.

N. ampullacea cv. *marnier-lapostollei* and *N. ampullacea* ‘Black Beauty’ are also available in the trade, but I don’t know these plants beyond the names, so I can’t comment on them.

Furthermore, *N. dungsiana* is undoubtedly related to the core *ampullacea* group. It is likely that other species less frequently seen in cultivation also belong here. Due to their pleasing size and characteristics, members of the *ampullacea* complex (including allied species) have been used in many hybrids. Regrettably, name changes and uncertainties in the application of names within the group introduce great confusion concerning the parentage of hybrids. For instance, *N. ‘Red Waif’*, a Gary Hendrix hybrid is listed as having *zebrina* and Fireball as parents.

If you have been paying attention to your history, you realize that the current name for the first parent of *N. ‘Red Waif* is *ampullacea* cv. ‘Midget’. But, what if a hybrid lists *tigrina* as a parent? Is the parent the *tigrina* of many years ago or today? It is even more complicated if the parent is listed as *ampullacea* without qualification. Now it is totally unclear whether the parent is a member of the core *ampullacea* complex, *albiflora*, a *punctatissima*, a *zonata*, or a hybrid. Furthermore, the range of possible choices depends upon the year the hybrid was made and to the extent the hybridizer knew and used up-to-date names.

Of course, confusion over names does not distract from the charm of the plants or hybrids made from them. If you prefer to not get involved with the intricacies of identification, just buy plants that look good to you. Your enjoyment will be just as complete regardless of the name on the label.

This article first appeared in the May 2003 [the Bromeliadvisory](#), the newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of South Florida. The following accompanied “*Neoregelia ampullacea* and its Neighbors” in the August 2005 [Caloosahatchee Meristem](#), newsletter of the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society

Below are four different varieties of *Neoregelia ampullacea*. Photos by Derek Butcher.



↑ This is a less frequently seen *Neoregelia* species, *N. dungisiana*. Its size and other characteristics easily qualify it as part of the “*ampullacea* complex” described by Herndon.
Photo by Michael Andreas



↑ Another bromeliad labeled *Neoregelia ampullacea* with less intense barring. This shows the classic appearance of the flowers as described by A. Herndon in his article.
Photo by Ken Marks



← *Neoregelia lilliputiana* is among the smallest of this group. Because of its very small size and pleasing shape it has been used extensively to produce “mini”neos. The flowers as seen here are “*ampullacea* type”.
Photo by Michael Andreas

⇒ Another small cultivar of *ampullacea* is *Neoregelia* 'Midget'. It is distinguishable from others in this group by its smaller size, darker leaves with consistent bars and many small dark dots.

Photo by Geoff Lawn



← This species, *Neoregelia punctatissima*, has the small size of the *ampullacea* group of plants, but is distinctive with uniform short dark bars throughout the leaves. The bars appear as dashes and no one extends across a leaf.

There are at least two forms – yellow, as pictured here and red.

Photo by Dorothy Berg

⇒ Except for size, with *Neoregelia zonata* nearly twice as large, there are few differences from *N. ampullacea*. For this reason, Herndon feels that *N. ampullacea variegata* should be classified as a cultivar of *N. zonata*.

Photo by Derek Butcher



← As Herndon mentions in his article, there are inconsistencies and confusion of the nomenclature of this group of plants. This photo of *N. ampullacea tigrina* from an issue of the BSJ 1970, shows what should be a cultivar of the species, but this differs from *N. tigrina* grown today.

Photo from the BSB Archives

All photos courtesy of fcbs.org

The meeting was called to order by Vice President, Butch Force. Butch welcomed the new and returning members and thanked everyone for coming. There were 31 people present.

Betsy McCrory passed around two recent articles that were in the Orlando Sentinel. The first one, dated September 30, 2006, was written by Jean Patterson, on plant societies, Patterson was a visitor at our September meeting. The article included a picture taken at our meeting. The second article dated October 22, 2006 was on the "Evil Weevil" that is attacking bromeliads in Broward County and elsewhere.

There being no show & tell we went directly to the program; Cryptanthus, presented by Dave Johnston from the Tampa area. Dave talked about light conditions, watering, elevation, and nutrition. The only pest is rabbits.

Break

The minutes were approved and Betsy gave the treasurer's report: \$778.38 in checking, \$11280.98 in money market; \$35 cash on hand with Total Assets of \$12094.36. The treasurer's report was filed for audit.

Butch asked for volunteers for the nominating committee. They are: Neal Ekengren, Pam Flesher, and Butch Force. They will present a slate of officers at the November meeting for the approval of the membership.

Butch asked for a chairman for the Christmas party. Betsy McCrory volunteered.

Betsy McCrory, who is the society's representative to the Florida Council, gave a report of the October meeting of the council. The Extravaganza was a huge success. Sales were around \$15,000, Auction \$3966, and \$900 in raffles. Approximately 140 people were at the banquet. The money raised from the auction goes to the council. The money will be used to help pay for the quarterly newsletters, the upkeep of the website and the weevil fund along with any other projects. Next extravaganza will be held by Broward County Bromeliad Society in 2007. Next world conference will be held in Cairns Australia in 2008. Betsy reminded the society members that we need to have two representatives for the next meeting of the council in January 2007.

The application for the Leu Gardens Sale, March 24 & 25, 2007 was received. The society voted to participate and Betsy will send in the money for the sale.

Announcements:

Betsy McCrory is trying to sell out her bromeliads in the greenhouses. She is offering great prices and is open on the weekend by appointment only. Betsy's bromeliads are mainly for landscaping.

