



**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

Mail to:

Carol Johnson, Editor at cover address

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VOLUME XVII - ISSUE I

FEBRUARY 1997

CATCHING UP - STAYING EVEN

For those few of you who keep a complete file of the NEWSLETTER, no, you did not lose Issue 4 of 1996. There was no news of note, no headline stories, so I decided to save the money for the next issue. This one. I am beginning my 17th year as NEWSLETTER editor. Every year is the last. This year we shall see.

Nat, Rob and Don DeLeon and their bromeliad nursery are featured in the current issue of GREENHOUSE GROWER Magazine, with their pictures on the cover and a feature article inside. I never realized before how much the boys look like Nat. This issue I shall keep.

There were rumors that the West Pasco Bromeliad Society had disbanded, so I called Evelyn Hayes for verification. She confirmed that the vote to disband was passed this month. Evelyn has tried very hard to keep the group together, and has attended nearly all Council meetings. Many thanks, Evelyn.

HOSTS FOR FCBS MEETINGS: 1997:, Jan, Fla. East Coast; April, Broward; July, Seminole; October, West Pasco (?). 1998: Jan, Central Florida; April, Caloosahatchee; July, Tampa Bay; October, South Florida. 1999: Jan., Imperial Polk; April, Jacksonville; July, Sarasota; October, Florida West Coast.

We lost one and gained one. Treasure Coast Bromeliad Society became a member of FCBS at the January 1997 meeting. They represent an area of Florida which has long been neglected--too far north for easy attendance to Broward and too far South for Central Florida and Florida East Coast. Their area, Vero Beach and surrounding territory, should have prime growing conditions for bromeliads and it will be exciting to watch them grow and learn. Thank Cassandra Barrett for the organizational effort. Welcome TCBS.

HATS OFF TO THE WEEVIL WARRIORS

The weevil (*matamasius callizona*) was first noticed in Southwest Florida native Tillandsia populations in 1990, although it had probably been around for some time before being noticed. What appeared to be perfectly healthy plants suddenly disintegrated, the leaves fell to the ground and the plants were history. Reports across South Florida indicated that this was no isolated occurrence and the Florida Council lost no time planning curative measures.

We were lucky to attract the attention of the Entomology Department of the University of Florida and Dr. J. Howard Frank, because without Dr. Frank we would still be bumping around in the dark on weevil control research. He determined that the weevil in it's native habitat (Central America) was probably controlled there by a natural predator and that we should focus research so as to identify, incubate and release the predator into our Florida habitats.

The Council realized that this course of action would entail many thousands of dollars, and established a separate Weevil Fund. Bromeliad Societies and individuals throughout have contributed generously (see V XVI, #2) and are continuing to do so. Extravaganza Rare Plant Auction proceeds in 1996 went into the Weevil Fund. Just recently, there has been contributed \$2,000.00 by societies from World Conference profits.

Meanwhile, the weevil is chomping it's way North, and has now passed Sarasota. It was hoped the frost belt would halt it's progress, but our West Coast had killing frost during 1995-6 and the weevil has appeared there this year.

As Treasurer of FCBS, I report the following disbursement of funds to date for weevil research. Every dime was donated by the bromeliad lovers of Florida. We are now entering the most expensive phase of the control program and hope the same generous folks continue to support the effort.

WEEVIL FUND DISBURSEMENTS THRU 12/31/96

University of Florida (SHARE):
4/18/92 3,000.00
4/17/95 700.00
1/18/96 1,300.00
12/20/96 3,900.00
12/20/96 244.60
Total to SHARE \$ 9,144.60

Escuela Agricola (Honduras) Graduate Student:
12/19/94 1,592.50
8/26/95 1,592.50
1/18/96 1,500.00
6/14/96 2,300.00
11/19/96 2,300.00
Total to Honduras \$ 9,285.00

Other expense:
3/1/94 Shade Cloth 101.83
3/4/94 Ship Shade Cloth 10.20
7/20/94 Travel to Panama 2,776.00
1/18/96 Misc. Exp. Mexico 100.00
Total Other Expense \$ 2,988.03

Total Expense to 12/31/96 \$21,417.63 21,417.63

Balance in Weevil Fund, 12/31/96 2,883.23

Total Weevil Donations thru 1996 \$ 24,300.86

Congratulations to the generous people of Florida,
most of whom have never seen a live weevil.

Elsewhere is reprinted a letter received from
Don Beadle regarding weevil damage at his nursery.

Reprinted also is the first article published in
the Newsletter, May 1990, which introduced the
weevil to our readers.

(Following are excerpts from Entomology Cir. No. 330. dated May, 1990, issued by Fla. Dept. Agric. & Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry. Lack of space in this FCBS Newsletter makes it impossible to print the entire text. A complete report will undoubtedly be carried in the BSI Journal).

