

S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

Vol 33

Number 5

Sept/ Oct 2009

PUBLISHED BY:

The Bromeliad Society of South Australia Inc

Born 1977 and still offsetting!



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Len Colgan

1 Ailsa Avenue, Warradale, 5046. Ph: 82969426

Secretary: Derek Butcher.

25 Crace Road, Fulham, 5024. Ph: 83567728

Vice president: Adam Bodzioch

Treasurer: Bill Treloar

Margaret Butcher

Maureen Hick

Colin Waterman

Lainie Stainer

Bev Masters

Email address:

Secretary - tillands@senet.com.au

Web site: <http://www.bromeliad.org.au>

Meetings Venue:

Maltese Cultural Centre,
6 Jeanes Street,
Beverley

Time: 2.00pm.

Second Sunday of each month
Exceptions – 1st Sunday in May, &
August & no meeting in December
or unless advised otherwise

**VISITORS & NEW MEMBERS
WELCOME**



Neoregelia 'Tiger'

Pots, Labels & Hangers - Small quantities available all meetings.

For special orders/ larger quantities call Ron Masters on 83514876

Dates for 2009

Meeting dates:-

Sept 13th- Trip to northern NSW by Derek, Oct 11th-“Problems, Questions and Answers” bring in problem plants (even herbarium specimens) for discussion!, Nov 8th.

Special Events:- Nov 7th Sales day

Applications for membership always welcome.

Subscriptions \$10.00 per year Feb. to Feb.

Several reference photos courtesy of “fcb.org”



July meeting from the Secretary's desk

Because of very healthy bank balance and now we have no commitment for an Australian Conference for a few years to come we decided to reduce the commission sellers pay on plant sales. For a three-year period we decided to reduce the commission at our Shows to 10% instead of 20%. To encourage members to sell at meetings we decided this would be free of commission for the same period.

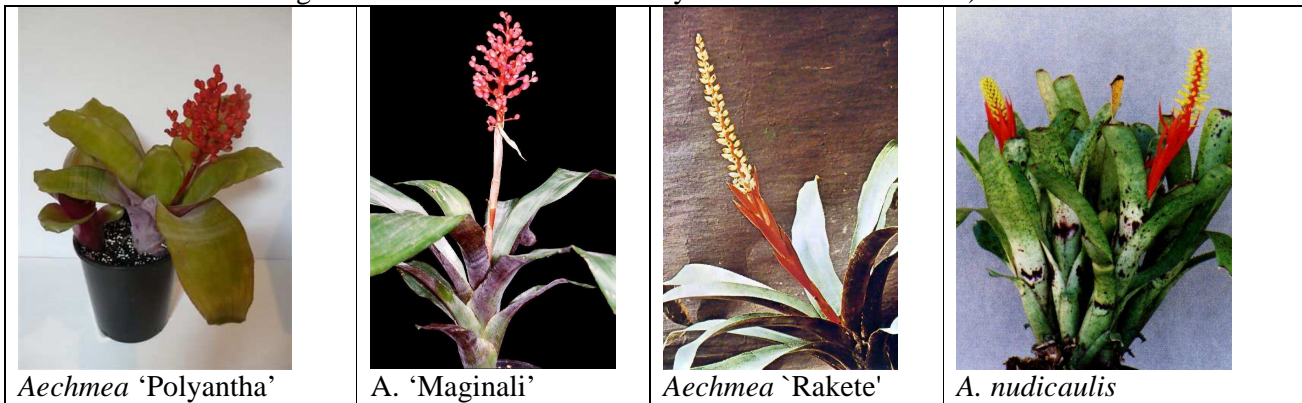
In our last Gazette you may have noticed my plea for a photographer at our meetings to take a photograph of a plant that had some special interest. Well, Julie Batty has put her hand up and it was her plant that we put the provisional name of *Aechmea* 'Polyantha' on. As with so many of our plants there is a story behind this name. This goes back to 1981. Julie says her plant seen here is very close to the *Aechmea* 'Polyantha' as published in the last Gazette but this got me thinking. The following goes back 28 years!

***Aechmea* 'Polyantha'** (*nudicaulis* x '*Maginali*') according to *Cultivar Register 1998* but ('*Maginali*' x *nudicaulis*) according to the *Richter's* writings.

This all started when Julie Batty brought in an unnamed plant in the last stage of flowering at the June 2009 meeting and most of us said, Aechmea 'Polyantha'.

