

FLORIDA COUNCIL
of
BROMELIAD SOCIETIES inc.

1985

Quarterly Newsletter.

This newsletter published quarterly by Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. & mailed February, May, August & November to all paid up members of those Bromeliad Societies of Florida which make up the Council. Non-members may subscribe for \$2.00 year. Make checks payable to: Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies & mail to Carol Johnson, Editor, at the cover address.

VOL. V - ISSUE II

EXCERPTS FROM:

NOTES ON HYBRID TILLANDSIAS IN FLORIDA

by

Harry E. Luther

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

Tillandsia X floridana L.E. Smith pro sp. et stat. nov.(Tillandsia fasciculata SW. var. floridana L. B. Smith, Phytologia 15(3): 197, 1967)

Plant flowering to ca. 0.6 m high, usually much smaller, leaves numerous, densely cinereous, lepidote, stiff and erect, sheaths triangular, to 2.5 cm. wide, blades very narrowly triangular, to 0.8 cm wide at midlength; scape erect, shorter than to about equalling the leaves; inflorescence densely digitate with 3 to 10 lateral, erect branches; primary bracts elliptic, densely lepidote, pink when alive; spikes 5 to 13 flowered; floral bracts densely imbricate, 2-2.5 cm long, thin, nerved, variably lepidote, pink when alive; sepals 1.7-2.2 cm long, posteriorly connate and earinate; corolla to 4.5 cm long, tubular, violet; stamens and style exserted; capsules to 4 cm long.

TYPE: United States: Florida: Osceola Co., 50 feet, 23 March 1953, M. B. Foster 2820 (Holotype: US).

The narrow leaf Tillandsia taxa of Central Florida have been a source of confusion for many years (Smith, 1966). Previous workers, dealing mainly with herbarium material have found great difficulty in applying names to the variable populations of tillandsias found from Lake Okeechobee northward in peninsular Florida. Only by observing living populations is it possible to understand this variation and correlate characters of the living plants with artifacts of preserved specimens.

In central Florida Tillandsia fasciculata SW. var. densispica Mez (near the northern limit of its range) apparently hybridizes with the dominant species, Tillandsia bartramii Elliot. Specimens more or less morphologically intermediate between these species are fairly frequent. In some populations the purported hybrid plants tend to greatly resemble the T. bartramii parent suggesting further backcrossing. It should be noted that the type specimen (Foster 2820 at US) more closely resembles a typical T. fasciculata var. densispica than most of the additional material examined. Mulford Foster (cf. letter with type at US) suggested a hybrid origin for his 2820 but appeared to dismiss this possibility without explanation. C. S. Gardner (1982, and pers. comm.) also concluded that this taxon was of hybrid origin but did not propose any nomenclatural changes.

Tillandsia X floridana may be distinguished from T. bartramii by its larger size and more ample inflorescence as well as a tendency to form more erect, not hemispherical clusters. It differs from T. fasciculata by being somewhat smaller with narrower leaves and having pink (not red or green) rather thin, usually lepidote floral bracts.

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MAY 1985

Tillandsia X smalliana Luther, *hyb. nov.*

(Tillandsiae polystachya sensu Small non T. polystachia (L.) L.)

Plant stemless, flowering to 0.5 m high; leaves 8 to 18 in number, densely appressed lepidote throughout, stiff, coriaceous, arching but not at all recurved or contorted, sheaths broadly elliptic, inflated, to 4 cm wide, blades narrowly triangular, involute, to 2.2 cm wide at mid-length; scape erect, exceeding the leaves; inflorescence digitate with 3 to 12 lateral, erect branches (rarely simple); primary bracts elliptic, glabrous, usually red; spikes 5 to 15 flowered; floral bracts densely imbricate, to 2.5 cm long, coriaceous, glabrous, red; sepals 2.0-2.4 cm long, posteriorly connate and carinate; corolla to 5 cm long, tubular, violet; stamens and style exserted; capsules to 3.8 cm long.

TYPE: United State: Florida: Collier Co., Big Cypress Swamp, Oct 1980, Bush, Dragen, Determann & Luther s n (Holotype: SEL).

