

S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

Number 1

Nov 2011/Jan/Feb 2012

PUBLISHED BY:

The Bromeliad Society of South Australia Inc

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Born 1977 and still offsetting!'

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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
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MEETING & SALES 2012 dates:

11/3/2012(Summer brag), [31/3/2012 Sales](#), [1/4/2012 Sales](#), 8/4/2012 (Pricklies), 6/5/2012, 10/6/2012,
8/7/2012(), 5/8/2012 (Winter Brag), 9/9/2012, 14/10/2012, [27/10/2012 Sales](#), 11/11/2012,

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Thursday night October 27 must have been a restless night for some members because by the time I arrived at 2.15 pm on the Friday all the tables had been set up and I had missed the usual differences of opinion as to what should go where! All I had to do was make sure the plants I had brought in for display were displayed in the right place. The influx of good quality display plants was brought about by our President contacting the oldies because the article in the Sunday Mail on the previous Sunday by Sophie Thompson was so good we just had to set our standards high! In fact all the advertising fell into place which meant a bumper crowd to buy up big. For some reason the buying public had come of age because we did not get the 9 o'clock stampede and we saw a steady stream. Treasury has since told us it was the best sales day so far, money-wise. Promoting the Society need not be left to the Society sales days and members can promote Bromeliads in other ways. Did you know that Warren is travelling to Murray Bridge in the next year to preach to the unconverted. He asked for a CD of photos of the more common Bromeliads to help him in his spiel. He now has this to swot up the names and choose which ones he wants to use. If there are others who want to do the same thing, this CD is FREE!

This year, having the sales day as a separate endeavour, two weeks before the November wind-up did save tired legs and appears to have been the right decision. But it did not seem long before the last meeting of the year was upon us. This was speeded up by the fact that Hon Sec's computer decided to behave badly, meaning the Gazette was a hurried affair! But we got there. Sending out Gazettes by Email is still having teething problems because of transposition of the written code to the typed code. Instead of telling me at a meeting about non-delivery it would be more prudent to send me an email tillands@bigpond.com That way I can copy your email address instead of guessing what it should be.

Len and Adam had brought in plants to discuss so that the meeting was not totally a feed and frantic 'gambling' at the auction. I say 'gambling' because oft was the time when bidding was made just to test the staying power of a fellow bidder.

Needless to say, Len brought in tillandsias and each had a story to tell, such is Len's memory. Over the years he has acquired plants that are very rare elsewhere in Australia but as time goes by the original labels get frail and fall off. Years ago when Len was young he had a great memory but we will have to convince him he is getting older. As an example anyone who has been to our place the Tillandsias have two labels each. One is like a tombstone which does not mean the plant has left this earth, but there for identity for those whose eyesight is failing.

Why am I telling you this? You must remember Len waving around a stunning flowering Tillandsia which he said he had lost the label but was a hybrid between *T. ferreyrae* and *T. bulbosa*. Most of us know *T. bulbosa* but not *T. ferreyrae* which flowers about 2 metres high. A sort of mating an Alsatian with a Chihuahua. As is my wont (yes, it is a proper word!) I checked against my records and guess what. Years ago Len had registered this hybrid as 'Royal Sceptre' in collaboration with a chap from SE Asia. So while this side of the Pacific it is the name that should be used, those in Florida thought it worthy of a name too and used 'Rechoncho'. This is Spanish for plump in English or fat in Australian!



Tillandsia 'Royal Sceptre' photo by L. Colgan

Roving Reporter October/November cont:

Perhaps a mention of my records seems appropriate. About 20 years ago I decided to collate data on Bromeliaceae from reputable sources such as those written by botanists and the like. I am not into coffee table books because here names can be in error. Anyway, I now have over 300 x 3-ring folders on the walls of my den. 15 years ago I could see that no library would like to be bequeathed them so I started transferring data to my computer. The result is that now I have a very comprehensive data base. Sometimes when I see the need to help out some Bromeliad taxonomist I'll send them a copy of my files for educational purposes only. Countries concerned are varied from Brazil, Peru, Colombia, Mexico, USA then Thailand to South Africa and of course Europe including Russia! They all get it in Aussie English!