As is usual with these sorts of happenings I see a chance to write something for our local Gazette. I found some interesting information when I wrote on Aechmea fulgens/miniata in Bromeleter 18(1): 6-7. 1981. I quote:

'I would say that all make good specimen plants, with the flowers and resultant berries being persistent for months. I do have another plant in this complex called Ae. 'Polyantha' which is a hybrid between Ae. 'Maginali' and Ae. nudicaulis. Although I have not yet flowered it, the shape is similar and the leaves "discolor" (The confusion over the name 'Polyantha' started back in 1964 when a Sydney nurseryman released plants grown from German seed of Aechmea fulgens var. discolor X Ae. miniata var. discolor and said the cross was called Aechmea 'Polyantha'. There were hundreds of these plants in both the green form and discolor sold through the chain stores. comment by Editor – Olwen Ferris.)'



Notes by Butcher 6/2009

Let us remember that *Aechmea fulgens* var. *discolor* X *Ae. miniata* var. *discolor* are also the parents for *Aechmea* 'Maginalii'!!!

If we look at *Aechmea* 'Rakete' by Richter this has similar parents (*nudicaulis* x *fulgens* var. *discolor*) to A 'Polyantha' and yet retains some influence of the *A. nudicaulis*. In fact all other hybrids involving *A. nudicaulis* show traits of this species. Why is it that 'Polyantha' does not? Could it be a selfing of A. 'Maginali'?. The original photo in *Zimmerpflanzen: Brom.* 278. 194B and Padilla's description seem to confirm this. See also the BSI's 1977 English-translated publication "*Bromeliads*" by Walter Richter (page23).

From Padilla 1973

Aechmea 'Polyantha' Richter (*Ae.* x '*Maginali*' x *Ae. nudicaulis*) . A graceful rosette with soft, glossy leaves, green above, purplish red underneath. The tall, erect inflorescence is an open spike, bearing blue violet petaled flowers.

July meeting cont:

Aechmea 'Rakete' Richter (*Ae. nudicaulis* x *Ae. fulgens* var. *discolor*). A medium-to-large plant with foliage similar to that of *Ae. fulgens* var. *discolor* and an elongated red and yellow inflorescence similar to that of *Ae. nudicaulis*.

Note that even with similar parentage Padilla makes no reference of the influence of *A. nudicaulis* in 'Polyantha'!

No wonder we can't tell the difference between 'Polyantha' and 'Maginali'

Things ain't as simple as we first thought!

At the June meeting we had many more plants than attendees AND they were flowering. This time we had more attendees than plants, which was good because we had to have time to see a presentation by Len on Bolivian Tillandsias A-Z using our new computer and projector. We had perhaps the last run after its presentation at the World Conference in 2006 in San Diego, California and again in Germany in 2008. We were able to make hints as to how to improve it even more! Perhaps we are a bit spoilt in Adelaide because of our contacts with German Tillandsia specialists who are also Bolivian experts. So we have plants here that are rarely seen in the USA. Many comments were made including 'ohs' and 'arr's' so if you were unable to be there, I am sorry to say you missed a treat! I am unable to go through the whole presentation so will just say a little on names. Lotte Hromadnik has a yellow petalled *Tillandsia* named after her and called *Tillandsia lotteae*. The 'ae' showing it was named after a female. No worries about this name. But what about *Tillandsia edithiae* which Lotte gets really uptight about. You see it was named after Edith Blass and was described as *Tillandsia edithae* by Rauh. Harry Luther in his understanding of botanical Latin said "No No" this should be *Tillandsia edithiae* (note the extra 'i'!). Now, Lotte always complains about why Aussies like Len (and did include me!), follow the Americans in this name change. She has a valid argument because convention has it that you leave the name as originally spelt. What name appears in the International Plant name index sponsored by both Kew Gardens and Harvard University? It is *Tillandsia edithae* of course.



Tillandsia lotteae.



Tillandsia edithiae

There was an interesting plant in the 'Special' Raffle called *Aechmea roberto-seidelii*, which brought a shudder. It was from Gunner Hick who like the rest of us oldies is gunna change the label and then forgets what it was we had to do. We hurriedly decided it was 'Favorite Hiccup' and Julie Batty took the plant home. Julie is one of our more inquisitive members and could only find 'Hiccup' in the records and has corrected her label. The irony is that we do have the true *Aechmea roberto-seidelii* in Adelaide, which the taxonomists have called variously, *A. pineliana*, *A. triticina*, and *A. guarapariensis* in the past 30 years. So if you are a gunna, get busy now!