Tillandsia X smalliana is frequently encountered in cypress swamps, and in brightly lit hammocks throughout the southern portion of Florida (pers. obs.) always in the company of its putative parents T. balbisiana Schultes f. and T. fasciculata Sw. var. densispica Mez. All specimens examined are consistently intermediate, suggesting that these plants are primary hybrids and rarely backcross with either parent. Whether or not these hybrids are fertile has not been ascertained but they often develop fruit both in the wild and in cultivation. Tillandsia X smalliana has usually been misdetermined as T. polystachia (L.) L., a common Caribbean species not known to occur in Florida. Luther (1978) has pointed out the differences between these two taxa and several other authors have expressed doubt concerning the identity and status of this Florida taxon (Smith, 1938; Rickett, 1966; C. S. Gardner, 1982 and pers. comm; R. W. Read, 1984 and pers. comm.).

Tillandsia X smalliana may be distinguished from T. balbisiana by its more numerous leaves that are erect to arching and not at all recurved or contorted and larger inflorescence. It differs from T. fasciculata by having its leaf-sheaths conspicuously inflated, a more slender scape, and narrower, more erect branches of the inflorescence.

Acknowledgements: I thank the curators at US, NY, USF and FLAS for the loan of specimens critical to this study.

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Editor Note: The above article reprinted from PHYTOLOGIA, An international journal to expedite botanical and phytoecological publications. Volume 57, No. 3, May 1985. Published by Harold N. Moldenke & Alma L. Moldenke; 500 Hemlock Avenue NW; Corvallis, Oregon 97330.

F O L L O W U P :

(This first letter had to be retyped as it would not reproduce. The other two are copies as received).

April 29, 1985

Dear Carol:

It was good to see you at the Miami Show and as promised I am putting in my 2 cents worth on your request for discussion of the pros and cons of the club raffles.

Our Sarasota group sells tickets for 25 cents each and all raffle plants are donated by the members. When you win a plant, you are suppose to bring the second offset back to the raffle. We look upon our raffle as one of the main ways we raise funds for the club and, of course, a nice way to share plants with our members.

Granted the beginner has more fun than the person with a large collection, since they are more likely to find plants that they don't have. However, we have a number of members that have large collections and we try to bring plants that are not quite so common. This does not necessarily mean expensive, just different plants. In addition, many of the so-called trash plants become treasures after the freeze we had in 1984. We certainly do not expect our commercial and collector members to bring a larger number or more expensive plants to the raffle.

I think it is a valuable service to the new collector to have available a number of different plants at low cost, because very few of them would be willing to spend much money on plants which they are not sure they will be able to raise. However, when they are successful at growing some of the cheapies, they then become bolder and begin to spend money on better plants.

Finally, I think some members of our plant clubs are losing sight of our clubs' purposes. As far as I know, the clubs were formed to share information and enjoyment of these marvelous plants and not to provide income for individuals nor one-up-manship of groups or individuals over others.

/s/ Patsy Worley, Member, Sarasota
Bromeliad Society.

Viola Abel
380 North Shore Drive
Sarasota, Florida 33580

Dear Editor,

I started this letter nearly a month ago, then it got buried under income tax papers!

In regard to the article on "junk plants" in the last Quarterly, I wonder what the author considers "junk plants"? If they are unrecorded crosses of dubious attractiveness, I can agree wholeheartedly. But if the author considers such old favorites as *Billbergia pyramidalis*, *nutans*, *distachia* and *pineliana* junk plants just because they are common and easily grown, I violently disagree!

How many hundreds of people first became hooked on bromeliads after receiving a blooming old garden favorite bromeliad? I know my first bromeliad was a gift of *Billbergia pyramidalis* eighteen years ago and I have been buying an average of 25 bromeliads every year since so the dealers are way ahead of the game.

In regard to plant raffles, I could not understand the author's contention that they cause membership to drop. Poor programs will do the job very rapidly but plant raffles do give members who can't afford to buy more expensive plants an opportunity to build up their collections. I feel that each Society should decide that issue without pressure from other groups.

If the purpose of that article was to stir up controversy among the members, it sure did the trick!

Regards,

Viola Abel
Mrs. Viola Abel

Editor's Note: Nowhere in the article regarding plant raffles were the words "junk plants" used. There is no such thing as "junk plants". There is "trash", i.e. spent, misnamed, diseased, cold damaged plants. My thanks to those who responded. Many who oppose plant raffles called to voice their opinion, but understandably did not wish their signatures committed to print. The article was written by your editor, and while I neither oppose or approve plant raffles, I do get around a good bit and talk to a lot of bromeliad people. Believe me, the subject is not one I just dreamed up.

