



# **FLORIDA COUNCIL of BROMELIAD SOCIETIES INC. Newsletter**

This Newsletter published by Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. & mailed to all paid up members of those Bromeliad Societies of Florida which make up the Council. Non-members may subscribe for \$2.00 per year.

Make checks payable to:

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

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Carol Johnson, Editor at cover address

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VOLUME XIII - ISSUE 4

November 1993

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CATCHING UP-STAYING EVEN

It is with regret I inform you of the passing of another long-time Florida bromeliad friend. David Adels of Florida West Coast Bromeliad society died last month of a viral infection. He was 53 years old and had been a member of FWC society since 1976. David was a true plant lover and a gentle spirit. He had not been in the best of health for many years, but managed always to be in the thick of things. He will be missed.

As usual, this last Newsletter of the year will be somewhat late. The shows are all past, and barring unusual weather, there will be very little plant news until 1994. If your society is planning a show in 1994, and the date is set, I would appreciate the information as soon as possible.

In issue number 2 of this year I reported on the use of eucalyptus bark (& mulch). Since that time I have discovered that top-dressing with the eucalyptus product discourages snails, slugs, ants and roaches. Also, moths do not seem to lay eggs on young seedling when they are placed in a tray lined with the eucalyptus. Results were most striking on *Aechmea mertensii* seedlings.

REVIEW: I have acquired a copy of Bulletin 877 dated June 1990, entitled "Mosquito Production from Bromeliads in Florida" written by our own Dr. J. Howard Frank of Evil Weevil fame. It is an attractive booklet with colored illustrations of bromeliads and a detailed report of studies regarding bromeliads and their association with mosquitos in Florida. The mosquito genus Wyeomyia is the one common to Florida and, while it is a biting pest, it is not known to vector

vector any disease of humans. Much of the booklet is technical, but the gist (for you and I) is contained in the SUMMARY on page 14, and I quote it herewith:

"Among the native and imported bromeliads (air plants) common in Florida are tank bromeliads, which catch and hold water in little pools (tanks) in their leaf axils. Many different tank bromeliads are grown as ornamental plants.

Mosquito larvae grow in the bromeliad tanks. Almost all of them are Wyeomyia mosquito larvae, but sometimes others are found, especially when grass clippings get into the bromeliad tanks and foul the water. Besides the mosquito larvae, various harmless aquatic organisms live in the bromeliad tanks.

The mosquito larvae do not harm the bromeliads, but they produce mosquito pupae which, in turn, produce biting adult mosquitos. Adult Wyeomyia mosquitos bite during daylight hours and often are a pest problem. They are not controlled by pesticidal fogging conducted by mosquito control districts.

Reduction of the number of tank bromeliads grown is a practical way of controlling Wyeomyia mosquitos. Because the mosquito larvae feed on organic materials such as dead leaves that have fallen into the tanks, then keeping tank bromeliads in glasshouses and shade houses will lessen adult mosquito production from them. Pressure from a garden hose will wash out some mosquito eggs and organic materials in bromeliad tanks.

In general, use of chemical insecticides to kill Wyeomyia is not a reliable strategy. The microbial insecticide Bacillus sphaericus has given promising results in preliminary tests and may be harmless to non-target organisms; applications of it may have to be repeated six times per year. It may be available commercially in 1989 or 1990 as a mosquito larvicide."

For a copy of the booklet, address: Agricultural Experiment Station; Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences; University of Florida; Gainesville, Fl. BULLETIN #877.

FLORIDA COUNCIL OF BROMELIAD SOCIETIES, INC.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Third Quarter 1993 at 9/30/93

Beginning Balance, General Fund	\$ 5,976.19
Deposits during Quarter (1)	<u>3,065.50</u>
Available Funds, General Fund	9,041.69

Expenses:

Radio Shack, Supplies	\$ 49.43
Special Mailing Expense:	
Print Letter	60.35
Postage	62.72
Envelopes	45.61
Petty Cash	35.00
Speaker's Fee	200.00
VOL. XIII, #3 Print	406.90
VOL. XIII, #3 Mail	65.61
	<u>925.62</u>
Balance, General Fund, 9/30/93	\$ 8,116.07

Weevil Fund:

Beginning Balance	\$ 9,191.40
Deposits	635.00
	<u>9,826.40</u>
Account Balance, Reconciled, 9/30/93	<u>\$17,942.47</u>

