



BROMELETTER

***THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
THE BROMELIAD SOCIETY
OF AUSTRALIA INC.***

bromeliad.org.au



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**Photo Front
Cover**
**Allan Beard's
Bromeliad
Garden**
August 2020
 Photo by
 Larissa Victoria

Greetings to all BSA members,

Talking to fellow bromeliad enthusiasts, the differences in what appeals to one person, compared to another, is always interesting. And bromeliads tick all the boxes, as they have something for everyone. Some are drawn to a particular genus such as tillandsias (Terry, Harold), others are attracted by colour (Bob, Pat, Alan M), others to size (Mark and Ray love the grand alcantareas while Joy loves her minis). Some like the rare (Ian), others revel in growing the perfect specimen (Bob, Carolyn, Harold) and others love to see the colour and variety in their gardens (Allan B, Kerry and myself in this category). The point is, there is no right or wrong way to grow or collect these fabulous plants and each bromeliad lover can appreciate the specific passion of another. In this issue we have the privilege of visiting Allan Beard's garden. There was so much to see in this beautiful garden. Since overseas travel is a far away dream, in this issue we cross the ditch to view an amazing garden. A good illustration that no site cannot be redeemed by planting with bromeliads, and if you must other plants.

Another point that recurs, is that most people's interest in bromeliads stems from obtaining just one bromeliad. I encourage you this coming month to give at least one bromeliad to someone outside the bromeliad sphere. We need new members, so please introduce someone to the wonderful world of bromeliads. Most importantly stay safe and keep enjoying your bromeliads.

regards Larissa

Life Members:

Ron Farrugia
Graham McFarlane
Bill Morris
Ian Hook
Allan Beard
David Scott



Both our September meeting and Spring Show have been cancelled.

The October meeting is also in doubt, so please continue to check the BSA website for updates.

WEBSITES

Bromeliads in Australia

<http://bromeliad.org.au>

Encyc of Bromeliads

<http://encyclopedia.florapix.nl/>

BSI Cultivar Register

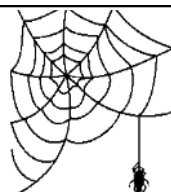
<http://registry.bsi.org/>

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

<http://fcbs.org/>

Bromeliario Imperialis

<http://imperialia.com.br/>



MEMBER PROFILE—ALLAN BEARD

Source : Interview with Allan, photos L. Victoria

Allan has been a resident of the Glenorie area all his life apart from his first three years spent in Glossodia. He has seen this rural area change from the time you knew every kid and farm in



Photo above: Allan in one of his shadehouse areas standing next to a *Vriesea Hieroglyphica*.



Photo left: An enlarged photo of this outstanding bromeliad.

the area and when Old Northern Road was a dirt road and became a muddy bog during torrential rains.

Following in his father's footsteps Allan worked all his

life on the land. On his current property he grew peaches, plums and nectarines. As residential properties became more prevalent in Glenorie area, the laws governing management of pests changed, making it difficult and expensive to continue

growing fruit, so Allan's orchard was pulled up.

Photo left & right: Beautiful large alcantareas love the sheltered spots underneath the trees.



Photo right: Allan has a large beautiful garden area, with a central lawn seen at the left of this photo. The lawn is ringed by mature trees which provide shelter to broms in the gardens.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

Allan's wife, returned from Hargraves nursery (now closed) one day, with a bromeliad and Allan recalls asking her "what did you buy that for?" However the unusual nature of the bromeliad got to him and over the years he would occasionally find and buy another bromeliad. Then at workshop day in Annangrove on 'Surviving on 5 acres' he found a stall selling bromeliads and a flyer for the BSA show. He bought 15 bromeliads that day and couldn't wait for the show. This was then held in the Burwood RSL and when he went Allan was blown away by the display. He recalls walking around being amazed by all the beautiful and different bromeliads only to find that when he went to buy some, they were nearly all gone. So he determined that in future he would buy first and look around after!



Photo left: a huge and beautiful specimen of *Vriesea fosteriana* obviously loving its position under this large tree. The old orchard, now a paddock is in the background.

Photo right: close up of this magnificent *Vriesea fosteriana* spike.



After the first show, it took Allan nine years to find where and when there was another bromeliad show. He only found this information by accident when he was browsing a garden book in a doctor's reception area.

