

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2021

Celebrating over 67 Years in Bromeliads



August 2021 Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

Date & Time: Tuesday, August 3, 2021; 7:30 pm
Location: Good Samaritan Church
6085 Park Boulevard
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

In August we will once again hold a regular, in-person meeting at our usual meeting location and time. The church's conditions for use of the meeting hall will remain the same until further notice and are as follows. We must limit the number of people, must wear masks regardless of vaccination status, and must sanitize the tables and chairs at the end of the meeting. We will also continue the policy of no shared refreshments but will have some individual bottles of water and soda. and packaged snacks will be available. Otherwise, our meetings will be conducted as a typical meeting, with Show and Tell, Raffle Table, and Friendship Table.

AUGUST PROGRAM

Longtime member **Alton Lee** will give a presentation titled *Bromeliads 101: A to Z* (subtitle: *All the Basics*), everything you wanted/needed to know about growing bromeliads. Having joined our society in 1975, Alton has been a member longer than other current members. He will share with us his 45-plus years of experiences growing bromeliads.

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

JULY PROGRAM

The July meeting scheduled for our usual first Tuesday of the month was postponed a week because Hurricane Elsa was threatening our area. **Dave Johnston** was the speaker with a talk titled *Bromeliads--A look Back at 40 Years--Then and Now* about the changes that have occurred in the bromeliad world over the past four decades. This is the same talk he attempted to present to us in February 2020 when his computer malfunctioned. We were pleased to finally have our first in-person meeting after 15 months of cancelled meetings due to the pandemic and to hear his long-awaited presentation. Dave presented examples of older species and hybrids for commonly grown genera and some of the hybrids developed in the past 40 years. Some of his material is summarized below along with information from additional sources.

In the past 40 years, the number of bromeliad subfamilies has grown from three to eight, the number of genera has expanded to 76, and there are currently about 3,900 species. In addition, there are more than 20,000 named bromeliads (hybrids and varieties), and the number of bigeneric hybrids has increased. Bromeliads were once uncommon in the garden, and in the early decades of our society, a winning raffle ticket did not mean that you had won a free plant but that you had won the opportunity to buy one from the raffle table. The phenomenal increase in numbers is due in part to the use of tissue culture, which makes possible the mass production of the plants. This bodes well for bromeliad lovers who now have more choices and more ways to acquire them. Bromeliads are now available to the public from a variety of sources---large and small specialty nurseries, 'big box' stores, grocery stores, and Internet sales. Below are examples of older bromeliads and some of the newer hybrids and cultivars generated from them.

Aechmea

- *Aec. fasciata* (picture below) was first known in the 1870s and has since been bred without spines. There is now a variegated spineless form (picture below). Recent hybrids of *Aec. fasciata* are 'Star of Linda' (picture below), 'Super Nova', 'Maja', and 'Melissa'.



Aec. fasciata



Aec. fasciata spineless, variegated



Aec. 'Star of 'Linda'

- *Aechmea chantinii* and its cultivar 'Bert' are older plants found in most collections and have been used in crosses of at least 75 registered hybrids, such as 'Shogun', 'Samurai', and 'DeLeon' (picture on right)
- *Aec. blanchetiana* now comes in a red form and an orange and red form, and four variegated forms.
- *Aec. mulfordii* is an older popular species. In the 1990s a red form, 'Malva', was registered (pictures below).



Aec. 'DeLeon'



Aec. mulfordii



Aec. 'Malva'

- *Aec.* 'Burning Bush' (*fulgens* x *ramosa*, picture below) has been around for decades. More recent *Aechmea* include *Aec. fendleri* variegated (picture below), 'Blue Tango' and its variegated form 'America', 'Del Mar' and its variegated form 'Del Cielo', 'Patricia' and its variegated form 'Patricia's Secret' (picture below).



Aec. 'Burning Bush'



Aec. fendleri
variegated



Aec. 'Patricia's Secret'

Alcantarea

- The well-known species *Alcan. imperialis* has several variegated forms such as 'Skotak's Big Bang' and is part of the parentage for the bigeneric x*Vriecantarea* 'Julietta' (pictures below).



Alcan. imperialis



Alcan. 'Skotak's Big Bang'



x*Vriecantarea* 'Julietta'

Ananas

- *Ananas cosmosus* (formerly *Ananas lucidus*) now has a variegated form, 'Lava Burst' (picture on the right).

Billbergia

- Older *Billbergias* commonly found in gardens are *Bil. pyramidalis* and the hybrids 'Theodore L. Mead', 'Muriel Waterman' and 'Hallelujah'.
- Newer hybrids include, 'Cold Fusion' and 'Darth Vader' (pictures below), and two variegated forms of 'Hallelujah'.



