

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2017

Celebrating over 63 Years in Bromeliads

fwcbs.org



April 2017 Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

Date & Time: Tuesday, April 4, 2017, 7:30 pm
Location: Good Samaritan Church
6085 Park Boulevard
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

Program

In his talk titled *Billbergias are Awesome* **Dave Johnston** will tell us about Billbergia species that he thinks are worthy of growing and why. He will then move on to Billbergia hybrids from throughout the world. His talks are most persuasive, and this one will encourage bromeliad enthusiasts to rethink whether they like Billbergias or not and, if not, to at least agree that there are some 'awesome Billbergias'.

Plant Sales

The speaker will be the sole bromeliad vendor for the evening.

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Program

Tom Wolfe's presentation titled *Unique Ways to Display Your Bromeliads* lived up to its name. With a hands-on demonstration, he explained his techniques and the materials used for displaying and mounting bromeliads. Here are some of his tips.



- Types of materials used for mounting bromeliads can include cork bark, tree fern bark, wood slab, wine bottle cork (real cork, not plastic), glass balls, monofilament (for hanging rootless Tillandsias), cedar wood (long lasting) and driftwood.
- If using driftwood, treat it first with water/Clorox solution to kill algae and termites that might be present.
- Select an appropriate size mount (not too big not too small) for the particular bromeliad you are mounting and take into consideration how it will grow over time, both size and orientation (up? down?).
- If doing a decorative piece, such as a vase or grouping, place the plants so the eye moves up the arrangement.
- Use wire, cable ties, and/or water-proof glue to secure the plant to the mount. Cable ties can be removed once the plant has rooted onto the mount.

- Mounted bromeliads can be fertilized with a weak solution of a foliar feed, applied directly to the plant leaves.

Below are pictures of some of Tom's mounted bromeliads.



Bromeliads on a hanging block of wood



Bromeliads in hanging glass balls



Bromeliads on driftwood

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

We have introduced a new feature at our meetings, a question and answer session for inquiring minds with questions regarding problems with or general information about bromeliads, such as how much fertilizer to apply to a bromeliad and when. Questions are read at the meeting to solicit answers from experts or from members who have encountered the same issue or problem. It works this way:

1. Submit questions in writing, either at the meeting and or by email prior to the meeting. If submitted by email, send your questions to Vice President/Program Chairman Brian Corey at bcorey2@tampabay.rr.com or to Newsletter Editor Linda Sheetz at lsheetz@tampabay.rr.com.
2. Your question(s) will be read at the next meeting just prior to the Show and Tell segment. People who submit questions will remain anonymous.
3. Questions and their answers will be reported in the next newsletter.

Here are questions asked and answers offered at the March meeting.

Question: I live near salt water; which bromeliads are salt tolerant and which are not?

Answer: One response was that Neoregelias, Vrieseas and Guzmanias are salt sensitive, and another response was that sea salt was not an issue for epiphytic bromeliads. Other sources found on the internet say while bromeliads do not meet the definition of a halophyte, that is, a plant that grows in or near water with high salinity, they have a high tolerance for sodium found in sea water. Caution: Reclaimed water has a high salt, i.e., sodium, content and can negatively impact bromeliads and other landscape plants.

Question: Are bromeliads pot-sensitive, that is, do they respond to the size of the pot, either a big pot to grow big or be pot-bound in a little pot? And for bromeliads that need big pots, do you start them big or periodically transfer to a bigger pot as the plant matures?

Answer: In general, pot size does not matter and bromeliads can be planted in whatever size you want. An exception would be some terrestrials such as Dyckias and Hechtias that have a thick cascade of leaves that can effectively block water from reaching the soil beneath them. These should be planted in over-sized pots that allow the top of the soil to be exposed.

Question: I have a Neoregelia that has many pups on it; one is finger size, two are just emerging from the soil, and five more are green bumps on the stem. Are these all viable or should I sacrifice the bumps and allow the others to develop more fully? Or do multiple pups result in poorer quality offspring?

Answer: Leave them all on the mother plant; they will all develop well. And as they develop, taking off pups before they get too large can induce the mother plant to produce more pups.

SHOW AND TELL

Reviewed by Helga Tarver

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Dick Dailey | <i>Neoregelia</i> 'Luna' (photos below); this plant is a normal colored offset produced by an abnormally pale pink mother plant that Dick got from the raffle table some months ago. |
| Alton Lee | <i>Aechmea</i> , unknown hybrid |
| Franne Matwijczyk | <i>Aechmea weilbachii</i> forma <i>pendula</i>
<i>Cryptanthus</i> 'Elaine'
<i>Neoregelia</i> 'Christopher Robin' (photo below); <i>Neo. olens</i> x <i>Neo.</i> 'Treasure Chest', by Lisa Vinzant; grown in bright light, the apple green leaves turn an orange/red color with yellow mottling. |
| Linda Sheetz | <i>Billbergia</i> 'Hummel's Fantasia' (photos below) |
| Susan Sousa | <i>Aechmea</i> 'Foster's Favorite'
<i>Aechmea fulgens</i> variety <i>discolor</i>
<i>Fosterella</i> , name unknown
<i>Tillandsia utriculata</i>
<i>Tillandsia ionantha</i> 'Druid' (photos below); its white flowers distinguish 'Druid' from <i>ionantha</i> 'Fuego' which has red flowers. |

