

Far North Coast Bromeliad Study Group N.S.W.

Study Group meets the third Thursday of each month
Next meeting 16th January, 2014 at 11 a.m.

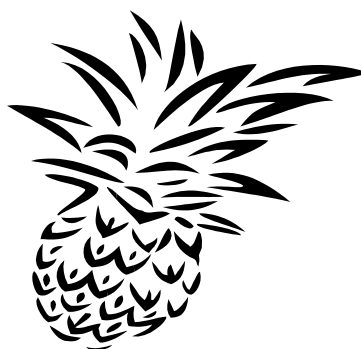
Venue: PineGrove Bromeliad Nursery
114 Pine Street Wardell 2477
Phone (02) 6683 4188

Discussion: December 2013

Christmas Party



*Best Wishes for a
Happy Christmas*



Editorial Team:

Kay Daniels Trish Kelly
Ross Little Helen Clewett

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Meeting 19th of November 2013

The meeting was opened at approximately 11.20am.
The 24 members and two visitors present were welcomed.
A total of 10 apologies were received.

General Business

Several members asked if more zeolite was going to be ordered. Don reiterated the benefits of adding zeolite to your potting mix. It is one of the major volcanic minerals in the world, it acts as a fertilizer trap, it enhances the water holding capacity and can get rid of toxins by acting as a filter. It is inert, which means you can add a high percentage to your mix and not overdose on it. It has been suggested as little as 5% be added to your mix to gain its benefits. (original zeolite article, FNCBSG NSW Newsletter May 2013, p.6)

Lesley showed the Group a large, shallow squat pot she had recently purchased suggesting that maybe the Group could buy them in a bulk quantity. Lesley felt they appear a good useful size at 300mm x 120mm deep for growing Dyckias, Orthophytums, Deuterocohnias some Tillandsias and especially Cryptanthus. At this diameter they would be good for creating dish gardens. It was agreed to source a supply to be able to have these available for sale at our next meeting.

The issue of worms in pots had been raised this month since our last meeting so the Group was asked for their opinions on this subject. The opinion of the Group differed from very valuable to extremely bad. Ross' opinion was that they were not good in small pots placed on the ground as in a good clean inert mix there was nothing for the worms to eat other than the fresh roots of your plant. However if one was using a very humus rich mix worms will eat the decaying humus matter hopefully and not the roots of our valued plants. The worms are fine in very large pots where they help create drainage etc. Basically it depends on the size of the pot whether worms are of value or not, also if you are repotting regularly it is not an issue. A question was also asked about using Phosphoric acid to help rid your mix of worms, it was suggested it is probably safer to use soapy water and flush the pots with fresh clean water afterwards. (article p.6.)

As we are always looking for cheaper alternatives to build structures to house our ever expanding bromeliad collections, an interesting article was recently posted on Planet Bromeliad that I felt was worth printing here in our Newsletter. We discussed the viability of building a shade house using this star picket and poly pipe hoop method which most agreed seems a very cheap and easy method to construct. I know of a few people who have employed this method of construction, so hopefully in the near future we may get some feed back regards viability as to cost and the ease of construction. (article p.7.)

The best bit for general business was left till last - **food** for the Christmas Party, it was agreed the Group will supply the meat for the BBQ, drinks and bread/rolls. Each member should bring a plate of either salad, dips etc., preferably chocolate dessert type dishes was suggested by Ross.

The Christmas draw was confirmed that a number of plants have been acquired for the membership **attendance** draw. Members have also been asked to bring a plant along to add to the membership **swap** draw, only those who contribute to this part of the activities will participate in this second section. The draws will be conducted based on attendance over the year. Regular attending members not able to attend will have a plant selected for them and held till the next meeting they attend for them to collect.

Trish has suggested a photographic competition popular vote as part of our Christmas Party activities. Hopefully we will see some good quality photographs produced that we can use in future issues of our Newsletter.