This is one of the reasons why I like correct names or should I say referral to the right records to guess a name. I get my co-editor and printer operator – Bev- to use photos from reliable sources, and shudder when I see photos in other newsletters of photos taken at plant competitions which are clearly in error. No attempt has been made to check names which only add to confusion.

And so to Adam's table where he had some ring-ins to compare with his *Billbergia alfonsi-joannis*. If you find it hard to spell, remember that it was named in honour of the Brothers, Priest Cônego João Reitz (born. 1904) and Priest Afonso Reitz (born. 1906), eminent admirers and growers of ornamental plants and part founders of the Herbário Barbosa Rodrigues, headquartered in Itajai, in Brazil. The plant was in flower and Adam seemed very proud of it which means that after struggling for many years we have convinced him there is merit in Billbergias! It does take several years growing to get it to flower but it is worth the wait. Many have tried to hybridise with it but because it is in the Helicoid group it prefers to self-set its own seeds. This makes it difficult to use as mother. In recent years Vic Przetocki in Perth has been successful using it as father where the size of the inflorescence has been reduced but compensated by more-colourful leaves.

We saw a large *Neoregelia* with spotted leaves that had been brought in by Rose Van Gorp, one of our newer members. It appears that over the years Rose has acquired plants without names but now she is a member is keen to get some lead on their names. As I pointed out there was a greater chance of a solution when they were in flower and this was one result. Yes, it had blue flowers which meant it was not a true *Neoregelia marmorata* so the best I could give was *Neoregelia marmorata* hybrid.

Then there was the triple headed *Aechmea nudicaulis*. It was said to be var. aureo-rosea which took me back 20 years when Peter Franklin, from Raymond Terrace, NSW was grappling with this problem because the plant being grown under this name did not fit the description in the 'official' records. Translating the Latin we come to yellow and red which describes a plant with yellow flowers and red scape bracts but the plant should have petals that are yellow at the top and red below. Even the Brazilian taxonomists are saying that they cannot work out the so-called varieties and it may be better just to call the plant *Aechmea nudicaulis*. I hope the owner of this plant will amend the label if only because future members like Rose should not be confused more than necessary.

The 'Special' afternoon tea lived up to the standard in previous years thanks to Bev, her helpers and all those who brought in a plate of consumables

The plant swap went fairly smoothly with only one member nearly missing out on selecting a plant of his choice. The auction was off to a rattling start with many good bargains going under the hammer. The auctioneer did offer himself for 50c but there were no takers. The proper *Neoregelia* 'Macho' went for much much more.

I always prize a plant that has a provenance over one without. One plant that went to a happy bidder had originally come from Wittunga Botanic Garden from up Blackwood way. Wittunga Bot Garden was originally the property of the Ashby family and the Adelaide Bot Garden had acquired it from them.

If you are ever up that way this Garden is a fascinating place with many of the original plants still growing there. In the northern part under a tree you will find a large clump of billbergias growing in the ground. When you find the label it will still say *Billbergia vittata* despite me jumping up and down over the years telling them that the plant is the German hybrid *Billbergia* 'Breuteana' (*amoena* x *vittata*). Well, I think it is that name.

Roving Reporter October/November cont:

You see in the late 1800's it seems that every headgardener in every Castle or Chateau in Europe decided to cross *Billbergia amoena* with *Billbergia vittata* and the more wealthy ones even had botanical artists paint their acclaimed new hybrid.

As for living plants to survive in Europe they would have had to survive Great wars. Did the Ashby plant get to Australia before or after the Great War in 1914-1918? Did it come in via the German migrants? All is conjecture but what we do know is that in getting ready for the Adelaide Brom Conference in 1995 I was able to get the loan of a botanical painting of *Billbergia* 'Breauteana' said to be linked to the Ashby collection. Yes, in years past the Adelaide Bot Gardens did employ a botanical artist although these days I assume everyone has a digital camera! So someone in Head Office was aware of the proper name but nobody has told the sign painter. While this was happening in Adelaide a similar situation was occurring in Port Macquarie in NSW. This plant eventually got called 'Chas Webb'. Are they the same plant or just another *B. amoena x vittata* ? By the way, if you want to know what a *B. vittata* flower should look like get hold of *Billbergia* 'Domingos-Martins' which is a true *B. vittata* but with spotted leaves!