March 5, 1985

Mrs. Carol Johnson, Editor
F.C.B.S. Quarterly Newsletter
3961 Markham Woods Rd.
Longwood, Fl. 32779

Dear Carol,

We enjoyed your article in the current issue of the F.C.B.S. Quarterly and appreciate the opportunity to comment on this very important controversial subject. We sympathize with your position. Being a nurseryman and a bromeliad society officer does indeed produce mixed emotions.

As a F.W.C.B.S. President and member we saw the raffle as an important source of income for the society. However, as nurserymen, we feel that the large number of plants raffled discourages purchases of plants.

We here at Hudson Nursery stopped taking sale plants to meetings. Preparing and boxing the plants for the trip was too time consuming when 95% had to be carted back.

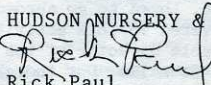
As with you, few society members shop at our nursery. When they do, often they will smile and "jokingly" make some comment about our prices being way too high. They forget (or don't realize) that when plants are purchased from other members at meetings it is often at wholesale or below wholesale prices. We personally resent those comments and are tired of being painted as some sort of rip-off artists.

Yes, we believe market value of plants at meetings should be held up. Sadly, we seldom volunteer information about local societies to customers because when we do we lose them.

Thanks for the opportunity to express some of our feelings.

Sincerely,

HUDSON NURSERY & SPRAY SERVICE


Rick Paul


K. W. Hudson

RP:KWH/asm

P.S. Carol, thank you for asking us to "sound off". We apologize for this lengthy diatribe. Please feel free to use all or any part of it for reprint in a future bulletin.

STATE NEWS

The regular meeting date of the Florida Council, scheduled for the second Saturday in April was postponed until the time of the Florida State Show and held in Miami on April 27 at the home of Connie Johnson. All state societies were represented with the exception of Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society. Due to the illness and death of our Secretary's husband, Dr. John McKenzie, there will be no minutes printed in this issue.

NEW OFFICERS at Bromeliad Society of Broward County for the coming year are: Maureen Frazel, President; Tom Naylor, Vice President; Joan Graber, Recording Secretary; Barbara Kremp, Corresponding Secretary and George Skiba-Piadlowski, Treasurer. MARK YOUR RECORDS.

The ANNUAL FLORIDA MEMBERSHIP ROSTER will be printed in Volume 5, Issue 3 of the Quarterly, which will be published in August. Florida Council representatives please note: An up to date membership roster from each of the Florida affiliates is essential to this effort and must be received by the Quarterly Editor not later than July 15. The roster is published in August to accommodate the Bromeliad Society of Broward County, which has a year ending date other than December 31.

On August 1, Treasurer of the Council, Ms. Rose Schmidt, will bill each Affiliate Society its Quarterly assessment for the year at \$1.00 per member plus an inflation fee of \$25.00. Also on this invoice will be an item of \$10.00 for annual membership dues. Up until 1984 the annual dues per affiliate society were a token \$1.00 and the Senior Reps just dug into their pockets and forked over. It is doubtful if any of them were ever reimbursed by their society. In 1984 the Council voted to raise the annual dues to \$10.00 and there was some hesitation about digging down. While published statistics would have us believe that inflation rates have slowed, somehow printing, postage, and the cost of correspondence continues to rise. Total membership in the Florida bromeliad societies has dropped in the past two years, but this seems to be a national trend in all plant societies. The explanation (excuse?) forthcoming is that in times of high prosperity people tend to branch out into more frenetic activity. When times are lean, they stay home and grow tomatoes (or bromeliads).

IT WAS DISTRESSING to hear of the recent death of Dr. John McKenzie of the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society. John and wife, Gene, loved to go abroad collecting and even though John was failing, he persevered in this activity until just a year ago. His widow, Gene, is the very able director of the Caloosahatchee newsletter and Secretary of the Florida Council. Our thoughts and sympathies are with her at this time and we hope she will call on her bromeliad society friends throughout Florida for any aid or comfort we can give her. Gene's address is: 131 Dow Lane; N. Ft. Myers 33903.

THE 32 FLORIDA BROMELIAD judges who took the Judges' Symposium in Ft. Myers last November have received their test papers. All passed and will receive their recertification for another three years.