Aechmea roberto-seidelii

July meeting cont:

ON THE TRAIL OF *AECHMEA ROBERTO-SEIDELII* by Derek Butcher in Bromeleter 24(6): 9. 1986

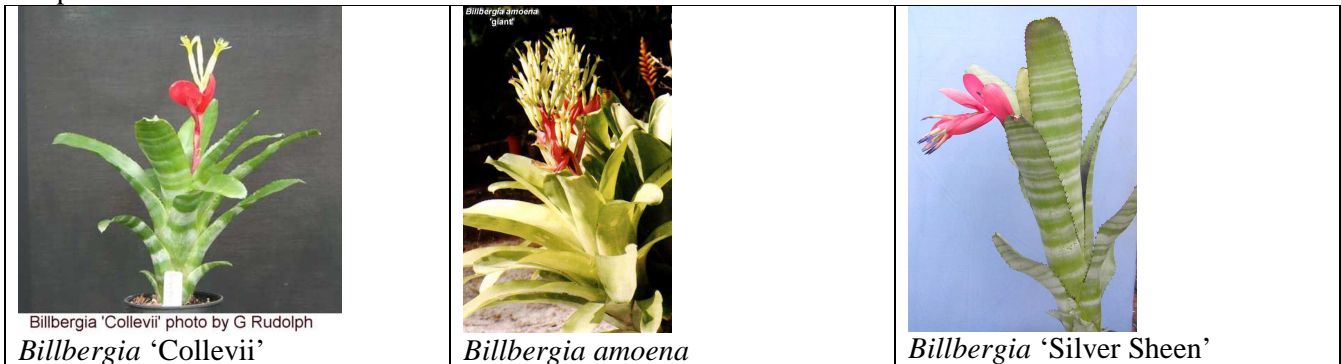
In 1981, three of us in South Australia obtained seed from Diane Pippin, then the seed officer for the Bromeliad Society Incorporated, in the United States. None of us knew what we were ordering or even what *Aechmea roberto-seidelii* was supposed to look like.

We all had good germination and whereas Josie Tonkin and myself had all maroon-red leaved survivors, Maureen Hick had green leaved specimens as well, one we called *Aechmea* 'Hiccup'. This, with an alleged species, which should have produced a more stable grex!

All the plants had a similarity in shape to *Aechmea* 'Foster's Favorite', but with slightly wider leaves. When my plants produced a flower similar to *Aechmea racinae*, then it seemed I should really try to trace a description of *Aechmea roberto-seidelii*. The Bromelioideae tome of Smith and Downs indicated that *Aechmea roberto-seidelii* was reduced to Synonymy under *Aechmea pineliana*. As we all know, this is a plant with stiff leaves and an erect inflorescence. Here in South Australia, *Aechmea pineliana* is always the plant that gets Florel or Carbide treatment to force it into flower. It is only the variety 'minima' that flowers without artificial aid.

It was clear that our plants had the wrong name. When Maureen Hick's green leaved efforts produced pendant flowers, but of a different colour combination, the coincidence was too great. We must surely be looking at *Aechmea* 'Foster's Favorite' F2. That is, the seedlings should show some affinity to either the original parents, namely *Aechmea victoriana* and *Aechmea racinae* or, of course, the original hybrid.

Back to the plants on display that I had the privilege of quickly running through. Either *Billbergia* 'Collevii' is very popular or you can't kill it with a stick because it was with us in June and 3 examples at the July meeting. The Latin name suggests species but it is a hybrid with *Billbergia amoena* one of the parents. I could not understand how a hybrid done in Europe in 1882 had received little publicity but popped up in Sydney in the 1970's. How had it survived two world wars? It was suggested that a Digger could well have brought home a plant for his sweetheart in 1919.. *Billbergia* 'Silver Sheen' was in flower suggesting that one of its parents was *Billbergia sandariana*. It would seem this is another hybrid where the parents are suspect.



