



Where Guests are Welcome and Members Are Encouraged!

Aechmea Fasciata (Silver Vase)
from GBS Photo Gallery on CD

August Meeting Details

TIME: Sunday, August 26th - 2:00 PM

PLACE: UF Entomology/Nematology Building, Natural Area Drive east of the Performing Arts Center on Hull Road, U of F. or the 5th left turn on Archer Road coming East from 34th Street.

PROGRAM: Speaker and Hosts: Ron and Carolyn Schonau

The August 26th meeting of the Gainesville Bromeliad Society will be held at 2:00 pm at Oak Hammock, Gainesville (see directions below), at the invitation of Carolyn and Ron Schonau. We will enjoy an open house at the Oak Hammock greenhouse and have some refreshments as well. There will be plants for sale with half the proceeds going to the Oak Hammock Benevolent Fund which is a charity.

We will forgo our usual business meeting; however, we will want to talk about the upcoming 20th World Bromeliad Conference in Orlando (Sept 24 – Oct 1).

This should be a most enjoyable meeting of the Gainesville Bromeliad Society on August 26th. We look forward to seeing you there. ~David Silverman, Pres.

Directions to the Home of Ron and Carolyn Schoenau:

Oak Hammock at the University of Florida is on the south side of Williston Road (SR 331) approximately half way between US 441 and I-75.

- ⇒ If coming off the interstate, take Exit 372 and head east. After you have left the group of lights at the interstate, it's about a mile to the first traffic light; turn right into **Oak Hammock**.
- ⇒ If coming in from US 441, turn west onto the Williston Road to the second traffic light. Turn left into **Oak Hammock**.

The security personnel at the gatehouse will direct you to the Commons; we'll meet in the Multipurpose Room. The greenhouse is within a very short walk.

August 2012



Awesome Coloration

Bromeliad Neoregelia Stars & Bars USA—2 Views

Source: Another Australia Bromeliad for \$11.99 ; Sorry to say they do not ship to the USA

http://myworld.ebay.com.au/brookreflections/?_trksid=p4340.i2559

Secretary's Notes: From Last Meeting, July 2012

Our meeting was called to order by Vice President Irene Aldrich at 2:08. Our speaker, Dave Johnston, from the Pinellas area, has been growing bromeliads a long time. He presented a tribute to Chester Skotak, who is not only quite the character but also an enthusiastic and prolific bromeliad hybridizer. Chester was born in TX and is now living in Costa Rica. He has sent his hybrids far and wide, from the United States to Australia. Chester worked a lot of his hybridizing magic with *Neoregelia carolinae*. He also did a lot of work with *Aechmea*, and developed several spineless forms. Dave's slideshow was one gorgeous bromeliad after another. Many were variegated forms that, as presented, elicited many "ooh's", "aah's" and "wow's" from the audience. Some useful cultural information came out during the presentation as well, such as the fact that variegated plants are slower to grow, more susceptible to scale, and more cold-sensitive. Overall, Dave did a wonderful job of entertaining our club with wonderful examples of the beauty and variety offered by our favorite plants. Dave's exceptional selection of plants for sale allowed many of us to add new excitement to our own collections.

News of our members - Bobby Ing had a big operation and Irene had a card we all could sign. Marvin Simring is undergoing chemotherapy in Brooklyn, NY. He has 4 more treatments to go. His white blood cell count was really high but is now normal. He's doing well, and says, "Hello."

At 3:00 we broke for snacks and socializing

Show & Tell:

Nancy had a species plant, *Ae. andersoni*, in bloom. It is not cold hardy. Hers was greenhouse grown.

Ron shared a *Dyckia* sp. that was cute, and showed up in their collection after a major cleanup. One of their first-acquired plants, circa 1975, was *Guz. Petula*, which is VERY cold sensitive and tasty to squirrels. Its bloom doesn't amount to much (it has white flowers) but it is a pretty foliage plant. *Dyckia brevifolia* is cold hardy and solid green. Another *Dyckia*, with the name "Golden Glow", or something like that, is turning yellow. There is one that does that, called "Moonglow".

Florida Council - (Ron) The Extravaganza is in the Clearwater/ Largo/ St. Pete area next year. The agenda has yet to be determined. The world conference needs some volunteers to stuff packets. It is highly probable the 2014 conference will be in Hawaii. The Fl Council meeting in Oct will be at Oak Hammock, sponsored by GBS.

Our August meeting will be at the Schoenau's.

The idea for the September meeting is a raffle. Think about this and what you would like to contribute as far as plants or plant-related items. This would be a way to raise a little money for our club. We will discuss this further at our next meeting.

Ray Lemieux is our speaker for October.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30.

THE CARE AND FEEDING OF ME, YOUR NEW AIR PLANT *

Hello! Allow me to introduce myself. I'm a Tillandsia - but my friends just call me an "Air Plant". Why you say? Well, it's because I'm an epiphyte; that is, I don't need soil to grow in, or even roots, for that matter. If you were to visit my tropical home you might see me "hanging out" with my friends in a tree or on a rocky cliff. There we use our wiry roots to hold fast, taking nothing from our hosts. You see, my friends and I are members of the bromeliad family.