Bill Breauteana ABG 1994

Aechmea gamosepala by D Butcher Nov 2011

I have been acquainted with this species for at least the last 30 years so why the sudden interest. Recent activity on a Bromeliad Forum, show that this plant is still being grown, and is still popular. Renewed interest in setting up a Gamosepala Group on the Bromeliad Cultivar Register has prompted me to go into print. If you are in the BCR data base on <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/bcr/index.php> all you need to do is enter Gamosepala Group in the 'Notes' section when you do an Advanced Search. This will give you a list of what we consider is close to the species – some hybrids and some just cultivars of the species.

I have always had difficulty in reconciling the drawing in Smith & Downs with what we grow as *A. gamosepala*.

The drawing appeared in 1892 and while the flowers may be called lax you cannot easily discern the matchstick flowers that are much further apart these days! I had always tried to identify an *A. gamosepala* from an *A. cylindrata* by the fact that *A. cylindrata* had a much denser inflorescence. Alas, this method does not work if we use the key in Smith & Downs which reads as follows:



18. Inflorescence with its axis slightly exposed, many-flowered.

20. Flowers 20 mm long; inflorescence stout; floral bracts soft.

cylindrata

20. Flowers 15 mm long; inflorescence slender; floral bracts pungent. ***Gamosepala***

You have to decide if the floral bract which is the insignificant papery thing immediately below each flower, is soft or sharp!

But when we read Reitz in his Flora Illustrada Catarinensis 1983 we find that petals can be 20mm long for *A. gamosepala*. We must remember that Santa Catarina is where the type specimen was found but not seen by Smith. Another thing missing in the Smith & Downs description is that *A. gamosepala* is stoloniferous – some with short stolons, some long. The following is what we should be using for identification

Aechmea gamosepala Wittmack, Bot. Jahrb. 13(Beibl. 29): 3, 13. 1891.

Description from Smith & Downs

Plant flowering 40-75 cm high. (stoloniferous)

Aechmea gamosepala cont:

Leaves 15-20 in a dense funnellform rosette, 25-55 cm long, covered with pale minute appressed scales especially beneath, nearly entire or with a few minute spines near apex; Sheaths narrow but distinct, sometimes tinged with blue;

Blades ligulate, broadly rounded and apiculate, 3-5 cm wide.

Scape erect, slender, sparsely white-flocculose, soon glabrous;

Scape-bracts erect, lanceolate or elliptic, acute, entire, membranaceous, deciduous. Inflorescence simple, slenderly cylindric, obtuse, subax, 9-26 cm long; rhachis slender, glabrous or nearly so.

Floral bracts narrowly triangular, attenuate, pungent, entire, nerved, the lower exceeding the flowers, the upper shorter than the ovary;

Flowers sessile, spreading or suberect, 15 mm long. (20mm long)

Sepals strongly asymmetric, rounded, 4-5 mm long without the 2.5-4 mm spine, halfconnate, glabrous;

Petals erect, ligulate, obtuse, 9 mm long, purple or blue, bearing 2 fimbriate scales near base;

Stamens included;

Ovary slender, narrowed toward base; epigynous tube large, crateriform; placentae central; ovules obtuse.

Aechmea gamosepala var *gamosepala*

Sepals red; petals purple or blue.

Type. *Schimper* 231 (holotype, LG n v), Joinville, Santa Catarina, Brazil.

Distribution. From terrestrial on dune slopes to epiphytic in forest, from near sea level to 250 m alt, Sao Paulo to Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

Aechmea gamosepala var *nivea* Reitz, *Sellowia* **14**: 101. 1962.

Sepals rose; petals white.

Type. *Reitz & Klein* 9093 (holotype, HBR), terrestrial in woods, Pirao Frio, Sombrio, 10 m alt, Santa Catarina, Brazil, 5 Sep 1954.

Distribution. Known from the type collection only.

I will now mention a few of the names as being part of the Gamosepala Group. There are currently 12 of these.

One trait that is readily noticed as being different to the species involves variegation. In *J. Brom. Soc.* 55(4): 187-9. 2005 I pointed out that we should only accept one variegated form per species to save confusion.

Here we have problems with 'Lucky Stripes' and 'Mardi Gras' where difference is said to be in the darkness of the green in the leaf which can be easily picked up if the plants are grown side by side. If not, you can have problems.

