

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2018

Celebrating over 65 Years in Bromeliads

fwcbs.org



September 2019 Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

Date & Time: Tuesday, September 3, 2019; 7:30 pm
Location: Good Samaritan Church
6085 Park Boulevard
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

PROGRAM

Terrie Bert will be the speaker at our September meeting. In her presentation titled *Pitcairnia and Puya—Two Interesting and Often Ignored Bromeliad Genera*, she will show the amazing, multicolored world of *Pitcairnia* and explain how *Puya* gave rise to the highly diverse bromeliad *Bromelioideae* subfamily. She will talk about the diversity, natural distribution, habitats, ecological importance, and cultivation conditions for each of the two genera and tell us which among them we can, and cannot, grow in Florida. As she often does at the end of her talks, she will have a little quiz about the presentation, with prizes awarded for correct responses. Be alert!

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM

Tom Wolfe gave a presentation titled *The Kaleidoscope of Neos* on the subject of the many colors and patterns of the leaves for bromeliads in the genus *Neoregelia*. His topic was well demonstrated by the many photographs he showed us that were the handiwork of his wife Carol. While many genera can be colorful, the *Neoregelia* impress with their range and diversity.



Carol and Tom Wolfe

For *Neoregelia*, the main attraction is typically not the inflorescence, which stays low in the center of the plant cup, but rather the colors and patterns their leaves produce. They may be banded, blotched, variegated, marbled, spotted, and/or albomarginated and display colors such as red, purple, pink, blue, yellow, orange, and maroon. To maximize *Neoregelia* color potential, grow them in good light, typically dappled shade to very bright light. Variegated *Neoregelia* typically prefer a bit more shade and some hardy ones show best color in full sun. You may have to move your bromeliads about in your garden, testing different light conditions to see what works best for them. As

they grow to maturity, do not fertilizer; this will keep them compact and allow the foliage color to intensify. Too much fertilizer can make them green and leggy.

Tom urged people to register a bromeliad hybrid if it has not already been named and registered and if the parents' names are known. Hybrids without a registered name can only be referred to by their formula (or parents') names, i.e., father x mother. An example of a formula name is *Neo*. 'Spring Rain' x 'Faded Love'. [Note: This was bred by Lisa Vinzant who registered it as *Neo*. 'Wisteria'.] Many bromeliad hybrids from the same parents do not look like each other and thus need their own proper name to distinguish them from their siblings. It is this way with humans. For example, Ted and Alice breed and have four offspring (i.e., hybrids), all difference in appearance from each other. If these 'hybrids' are not each given their own name, they can only be referred to by their formula name 'Ted and Alice's kid' (or maybe *Homo sapiens* 'Ted x 'Alice?'). Fortunately, Ted and Alice are required to register their little hybrids by means of a birth certificate. Bromeliad growers should also be responsible breeders and register bromeliad hybrids that result when they 'breed' male and female parents.

SHOW AND TELL

Barb Gardner *Neoregelia* hybrid or species; stoloniferous, in a hanging basket.

Portea petropolitana bloom stalk (photo below) Barb said she learned in the BSI judges school that she is attending that after pollination, the fruit of the pollinated flowers of this bromeliad change color as a visual signal for pollinators to avoid the old flowers in order to increase pollination efficiency. But she wondered if hers had ever been pollinated because she has not observed any color change in hers. Comments, anyone?

Sal Vactor *Hohenbergia pennae* (photo below)

x*Canmea* 'Jaspe' (*Canistrum fosterianum* x *Aechmea fulgens* v. *discolor*; photo below)

Dyckia delicata (photo below)

SHOW AND TELL PLANTS



*Portea
petropolitana*



Hohenbergia pennae



xCanmea 'Jaspe'



Dyckia delicata

Members Want to Know...

This section presents questions regarding bromeliad cultivation that members submitted in writing to the Program Chairman to be read at the meeting. The questions are followed by answers or comments from the group at the meeting.

Question: How can we control mosquito populations that grow in our bromeliads?

Answer: There were several suggestions and comments from the group.

1. Rinse out the tank once a week with a hose. Mosquito larvae typically hatch within seven to 10 days after being deposited.
2. Place dried BTI bacteria in the leaf axes. When wet, the bacteria become activated and eat the mosquito larvae.
3. Spray with a weak solution of Sevin or a holistic spray such as a garlic-based one.
4. Caution: Killing all mosquitoes with a pesticide spray will also kill the species of native *Wyeomyia* mosquito that competes with and limits populations of the species of *Aedes* mosquito that carry disease. (*Wyeomyia* species do not carry diseases.) Pesticides can also kill any critters living in or near the bromeliad such as lizards and frogs.

Question: (asked during the Show and Tell session) What is the best way to divide a Dyckia or Hechtia?

Answer: First and foremost, be careful and wear protection (gloves, arm guards). Our in-house Hechtia-Dyckia aficionado Gary Lund said that based on his experience, the best way to divide these plants is to take them out of the pot, turn them upside down and cut all the roots to the base of the plants. Now you can get a good look at the base of the plants and make informed decisions about where to cut between them. He uses a chisel to separate them; others suggested using a Sawzall reciprocating saw or other similar cutting tools.

THIS AND THAT

New Members

We have two new members, John Orr and Anne Szabo (photos below). John is a returning member, having been in our society a number of years ago. Welcome, Anne, and welcome back, John.



Anne Szabo



John Orr

Bromeliad Extravaganza[®]

Mark your calendars for September 20 and 21, the dates of the Bromeliad Extravaganza that will be in Orlando, FL this year. The event is hosted by the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida and sponsored by the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies. This is always an entertaining and informative event, with lectures, bromeliad sales, a rare plant auction, a banquet, and tours of commercial and private nurseries in the area. Hotel details, event registration and event schedule information can be found at www.BromeliadX.com.

October Home Garden Tour

On Sunday, October 20, Susan and Larry Sousa will host a Garden Tour Social at their home, from 1pm to 4pm. Refreshments will be provided. This event is similar to the Home Garden Tour Social that member Sandy Holloway hosted at her home last March. The Sousas' address is 5400 Bates Street, Seminole, 33722. Contact Susan at susansousa1@yahoo.com for additional information.

UPCOMING EVENTS, 2019

September 20-21, Bromeliad Extravaganza[®]

Orlando, Hosted by Bromeliad Society of Central Florida (www.BromeliadX.com)

October 12-13, USF Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Festival

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

October 20, FWCBS Home Garden Tour, Larry and Susan Sousa's Home, 1-4 pm

5400 Bates Street, Seminole (susansousa1@yahoo.com)

October 25-27, Tropiflora Nursery Fall Festival

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

November 13, Sarasota Bromeliad Society Annual Bromeliad Auction, 7 pm

Marie Selby Gardens Great Room, Sarasota, (Marian Kennel: mmkennell@verizon.net)

December 14-15, Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Sale and Show

Araba Shrine Temple, 2010 Hanson Street, Fort Myers (bprevattpcc@aol.com; Larry Giroux, 239-850-4048)

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