We bromeliads are a diverse group, and I have family members all over the American tropics, from south Florida to Argentina. Some of my cousins grow in the soil, like cousin pineapple, but most of us are content to life in trees, on rocks or other breezy places. Why, I even have a close cousin with no roots at all! *Tillandsia usneoides*, or Spanish Moss as most call him, is a real swinger; he just drapes himself over a twig and doesn't bother with roots.

The secret to our success in difficult environments is our **trichomes**. Now all plants have trichomes, but only in bromeliads are they so developed - especially us *Tillandsias*. It's trichomes that give many of us *Tillandsias* a white, silvery or fuzzy appearance. These specialized organs allow us to be expert **oligotrophs**, or nutrient scavengers. While most plants feed through well-developed root hairs, me and most of my kin take our nutrients from even the most unlikely sources. Rainwater, fog, leaf debris, bird droppings (yuck), and even dust provides us with ample sustenance.

Just because we can live on skimpy rations, doesn't mean we don't enjoy a hearty meal. Like you folks, we grow faster, bigger and look better if given a balanced, steady diet. Our feeding can be as infrequent as monthly, though we prefer to be fed more often in smaller doses. We're not that fussy about food either, but there is one important thing to remember. Since we don't live in soil, we can't break down urea based nitrogen. Nitrogen is the "N" component in the NPK analysis of fertilizer. Phosphate and Potash are important too, but be sure the nitrogen is ammoniac, or nitrate, or both, not urea based. An NPK rating of 20-10-20; 20-20-20; or 20-10-30 is good. If you feed me monthly, use up to a tablespoon per gallon, half that for bi-weekly and less if you use a diluted solution each time you water. Be sure to read the directions on the fertilizer bag. Usually commercial brands can be safely used at half to quarter strength.

About now, you're probably asking yourself, "Now that I know what he eats, I wonder what else he likes?" I'm so glad you asked! Water. That's right, water. Even "Air Plants" need water. A pH of 6.0 is perfect, but rainwater and almost any tap water will do. (No Perrier needed). But one thing, never ever use softened water! This has too much sodium (salt) in it, and will do me in. Give me a drink about twice a week by wetting me thoroughly, then let me dry out. I may need more if kept in the AC or if you live in a desert, and less in the cool months. Silvery (xeric) *Tillandsias* need less water than green (mesic) varieties.

Light, the natural kind is best, is something no plant can do without. If you keep me inside a house or porch, give me all the light you can. Keep me in a South, East or West window or close to some grow lights. If you keep me in a greenhouse or outdoors, make sure I can take the sun OK. If my leaves are more green than silver, or rather shiny, I usually need less light and may burn in the fall sun. If I have a lovely coat of silver, chances are that I can take the brightest spot you've got.

Air plants gotta have air. Just a little breeze from an open window or a fan will do. Try to avoid putting me in a dead air space. Take particular note of the word 'dead'. Get the hint?

Wake up! I saw you drifting off. Now pay attention for just a few more minutes.

Now that you know what I require, what are you going to put me on or in? With few exceptions xeric *Tillandsias* don't like being potted. We prefer being mounted on a piece of wood, cork stone or other suitable



Photo of a Tillandsia
belonging to Nancy Mason/

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perch. Attach us with construction adhesive (Liquid Nails), wire (no bare copper) or both. In time we'll form wire-like roots of our own and grip any rough surface. We can do just fine standing up in an empty pot, or resting on the surface of a pot full of pebbles or other material that doesn't hold water. However, we're so handsome that we think we should be displayed either by hanging or standing mounted to show off our full potential. Here are some tips: Learn something about me, like how big I get, so that you can choose a mount that will accommodate me when I grow up. If I clump, you may want to choose a slender mount that will show off my best form. I look great standing on a root or decorative stone. Be artistic, go ahead, use your imagination. Make a Tillandsia tree and put me on it with some of my friends, it'll make a great conversation piece. Just remember to choose plants that have similar requirements for light and water. Try not to mix desert plants with jungle plants.

So that's about it. Easy huh? Now all that's left to do is enjoy. If you do the simple things I ask I'll bloom and grow and make you proud and glad that we met. Now what more could you ask of a plant?

* Courtesy of Tropiflora, 3530 Tallevast Road, Sarasota, FL 34243
<http://bromeliad-chicago.org/tillandsia.htm>

Gainesville Bromeliad Society is affiliated with:



<http://www.fcbs.org/>



<http://www.bsi.org/>



*Keep in mind the
World Bromeliad Conference*

Have YOU registered yet?

To Register: www.fcbs.org/WBC12Registration.pdf

Schedule of Events: <http://www.fcbs.org/BC12ScheduleofEvents.pdf>

Sales Rules: <http://www.fcbs.org/WBC12SalesRules.pdf>

Or go to FCBS @ <http://fcbs.org/>

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