THE SPECIES OF METAMASIVS IN FLORIDA
(Coleoptera: Curculionidae)

INTRODUCTION: The weevil genus Metamasivus Horn is composed of approximately 100 Neotropical species, one of which naturally occurs in South Florida. These medium-sized, often brightly colored weevils generally breed in palms, orchids, bananas and plantains, sugarcane, and bromeliads, including pineapples. Recently 2 exotic species with pest potential have become established in South Florida. Metamasivus callizona (Chevrolat) is here reported for the first time from the United States. This circular summarizes biological and distributional information about these 3 species and will facilitate their identification.

HISTORY: Metamasivus callizona (Chevrolat) was described from Mexico south through Guatemala and western Panama (Vaurie 1966). The first Florida specimen of this species was collected at a bromeliad nursery in Ft. Lauderdale on 11/15/89. The nursery was treated and no other specimens were found. Within two months, continued surveying produced specimens of M. callizona from scattered localities in central and northern Broward County and southern Palm Beach County and it appears to be established. Weevils have been collected from native bromeliads in both residential and natural areas.

IDENTIFICATION: Metamasivus callizona (11-16 mm long) is black except for a transverse band of yellow or orange just before the midpoint of the elytra.

BIOLOGY: Vaurie (1966) recorded Metamasivus callizona from bromeliads, pineapple plants, and "banana debris". In Florida, it has been collected from Tillandsia fasciculata Sw. and T. utriculata L. Adults, larvae and pupae often are present in the same plant. Larval damage is restricted mainly to the base of the plant, although sometimes it extends up the inflorescence.

At Easterlin County Park in Broward County a heavy infestation in February (1990) was marked by numerous seemingly healthy plants littering the ground. Closer inspection revealed extensive damage to the base of the plants, so that they had broken away from the tree branches. The life cycle seems to be fairly rapid, as pupae have been found in extensively mined but still green and apparently healthy plants. Obviously distressed plants rarely yield anything except empty pupal cases.

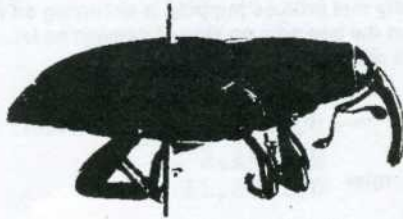
DISTRIBUTION: Metamasivus callizona: Broward: Ft. Lauderdale, North Lauderdale, Oakland Park, Parkland, and Wilton Manors. Palm Beach County: Boca Raton. Its distribution suggests that it was introduced and established long before the first specimen was discovered.

ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE: Metamasius callizona has already shown that it has pest potential in nurseries specializing in bromeliads, and could pose a threat to the native Tillandsia species in the state. Of special concern are the 2 threatened species in the genus in Florida, T. flexuosa Sw., which occurs within the current Florida range of M. callizona, and Till. pruinosa Sw. (Ward 1981).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: This report prepared by C. W. O'Brien Department of Entomology and Structural Pest Control, Florida A & M University, Tallahassee, Fl. 32307 and K. C. Thomas, Florida State Collection of Arthropods, P.O. Box 1269; Gainesville, Fl. 32602. Also, Division of Plant Industry inspectors Dennis Clinton, Susan Marsicano, Matthew Wittek, Debra Chalot, Donna Leone, Jack McCluskie and Keith Harris are to be thanked for their untiring efforts in tracking down populations of M. callizona.



M. callizona Chevrolat, dorsal view (length, 11-16 mm).



Metamasius callizona, lateral view

1/14/97

Carol Johnson
3961 Markham Woods Road
Longwood, FL 32779

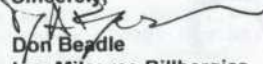
Dear Carol:

Mr. Al Muzzell has asked me to write to you regarding the weevil invasion to my place, so here are the facts, Mam, as I recall them.

Los Milagros is a *Billbergia* collection located some 12 miles south of Sarasota, Florida in southern Sarasota County. The *Billbergias* grow in open shade structures on five semi-wooded acres containing pines and oaks. One large live oak hosts a large population of native *Tillandsias* including *Tillandsia utriculata* and *Tillandsia fasciculata*. In August, 1996 I noticed a few large *Tillandsias* on the ground beneath the tree. Examination of the plants showed them to be eaten off completely just above their bases leaving the bases attached to the tree. The plants contained various larval, pupal and mature stages of the weevil *Metamasius callizona*. The insects were identified by Al Muzzell and Dr. Louis Wilson.