General Fund Deposits Analysis (1) :

1. Extravaganza Auction	2,160.00
2. Assessment & Annual Dues	731.00
3. Meeting Auction	57.50
4. FEC Initiation Fee	50.00
5. Adopt-A-Garden	65.00
6. Subscription	2.00
	<u>\$ 3,065.50</u>

Carol Johnson

The many small Vrieseas tend to get lost in the maze of their big, glamorous relatives, but to those who have limited or very little space, or who specialize in small plants, there are some real gems available. Most of the truly miniature Vrieseas are native to eastern Brazil, and in my experience, all self-seed and are easily grown. All seem to prefer low light, but in all other ways should be treated like their bigger relatives. I list here only five, but they are my favorites of the really small plants. All are species.

Vriesea modesta, to 12" high, including inflorescence. Beautiful, simple bloom spike rising just above the recurved green leaves. Spike is wider than tall, red blending to yellow-orange & rose. Very long lastings. Best grown as a clump in a six inch bulb pan.

Vriesea racinae. Eight to ten inches tall, including inflorescence. Green leaves are numerous, heavily brown spotted and tightly recurved. Blooms and bracts are insignificant, greenish-yellow, and reputed to smell like Ivory soap. It is rightly the most popular of the small Vrieseas, it self seeds and is easily propagated. It is named for Racine Foster, who discovered it in Esperito Santo, Brazil.

Vriesea poenulata. To 12 inches tall, including the inflorescence. It has many thin recurved leaves growing from a modified bulbous base. If kept fairly dry the leaves develop dark speckles which are very attractive. Flowers are yellow & fairly large for so small a plant. The plant blooms regularly and produces numerous offsets. It requires little care.

Vriesea triligulata. This plant is not listed in Monograph 14, so is undoubtedly a new find. The plant is no more than 3 inches tall, but it has

a proportionately tall bloom spike, which makes the total height about 12 to 15 inches. Leaves are fairly numerous in a graceful, recurved rosette, green with reverse maroon. Stem is bright red, the flowers yellow and rather numerous. The plant pups freely and prefers quite low light.

Vriesea correi-araujei. This is another newly described small Vriesea. It is very similar to Vr. poenulata, but without the speckled foliage and the blooms are white. Also, the leaves are more erect than recurved.

There are many other small to medium size Vriesea that are a joy to grow, but all of those listed below can be force fed and overpotted to increase their size. Grown normally, all are small enough to qualify as space savers.

Vriesea sucrei	Vriesea scalaris
Vriesea simplex	Vriesea carinata
Vriesea guttata	Vriesea lubbersii *
Vriesea flammea *	Vriesea rodigasiana
Vriesea bleheri	* denotes stoloniferous

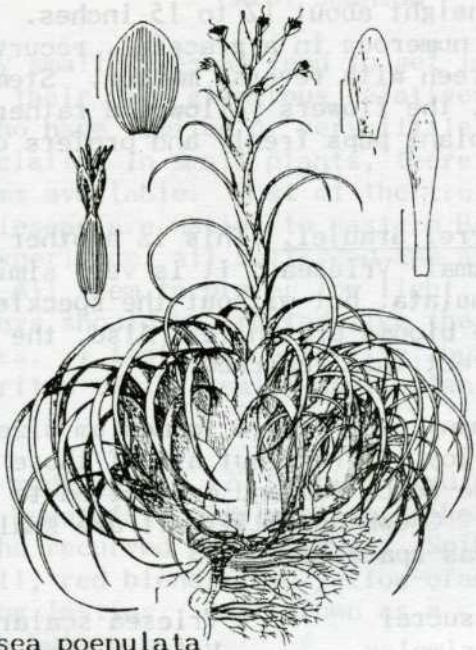
There is also a group of gray leaved, Tillandsia like Vrieseas, but these take different treatment and deserve separate discussion.