Members Show and Tell

Kay H. brought in a *Ae. 'Lucky Stripes'* with two pups being pale yellow with only a single fine green stripe in a couple of their leaves. She was asking if the plant was lacking something eg. fertilizer, light or water. Kay was advised this often happens in variegated plants with unstable variegation. Advice was to leave the yellow pups attached to mum as they will continue to grow and quite likely produce normal pups themselves. Comment was also made that often we see plain green pups emerge from these variegates also, later to get variegated pups produced from these. Discussion was entered into regarding albinism and what is a true albino in the bromeliad world, meaning a totally white plant, white bracts, white petals etc., in other words, a true, entirely white plant. Generally when we refer to our plants as having an albino pup it is only the foliage that is white, or, as often seen, cream or yellowish leaves. It has been observed that these plants still produce a normal or typical for its type, coloured inflorescence.

Therefore are these, not strictly albino ??

What should we refer to our cream/yellow/white foliated plants as being ??

Perhaps we just stick to the terminology of 'novar' - no variegation ??

Kay also had a rather nicely grown *Tillandsia* for identification, fortunately it was partially in spike, popular decision by all was that it was *Tillandsia secunda*.

John Crawford asked how to get roots on one's *Till. secunda* as he has no luck getting his plants to establish roots. Some helpful feedback will be appreciated.

Jeanette brought in a *Canistropsis burchellii* that had damage marks on the leaves, possibly due to the winter cold and wet weather we have experienced, improved air circulation should benefit the health of this plant.

Dawn has been busy photographing and cataloguing her entire collection, Dawn passed around her album for members to view. It was nicely set out with each genus having a good representation, some great photos there Dawn, hope we see some in the upcoming photographic competition. Also we would like to see some of Dawn's photos grace our pages here in our Newsletter.

Actually it would be nice to see many of our members photos gracing the pages of our Newsletter not just from the few we see now. So come on photographers get those snapping fingers working and give us some photos to publish next year. Digitals are best and easier to e-mail to the editors or bring your camera card along and we can download the selected photos. Old film photos can easily be scanned and e-mailed through or we can do them for you if you bring them along to our meetings. These are best left with us to process at a later date, so photos should be supplied in an envelope with your name printed on it.

Ross asked for lesser seen Genera and species to be brought in for discussion as we are mostly seeing the same ol' same ol', surely some of you have some hidden treasures tucked away in the garden. Some of the very old species plants are very well worth while showing as these are being forgotten when they shouldn't be, we need these species to keep strong gene pools going.

So get them out, clean them up and bring them in to show them off.

John had two neoregelias needing identification, both with a purple centre, they both looked similar, possibly slight differences due to cultural/growing conditions, suggestions were of *Neo*. 'Amethyst' (name amended to 'Goode's Amethyst' to differentiate it from the other 'Amethysts'), also possibly *Neo*. 'Sheer Joy'.

Meg brought in a *Vriesea ospinae* var. *gruberi* sporting a couple of very nice, healthy pups. Meg brought it along to show an example of an upper pupper, pointing out that these are pups growing in the upper leaf axils not at the base of the plant as seen on most of our bromeliads.

Meg also showed a *Vriesea delicatula* which is a delightful small species that has been used quite a bit in hybridizing, there are eight registered hybrids on the BCR and a few with parentage not noted eg. Vr. 'Pinegrove Candles'.

Ross commented on Vr. Pinegrove Candles which have been noticed to change colour from season to season. Only the purple one is stable.

Lesley brought along two different forms of *Tillandsia flabellata*, a red form and a green form, noted difference being in the colour of the foliage.

Laurie brought along a couple of pieces of *Tillandsia funkiana* in flower and a *Tillandsia reichenbachii* with its perfumed flowers. This raised some discussion as to men being colour blind and lacking a sense of smell often resulting in ones partner needing to verify whether a plant has perfume or not.

Trish brought along a *Vriesea* 'Jarrah' to show how to remove its pups, after removing the lower leaves Trish proceeded to demonstrate cutting the pups off using a sharp knife. She also showed a *Vr.* 'Tachetes Gold' that has had many pups removed already and showing another two which are its 13th and 14th pups. This was after removing the flower spike early and feeding well at that stage, these results have now shown the benefits of this action.

John Crawford showed a well grown *Vriesea* (*Vigeri x cardinalis*) x *guttata* (unreg.) with yellow/cream tipped bracts on the inflorescence. Comment was made that previously seen plants of this particular hybrid only have entire pink bracts, not with cream tips. Further investigation is required to see if there are several clones of this hybrid in circulation.

John was searching the BCR and FCBS web sites to confirm the identity of his *Vriesea flammea* when he realised that the photo on FCBS differed to the photo under the same name on the BCR. This then caused him some confusion so he brought his plant in for discussion and to ask about the 'confused' naming.