Then there was the case of a plant that became variegated in Brazil. Should it have a name? Do we use 'Lucky Stripes' or 'Mardi Gras'? We decided to leave it as *A. gamosepala* 'Variegated'. The other variegated is 'Exotica Candy Stripes' but this has almost white petals.

This renewed interest caused Australian growers to look at plants they had been growing for years and there were definite forms being grown that were different to the 'norm', one with long stolons – generally called 'with stolons', and another with reddish leaves called 'Rubra'

Recently we have seen registered

***Aechmea gamosepala* cont:**

1. *Aechmea* 'Big Pinkie'

A large form of *gamosepala* named by Ross Little, NSW. Origin unknown. Fertile part of inflorescence to 35cm long. No apparent stolons.



A Big Pinkie (Photo by Ross Little)

2. *Aechmea* 'Ruby Red', named by Ross Little, NSW, for a plant that has been circulating Australia for over 20 years as *A. gamosepala* Rubra. Grown at least by Ruby Ryde and Nina Rehak in Sydney and Bernard Stonor in WA. Leaves redder, wider and stiffer than the 'normal' *A. gamosepala*. Plant to 30cm high, to 60cm when in flower.



A Ruby Red (Photo by Jarka Rehak)

3. *Aechmea* 'Big Matchsticks' named by Geoff Lawn, WA, Mature rosette to 50cms. diameter x 60cms. high. Erect spike to 1 metre tall. Lengthy stolons to 50cms. Flowers are paler than "normal" *gamosepala*. This clone has been circulating in Australia for over 20 years as "gamosepala big form", or "With stolons"



A Big Matchsticks (Photo by Ross Little)

4. *Aechmea* 'Red Lips' Named by Ross Little, NSW. A form of *A. gamosepala* with red leaf edges. Grown for many years at Pinegrove Nursery as just another *A. gamosepala* but differs in several ways. Plant smaller than 'Big Matchsticks' but still with stolons. The scape is reddish and the fertile part of the inflorescence somewhat disappointing at only around 13cm long and 3 cm wide.



A Red Lips (Photo by Ross Little)

We know that 'lots' of gardeners grow *Aechmea gamosepala* even if they don't know the name! So if the keen ones amongst you who look for differences happen to come across some unnamed plant which flowers like *A. gamosepala* remember that they come with different names for the different forms. If you come across yet another form please let me know.



Roving Reporter Jan 2012

Jan 8th turned out to be a cool day and I was surprised that attendance was down a bit. But, it was great seeing Bob Whisson with a few more grey hairs but well on the road to recovery.

Roving Reporter Jan 2012 cont

We found that a decision had been made to publish the Gazette every 3 months with the first one for 2012 to be delivered at the March meeting. Thence it would be June and September with the December issue being posted out. As for meetings it was decided that although the April meeting will fall on Easter Sunday we may as well continue to hold it because few Brom growers actually disappear for these holidays.

We found out that Noel Richards loves eating oysters but had problems in getting rid of the hard bit. He has recently been converted to growing tillandsias and lateral thinking and an artistic bent saw him using oyster shells as a mounting medium. Mind you, you have to be soft handed with the drill but anything is possible. To solve the problem of disposal and the reason for getting more Oysters to eat he offered several free bags of Shells for members to experiment with. These were all taken up so we must have more artistic minded members than I first thought. Unless, of course some thought it was a way to grow themselves an oyster or two.

Now to important things like plants where Len Colgan came out of retirement to talk about the many plants on display. Yes, they outnumbered people in their attendance. All showing good colour and a minimum of leaf damage. Those who may brag must remember that the end part of 2011 was very good Brom weather. It is said that the days were warmer than usual but the heatwaves were less. We just hope that this trend continues. There were lots of Margaret Paterson hybrids on show which is good because it means some did listen to me a year ago when these Neos started arriving and I was saying I hoped the plants survived. Proof of survival was bringing them in to later meetings!

Why would anyone with a name of Waterman want to grow a *Nidularium* called Watermelon? Anyway, the Roving reporter got into trouble with the photographer in that she took its photo but could not find it in the official listing of Cultivar names. We have since remedied the situation as follows.