Destruction of the native *Tillandsias* has continued until only the small plants under 3" remain. No effort was made to treat the native plants in the tree. To date, January, 1997, I have found no evidence of the weevils presence in the nearby shade houses which are unsealed and open to insect entry. If I discover weevil-sign in the *Billbergias*, I will notify you and the Florida Council.

I have noted recently that profuse pupping is occurring on the *Tillandsia* bases remaining on the tree with no sign of damage so far. I shall continue this observation as well.

Sincerely,

Don Beadle
Los Milagros *Billbergias*
First Dirt Road
Venice, FL 34292

don beadle . los milagros billbergias

First Dirt Road, Venice, Florida 34292 • Phone / Fax (941) 485-1096

FLORIDA COUNCIL OF BROMELIAD SOCIETIES, INC.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Consolidated 1996 Report at 12/31/96

Beginning Balance, General Fund	8,263.43
Deposits 1996	<u>1,482.00</u>

\$ 9,745.43

Expense:

Bulk Mail Permit	85.00	
Fla. Corporation Tax	61.25	
Chairman Expense	8.63	
1st Class Postage	128.00	
Newsletter: Print	1,419.53	
Mail	253.84	
BIC Donation	800.00	
Extravaganza Expense	78.75	
Labels	<u>24.00</u>	<u>2,859.00</u>

Balance, General Fund, 12/31 \$ 6,886.43

WEEVIL FUND:

Beginning Balance	8,426.33
Deposits	<u>6,101.50</u>
Available	14,527.83

Expense:

Other	100.00
Escuela Agricola	6,100.00
SHARE UF	<u>5,444.60</u>
Spent	11,644.60

Weevil Fund Balance at 12/31/96 2,883.23

BALANCE IN BANK AT 12/31/96 \$ 9,769.66

Reconciled and certified correct:

Carol M. Johnson, Treasurer

OFFICERS AND FCBS REPS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 1997

- 01 Bromeliad Society of Broward County
Meets Broward Ag Ext. Bldg. 3rd Monday
President: Polly Pascal
Vice President: Bill Frazel
Secretary: Kevin Murphy
Treasurer: Charles Knox
Council Reps: Polly Pascal, Maureen Frazel
-
- 02 Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society
Meets Lee County Garden Center, 3rd Sunday
President: Marie Bessellieu
Vice President: Don Beadle
Secretary: Betty Ann Prevatt
Treasurer: William Davis
Council Reps: Larry Giroux (Chairman) &
Bobbie Hull
-
- 03 Bromeliad Society of Central Florida
Meets Leu Gardens, Orlando, 4th Monday 7 pm
President: Karen Andreas
Vice President: Geoffrey Johnson
Secretary: Betsy McCrory
Treasurer: Edw. Hall
Council Reps: Geoffrey Johnson, Karen Andreas
-
- 04 Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society
Meets Hope Presb. Church, Clearwater, 1st Thur
President: Marty Baxley
Vice President: Kathy Risley
Secretary: Fay O'Rourke
Treasurer: Michael Kiehl
Council Reps: Marty Baxley & John Bankhead
Gwen Carnegie, Alternate
-
- 05 Imperial Polk Bromeliad Society
Meets Bartow Civic Center, 1st Sunday
President: Joy Meyer
Vice President: Jack Roland
Secretary & Treas.: Mary Jane Albright
Council Reps: Joy Meyer & Whit Merrin

06 Jacksonville/Gainesville Bromeliad Society
Meets Entomology Bldg. UF, 4th Sunday 2 pm
President: Joan Prange
Vice President: Al Muzzell
Sec'y-Treas: Ross Prange
Council Reps: Carolyn Schoenau, Al Muzzell

07 Sarasota Bromeliad Society
Meets Selby Gardens, 2nd. Monday, 7:30 pm
President: Bob LaRoe
Vice President: Dennis Cathcart
Secretary: Dorothy Overbeck
Treasurer: Edna Sieff
Council Reps: Don Beadle, Teresa Bert

08 Seminole Bromeliad Society
Meets Sanford Garden Club, 3rd Sunday, 2 pm
President: Bud Martin
Vice President: Brian Hacker
Secretary: Norma Sinfield
Treasurer: Edw. Hall
Council Reps: Geo. Aldrich, Bud Martin

09 Bromeliad Society of South Florida
Meets Fairchild Tropical Gdn. 1st Tues. 7:30
President: Connie Johnson
Vice President: Ed Prince
Secretary: Peniel Romanelli
Treasurer: Bob Mills
Council Reps: Nat DeLeon, Martha Kent

10 Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay
Meets Tampa Fed. GC 3rd Monday evening
President: Alice Burhenn
Vice President: Dave Johnston
Secretary: Merry Webber
Treasurer: Bryan Eubanks
Council Reps: Tom Wolfe, Alice Burhenn