Ross showed a *Pitcairnia* with white petals that he has in flower at the moment with no name, no name suggestions were offered. Photos have been taken and flowers cut up and measured, a herbarium sample prepared and photographed and all has been forwarded for further discussion with Derek Butcher and Peter Tristram. Derek has forwarded these to Brom-L for the taxonomists to cast an eye over. Hopefully we will get an identification soon as this plant has been grown here at Pinegrove since circa. 1985 as *Pitcairnia* species (white flowers).

Discussion was entered into regarding the 'Anna' range of neoregelia hybrids, it was thought these were all the same hybrid with variable variegation and given individual numbers to separate them from each other. This is NOT the case, they were a group of unnamed hybrids imported in the 1990s and given the temporary name of 'Anna' and assigned a number to differentiate them from each other until official names were/are assigned. Some of these are listed below with their present name/s.

Please add to, or correct this list to the editors if possible as this is by NO means a correct or official listing, but a hear say list at this stage.

Confirmation of name and corresponding Anna # would be appreciated.

Anna #1 = Mad Max / Lorena	Anna #38 = Absolutely Fabulous
Anna #5 = Hyperball / Heck	Anna #39 = Wild Gossip / Garnish
Anna #10 = Wonder of Worlds	Anna #40 = Hot Gossip / Predator
Anna #11 = Brittany	Anna #43 = Purple Glaze
Anna #23 = Cherry Ripe	Anna #63 = Jaws Too

Earthworms kill potted plants

For a long time, I have suspected that earthworms kill potted plants by feeding on their roots. Whenever I cleaned out such pots, I found earthworms in them.

Ever since Charles Darwin wrote of the earthworm in 1881, "It may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world, as have these lowly organised creatures", few have dared to say anything nasty about earthworms, so I kept my suspicions to myself while trying to figure how I could prove my case.

As a scientist I am aware that to prove cause and effect, I would have to set up a comparison between two potted plants in which everything would have to be identical except that one pot would contain worms while the other would have no worms. However, with just two pots for comparison, the results could be muddled up by unknown variations despite efforts to ensure absolute uniformity. It would be better to enlarge the comparison to say 20 pots per treatment. Comparing 20 pots against 20 would be statistically more robust than one against one. I still had to figure out how to measure plant performance and for how long to run the experiment. Things got so complicated in my mind that the experiment never got done.

Last year, I raised half a dozen seedlings of the rare endemic Malayan witch hazel, *Maingaya malayana*, in individual pots. The seedlings grew at different rates, which was to be expected since they were raised from seeds and could be expected to be genetically different from each other. I had also not taken the trouble to ensure that the soil was exactly the same in all the pots. Also the pots were in different parts of the garden, under different environments. However, one plant was particularly stunted. I thought this was a genetic dwarf because it did not respond to any of my efforts to get it to grow beyond its first few leaves. Finally when it was clear that the plant was about to die, I tipped the plant out of the pot and found earthworms wriggling in the soil. I threw out the earthworms and repotted the plant. It recovered immediately and produced new leaves. The recovery was so striking that I have no doubt the worms were the cause of the stunting and slow decline of the plant.

For those who still doubt, I can now suggest an easy test. Add earthworms to a pot containing a healthy plant. Watch the plant decline over the next few months, then repot the plant after removing the worms, and see if the plant recovers.

