



# THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY'S

**MERISTEM**     *July-Aug 2024*



# CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OFFICERS

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**Party Chair—Vacant**

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**RAFFLE COMMENTARY—Larry Giroux**

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# THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY

**July Meeting Meeting: Sunday, July 21st 2024  
August Meeting August 18th 2024**

**Our July and August Meetings will be at the  
Ft. Myers– Lee County Garden Council Building  
2166 Virginia Ave. Fort Myers.**

The facility is north of the Edison Gardens parking lot and about 1/2 miles north of our previous meeting location— Covenant Presbyterian Church. Virginia Ave is approximately 3 miles north of the intersection of Colonial Blvd. and McGregor Blvd. and is the 2nd Street north of the Edison Gardens

**Please bring food, Friendship, Raffle and Show and Tell Plants  
There will be NO membership sales allowed at the July meeting.**

The CBS Board has established a more structured schedule for our meetings, which we will adapt as necessary—

**\*12:30-1:15:** Doors open, check-in, membership, distribution of door prize tickets and sale of raffle tickets, membership or speaker plant sales.

**\*1:15-1:45:** Workshop    **1:45-2:00:** Break, plant sales continue  
**2:00-2:15:** Business Meeting    **2:15-3:00:** Program followed by door prize  
**3:00-3:30:** Break for refreshments    **3:30-4:00:** Show and Tell and Raffle  
**4:00:** Clean up

**MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2024 ARE DUE** Please contact Betty Ann and RENEW Membership renewal fees are \$15/20 single/dual; New member dues: \$20/25, single/dual payable by check or cash at the meeting or by mail to Betty Ann Prevatt, CBS Treasurer 2902 Second Ave. Fort Myers, FL 33916

The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society is an active Affiliate of:



Cryptanthus Society



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July CBS Program  
“Foliage *Vrieseas*: Take 2”  
By Dave Johnston

There are notably two predominant groups of plants within the *Genus: Vriesea*. The green leafed group is generally characterized by soft, spinless, green or slightly colored blushed and sometimes red tipped leaves. These have single paddle or minimally branched, colorful inflorescences and are often confused for *Tillandsias*. The second smaller group is referred to as the foliage or patterned leafed *Vrieseas*.

Dave Johnston will be demonstrating this second group of plants in his presentation “Foliage *Vrieseas*: Take 2”.

Dave Johnston, 39 years ago acquired his first pair of bromeliads, a cryptanthus and a neoregelia. Within 5 years he had so many plants that he decided to open *Bromeliads Galore*, a collectors\_nursery in Pinellas County. Although his addiction to new and unusual bromeliads has not been resolved, he currently has limited himself to about 1000 different species and hybrids. During his many years of involvement with the hobby, he has contributed much of his time serving as President of the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa and of the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society, as well as most of the other Officer positions. His entertaining and informative programs are always in demand at Societies’ meetings. I think this will be the 8<sup>th</sup> different presentation, which Dave has given to the CBS; I for one can’t wait to enjoy it. Dave should be bringing a nice selection of plants for sale, so come early so you don’t miss out. Please, no Membership Sales!

Front cover: The patterned foliage species *Vr. fenestralis*; photo by Herb Plevier  
Back cover: *Vr. Hawaiian Raspberry* by David Fell; photo by David Fell.

July CBS Workshop  
“*Nidulariums*”

Our Workshop presentations will continue in July with the Basics— The plants of the *Genus: Nidularium*. As with previous Genera reviews, we will have discussions and presentations by knowledgeable members, photos and live plants to discuss the variety of species and hybrids and how best to grow these in our climate. Again we ask members to bring in any *Nidulariums* you may have, regardless of condition or status. Members are encouraged to talk about their plants and ask questions. Included in this newsletter is a great article by Karen Andreas from FCBS Aug.2015 Newsletter.

## ***Nidularium* An Overlooked Landscape Bromeliad**

By Karen Andreas      Photography credit as noted.