He couldn't wait to go to the show and spent \$240, which in those days was an enormous amount of money! He recalls he stood at one sales table and was taking the broms off as quickly as the seller could put them up onto the table.



Photo right:
The mature trees provide shelter and height to display the many epiphytic bromeliads such as these vrieses.



The first few BSA members Allan met were Keith Ryde and Felicity Begg and as soon as he started

coming to the BSA meetings his bromeliad collection grew exponentially.





Many of Allan's bromeliads are in shade houses or under cover.

Allan's recent adaptation of his Hills Hoist, now covered with shade cloth, means he can just stand in one spot and spin the clothesline in order to water every section. The outer lines are left without cover and are brom free for drying his clothes! **Photo top left.**

The garden is a place of relaxation for Allan and a place he came to unwind, at times even going out during the night by torchlight. He planted the trees section by section, usually designing and planting one area after a busy fruit picking season. His wife, Dorothy, loved going into the garden, particularly during her time of illness



when she was confined to the house.

Allan ensured the paths were wide enough for her frame and electric scooter when designing the gardens.

Allan says there is always so much to learn when you grow bromeliads, that you have successes and failures, but hopefully more successes particularly with your special broms.



Photo left: An enormous Alcantarea Peter Tristam, inflorescence soars into the tree branches.

Photo right: this photo gives you an idea of its height as it towers over a swing seat in the garden.



Allan has created interest in every area of his garden, using contrasting colours, bromeliad sizes, colours and markings, with the occasional garden ornament.

He has created visual interest with height using baskets, tree stumps and branches.



It's a beautiful and peaceful garden, a credit to Allan's hard work and vision.



A QUICK GUIDE TO BROMELIAD PROBLEMS

SOURCE: Romanelli P, FNCBSG 2013

Bromeliads are fairly trouble free, but problems do arise so here are some of the more common ones, along with possible causes.

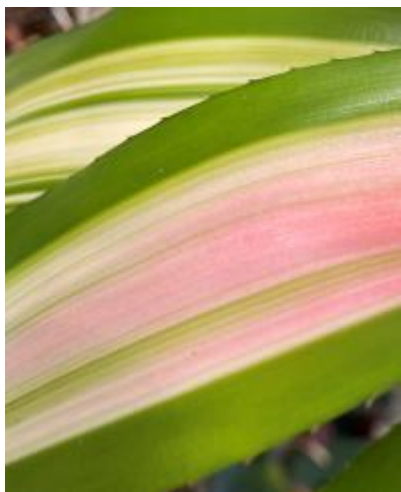
PROBLEM	LIKELY CAUSE
Pale bleached appearance	Too much sun
Poor colour	Too much shade
Long, floppy leaves Brown or yellow leaf ends or edges	Too much shade Plant grown too dry Cold or heat damage Poor ventilation Soil mix or water has wrong Ph (most bromeliads like an acidic mix)
Brown spots	Watering in full sun Too much light Cold or heat damage Chemical burns (possibly caused by copper or arsenic from treated wood or misuse of pesticides. Never use oil based pesticides or those containing copper or arsenic.)
Quilling (inner leaves stick together)	Little or no water in cup
Brown or mushy leaves at base	‘Wet feet’ as a result of over watering, potting too deep or bad drainage.
Holes in leaves	Snails, slugs, insects Watering in full sun
Centre leaves loose, withered brown or whitish or soft, with a smell that would choke a buzzard	Crown rot; possibly a result of stagnant water or poor ventilation
Brown spots on outer leaves, can be scrapped out but then spreads to inner leaves	Copper cyanide in surrounding timber, or timber that hasn't been properly sealed



One of
the

things we all have been missing is seeing other member's beautiful bromeliads - here are some close up photos taken by Pauline Blanch using

Iphone 11 Pro and tips from last issue. Look at the amazing details she has captured.



Clockwise from top left: Neo Gunpowder; Neo. Mount Warning; Vr. Pink Lady; Vr. Hans Gultz; Vr Evita; leaf section Neo Orange Flush.





FAREWELL TO BELLE

Belle the gentle, affectionate giant is no longer with us. Her life was becoming a struggle and ended in a peaceful way at the end of July. Belle was a regular and friendly attendee at our BSA meetings and will be greatly missed.



LET'S PLAY BROM TRIVIA

Test your brom knowledge

1. What is the largest bromeliad in existence?
2. What genera name is derived from the Latin meaning 'spike' or 'spear'?
3. What is the difference between the terms lithophyte and saxicolous?
4. Name a bromeliad that has a fragrance like clove spice.
5. In the bromeliad world what do hummingbirds and bats have in common?
6. Name 4 BSA life members.