Reprinted from: Tropical Gardening,

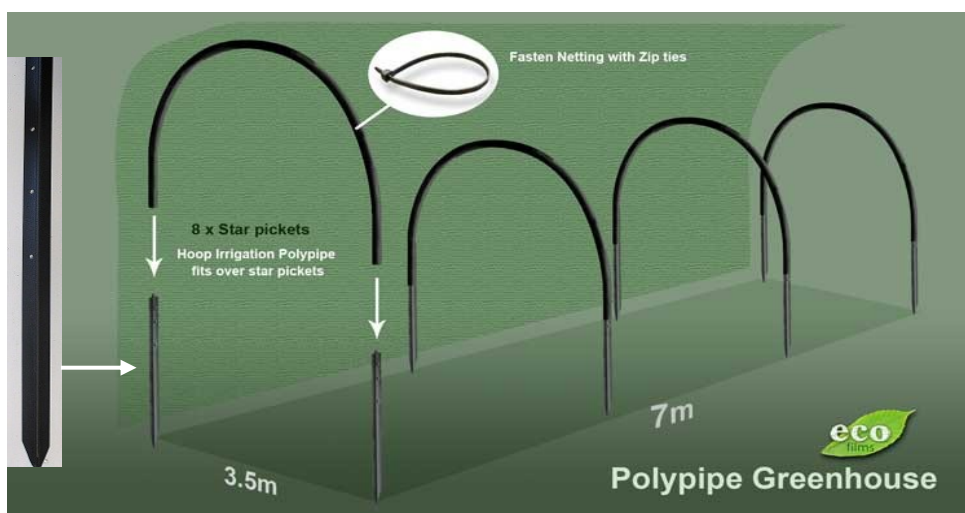
Posted by Dr Francis Ng, Sunday, February 06, 2011

Easy to Build Polypipe Greenhouse

Posted by [Ecofilms](#) on Jun 17, 2011 in [Permaculture](#), [Techniques DIY](#)

Sometimes you see something and you think "Wow! That's a great idea." We came across this very simple and easy to build greenhouse at Rosina Buckman's backyard.

Most greenhouse designs are overly complicated with lengthy instructions and steel engineering that makes them unaffordable to most people wishing to have something in their backyard to grow their seedlings or indeed even a basic shelter to cover their aquaponic systems from the rain, wind, birds and insects. Yet this one idea is not commonly found on the internet.



All you need are around 8 star pickets and a length of thick industrial strength irrigation pipe to make a Greenhouse of approximately 3 meters by 7 metres. Star pickets are also called steel fence posts in some countries. They come in a variety of sizes from 900mm right up to 2400mm in length. Buy the taller steel picket and hammer them into location in your desired spot in the backyard.



Polypipe comes in a range of sizes, do choose one that is wide enough to slip over the steel picket. The polypipe Rosina uses fits snugly over the picket and slides down about half the length of the picket. It is then arched and connected over the other picket. Bird-netting or shade cloth is connected to the pipe with large size zip ties. The beauty of building your greenhouse this way is that you can change the shape and length to fit any shape in the garden.



Vriesea 'Splendide' - Kay Daniels
1st Open and Judges Choice



Neoregelia 'Pink Spider'
1st Novice - Lesley Baylis



Neos. mounted on driftwood
1st Decorative - Helen Clewett



Pitcairnia
unknown



Vr. (Vigeri x cardinalis)
x guttata



Tillandsia flabellata red & green form
Shown by Lesley Baylis



Basket of *Vriesea flammea*
grown by Ross Little



Tillandsia secundata
grown by Kay Heindke



Tillandsia funkiana and *Tillandsia reichenbachii*
grown by Laurie Mountford



Aechmea 'Lucky Stripes' showing
regular growth and albinism ??



Vriesea delicatula grown by Meg Kerr



Vriesea 'Pinegrove Candles'

Photo's supplied by: Ross Little

Recognising what a name Means for a Confused Reader, by R.L.

For the purists among us there is a right and wrong way to write a plant name on a label. Some of us print using capitals (upper case) as it is easier for a lot of people to read. Some write using small letters (lower case) and chicken scrawl which is hard to read at times. Some people write adding fancy tails to their letters making it difficult to decipher just what some letters are supposed to be. Occasionally one needs to get the magnifying glass out to read tiny print on a large label. The main issue is, can the name be read and understood easily.

Understanding the writing:

Species - the genus name should begin with a capital letter = *Vriesea*
the species name should be all lower case = *flammea*

Written correctly a species name should also be in italics: *Vriesea flammea*

Hybrid - the genus name written as per species = *Vriesea*
the hybrid name should begin with a capital, be written in lower case
and with single quotation marks = 'Flammea'

Written correctly a hybrid name should read: *Vriesea* 'Flammea'

When these basic rules are applied it becomes quite easy to ascertain when one needs to check species or a hybrid on FCBS as there is both a species list and cultivar (hybrid) list. The BCR is specifically hybrids and cultivars only. Unfortunately these lists aren't written in the manner described above so one needs to read the heading of the lists carefully when confirming an identification.