***Nidularium* ‘Watermelon’ by D Butcher 1/2012**

In 1998 Antonio Miranda from Brasilia sent us a few seed he had collected in the wild and which he thought were *Nidularium fulgens*. We got a few to germinate and in 2008 one flowered that was especially interesting because as Margaret said, the primary bract colour reminded her of a watermelon with the skin taken off. When you only grow from offset you get a biased view as to the colour expected. It is only when you grow from seed do you get a chance to see what nature can produce. If the seed was collected in someone’s collection you can expect hybridisation to provide variability. Here it seemed to be a true species and within the colour range of red or sometimes orange or pink as advised by Elton Leme. Offsets have been slowly spread around and now seemed to be the time to register the name. The plant is generally about 40cm in diam. So if you are after a ‘Watermelon’ of the non-edible kind see Colin in a couple of months’ time



***Nidularium* ‘Watermelon’ (Photo J. Batty)**

We can also blame Colin for bringing in a multiheaded *Guzmania* ‘Bahia’ to prove that members other than Adam can grow this genus. The name does seem an odd one to use because you do not associate this genus with Brazil. In fact few guzmanias are found in this country. But you can find *Guzmania lingulata* there and this seems to have been used in 90% of *Guzmania* hybrids in the market place. You can include ‘Bahia’ here too!

Roving Reporter Jan 2012 cont:

And now to something really unique in that I cannot remember ever having seen a Double Mac at our meeting. You may have seen Bob McGregor staggering into the meeting with a huge plant in his arms. We learnt later that it was a clump of *Neoregelia macwilliamsii* that had been quietly growing for some years under the orange tree (not his usual lemon tree). Needless to say he had to remove several dead leaves and we all agreed he had done a good job. In our weather this species takes a while to flower, waiting for a 'good' year to turn up. As Bob showed us, it does not need a large pot.



Neo McWilliamsii & Bob (Photo J. Batty)

It is a welcome surprise to see some of the old favourites turn up. One such was a plant that had the name *xNiduregelia* 'Surprise' and perhaps I should tell you about some surprise. In the 1970's Grace Goode loved to use *Neoregelia* 'Vulkan' in her hybrids. Note the spelling of the name because you don't often see this hybrid around these days. It is a robust *N. concentrica* hybrid and a much darker colour. Not to be confused with the more common 'Vulcan'.



xniduregelia Surprise (Photo J. Batty)

In 1974 she crossed *N. 'Vulkan'* with *Nidularium fulgens* to get 'Something Special'. By some odd quirk she also got a *Neoregelia* 'Thor'. In the same period she crossed 'Vulkan' with an un-named *Nidularium* and must have had a surprise because that was the name she gave to it. This particular hybrid really shows up both parents by having a flower head of a *Neoregelia* with the primary bracts of a *Nidularium* on the outside.

Now for the second surprise because in those days they were called *xNeolarium*. In the 1960's the American Society had a bit of a hucup where a splinter group was formed by a certain A. D. Hawkes who duly published his own 'Journal' called Bromeliad Papers. The BSI did their best to ignore him but should really have just monitored him. Anyway, Mulford Foster coined *XNeolarium* in J. Bromeliad Soc. 23: 175. 1973. Everything went on swimmingly until the 1990's when a certain Derek Butcher got hold of a copy of 'Bromeliad Papers'. He found that Hawkes had been naming cultivars based on parentages quoted in Mez in 1935. He named them after friends and even his cat BUT none were in cultivation. While the taxonomist relies on dead material in the herbarium the ICNCP relies on live material in cultivation! Hawkes had used *xNiduregelia* which is based on ICBN and therefore could be considered legitimate. I referred it to Jason Grant who included the following in his paper 'Genera in Bromeliaceae' in Selbyana in 1998 ***XNiduregelia*** A.D. Hawkes, Bromel. Pap. 3(9): 85. Mar 1963 ("1961-1963"). Parent genera: *Nidularium* Lem., Jard. Fleur. 4: ad t. 411; Misc.: 60. 1854 and *Neoregelia* L.B. Sm., Contr. Grad Herb. 104: 78. 1934. **This name predates *XNeolarium*.**

Another interesting plant from the past that Bob brought in looked like it had *Cryptanthus* in its make-up because of the barring on the leaves and was reminiscent of the bigeneric *xNeotanthus* 'Cardboard' but when two of the 'big-guns' agreed it just had to be the rarely seen 'Firefoam' many put their indecision down to a temporary memory lapse.