Answers are at the end of this newsletter.

NEED A BROM FIX? by Ian Hook. Actually, Gen and I went driving inland for one week, we did lots and shook out the cobwebs. I recommend you ALL go for at least a day trip to Tea Gardens, and visit one of our long term BSA members, Ross Smith. Make time to stop along the way at the delicious 'Waterfall Café' and Mt. Penang Gardens, the Hunter Region Botanic Gardens or some beach strolling in Tea Gardens. Ross is at 13 Sidney St, Tea Gardens where he has established quality plants resulting from his 50+ years experience growing and hybridising bromeliads. In line with COVID-19 guidelines Ross is keeping numbers below 5 at a time, so call him on 02-4997-2880 or 0438-723-121 to arrange a time.

Report from Treasurer Alan Mathew for August 2020

Opening balance at bank 1.8.20	\$16242.04
Income:	\$874.95
Less Expenses:	\$724.37
Closing balance 31.8.2020	\$16392.62

CLUB OF HERCULES - PUYA CLAVA-HERCULIS

Source: Die Bromelie 2020(1), Eric Gouda; wikipedia; dictionary.com

A species with a large distribution in the Andes of Ecuador, that grows at 3000-3900m elevation, mostly between high grasses and small shrubs. This puja is monocarpic and found only as solitary rosettes.



It has medium size rosettes with stout club looking inflorescence (1-1.5m). Rosettes have glabrescent upper leaf surface and white lepidote on lower surface. Leaves are 30-40 cm and margins have black spines covered with tuft of white trichomes.



clava - herculis refers to the club of Hercules, the Roman god, known for his strength and numerous far-ranging adventures. Son of Zeus.

The thick club shaped inflorescence is very hairy with pale brown to grey hairs, and the lower primary and peduncle bracts are recurving while lower bracts are short reflex laminate - dense and imbricate.



Flowers appear only from the primary bracts and have blue corolla and orange - yellow stamens.

Glossary

recurving - curving down or backwards

lepidote - having a covering of scurfy scales

glabrescent - hairless or smooth surface

monocarpic - die after flowering

imbricate - Overlapping, as shingles on a roof; arrangement of plant structures with some layers ones overlying and partially concealing the adjacent ones

corolla - the petals of a flower, typically forming a whorl within the sepals and enclosing the reproductive organs

stamens - the male fertilizing organ of a flower, typically consisting of a pollen-containing anther and a filament.

COPING DURING COVID

Source: Ian and Jenny Hook

Our president Ian Hook was given a list of 'to do tasks' by his wife, who told me she doubts he even remembers that. However he did tackle sorting his shed, which was filled with treasures after years of vigorous accumulation and subsequently engaged his creative talents to create these bromeliad stands using weird and wonderful bases found during the cleaning up process!



GOING POTTY? - A BIT ABOUT POTS

Excerpt of original Culture Leaflet printed by the BSI which was handed out to new members.

The important factor for growing bromeliads is that the potting mix must drain rapidly, but using the right pot is also necessary. Here are a few good 'pot' rules to follow are:

1. Don't pot a bromeliad too deeply.
2. Don't use a pot that is too large as the danger of over watering increases. Usually a four, five or six inch pot is sufficient for a full grown plant.
3. Don't allow the plant to rock back and forth, or wiggle. This damages the tender, developing roots. Stake the plant or surround with rocks, if necessary, until the roots are well developed.
4. Use a fast-draining potting mix. The water should run right through the mix, then empty the saucer.
5. Use a pot with drainage holes in the bottom or sides.

CONT

A few more hints....

- Learn your different genera soil requirements.
- Most grey leaved tillandsias **will not** do well potted.
- Cryptanthus and Dyckias grow well in African Violet soil. Many African Violet growers find Cryptanthus good companion plants under fluorescent lights.
- Dyckias do well in cactus soil.

INSPIRATION

Source: Allan Beard

Attaching your broms to a rough bark tree (one that doesn't lose its bark) can have some surprising results.

When the conditions are right, just the correct amount of

sun and rain the seeds which get stuck in the bark

come to life forming a lovely cascading pattern down the tree limb.

HINT You could assist by sprinkling the seeds into the crevices of the bark.