We had a few *Dyckia* for display, not the run-of-the-mill green leaved hybrids that seem everywhere but those with attractive leaf markings and with a pedigree. I brought these in because I am currently on a high, having made contact on the Internet with a Brazilian specialising in *Dyckia*. 30 years ago I realised that species in this genus hybridised readily and most growers did not care so I became disillusioned and tried to find plants with bit of a pedigree. My collection is therefore small. I also brought in an *Encholirium*, which we will have to flower to ascertain its name because it was a seedling from Rudi Schulz in Victoria. 30 years ago *Dyckia* and *Encholirium* were mixed up and it was only 5 years ago when the Brazilians decided that if the plant flowered off centre it is *Dyckia* but if a terminal flowerer from the centre it is *Encholirium*. If you want to reduce the number of offsets in your pot you will need to turn the 'mass' out of the pot so you can tackle it from the base. You will have a lot of dead leaves to remove but then it is fairly easy to split off single plantlets. Only keep the best! How do you get a single plant to stay single for a period of time? Grow from seed where the plant will usually stay single until it flowers!

July meeting cont:

Len had a change of heart by bringing in miniature *Neoregelia* hybrids rather than his beloved tillandsias. So we saw 'Cougar', 'Pheasant', and 'Only Child'



Neoregelia Cougar



Neoregelia 'Pheasant' photo by Bill Paterson



Neoregelia Only Child

Maureen had brought in a huge flowering pair of *Aechmea* 'Fulgo-Ramosa' plants from the old school. I say the old school because this particular crossing keeps getting done, and new names given because a new hybrid can always be sold for a higher price than an old hybrid



Aechmea Fulgo-Ramosa flower

June meeting had one of our Colin's bring in plants for display and not to be outdone, our other Colin did the same for the July meeting. This is the sort of participation we need. Both these members receive more banter than most and would be disappointed if it did not happen. Both had been buyers at the Conference! There was a pot with *Aechmea apocalyptic* on the label, which we felt had to be *Aechmea gamosepala* or one of the many hybrids that look like *Aechmea gamosepala*. Because of the varying forms of *Aechmea gamosepala* that are around in their hundreds I felt I should show the differences to look for, if you think you have the rare *Aechmea apocalyptic*. Both have blue petals and a matchstick like flower. Don't put too much emphasis on sepal and ovary colour being redder in *A. apocalyptic*!

Inflorescence very lax, few-flowered, soon glabrous; flowers 25 mm long; scape -bracts mostly remote, scape decurved. *apocalyptic*

Inflorescence with its axis slightly exposed, many-flowered. flowers 15 mm long; inflorescence slender; floral bracts pungent. scape erect *gamosepala*.



Aechmea apocalyptic



Aechmea gamosepala

Finally we had a fluffy little *Tillandsia* with 5 offsets just starting to flower after having been acquired from Keith Bradtberg in 1993. It was called *Tillandsia* 'Enano'. One member did suggest that the flower should be removed to promote offsetting which may be alright for her but I prefer to let nature take its course. A bit of information on this plant follows:

Tillandsia 'Enano' Oct 2005

This plant was imported by Maurice Kellett in Victoria AU from Werner Krauspe in the 1980's. See advertisement in J. Brom. Soc 34(2): 89. 1984 which shows *Tillandsia tectorum enanum minor*. This plant breeds true from seed and many of us grow it in Australia.

First let us look at the name where 'enanum' in Latin means not dwarf and then there there is 'minor' that means small. It is a confusion of terms. Someone may have been trying to latinise 'Enano' the Spanish for dwarf and Spanish is spoken in Peru where this plant is supposed to originate - according to Werner Krauspe. We know that Werner did import from Karel Knize in Peru but despite many other names being used by Knize in his catalogues in this period this is not mentioned! We know that Knize thought up many Latinised names without even wondering if the plants would be properly described. It appears that Werner Krauspe was of a similar frame of mind!

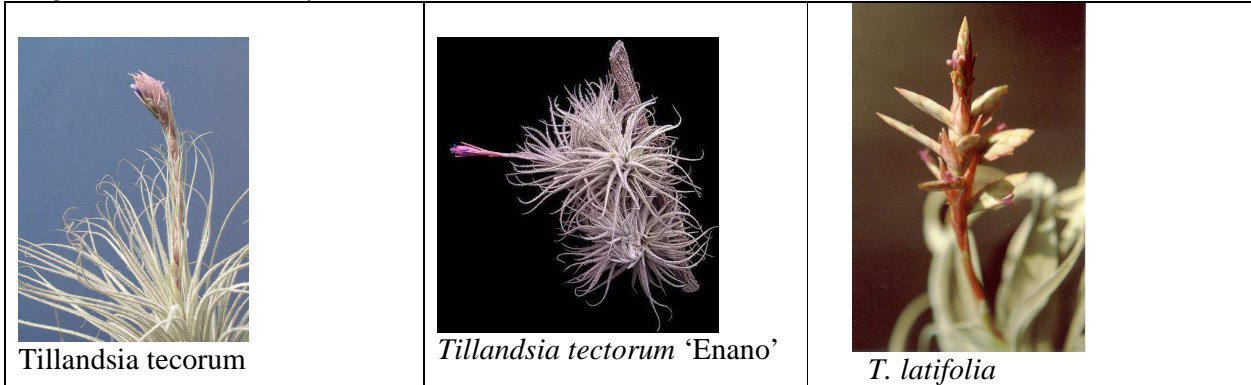
So for the last 20 years this plant has been happily growing and being reproduced faithfully from seed as well as offset, throughout Australia. Enquiries on the Internet in 2005 suggest that this plant is not alive in the USA.