SEMINOLE BROMELIAD SOCIETY invites members of all area Bromeliad Societies to join them for their annual Selby Botanical Gardens gathering in Sarasota on June 16. Co-ordinators are Bud Martin; 1405 Pine Way; Sanford 32771 (tel: 305-321-0838) or Nancy Hall; 1111 Glen Garry Cir.; Maitland 32751. Tel. 305-647-2039.

SHOW WINNERS:

Jacksonville Bromeliad Society Palatka Mall Show, March 29-31, 1985.
Best in Show, Al Muzzell, *Vriesea Shima* Rhyu
Sweepstakes, Al Muzzell

Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay
Best in Show, Cornelius Colin, *Neophytum* Ralph Davis
Sweepstakes, Cornelius Colin

Bromeliad Society of Broward County, April 13-14, 1985, Ft. Lauderdale
Best in Show, Jack Cunningham, *Aechmea orlandiana* cultural display
Sweepstakes, Stan McMillan

Florida State Show, Miami, Fairchild Gardens, April 26-28, 1985
Best in Show, Jeffrey Block, *Aechmea purpurea-rosea*
Non-Commercial Sweepstakes, Tony Buffalo
Commercial Sweepstakes, Steve Correale

Jacksonville Bromeliad Society Normandy Mall Show, Mother's Day Weekend.
Best in Show, Don Bryne, *Aechmea zebrina* multiple
Sweepstakes, Cornelius Colin

A SYMPOSIUM:
THE BIOLOGY OF TROPICAL EPIPHYTES

In keeping with its goals of research and conservation, the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in celebration of its tenth anniversary will hold a symposium entitled "The Biology of Tropical Epiphytes" on 19-21 September 1985 in Sarasota, Florida, USA. Invited and contributed papers will address botanical and horticultural topics pertaining to epiphytes, including their ecology, physiology, reproduction, systematics, conservation, micropropagation, and cultural management in glass houses and tropical botanical gardens. A large collection of living specimens of Orchidaceae, Bromeliaceae, Araceae, Gesneriaceae, and Pterophyta, as well as many other tropical vascular plants, is maintained at Selby Gardens. These collections will serve as a focal point for observation and discussion during the symposium. The symposium is open to all biologists and horticulturists interested in epiphytes. Persons interested in attending the symposium, presenting a short paper and/or receiving additional information should contact Dr. W. John Kress, Director of Research, The Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, 811 South Palm Avenue, Sarasota, Florida 33577, USA (813-366-5730) by 15 June 1985. Details on the program of speakers, preparation of abstracts of contributed papers and posters, accommodations in Sarasota, and a final registration form will be sent by 15 July to those persons who have completed preliminary registration.

SHOW PAGE

May 31 - June 2, 1985 - Seventh Annual Atlanta Bromeliad Show.

Northlake Mall. Off I-285 at La Vista Rd., Atlanta
Standard Bromeliad show, members' and commercial
plant sales. Judging Saturday, June 1.
Show Chairman, Charles Hilbers, 404-429-8993

September 15, 1985 - Seminole Bromeliad Society All Day Workshop

October 12-13, 1985 - Annual Sarasota Bromeliad Show at Selby Botanical
Gardens, Sarasota. Show Chairman, Robt. L. Smith,
813-388-1921.

October 18-20, 1985 - Bromeliad Society of Central Florida Annual
Bromeliad Show in conjunction with the Central Florida
Lawn & Garden Show at Leu Gardens, Orlando.
Ed & Nancy Hall, Co-Chairmen. 305-647-2039.

November 9-10, 1985 - Annual Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Show.
Peggy Bailey, Show Chairman. 813-694-1803.

April 18-20, 1986 - FLORIDA STATE BROMELIAD SHOW, hosted by Bromeliad
Guild of Tampa Bay at University Square Mall, Tampa.

May 21-25, 1986 - World Bromeliad Conference; Fairmont Hotel, New
Orleans, La. Show theme, "One Mo' Time". The show will
be kicked off with a private showing of the paintings
of Morris Henry Hobbs. Conference guests will be the
first to view the exhibition, which will then remain
on exhibit for some time. Jack Grubb, Show Chairman.

The latest non-sequitur from Murray Cragin of Northwest Florida
Bromeliad Society:

EVEN BARBARIANS
LIKE
CHOCOLATE-CHIP
COOKIES