Vriesea 'Flammea' Photo taken By D Butcher at Selby Gardens 1992

The difference between the plant on the left and the one on the right is quite obvious, however they both have the same name. Written correctly with its single quotation marks it is easy to understand the plant on the left is a hybrid. The plant on the right is the species of *Vriesea flammea* and is found in the species list when searching FCBS.



Quote from Derek Butcher: Very rarely do you see lists of both species and non species so you need to know what sort your plant really is. The fun starts when you try to work out if the name on your label agrees with the official records.

Vriesea flammea

This charming small *Vriesea* was first noted by Dr. Lyman B. Smith in Brazil in 1941. It is a robust grower soon forming a good-sized clump even in a small container. Like several other species in this genus, it is a shy bloomer unless it can be grown in this manner. The plant can be raised outdoors in the milder regions of southern California.

The species *flammea* is not too often found in collections; what is usually noted is the hybrid which was first described, by Duval in 1902 in the *Revue Horticole*. This cross is (*× vangeertii*) *× Jonghei*. From a compact medium-sized rosette of soft lettuce-green leaves rises a tall brilliant red flattened spike. In no way does it resemble the species bearing the same name.

It seems that the name *flammea* has caused some confusion in the past. On the cover of the Bromeliad Society Bulletin, Vol. IV, No. 3, is pictured a *Vriesea* with a beautiful branched flower stalk bearing the name of *Vriesea × 'flammea'*. In Vol. XI, No. 4, Charles Chevalier disclosed that this name was given very obviously in error and that the *Vriesea* with the branched inflorescence should be named *Vriesea × van ackeri*.

Reprinted from: The Bromeliad Society Bulletin, 1967, Vol.17, No.4.

Tip of the Month from **The Bromeliadvisory**, July 1987.

This growing tip from Nat De Leon.

As dry as it has been for the past six weeks or more, it has been really rough on our bromeliads. Summer light is very intense. The unusual dry weather has resulted in clear skies, when we should have had many days of cloudy skies and frequent showers. This compounds the situation and many plants are showing it.

If your bromeliads are taking on a yellowish appearance there are several things you can do. You can sprinkle your plants down more often. The softer leaved guzmanias and vrieseas will especially benefit from the extra misting. If you have the room to do so, move yellowish looking plants to a more shaded area. Otherwise, consider double shading some parts of your growing area. Double shading means adding another layer of shade cloth either on top or underneath your existing shade cloth, whichever is easier. The extra shade cloth can be considered temporary but can remain in place for the rest of the summer. If your present structure has shade cloth resting on wire cables, it would be easier to stretch the extra layer underneath, between the existing shade cloth and the cables. By doing so the cable will hold the shade cloth in place and you only need secure the two ends. Areas that are double covered will be darker and you'll notice the areas will be significantly cooler as well. Being cooler they will not have to be watered as often.

Chemical Control of *Diaspididae* - Hard or Armoured Scale Insects *Coccidae* - Soft Scale or Wax Scale & *Pseudococcidae* - Mealybugs

by Les Higgins 2013.

Hard scales are covered by non-living waxy armour that makes killing them extremely difficult. Penetration through this armour by contact insecticides is very doubtful. Systemic pesticides can be the answer but many are hazardous to the operator and the plant. Mealybugs and soft scale are, in comparison easy to kill.

Pesticides are rated by LD50. That is the lethal dose that kills 50% of the animal population under test. A pesticide certified LD50 of 1 indicates 1mg has a 50% probability to kill a 1kg animal in one application. Rogor 40 an organophosphorus tested on dogs is specified LD50 oral 250 and LD50 dermal 1000. Rated as moderately hazardous it is well known that humans cannot tolerate more than 3mg of Rogor 40. Malathion E.C. 500, an organophosphorus, is indicated Oral LD50 1400 - 1900, dermal about 4000. Malathion's rating is "slightly hazardous" however the EC formulation dissolves the plants cuticle. The above two are 'wide spectrum' pesticides. Both are frequently recommended without considering the plant surface, operator health or insect penetrability.

