

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

June 2009



JUNE MEETING

Date/Time:

Tuesday, June 2, 2009
Doors open at 7 pm; meeting starts at 7:30.

Location:

Hope Presbyterian Church
1698 South Belcher Road
Clearwater, Florida 33764

Program:

Mike Owen, Park Biologist, Fahkahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, will talk about Florida's native bromeliads. At the park, Mike's duties include hydrological monitoring, surveys for listed plant species, a herbarium collection, wildlife observations including road kill data, vertebrate species list, plant species list, non-native plant removal, and interpretive programs such as swamp walks, slide shows, and guided walks. He has started a *Tillandsia utriculata* monitoring program at the park to document impacts from environmental factors such as the Mexican bromeliad weevil, hurricanes, droughts, and frost events. He is currently tracking about 1,000 specimens of *Til. utriculata* and plans to document annual winter survival and spring seed production.

Refreshments:

The June refreshment volunteers are Kathy Lockwood, Merle Deland, Rick Cowan, Nancy and Jack Dennis, and Alton Lee. All members are encouraged to supplement their efforts by also contributing food to the refreshment table.

MAY MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Annual Bromeliad Auction

The FWCBS Annual Bromeliad Auction held in lieu of the May meeting was well attended and generated the third highest revenues for an auction to date. Members were generous with both plant donations and bids. Linda and Dennis Cathcart (TropiFlora Nursery), Harry Luther (Marie Selby Gardens), and Donna and Michael Kiehl (Michael's Bromeliads) donated plants from their collections. Helga Tarver organized and sorted plants, assigning most to the Live Auction and some to the Silent Auction. Steve Littlefield donated a hand-painted block print of *Til. Bulbosa*, which generated lively bidding and ultimately brought the highest bid of the night.

The Live Auction was spirited, thanks to auctioneers who worked hard to get maximum bids from the bidders. Working as a pair, Alton Lee described the plant for auction and Kathy Risley was persistent in prompting the group for bids. Barret Bassick did a noteworthy solo job as auctioneer, both describing plants and coaxing bids. Runners who showed and delivered the plants included Kathy Lockwood, Judy Lund, and Susan Sousa. Cashiers Wilma Murphy and Sharon Philyaw assigned Bid Numbers and accurately tracked the bids. Chip Hill, the third cashier, helped tally the bid totals and collect the money. The Silent Auction, organized by Helga Tarver, had nine plants that brought a lot of interest from bidders.

Janet Bankhead and her team set up a bountiful setting of food on the refreshment table and she thanks everyone who contributed food to it. She received many comments about the delicious offerings.

THIS AND THAT

New Members

We welcome (albeit belatedly) new members Jason Ghormley and Robb Hill.

Field Trip to Color Zone Tropicals Bromeliad Nursery

On Saturday, May 23rd, 17 Society members boarded a bus and traveled to Grant Groves's bromeliad nursery, Color Zone Tropicals, in the Apopka/Winter Garden area just north of Orlando. Thanks go to Judy Lund, who arranged the bus and the lunch, which was at a Cracker Barrel restaurant in Kissimmee, and to Cindy Redmond who allowed us to park in her spacious yard where we boarded the bus.



Grant is a well-known hybridizer who graciously opened his wholesale nursery to our group for the afternoon. He gave a tour of his facility, explained the production process, and was helpful, patiently answering the questions with which we pelted him about the large variety of bromeliads.



Everyone filled the aisles, inspected plants, made selections, and came away with a bevy of lovely plants at great prices.



Raffle Table

Members are reminded to be generous with plant donations to the monthly raffle table. The raffle is a good source of revenue for the Society and, equally important, offers us the opportunity to acquire bromeliads for very little investment. All of us have benefited from the raffle in both ways and we should give back to it. As stated in our Standing Rules, members who win a plant from the raffle table are expected to donate another pup or plant to the table within one year for each plant they win. Give and take, take and give...it works.

Newsletter Editor Linda Sheetz, lsheetz@tampabay.rr.com