July meeting cont:

We knew that Die Bromelie published in 2005 a Special edition for the *Tillandsia tectorum* complex written by Lieselotte Hromradnik. Here was a chance to find out about OUR plant. It looked like a smallish *T. tectorum* but had totally blue flowers not bicoloured blue and white. It rang no bells for Lieselotte and we had no provenance to help her.

Perhaps this plant may be found again in the wild but in the meantime we intend to give it the cultivar name of *Tillandsia tectorum* 'Enano' not to be confused with the *T. latifolia* 'Enano' of Paul Isley.

The plant can be described as being acaulescent, about 20cm diameter with a scape 7.5cm long. The inflorescence is compound, almost capitate, about 3cm long with lepidote primary and floral bracts as well as sepals. The petals are totally blue/violet. It is interesting that Baker in 1889, Mez in 1935 and Smith in 1977 refer to *T. tectorum* as having bicolour petals but Gilmartin in *The Bromeliaceae of Ecuador* in 1972 refers to petals as being violet (we presume totally)! It is perhaps with tongue in cheek that we continue with the name 'Enano' because the plant is not dwarf! However, it is much smaller and fluffier than the large *T. tectorum* usually associated with Ecuador.



August meeting from the Secretary's desk

Our involvement in the Home and Garden Show at Morphettsville racecourse to be held on Oct 16-18 is only really to inform the General Public we are alive and well! We will also be promoting our November sales day. It seems we will easily get enough volunteers to man the stall during the period but other members may like to go to the Show to see us at work. To think you could be one of the few to ask our workers intelligent questions to keep them awake and on their toes!

Attendance was down a bit from the previous month. Was it the weather, swine flu, the fact that the meeting was on the 1st Sunday (those not reading the Gazette!) or they had no plants to survive the winter so they could brag about their achievement!

Adam had a valid excuse for non-attendance and Bill Treloar stood in!

First up was *Neoregelia* 'Tiger' grown very well by Darrel Whelan. Good strong stout leaves that could so easily be long and strappy if grown in too much shade. As with all plants I usually have some comment about identity and here goes! Chester Skotak of Costa Rica makes regular excursions down to Brazil to find plants he can use in his hybridising programs, this is but one. The problem is that he gives names to these select cultivars but leaves it to others to record their presence and what they are supposed to look like. This cultivar is said to be a form of *Neoregelia carcharodon* but nobody has butchered the flower to find out what species it is closest to. There are 4 to pick from. On the eastern coast of Australia there is a group of keen growers who I call the *Carcharodon* Cranks who do not take the name on the label but who investigate. We use 'Carcharodon' in the broad sense because it was the first of the group to be described. We find it is safer to use just the cultivar name and not align it with a species name.

The photo we have, was done by Julie Batty and because of her involvement I convinced her to check her photo with what others were growing under this name, on <http://fcbs.org>. One from New York had distinct mealie covering on the bottom side of the leaf but photos from Florida were more shiny and linked more with Darrel's plant We agreed it was probably the same. Now, this is what I encourage all those who have newly acquired plants especially from the eastern states. It can be fun.

August meeting cont:



From one challenge to another. *Neoregelia* 'Burnsies Spiral' so called because the variegated leaves are in a clear spiral. But it keeps growing and rarely flowers, so much so you often have to behead the plant and reroot it! Named after Doug Burns from NSW from some 40 years ago and we still have not got a photo of it in flower in Adelaide.

There were several other neoregelias in good condition as well as one or two Vrieseas of the squiggly leaf kind.

One variegated Neoregelia of note was that brought in by Maureen with Anna 46 on the label brought back memories. It all started in 1992 when Peter Tristram imported a stack of Skotak variegated hybrids. At least 46 seedlings made their way to John Catlan but somehow the parentages got lost so they were called Anna! It was felt at the time that decisions on naming would be made later. As far as we are aware Anna 46 has never been identified so it will have this temporary name forever!