Hard scale, Soft scale, Unarmoured scale (Mealybug) are so similar in physiology that an insecticide registered to kill one will probably destroys all three. A reasonable way of selecting a suitable insecticide is to consider it as two parts:

- 1) the active ingredient (**AI**)
- 2) the carrier

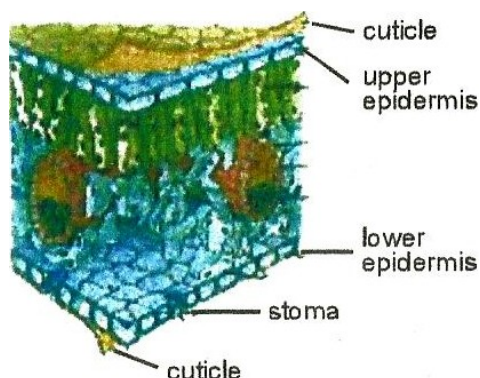
The range of carriers include:

Emulsifier concentrate (**EC**)

Wettable powder (**WP**)

Flowable liquids, Oils, Water, Aerosol and Granules.

EC's - These are hydrocarbon solvents. Most plants have cuticles composed of extremely thin hydrocarbon. **EC's** destroy the cuticle leaving the epidermis exposed. Baby insects emerge to stand on food and no longer need to tunnel through wax. Instead of a few survivors, as nature intended, a massive infestation occurs. Diseases appreciate the exposed epidermis and sunburn and water vapour loss become a problem. Numerous insects have hydrocarbon cuticles and **EC's** kill them by causing uncontrollable water loss. **EC** carriers increase **AI** effectiveness and are most suited for pests on non-living surfaces.

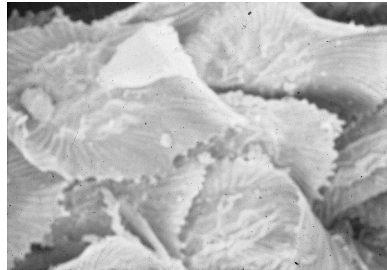


AI's - Active ingredients are being increasingly developed as 'target specific'. That is they are developed to kill a specific pest. Newly released pesticides are expensive but used in such small quantities are actually very economical. The latest chemicals if used more concentrate or too frequently than recommended can kill the plant. Personal safety requires selecting the **AI** with the least LD 50 rating consistent with the required eradication.

WP's - The powder can float in the air. For personal protection use a respirator with a combined dust and gas cartridge. Constant agitation is often necessary to keep the **AI** in solution. The big advantage is no damage to the plant's cuticle.

Flowable liquids - have the advantage of both **WP's** and the **EC's** without inherited liabilities.

Oils - should **never** be used on bromeliads. Oil causes low to moderate damage to plants with stomata. Bromeliads have trichomes. High magnification reveals the trichome is a beautiful lattice that by capillary action facilitates the uptake of rain water and very dilute nutrient. Oil permeates the minute holes in the lattice and the trichome becomes waterproof.



Water base - is low toxicity and no damaging to plants. There is a possibility that in this formulation the **AI** could kill the plant.

Aerosol - the propellant is usually a Hydrocarbon solvent. Use on insects, non living items and people but not plants with hydrocarbon cuticles.

Granules - most are systemic. Vapour is frequently released. Deadly on pests and prolonged exposure can kill plants. This is a product of last resort - use with extreme care.

Pesticides are further divided into contact, penetration and systemic action. Penetration enters the plant but goes no further. Systemic poison enters and travels in the sap system. In trichome plants systemic poison absorption is increased by dilution into fresh rain water rather than tap water. The N.S.W government has made efforts to curb huge amounts of misinformation by introducing the Pesticide Act. Only those people who have up-to-date knowledge of pesticides should give advice. Read the label before use.

Epidermis damage caused by the injudicious selection of a carrier is permanent. Unlike animals plants never repair damage. The consequence of a wrong carrier include: dehydration, debility, heat stress, burn scars and early death. Trying to kill pests often create better conditions for them to flourish and plants less likely to survive.

The minute gap between the armoured scale's cover and the leaf surface makes gas or vapour a certain way to quickly kill all stages of hard scale. Twenty minutes in a fumigation chamber kills every surface insect. To avoid damage and death to plants they must be dry before gassing and remain dry till no trace of gas remains (at least 24hrs). A fogging unit easily disperses **AI** to kill insects over a large area. Fog is vaporised glycol (antifreeze) its advantage is phytotoxicity. Systemics are the alternative solution.

Family *Coccidae*, soft scale or wax scale are best eliminated with systemic poison diluted in rain water.