(This article first appeared in the FCBS Newsletter August 2015)

The perfect bromeliad for lower light or early morning light conditions, *Nidularium* is often overlooked when planting bromeliads in the Florida landscape. It is easy to grow and adds color for a good long time in the garden.

The genus *Nidularium* was first described in 1845. The name is derived from the Latin word *nidulus*, meaning small or little nest, describing the rosette shaped inflorescence that is found nestled in the center of some of the species. *Nidularium*'s native habitat is Brazil, where its 48 species are found in the lower parts of rain forests at sea level to the edge of cloud forests. They grow in the litter on the forest floor, on low tree limbs and sometimes are found on rock outcroppings.



*Nidularium antoineanum*  
Photo by Michael Andreas

Moisture is a key component in the native environment of *Nidularium*. In cultivation, the soil should be moist but well drained. Do not let the soil or the rosette of the *Nidularium* dry out completely. While *Nidulariums* grow well in semi-shade and shady conditions, a little morning light will ensure that the leaves do not grow long and strappy. They can be grown well indoors if they have some humidity, filtered or diffused light and consistent temperature. They do not like temperatures below 55 (F).

Pups can be removed when they are at least one-third the size of the mother plant. The pups do not like to be over-potted; start them in 4" pots. Mature *Nidulariums* will thrive in 6" pots.

*Nidulariums* make excellent landscape plants. They add texture, shape and color to collections and are good for low light conditions, including in the home or office. Leaf color may be light or dark green, green with white stripes, green on top, maroon on bottom, green mottled with purple, or maroon.

The rosette-shaped inflorescence is long-lived, often for several months. In some *Nidulariums*, it sits nestled down among the leaves; in others, it rises on a stalk above the center of the plant. The shape also varies, with some rosettes of densely formed leaves and other inflorescences having a spiky appearance. The inflorescence color varies and can be rose, cerise or maroon. Its flowers are red, blue or white, and they open in sequence. *Nidularium* is a rewarding bromeliad to grow. Both species and cultivars offer dramatic shapes and long lasting color, something for every taste. With its elegant leaves and intensely colored inflorescence, *Nidularium* is an attention getter in any collection.

## Nidularium Gallery

*Nidularium antioineanum* grows both terrestrially and epiphytically in habitat. Its dense rosette is pink when it commences blooming and turns to purple or mauve as it ages. Steens highly recommends this as a landscape plant, which should be prominently displayed for its dramatic impact. (Photo by Michael Andreas)



The fire engine red inflorescence of *Nidularium fulgens* lasts for more than six months, and fades to cerise as it ages. Its dark green leaves are spotted. (Photo by Michael Andreas)

*Nidularium angustibracteatum* features a spikey inflorescence rising above the throat of the narrow leaves. (Photo by Jere Rhine)



The leaves and rosette of *Nidularium Leprosa* are green, mottled with purple. Even the rosette has the spots. (Photo by Mike Romanowski)

(*N. regelioides* x *rosulatum*)

***Nidularium***  
**‘Madam Robert Morobe’** not only features a bright red inflorescence but also leaves with a dark purple underside. (Photo by Michael Andreas)

(*N. innocenti* x *fulgens*)



***Nidularium***  
**‘Miranda’** is a real stand out with its striped leaves and hot pink inflorescence. (Photo by Debra Jones)

(Sport of *N. Madonna*)

***Nidularium Lila Rosea*** is another standout with its elongated inflorescence in rose pink and cream and its blue flowers. (Photo by Andrew Steens)

(Hybrid of ? Parentage)



All pictures courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies’ website. See more *Nidulariums* at <http://fcbs.org> > Photo Index. Webmaster –Michael Andreas