Photos: Top left - the original tillandsia is attached to a leaning tree branch.

Top right - small plantlets are forming in the bark crevices under the protection of a mature plant.

Bottom left - a single plantlet grows from a seed that implanted itself in the bark on the opposite branch.



WHANGAREI QUARRY GARDENS

Source: <https://www.whangareigardens.org.nz/gardens>; TripAdvisor



In this issue we travel 160 Kms north of Auckland, NZ where an old quarry site has been beautifully repurposed.

Hardie Brothers established a stone quarry at Whangarei in 1944



for producing aggregate for local road projects. When severe flooding in 1974 curtailed the operation, the then owners donated the 25 hectare site to the Whangarei District Council to become part of the city's parks and reserves. Nothing happened for 20 years, and the site was used as a rubbish dump, and filled up with



abandoned vehicles, concrete slabs, gorse and weeds.



In 1990, the Whangarei District Council was approached to form a public garden, and in 1997 the council purchased 2.5 hectares of adjoining land. Shortly after a group of

enthusiasts, 'Friends of the Quarry Garden' began clearing and planting the site.

In 2000, the Whangarei Quarry Garden Trust, took over the responsibility for development of the Gardens.

The gardens have different sections, including the bromeliad garden, native forest, fragrant camellia collection, five senses



garden and arid garden.





The Bromeliad Garden was established in 2000 and is maintained with the assistance of volunteers from the Northland Bromeliad Group. Orchids have recently been added to this stream-side garden.

The industrial heritage has shaped the landscape at the Quarry Gardens as remnants of the quarry days have been left in situ with concrete foundations, walls, corroded steel fittings, machinery and concrete tunnels blending with the plantings.



The Gardens are also home to over 100 outdoor sculptures, all created by local artists.

Photo right - *Puya venusta* is native to Chile. The foliage is a striking silver-grey with dangerously sharp spines running along the length of each leaf, the flowers in spring are a vivid blue.





Photo left: contrasting bromeliads beneath **Ceiba speciosa** (Silk floss tree) which is native to the tropical and subtropical forests of South America. Aside from a remarkable flower and an amazing spiky trunk, the fruit pods of this tree contain a cotton-like fibre that has many traditional uses including rope-making, canoe-building, and the production of paper pulp.



Photo left: *Ananas bracteatus* or red

pineapple is a short-lived perennial. The red fruit is edible, though not as sweet and fleshy as the usual market-variety pineapple. Its strong, spiny leaves make it an excellent choice as a 'security hedge'.

Unfortunately in July 2020 ,the gardens were severely damaged by flood. The volunteers have stepped up and the gardens are now partially open. Donations



for restoration of the gardens would be appreciated by the trust. Details on the Gardens website.



MORE on TRICHOMES

Source: wikipedia; Whipkey D Bromeliad Society/Houston's Newsletter Feb 2020.

Issue 1 this year featured an article on 'scurf' or 'trichomes' following Kerry's talk at the meeting, here is a bit more on the subject.

NB Don't confuse Trichomes with Trichomes

Trichomes comes from the Greek word 'trichōm' meaning 'hair'. These are plant hairs or scales but are not the same as animal hair as trichomes are often living cells. They have diverse structures and include:

- hairs (most common)
- glandular hairs, their function is to secrete metabolites for the plant
- scales (eg leaf scales of pineapples)
- papillae.

Some trichomes are frail, some coarse; shapes vary and may be branched like tree limbs, star-shaped, long and straight, while others are short and curly.

Trichomes can insulate from frost, reduce evaporation from wind and heat, reflect light and protect from herbivorous insects. So plants growing in extremely bright light have dense clusters of trichomes to reflect light away from the plant, allowing the plant to remain cooler and avoid sunburn. These plants are usually silver or grey in colour. Shade loving plants have fewer trichomes allowing more sunlight to fall on the epidermis. These plants tend to be greener in colour.

Some terms used to describe the surface of stems and leaves referring to the presence, form and appearance of trichomes are:

- **glabrous, glabrate** – lacking hairs or trichomes; surface smooth
- **hirsute** – coarsely hairy (sounds like someone I know!)
- **articulate** – simple pluricellular-uniseriate hairs
- **downy** – having an almost wool-like covering of long hairs
- **pilose** – pubescent with long, straight, soft, spreading or erect hairs
- **pubescent** – bearing hairs or trichomes of any type
- **strigose** – having straight hairs all pointing in more or less the same direction as along a margin or midrib
- **tomentose** – covered with dense, matted, woolly hairs
- **villous** – having long, soft hairs, often curved, but not matted

Some great adjectives to throw into your next conversation!