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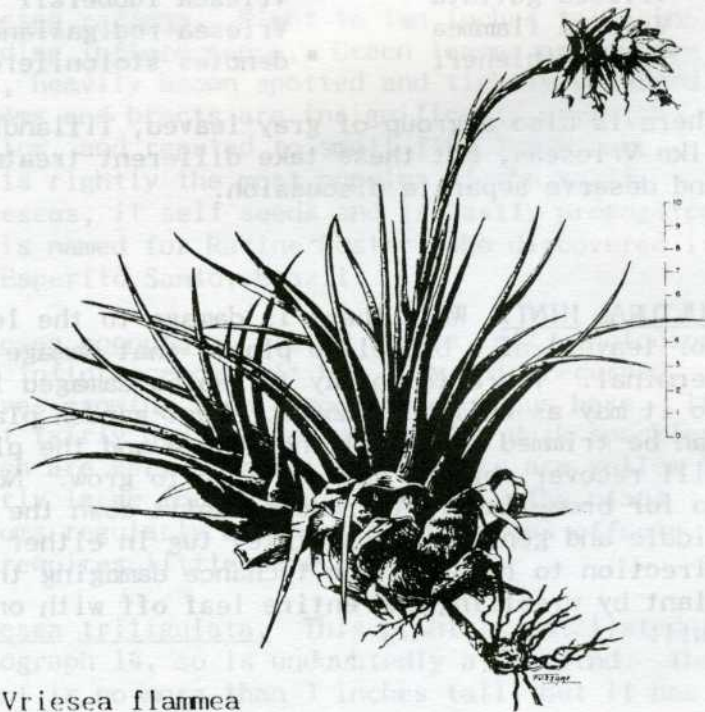
CULTURAL HINT: When there is damage to the leaf (or leaves) of a bromeliad plant, that damage is terminal. There is no way to heal a damaged leaf so it may as well be removed. Most garden plants can be trimmed back past the damage and the plant will recover, branch and continue to grow. Not so for bromeliads. To remove, split down the middle and gently (if possible) tug in either direction to remove. Don't chance damaging the plant by wrestling the entire leaf off with one pull.

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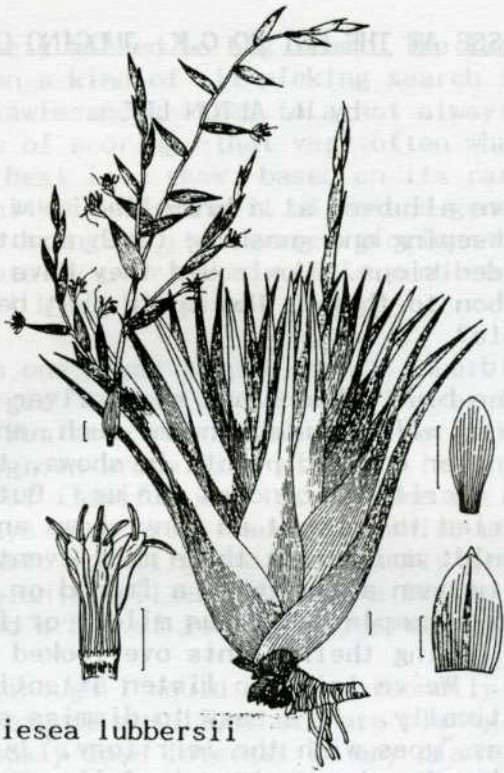
Vriesea flammea



*Vriesea poenulata*



*Vriesea flammea*



*Vriesea lubbersii*



*Vriesea carinata*



IMPASSE AT THE NOT SO O.K. JUDGING CORRAL

by H. ALTON LEE

We've all been at a bromeliad show and heard someone weeping and gnashing teeth about the judges' decisions. How could they have given a blue ribbon to that ? How could that be at the head table?

Since blue ribbons and mock silver never interested my wife, Paula, and me much, and since we have never entered plants in shows, this has not been a critical concern for us. But we have always tried to support as many shows and sales as we could; and during these many events, there has rarely been a time when a friend or acquaintance hasn't complained to us mildly or ferociously about having their plants overlooked or scored unfairly. We've tried to listen attentively and sympathetically. It's easy to dismiss such complaints as "goes with the territory," but quite often we've found ourselves in full agreement with the "wronged" party.

Lately, it seems so many people have been remarking about inequities in the present judging system that I have done some more up-to-date reflecting on the process. Since I hope I am reasonably objective on the subject, I will address what I and many others believe to be a fatal flaw in the present arrangement.

Long ago, in looking at my notes, videos and photos, I discovered a potentially disturbing pattern. The plants that were most likely to interest me, a romantic for 10 these decades, were almost never on the head table or necessarily even ribbon winners in their categories.

Friends tell me that today's novice judges have been trained so well to a rigid, narrow definition of perfection that the cliché about not being able to see the forest for the trees has