**Additional *Nidulariums***

In Europe in the 1890's it was common to out source the creation of hybrids of plants. *Nidularium* x *chantrieri* (fig. 1), presumably the cross of *N. innocetii* and *N. fulgens*, was produced by 2 brothers for a wealthy grower. Andre using a drawing and the information given to him, registered this hybrid as *Nidularium* x *chantrieri*. Butcher and others feel that the true parents are *N. fulgens* and a neoregelia. We may never know the true identification, but the appearance does closely resemble fig. 2, an unnamed cross of *N. innocetii* and *N. fulgens*. Photo 2 by Larry Giroux

In her article, Karen Andreas mentions the various colors of the *Nidulariums*' flowers and bracts. *Nidularium litmus* (figs. 3a,b) goes a step further. When its flowers are blooming the bracts are a bright red; as they mature they turn blue. Photo 3a by L. Giroux, 3b by D. Butcher.



Another interesting *Nidularium* species is *N. innocetii* (figs. 4a & 4b), which has been around for over a century and a half. During that time, it has been used to create many hybrids and several cultivars including variegated cultivars such as v. *Striatum* and v. *Lineatum* have been discovered. Photos by Dorothy Berg.



Over the years, plants of the genera *Nidularium* and *Canistropsis* have been mis-classified. Elton Leme, probably the best specialist of these genera has set us straight in his series of publications. One of the problems in classification is that most *Nidulariums*' inflorescences are nestled in the center of the rosette, while *Canistropsis* have prominent stems. *N. meeanum* (figs. 5 & 6) breaks that rule. Photos by Dorothy Berg.



Fig. 7 shows the orange color bracts of certain varieties of *Nidularium rutilans* ‘San Paulo’ (Photo by L. Giroux). Figs 8 and 9 show the variegated variety of *Nidularium regelioides* and the normal green mottled species (photos by Dorothy



Berg). This species is now named *Nidularium rutilans*. The less common *Nidularium wurdackii* (fig. 10) has beautiful pink colored bracts with black bases, black tips and black borders. Photo by Dorothy Berg.

**Minutes of the CBS General Meeting**  
**LC/FM Garden Council Building    May 19th, 2024**

Call to order: 1:19 by President Julie Stein

In Attendance: 25; Guests: Pete Diamond and Barb Murza

**General Meeting:**

**Announcements:** Julie asked the members to consider donating plants for the silent and live auctions this Friday for the World Bromeliad Conference in West Palm Beach. Contributions can be plants of course, or anything related to bromeliads, such as artwork or books. Donations can be given to anyone who is attending the conference.

Julie announced that Bonita Bromeliads is giving several \$5 vouchers to our members to thank us for all that we do for bromeliad enthusiasts. If you don't get a coupon at the meeting go there to shop, just let them know you are a member of the CBS, and they will honor this offer.

Vickie Chirside asked if anyone would be interested in being a clerk next Wednesday at the World Conference. A clerk's job is to help the judges while they are evaluating show plants. Anyone who might be able to help can talk to Vickie.

**Program:** Member David Denholm presented a slide show entitled "Bromeliads of Brazil/ Rio de Janeiro, highlighting various beautiful plants and trees he saw while exploring mainly the spectacular Jarden Botânico. Anyone wanting to make this trip needs to prepare for a 9-hour overnight flight from Miami, but it will be well worth the effort. At the Garden, there are over 6,500 species represented on about 30 acres. It was originally built to grow spices, such as nutmeg and cinnamon, but now encompasses so much more. Some of the gorgeous plants he showed us were *Vriesia fosteriana*, *Vriesia cyanea*, *Vriesea heiroglyphica*, *Billbergia amoena*, *Ananas comosus*, *Vriesia scalarus*, and *Alcantera imperialis*

**Door Prizes:** Our door prize this month was a beautiful *Aechmea* brought in by Debbie Mcphail.

**Show & Tell:** Dale Kammerlohr presented about 10 plants that members brought in to discuss. There was an *Aechmea* that Julie thinks is a *callichroma* but wanted confirmation. There was also a *Goudea ospinae* var. *gruberi* "Smudge Pattern" which everyone agreed was particularly striking because of its unusual leaf pattern. There was also an unnamed plant which was a cross between an *Aechmea fasciata* and an *Aechmea nudicaulis*.