Family *Pseudococcidae* includes many species of both aerial and root mealybug. Aerial mealybug are easy targets. The root mealybug's waxy coating protects it from most pesticides. Spraying poisons directly onto plant roots is not feasible. Suggested controls are systemic dips and drenches or granules incorporated into the substrate.

Both *Coccidae* and *Pseudococcidae* are nurtured by ants. Unless ants are exterminated there is a constant problem of mealybug and soft scale reinfestation.

Emergent crawlers of the three genera of scale have no armour or wax. They cannot survive a suitable spray of contact **AI** diluted in water. Do not apply a liquid pesticide on a dry plant. Spraying when temperatures exceeds 30° C usually causes distorted leaves and viral like marking.

Plant assassination by bacteria can follow the elimination of a severe insect infestation. Dead scale falling from the plant expose puncture holes that provide entry points for bacteria. *Saprophytes* are the first to enter to consume dead tissue. Pathogens follow and destroy living tissue. Eventually there is a menagerie of bacteria and fungus in progressively rotting tissue. Attempts at chemical control are useless.

February 2013, FNCBSG NSW Newsletter has an article by John Crawford "Scale Control in Bromeliads", John suggests the use of Confidor, it's **AI** is



Les' gassing chamber

Imidacloprid. The LD50 of pure Imidacloprid tested on rats is 450. The concentrate (15g/L) LD50 is 30,000. The LD50 of the RTU (0.125g/L) is 3,600,000. The carrier is water. Confidor when used as directed is safe for plants and operator.

See also - Family *Diaspididae* - Hard or Armoured Scale Pests of Bromeliads FNCBSG NSW Newsletter, August 2013.



Les Higgins fogging back in his working days.

Novice Popular Vote

1st	Lesley Baylis	<i>Neoregelia</i> 'Pink Spider'
2nd	Trish Kelly	<i>Vriesea</i> 'Kiwi Sunset'
3rd	Flo Danswan	<i>Neoregelia</i> hybrid ?

Open Popular Vote

1st	Kay Daniels	<i>Vriesea</i> 'Splendide'
2nd	Shane Weston	<i>Aechmea</i> 'Roberto Menescal'
3rd	Marie Essery Meg Kerr	<i>Billbergia</i> 'Cartherine Wilson' <i>Vriesea gigantea</i>

Judges Choice

1st	Kay Daniels	<i>Vriesea</i> 'Splendide'
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Decorative

1st	Helen Clewett	Mini Neoregelias on Driftwood
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Comments from the growers:

