

JANUARY 26, 2025 MINUTES of Gainesville Bromeliad Society

The meeting began with a Show and Tell with 3 fabulous plants from Nancy Mason. The first was *Aechmea weilbachii pendula*, a large plant with a bloom spike that hangs, the next was *Tillandsia bulbosa* Belize, large form - that has large bulbs, and the last was *Guzmania* 'Superb' that had a large showy inflorescence. All three were "show quality" – as is usual from Nancy.

The speaker this month was Jason Mellica from Sarasota and his topic was "Bromeliads 101". He started by describing the "botany" of bromeliads - a hardy group with some ranging from Virginia to South America. *Tillandsia usneoides* (known as Spanish Moss) is totally epiphytic and is spread by wind. Many bromeliads have a fuzzy white coating known as "scurfing" which is involved in respiration. There are 700 known species of *Tillandsia*. *Guzmania* and *Vriesia* are two more species that mostly grow in trees in the wild but can be grown in pots. These are in the sub family of Bromelioides that also contains *Aechmea*, *Billbergia*, and *Neoregelia*. They are all "funnel" shaped and hold water.

Light requirements vary from filtered light to full sun. Generally, the thicker the leaf, the more sun it can take. Water requirements and cold hardiness also vary with leaf thickness – the thicker the leaf, the more drought and cold tolerant the plant. Fertilization is not required if plants are outside but potted plants should be fertilized only when they are transferred to a larger pot. A good substrate for pots is 75% peat to 25% perlite.

Business Meeting.

Treasurer's report - Sandy said we had \$660.19 in checking and \$3,620.89 in savings.

Steve Provost posted the speakers program on the website along with an announcement of a talk on February 23 on Homegrown National Parks – what it is and how to get involved. On February 22 the Florida Council of Bromeliad Society will be meeting in Gainesville and we will send a representative. At our next meeting on March 23, Tom Wolfe will speak – topic to be determined.

Steve mentioned the next Extravaganza taking place in Orlando September 26-28. He also reminded people of the World Conference in 2026 in Costa Mesa, California.

Meeting adjourned about 3:30 with 40 members present.