Neotanthus Firefoam (Photo J. Batty)

Roving Reporter Jan cont:

George brought in two *T. cacticola*, one mounted and one in a ceramic pot. His point was that if you grow it in a pot it grows bigger and gives at least two offsets rather than the mounted specimen. My view is that a *T. cacticola* will grow on anything that stands still long enough in the wild you never see them in a pot of any description. But then if we did not have differences of opinions meetings would be boring.



T. cacticola (Photo J. Batty)

Len left the best to last but because they were his plants he rushed through them. We were all sorry to see his work in getting *T. wagneriana* to flower with browner leaves than wanted. Just blame the recent 41C but as Len pointed out to others growing this plant they should learn from his mistake and bring the plant indoors in such an event.

Now to his *T. arcuans* he was saying was behaving badly whereas to me it was behaving as it should, living up to its name ‘arcuans’ which means bent like a bow. Sometimes, they can even look like Keating’s ‘U’ curve if you can remember when he was Treasurer. *T. arcuans* and *T. ampla* are now treated as synonyms of *T. lajensis*, and all have that habit of ‘falling’ down.

Workshops – well nearly workshops – where the presenters at least got their hands dirty. These are great when held now and again, because they show the new member and forgetful older member that it is easy to play with bromeliads.

Bromeliad Workshop-removal of pups & repotting- Adam

The theme adopted for our January meeting was in response to one of the suggestions received from our newly instituted “Suggestions Box”. In response the Committee organised 3 separate presentations: one on removal of pups and re-potting, the second on a discussion on the benefits of different colour and density of shade cloths and the third on the removal and mounting of Tillandsias. Adam provided the first presentation, Peter Hall the second while Bill Treloar and Gerd Rudolph teamed to provide the third.



Adam & Pam removing a pup



Adam & Peter



Bill & George (Photos by Jeanne)

Adam displayed the many tools that he uses to remove pups. In particular, his demonstration in bending a hacksaw blade around Neoregelia pups showed the benefits of this technique in not cutting into those pups in their removal. Adam also demonstrated that removal of pups from Vrieseas and Guzmanias should not be done by cutting them away from the mother plant. Rather, they should be removed by gently prising the pups away from the mother plant and ensuring that roots are maintained to promote quick and strong growth after re-potting. Further, he demonstrated how removal of pups on stoloniferous plants should be done in order to maintain the basal part of the pup to promote rooting by the pup.

Adam also provided hints on facing the basal part of the plant towards the sun in order to establish the pup with quick growing roots and the optimising of variegated pups by facing variegated leaves towards the sun. Further, he recommended that pups not be planted too deeply in the mix, particularly Billbergias.

Bromeliad Workshop-removal of pups & repotting cont:

Adam then indicated his preferred mixes for the different genera and that different locations and genera required greater drainage than others. He also discussed the advantages of the different types of fertilisers and the application of foliar fertilizer to plants that have started to spike. Adam invited volunteers to demonstrate the removal of pups and only Pam Whisson put her hand up to try. She was rewarded when Adam presented her with a lovely Neoregelia pup that she helped to remove.

How do I choose the best shade-cloth for my greenhouse?

The most important features for greenhouse shade-cloth are the shade densities, the level of ultraviolet (UV) protection and colour.

The percentage of shade densities varies from 30% to 90%, so you have to choose the density applicable to the plants that you wish to grow and the location of your greenhouse. The shade-cloth must provide UV protection and be UV stabilised.

Most shade-cloth is made from UV stabilised polyethylene and it comes in woven and knitted varieties.

Knitted shade-cloth is much better to use than woven because the knitted will not fray when cut.

Shade-cloth comes in a variety of colours; black is the most common used.

Black shade-cloth absorbs heat and protects against harmful UV rays, but can also cause a rise in temperature by transferring heat and holding it inside the shade house.

White shade-cloth reflects and diffuses the sun's heat and UV rays. It does not hold heat in and lowers greenhouse temperatures.

The history of shade-cloth in Australia

Shade-cloth was developed over 30 years ago to provide protection for plants from the harsh Australian climate. Shade-cloth is used in a variety of ways - domestic, horticulture, commercial, industrial, sport, leisure and agriculture.

Shade-cloth can control shade, temperature, and evaporation and minimise wind, hail and frost damage.