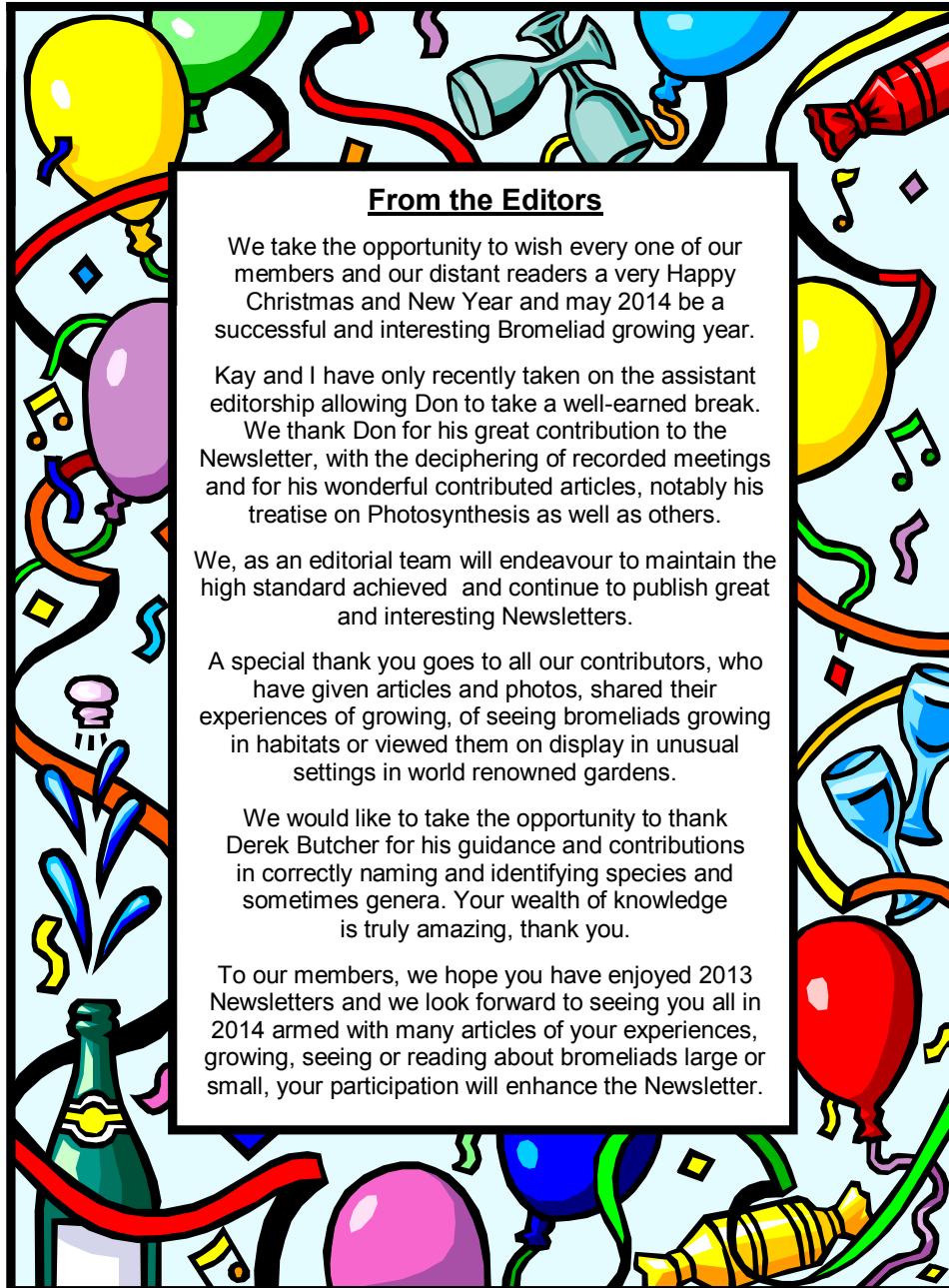
Lesley was inspired to buy and grow a nice clump of *Neoregelia* 'Pink Spider' after having seen a nice plant Marie had presented once. It is kept hanging in the shade house under 70% beige shade cloth where it seems to thrive on neglect. It needs plenty of water, fortunately Lesley lives in a high rainfall area. It is considered this plant is excellent for hanging baskets as this example proved.

Trish acquired her *Vriesea* 'Kiwi Sunset' from Eumundi markets several years ago, it is grown under 50% shade cloth and gets fertilized twice yearly.

Kay has had her *Vriesea* 'Splendide' for about four years now, it is grown under 50% shade cloth mostly receiving only rain water. Kay finds this plant quite an easy one to grow needing little care.

Shane has had his *Aechmea* 'Roberto Menescal' for about a year now which he acquired from Peter Tristram, it is originally from tissue culture, a sport of *Ae. chantinii* dark form. Best grown on the dryer side, it also seems to be prone to scale infestation. It's still a very highly sort after plant, so keep an eye out for it.

Helen's neo's on drift wood entry in decorative this month was designed to be used as a centre piece for a table so it can be viewed from all angles.



From the Editors

We take the opportunity to wish every one of our members and our distant readers a very Happy Christmas and New Year and may 2014 be a successful and interesting Bromeliad growing year.

Kay and I have only recently taken on the assistant editorship allowing Don to take a well-earned break.

We thank Don for his great contribution to the Newsletter, with the deciphering of recorded meetings and for his wonderful contributed articles, notably his treatise on Photosynthesis as well as others.

We, as an editorial team will endeavour to maintain the high standard achieved and continue to publish great and interesting Newsletters.

A special thank you goes to all our contributors, who have given articles and photos, shared their experiences of growing, of seeing bromeliads growing in habitats or viewed them on display in unusual settings in world renowned gardens.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank Derek Butcher for his guidance and contributions in correctly naming and identifying species and sometimes genera. Your wealth of knowledge is truly amazing, thank you.

To our members, we hope you have enjoyed 2013 Newsletters and we look forward to seeing you all in 2014 armed with many articles of your experiences, growing, seeing or reading about bromeliads large or small, your participation will enhance the Newsletter.

happy new year

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