Bill was intrigued with a variegated Aechmea with the 'temporary' name of 'Cold Snap' on the label. We are waiting for it to flower to see whether it is an *Aechmea organensis* as asserted by Chester Skotak. Meanwhile it has started sporting non-variegated offsets!

Len had brought in a small tray with 5 *Dyckia* plants in it having been purchased from the Adelaide Bot Gardens last year. Several took especial interest in them.

At the July meeting we had an *Aechmea gamosepala* that had *A. apocalyptica* on the label, so this time I had brought in a proper *Aechmea apocalyptica* or was it?! The plant did not agree with the original description made by Reitz in 1962. What I could not understand was that Lyman Smith had been sitting on an unidentified collection made by Foster since 1939 and was not divulged until 40 years later in 1979. Such is the time delay with taxonomists. Anyway, I contacted Harry Luther who assured me that what we were growing was within the broader concept of this species. (Refer to photos page 4)

AND so we move on to Bill's *Aechmea* in pyjamas. He leaves the dry outer leaves on for winter! This is something that will be discussed at our October meeting when we talk about "Problems, Questions and Answers" when I hope you will bring in problem plants (even herbarium specimens) for discussion!

Anyway we had *Aechmea weilbachii* in flower and just to help those who live in Warradale we enclose a photo of the plant taken by our resident photographer Julie Batty at our meeting. I know there are 5 forms or varieties of this species and only had two but at least they were in flower. The other one was the var *pendula* whose inflorescence came in two pieces. It was in two pieces and not more because of Bill's skill in avoiding a potential car crash on Highway One just north of the city. What made Bill annoyed was that it had taken him 10 years to get the thing to flower.



Aechmea weilbachii Photos by Julie Batty

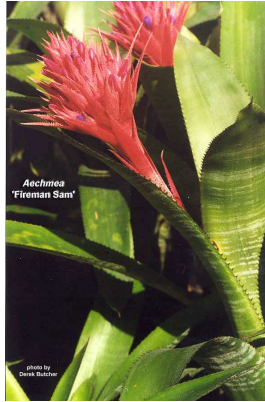
August meeting cont:

Len had brought in a clump of *Hohenbergia leopoldo-horstii*, which is his pride and joy. This is one of the species of this genus that seems to gladly grow in Adelaide. He'll have to repot soon and use the secateurs to make them part company!



Hohenbergia leopoldo-horstii

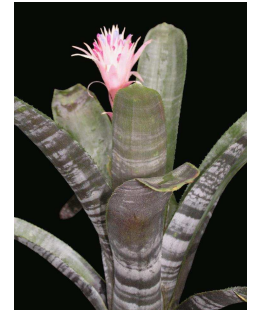
We were not as enthralled with his *Aechmea* 'Fireman Sam' purely because of Len's love of Huntsman spiders and one was currently in residence. This cultivar has been linked to *Aechmea dealbata* but botanically speaking comes somewhere between *A. dealbata* and *A. fasciata*



Aechmea 'Fireman Sam'



Aechmea dealbata



A. fasciata

I just had to bring in my *Tillandsia* 'Silver and Rose' to brag about its flower. Bill was able to confirm that the petals were a lovely shade of wishy grey or brown. Said to be a hybrid of *T. xerographica* x *T. concolor* we can now try to register the name even though the plant is acting like a mule and will not flower properly.



Tillandsia 'Silver and Rose'



xerographica x *T. concolor*

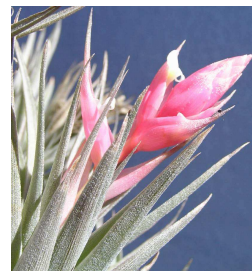


Len was keen to show off his *T. walter-richter* which was in bud and I wanted it to be in flower so we could check its name. This too is supposed to be a hybrid, only done without human intervention. It has been described so we think we know what to expect and we must remember that natural hybrids in the wild are rare than species!



T. walter-richter

Finally, we had Colin Anderson with his *Tillandsia* with a butcher's hook but without a label. Not yet in flower, guesses included *T. recurvifolia* if petals were white but more likely the hybrid of this species. If it came from the USA then linked to the Dimmitt hybrids around 'Houston' or if Australian the Reilly hybrids around that patriotic name 'Southern Cross'.



T. recurvifolia