Richard Temple of the Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society passed away. His plant collection will be sold at the Volusia County Fair in Deland in April 2007.

Pam Flesher reviewed the information regarding the Christmas Party and will have maps to the Azalea Park Recreation Center at the November meeting.

Butch announced the winners of the progressive auction. The tickets for the Door Prizes and Raffle Plants were called. Thank You to Penny Bullard and Rick & JoAnne Rector for the donations of plants for the progressive auction, raffle table, and door prizes.

Meeting adjourned:

Respectfully submitted,
Neal Ekengren
Acting Secretary

Aechmea- Excessive humidity causes yellow very disagreeable spots on *Aechmea* foliage which never disappear. Mounted plants should have their cups filled with water and avoid letting the cups dry out.

Billbergia- These plants are best grown hard; that is the media should be relatively dry but with the cups full at all times, high light and minimal fertilizing.

Cryptanthus- The potting medium should be loose and porous, but needs to retain moisture. Water, water, water, food, food, food.

Dyckia and Hechtia- Contrary to what one might expect from their appearance, *Dyckias* love water. These plants tolerate harder water. *Hechtias*: these true xerophytes require less water but in other respects are similar to the *Dyckias*.

Guzmania- Use a potting mix that will retain a little moisture, but allow all excess water to drain away freely. Wait until late spring or early summer to become aggressive with these plants using water and fertilizer.

Neoregelia- Ideal South Florida yard plants; they are quite tolerant of dry conditions. With water in their cups they are able to withstand periods of drought. Remember that on a hot day the water in the cups can reach a high-temperature which results in cooking of the inner leaves.

Nidularium- Over watering will rot the plants. When in doubt don't water. It is important to rid the center cup of accumulated salt; they do not like hard water. These should be watered in the morning.

Tillandsia- Plants are prone to suffocating and rot if any part is kept wet for too long. Soaking a *Tillandsia* is always your best bet. They can be fertilized at the same time. There are two types of *Tillandsia*. Those that grow in hot, dry regions are called silver or gray *Tillandsia*. The other group is soft, green-leaf species which live high in the tree tops in the cool or humid rainforest. This second group is very sensitive to sunburn and require higher humidity. The first group is more prone to rot and require good air circulation.

Vriesea- Can also be considered of two types just as the *Tillandsia*. A trick with the patterned *Vriesea* is to grow them in well draining media, keep the crown above the surface of the media, keep the dead leaves off the base of the plant and flush the water between leaves. *Vriesea* seem to do better when grown in smaller pots; this may be because the soil will dry out between waterings easier.

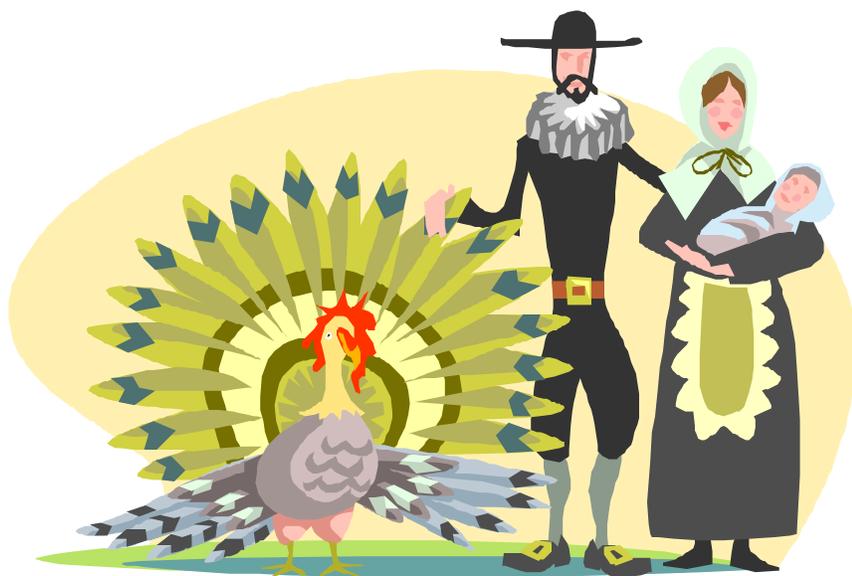
This article first appeared in the September 2002 Caloosahatchee Meristem, newsletter of the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society.

Welcome New Members

Lisa Robinette, Orlando

Welcome back

Mark Crowder



The Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, Inc. was formed in 1972 to encourage the exchange of information concerning the culture, identification and hybridization of the plant family *Bromeliaceae*; to promote & maintain public interest in bromeliads and to assist in the preservation of all bromeliads for future generations.



Meetings are held the 4th Monday of every month from 7-9 PM at Harry P. Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Avenue in Orlando. For directions: 407.246.2620 or www.leugardens.org. You'll enjoy informative programs, Show & Tell, plant sales, refreshments & door prizes. Members also receive a monthly newsletter — all for only \$10 per member, plus \$2 per additional family member (no charge for full-time students). Visitors are always welcome.



BSCF is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International, Inc. and a member of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. and the Cryptanthus Society.

BSCF is a nonprofit Florida corporation recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to this society are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.



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Permission to reprint is granted with acknowledgment. Please send all correspondence to the address below:



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November 2006

Next Meeting: Monday, November 27, 2006

Time: 6:30pm Refreshments

6:30pm **NO Member Market**

7:00pm Meeting begins

Refreshments: G - M

Speaker: TOM WOLFE FROM TAMPA.

Program: "WHATS BLOOMING IN THE WOLFES BACK YARD"