WHAT IS THAT BIT CALLED?

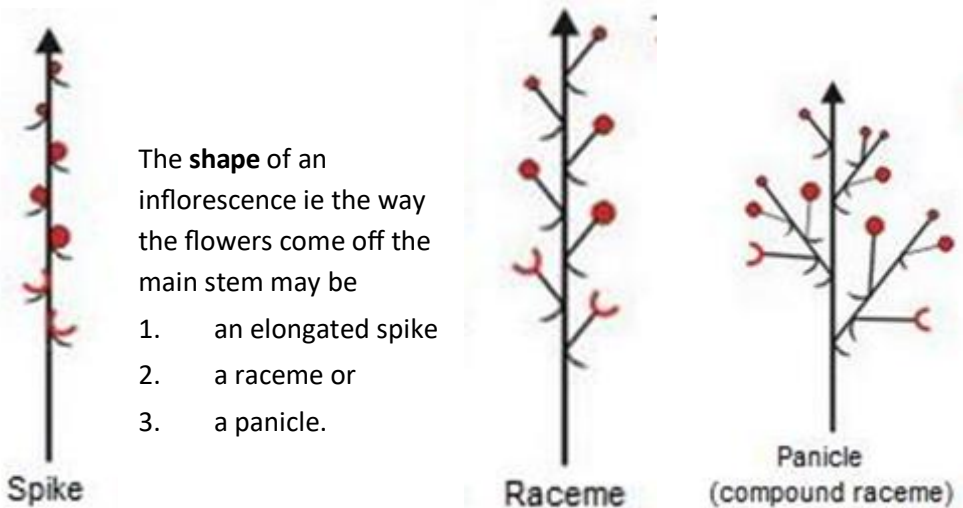
Source: Wikipaedia ; www.flowers-gardens.net; <https://www.fcbs.org/articles/Glossary.htm>

Surprisingly today's names and terms to describe plant parts are still based on the written works of Linnaeus (1707-1778), including his drawings. As the world is getting closer and communication is achieved with greater speed, it is important to have a correct and common language to avoid misunderstanding and mistakes.

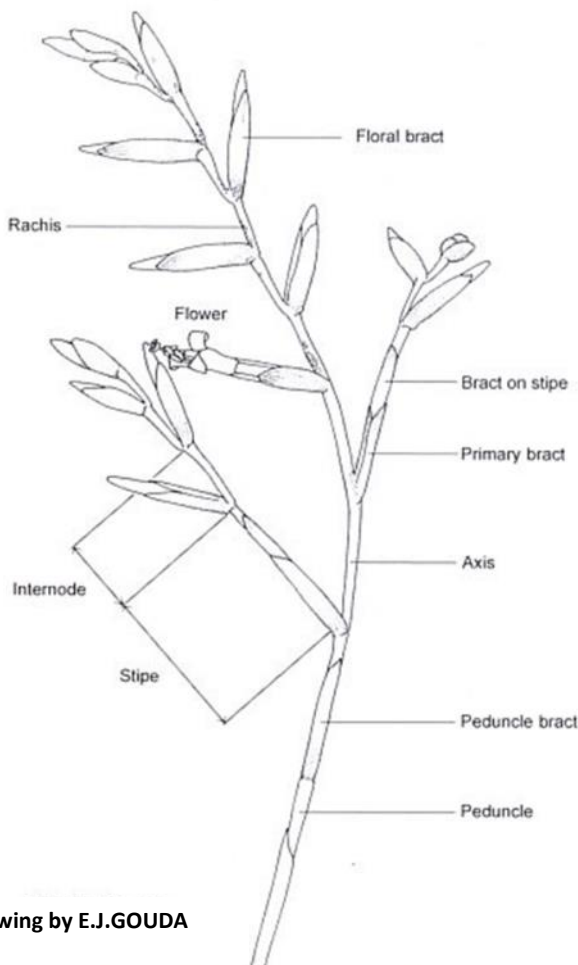
Identification of any bromeliad should take into account the flower part of the plant, as leaves can look very similar in different species. The flowers of most bromeliads are rather insignificant and many are found in the centre of a rosette, as in neoregelias. Other bromeliads produce a flower stalk or '**inflorescence**' that can be quite spectacular.

