

OCTOBER 26, 2025 MINUTES OF GBS

Steve Provost introduced the speaker, Terri Bert, from Bradenton, and who has extensive experience in bromeliads. She has a PhD in Marine Biology and has recently retired from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission. Terri stated that the Gainesville group was one of the largest she has seen recently as other groups are having trouble attracting and keeping members. She brought several different genera for her talk – all cold tolerant. She talked about PITCAIRNIA which is terrestrial and one of the primitive bromeliads. Pitcairnia need fertilization and grow in a wide variety of altitudes. They originated as high altitude species and subsequently migrated down to lower altitudes. They live along streams in the Amazon and are pollinated by hummingbirds. They have no tank, are wet adapted, and shade and cold tolerant. The next group she talked about was the TILLANDSIA – such as fasciculata which is native to Florida. AECHMEA are not as cold tolerant but grow large in places where other bromeliads won't grow. They are prolific and grow on the ground or in the air and have the most long lasting blooms. The genus is called the “garbage can” because any plant not identified is called Aechmea. Ae. Discolor has green leaves on top to catch the limited light coming from the sun and purple leaves underneath to catch the light reflected off the forest floor. There are 45 types of Aechmea nudicaulis. All plants labeled “Skotak” were hybridized by Chester George Skotak and have strange names and lots of color – stripes – spots etc. In any cross between 2 plants, the donor of the ovary is listed first and the pollen donor is listed second.

BUSINESS MEETING – Started at 3:25 with the Treasurer's report. Mary reported \$439.19 in checking and \$3,670.26 in savings as of October 16.

Brian discussed the format for the November meeting. Members should bring a plant-related gift and there will be a raffle. Members were asked to bring finger food and plates, cups, etc. would be supplied by the Society.

There will be election of officers in November: so far Brian has agreed to be president; Bob will be an “at large” member of the Board; Steve will be VP; Gail will be secretary; and Mary will remain as treasurer.

Steve indicated the Board is still looking at things for Sandy's memorial in addition to a brick that will be installed at the Gainesville Garden Club

The Fall Expo had 200 plants and was successful in selling about one-half of them earning \$550 for the Society. Brian donated \$40 from the plant sale he had at his house the month before.

The Extravaganza took place a few weeks ago and Steve Hoppin, a vendor, gave us 3 plants for the GBS raffle. There are 2 upcoming sales: Blossoms, Brew and BBQ on February 15 at the First Magnitude Brewing Company and the Dr. of Plant Medicine also in February – more to follow.

Business meeting ended at 4 pm with 28 present.