Ananas 'Lava Burst'



Bil. 'Cold Fusion'



Bil. 'Darth Vader'

Cryptanthus

- *Crypt. 'Ruby'* has been commonly grown since the 1970s, and today there are thousands of *Cryptanthus* hybrids and varieties, including the popular 'Absolute Zero'.

Goudaea

- *Goudaea* (formerly *Vriesea*) *ospinae* (picture below) now has a number of varieties such as 'Ocean Mist' (picture below), 'Golden Zombie', 'White Zombie', and 'Josefa Leon'.



Goudaea ospinae var. *gruberi*



Goudaea 'Ocean Mist'

Guzmania

- *Guz. lingulata* has been used to create about 100 hybrids, and *Guz. wittmackii* now comes in orange and purple and has been used in over 40 hybrids.
- *Guz. 'Tutti Frutti'* is a hybrid of *Guz. lingulata* by *Guz. wittmackii* for which there is now a variegated form (picture below). More recent *Guzmania* hybrids include 'Candy' (picture below), 'Margot', and 'Snowball'.



Guz. 'Tutti Frutti'
variegated



Guz. 'Candy'

Neoregelia

- *Neo. cruenta* and *Neo. carolinae* are older species that have been used in numerous crosses. Older hybrids widely used in crosses include 'Alpha', 'Beta', 'Dexter's Pride', 'Grande', 'Takemura Princeps', and 'Tricolor'.
- Newer *Neoregelia* hybrids include 'Star Wars' (picture on right), 'Black Opal', 'Bullet Proof', 'Flame Out', and 'Crazy Rabbit'.



Neo. 'Star Wars'

Tillandsia

- Older *Tillandsia* species include *bulbosa*, *ionantha* (with eight forms), *fasciculata*, and *stricta*.
- Newer ones include 'Tropiflora', 'Enchanted', and 'Avanti'.

Election of Interim President

At the July meeting, we voted to fill the position of president after Barb Gardner resigned that position in early July. Kathy Risley was nominated for the position and members voted their approval unanimously. Kathy will serve out the remainder of Barb's term which ends December 31, 2021. We are grateful to Barb for the services she has performed as our president for the past 2 1/2 years and look forward to her continued contributions to our society.

SHOW AND TELL

- Kathy Risley *Aechmea nudicaulis*
- Nancy Schmidt *Aechmea lueddemanniana* with ripe seed pods
- Linda Sheetz *Neoregelia* 'Dyn-O-Mite' (*Neo. carolinae* variegated x 'Fireball') x *Neo.* 'Fireball' x *pauciflora*; picture below)
- Neoregelia* 'Namaskar', a vegetative sport of *Neo.* 'Royal Burgundy' (picture below)
- Vriesea* 'Mint Julip Milky Way' a vegetative sport of *Vriesea* 'Mint Julip' from Bullis (picture below)

SHOW AND TELL PLANTS



Neo. "Dyn-O-Mite"



Neo. 'Namaskar'



Vriesea 'Mint Julip Milky Way'

THIS AND THAT

Family Pictures

Below is a picture of *Tillandsia* 'Curley Slim' along with its 'mother' *Til. intermedia* (the seed parent) and its 'father' *Til. streptophylla* (the pollen parent). Note the offspring's family resemblance to both parents!



Til. intermedia (left) + *Til. streptophylla* (center) = *Til.* 'Curley Slim' (right)

IN THE GARDEN

Barb Gardner



Aechmea distichantha



xPortmea 'Pink Paradise' (*Portea kermesina*
x Aechmea blanchetiana)



Monika Hale



Lutheria (formerly *Vriesea*)
splendens

Richard Poole



Aechmea dichlamydea var.
trinitensis

BROMELIAD AND OTHER PLANT EVENTS, 2021-2022

September 11, 2021, Bromeliad Bash

USF Botanical Gardens, Tampa, FL, 9 am to 2 pm

(<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/botanical-gardens/>)

October 9-10, 2021, USF Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Sale **TENTATIVE**

USF Botanical Gardens, Tampa, FL

(<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/botanical-gardens/>)

October 29-31, 2021, Tropiflora Fall Festival

Tropiflora Nursery, 3530 Tallavast Road, Sarasota (Tropiflora.com/events)

June 7-11, 2022, 24th World Bromeliad Conference, *The Big Show*, Sarasota, FL

Celebrate BSI's 70th anniversary, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sarasota

(<https://www.bsi.org/new/conference-corner/>)

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