

## JANUARY 22, 2023 MINUTES OF GAINESVILLE BROMELIAD SOCIETY

The meeting was held at the Gainesville Garden Club.

Bob Stevens introduced today's program entitled "Bromeliads 101". Nancy Mason and Steve Provost were presenters.

Steve gave an overview of the 60 genera and approximately 3,500 species which are New World plants with one exception from Africa. In North America they only grow naturally in Florida and Texas. There are 16 natives with the *Tillandsia usneoides* also growing farther north. The two types of growth are terrestrial or epiphytic – both are slow growing. Some are cold tolerant and grow in the mountains in dry climates while others prefer warm, moist conditions. Soil conditions allow good drainage. Steve mixes 1/3 perlite with 2/3 potting soil. Bromeliads have few pests with the exception scale (which is more of a cosmetic problem) and mealybugs (when grown indoors) both of which are easily removed. The other pest is the Mexican weevil which infects large-bodied *Tillandsia*. Mosquitoes are not a disease problem but can be annoying to people. If grown outside, however, many animals help to control mosquitoes.

Steve mentioned the Gainesville Bromeliad website at [gainesvillebromeliad.org](http://gainesvillebromeliad.org) for articles about bromeliads. Also the Florida Council at [fcbs.org](http://fcbs.org) has lots of information as well as [BSI.org](http://BSI.org).

Steve gave a demonstration of repotting showing the materials needed.

Nancy Mason brought several *Tillandsias* and explained their method of photosynthesis using trichomes, which are small pores on the plant that allow water and air to flow in and out of the plant. Some plants have so many trichomes they appear fuzzy. Although bromeliads are easy to grow it is imperative to know their needs. For instance, darker leaves will need less light; light leaves can take sun. Many can be either mounted or potted but some truly epiphytic plants will die if potted. Nancy showed a large variety of growth and flowering patterns.

The business meeting began at 3:45. Steve announced that in February we would be meeting at Elaine Young's house for a garden tour and possibly a meeting, depending on weather. Time will be announced at a later date.

The March speaker will be David Johnston who will deliver a second talk on biogenics.

There was no treasurer report but Sandy talked about 2 upcoming events – one was the Flora and Fauna event and the second was a fund raiser for the Gainesville Garden Club held at Cypress and Grove Brewery. People were asked to sign up to help at a table at each one.

Finally, the Florida Council Extravaganza will be held at the West Palm Beach Marriott on July 28 and 29. The hotel charges \$139/night and it's \$150 to register for the meeting...

Meeting adjourned at 4.00 with 28 people signed in. I HEAD COUNTED 27.