Taking a closer look at this part of the bromeliad you will see there are many variations that can help you identify a species, often differences may be small, such as the colour of peduncle bracts, length of flower bracts.

The **inflorescence** is the reproductive part of a bromeliad that bears a cluster of flowers in a specific pattern.



The stem at the base of a inflorescence is called a **peduncle**, it is the section without the flowers and is usually green but in some bromeliads can be coloured. The peduncle may have specialised leaves called **bracts** along its length. Whether bracts point up or down can also vary between similar looking species.



Drawing by E.J.GOUDE

The section of the inflorescence with flowers or more branches is called a **rachis** (means backbone or spine from the Ancient Greek).

The stalk of each single flower is called a **pedicel** (means little foot in Latin). When flowers don't have a stem to connect them to the rachis they are described as '**sessile**'.

The term 'scape' has been incorrectly used to describe any stalk or stem, the correct use of scape is to describe a flower stem that is smooth and non-woody, that is without any leaves or bracts. The **scape** normally rises from a bulb, rhizome or underwater structure as seen in garlic, chives and *Amaryllis Belladonna* (photo right). This is a mistake that occurs frequently in bromeliad websites, articles and descriptions, it is also a mistake to call bracts along the main stem 'scape bracts', the correct term being 'peduncle bracts'. (See D.Butcher <https://www.fcbs.org/articles/Glossary/Glossary.pdf>)



If you have seed to donate please contact Terry .

Below is the list of seeds in our Seed Bank.

<i>Neoregelia kautskii</i>	5.10.19	Terry Davis
<i>Al. imperialis rubra</i>	15.10.19	Terry Davis
<i>Pseudalcantarea viridiflora</i> (red under leaf)	23.10.19	Terry Davis
<i>Tillandsia fasciculata</i>	28.5.20	Steve Molnar
<i>Tillandsia setacea</i>	22.5.20	Steve Molnar

Seeds cost 50¢ per packet (plus postage) for Members and Seed Bank supporters
or \$1 per packet (plus postage) for all other enquiries:

Contact **Terry Davis (02) 9636 6114 or 0439 343 809**

For a full list please go to **bromeliad.org.au**

Answers to trivia: 1. *Puya raimondii*. 2. *Aechmea*

3. They have the same meaning ie growing on a rock. Lithophyte originates from Ancient Greek litho- "stone, rock" + -phyte "plant", while saxicolous comes from the Latin saxum "a rock" + Latin colere "to dwell" + -ous.

4. *Tillandsia cyanea* has a fragrance resembling that of clove spice.

5. Hummingbirds and some species of bats pollinate particular bromeliads.

6. see pg 3

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: Renewal is due **1st January** for membership year January to December.

Annual Membership (Single/Family):	Australia	A\$25
Overseas Membership:	Asia/Pacific Zone	A\$40.
	Rest of the World	A\$45.

New Membership requires a \$5 joining fee, plus Annual Subscription.

(Those joining after our spring Show are covered for the following year.)

Note: Un-financial members must add \$5 rejoining fee when re-applying for membership.

MAIL ORDER PAYMENTS BY MASTERCARD/VISA.

(Subject to A\$10.00 minimum.)

Members using Mastercard or Visa mail order facility should provide the following details, printed clearly in block letters, on a separate sheet of paper:

- Name and address of **MEMBER**.
- **TYPE of card** (Visa, Mastercard)
- **CARDHOLDER** name details, as shown on card.
- Mastercard/Visa **number** and **expiry date**.
- **CARDHOLDER** signature (essential).
- Payment details (membership renewal, book purchase, postage, etc.)

LITERATURE for Sale

<http://www.bromeliad.org.au/Contacts/BSALibrarian.htm>

TITLE	AUTHOR	PRICE
Bromeliads for the Contemporary Garden	Andrew Steens	\$20.00
Bromeliads: A Cultural Manual (Rev. ed. 2007)	BSI	\$ 6.00
Bromeliad Hybrids 1: Neoregelias	Margaret Paterson	\$25.00
Bromeliads Under the Mango Tree	John Catlan	\$10.00
Bromeliad Cultivation Notes	Lyn Hudson	\$10.00
Growing Bromeliads – 3rd Ed. by BSA IS BACK!.		\$20.00
	(member price)	

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