**Raffle:** Larry Giroux, with help from Dolly Dalton and Julie Stein, awarded about 13 donated plants to the lucky winners.

Meeting adjourned: 3:45

Respectfully submitted by Alison Ackerman

**Minutes of the CBS General Meeting**  
**LC/FM Garden Council Building    June 16th, 2024**

Call to order: 1:24 by President Julie Stein

In Attendance: 15; Guests: Rick Lyon

New Members: Lisa Smithson and Ken Theriot

**General Meeting:**

**Announcement:** Julie reminded everyone that our meeting in November will be

on the 24<sup>th</sup> (the fourth Sunday of November) instead of the previous Sunday, because of a scheduling conflict with the facility

**Workshop:** Our topic this week was on *Guzmanias*. Dr. Larry Giroux handed out an article he wrote many years ago and highlighted a few interesting tidbits. For instance: *Guzmanias* can grow with or without soil, but prefer moist, warm areas with in-direct light. While sharing several characteristics with *Tillandsias* and *Vrieseas*, such as being spineless, *Guzmanias* have tiny vertical reddish/ brownish lines that appear within the leaves. The inflorescences are usually 3 dimensional rather than 2 dimensional as seen with most *Vrieseas* and many *Tillandsias*. Since they are epiphytes, he suggested fertilizing with a foliage spray. A weak solution is all that's needed. In cooler weather and during the dry season, it's best to let the plant dry out between waterings to avoid rotting of the base and roots of the plants.

Since the Mexican Weevil loves *Guzmanias*, it's wise to check often for holes at the base or if the center leaves easily pull out. If infected, once the weevil larvae is killed, put the damaged plant in a dry, shady area and it may still give you pups (this is true of all weevil infested bromeliads). Please note: since the pups often develop between the leaves, it's difficult to remove the pups without hurting the mother. Larry suggested just letting it clump and keeping the mother as long as possible to provide nutrients and only cutting out or trimming damaged leaves and the old inflorescences.

Larry also showed many stunning photos of various *Guzmanias*, including several *lingulata* species, hybrids and cultivars. He also showed us a *Guzmania monostachia*, with white flowers and bracts (the variegated form), our very own endangered Florida native that grows along with the normal *monostachia* in the Fakahatchee Strand in Southern Florida.

**Program:** Dr. Terrie Bert, a longtime member of our Society and the Sarasota Bromeliad Society, has been a research scientist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute for over 25 years. Her widespread knowledge of bromeliads is a well-known fact as she has written many articles and made presentations all over the world. Today she presented the 1<sup>st</sup> in a series she has creating which focus on Bromeliad genera that are not commonly grown. Working her way through the alphabet, covering A through C, she displayed many informative slides and revealing photos. We learned that *Alcantereas*, besides being huge, taking a long time to bloom and dramatic, are tolerant of cold, heat, sun, shade, drought, rain, and leaf litter. We also found out that there are 30+ varieties of *Ananas comosus*, or pineapples, and that the plant fibers can be used to make baskets and hammocks. And if those tidbits weren't interesting enough, she showed us a striking *Brocchinia reducta*, a protocarnivore that can catch bugs and digest them handily with resident bacteria. Such a plant could come in handy for all of us living in Florida!

**Door Prizes:** Our door prize this month was a beautiful *Billbergia amoena* var. *stolonifera*, donated by Julie Stein.

**Show & Tell:** Dale Kammerlohr showed and discussed 13 interesting plants brought in for discussion, including a huge striking inflorescence, and a stunning Stotak hybrid.

**Raffle:** Larry Giroux assisted by Luli Westra and Julie Stein, gave away about 20 donated plants to the happy winners.

Meeting adjourned: 3:56

Respectfully submitted by Alison Ackerman



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**This is your July-August 2024 CBS Newsletter**