Show and Tell Plants



Neoregelia 'Luna' and pale pink mother plant



Neoregelia 'Christopher Robin'



Billbergia 'Hummel's Fantasia'

Tillandsia ionantha 'Druid'



New Members

We have three new members—Sharron Blair who joined in January, and VJ Dixon and Lumena Litts who joined in March. Welcome, all.

Follow up: *Art in Bloom* Show, Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg

As published in our March newsletter, our society was invited to participate in the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Arts 20th annual *Art in Bloom* show running Thursday, March 30, through Monday, April 3. The garden installation was a first for this event. Displays have historically been limited to floral arrangements associated with a particular piece of art in the museum. This year there are 40 such floral arrangements throughout the museum galleries. This venue was a good opportunity to let the public know about bromeliads and our society—who we are, what we do, and when and where we meet.

On Wednesday, March 29, our Bromeliad Garden Team was at the museum and installed a living bromeliad garden in their sculpture courtyard. The team was composed of these 11 members.

Mary Sue Beeler
Brian Corey
Dick Dailey
Barb Gardner

Sandy Holloway
Richard Poole
Linda Sheetz
Susan Sousa

Larry Sousa
Jan Stoffels
Joe Ventimiglia

Susan was the logistics chief, organizing the plant accumulation and trial staging, and provided her trailer to move the plants to the museum. Jan and Susan served as creative directors, capably supported by Mary Sue, Linda, Barb, and Sandy. The men on the team provided the man-power for loading, unloading, storing, and again loading and unloading the plants and did other odd jobs needed for the installation. They even showed some artistic talents when they assisted in placing plants in the display!

We used about 125 bromeliads to create the Bromeliad Garden in the courtyard. Many thanks go to members Marty Baxley (Jungle Gems) and Mitch Armstrong (Armstrong Nursery) who loaned over half of the bromeliads for the display. The rest of the plants were loaned by members of the team from their personal collections.

Dick Daily's crew at his firm Dailey Advertising in St. Petersburg colorized and revised our existing tri-fold for the flyer, and designed the sign for our Bromeliad Garden display and the posters used in the museum to show the way to the Bromeliad Garden. Dick's team also added color to our society's logo (original design by Steve Littlefield) used on the literature and signs. The colorized logo is now on display at the top of the first page of this newsletter

On Sunday, April 2, Linda Sheetz and Alton Lee will be in the Bromeliad Garden from 2 to 4 pm for the museum's "Conversations with the Designers" event, to answer questions about bromeliads and to hand out bromeliad horticultural brochures. Members are encouraged to visit the museum and experience the Art in Bloom show. For more information about the event, go to the museum's website <http://mfastpete.org/event/the-stuart-society-art-in-bloom>.

Below are pictures of the FWCBS Bromeliad Garden. Pictures on pages 7-9 that show areas of the courtyard garden before the installation are on the left and pictures that show those areas after the installation are on the right.



**Bromeliad Garden
designed and installed by...**

FWCBS would like to thank our major plant sources, members of FWCBS
Marty Baxley's Jungle Gems Nursery Mitch Armstrong Nursery

Meeting on the first Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm at
Good Samaritan Church • 6985 Park Boulevard • Pinellas Park, FL 33781
fwcbs.org

**This way to the
Bromeliad Garden installed by...**







UPCOMING EVENTS, 2017

March 31, April 1-2, Tropiflora's Spring Festival

Tropiflora Nursery, 3530 Tallavast Road, Sarasota, 941-351-2267 (tropiflora.com)

April 8-9, USF Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Festival

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL (cas.usf.edu/garden)

April 22-23, Green Thumb Festival

Walter Fuller Park, St. Petersburg, FL (stpeteparksrec.org/greenthumb)

April 22-23, Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society Sale

Sanford Garden Club, Sanford, FL (407-539-4314)

April 29-30, Mounts Botanical Garden Spring Plant Sale

Mounts Botanical Garden, West Palm Beach, FL (mounts.org/eventcalendar/)

August 4-6, 2017, Bromeliad Extravaganza[®], 'Bromeliads by the Bay'

Clarion Hotel, 4710, 2701 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL; Hosted by the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay, Tampa, FL (<http://www.bromeliadguildoftampabay.org/news>)

August 19-20, Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society Sale

Sanford Garden Club, Sanford, FL (407-539-4314)

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