The majority of shade-cloth in all colours is supplied in

- Two standard widths – 1.83 metres (6 ft) and 3.66 metres (12 ft)
- Shade densities – 30%, 50%, 70%, 80%, 90%

There are several grades of shade-cloth

- Commercial heavy monofilament cloth 80% has 306 gsm (grams per square metre) weight to
- Lightest 30% monofilament cloth at 90gsm weight.

Shade-cloth comes in a variety of colours – beige, white, navy, blue, black, dark green, light green, sandstone and terracotta.

Shade cloth article cont:

About 8 years ago when we first started growing cymbidium orchids and then built a shade house, I was faced with a variety of questions about the colour and density of shade-cloth and also the height of the structure. I received lots of advice and the majority of people advised me to use 50% knitted black shade-cloth.

Armed with this information I went to a supplier and he changed my mind to 50% white knitted shade-cloth. I am now pleased with this decision because the shade house is down in the south east corner of our property and it also has 1.83 metre metal fences on two sides and a garage on the north end, plus the neighbours have erected 4 metre high sheds, so I need the white shade-cloth to get as much light into the structure as possible.

Some growers also told me that black shade-cloth is best because the plants will never get burnt even under extreme weather conditions. Also they said that cymbidium orchids will not flower as well under green shade-cloth and that under white shade-cloth the flower spikes will be much shorter.

All this advice was indeed a load of rubbish. I know some pretty good cymbidium orchid growers that grow under all those colours and they grow and flower their plants very well.

Important Facts

- Density
- Colour
- Knitted

Height of greenhouse should be a minimum of 2.4 metres – 3 metres is better.

The orientation of the shade-house – if rectangular or square – east and west is ideal as well as the direction of the knitted fabric to gain the most light required to grow your selection of plants.

The direction of the knitted shade-cloth applies to the top and sides of the shade-house.

The shape of the shade-house roof also affects the amount of light (UV), for example a tunnel house greatly affects the amount of light especially if the orientation is north and south, because there is no flat surface area, and the sun's rays are at a greater angle. Then there is flat and gable roof.

All these factors – orientation, shape, size and direction of shade-cloth are important for optimal performance.

Plants will still grow well even if we don't achieve all these factors.

The areas that we live in are the most obvious differences in the way our plants perform.

Probably the most important aspects are choosing the density of the knitted shade-cloth applicable to the area that we live, and have the ability to mist or fog at regular intervals during extreme hot weather. The use of misters or foggers drops the temperature in the shade-house, increases the humidity and greatly decreases transpiration. More moisture is lost by plant leaf transpiration than any other factor. .

Peter Hall

Bromeliad Workshop cont: Tillandsia mounting

The third one was conducted by Bill Treloar and George Rudolph on how to mount Tillandsias. I could see some of the newer member wince when Bill was nonchalantly pulling of the basal leaves and yet this is the best thing to do in getting down to the growing part of the plant. It also helps you decide how to mount your plant. If there is sufficient stem at the base it means it can be placed in a hole in your mounting material. If not you need to consider other ways of attachment. Ones you will have to ponder over are the likes of *T. fuchsii*, *T. filifolia* and *T. ionantha* . Whenever Bill is going for a walk in the bush he is always on the look out for large twigs in the shape of a 'Y'. When inverted the outside angle is an ideal perching place.

I prefer to use Bottlebrush possibly because I have one in my yard that I am regularly pruning! If you are mounting plants for your own use then you should be looking for something that has character and shows off the Tillandsia at its best. If for sale you do not have much choice at your disposal. Here Bill uses scrap cut-offs whereas George

'borrows' branches from next door's trees and saws them into slices. If done on a diagonal the resultant pieces are larger. For those Tillandsias with a pointy end a hole needs to be drilled right through and sufficient size to allow the plant an easy fit. George even countersinks his for a fancy finish. There are many ways to attach a wire to act as a hook. Bill's way means you rarely lose the label whereas George saves on the amount of wire used!

Now for the actual attachment and here we saw both Bill and George flourishing Selley's Clear Sealant in dispensing guns. I thought this was great because that is what I use. Whenever I go to Albury for the Tillandsia get-together I am astounded at the different ways used in other States of Australia.

You only need a small amount of sealant wound around the pointy end of the plant for firm insertion in the hole. Leave it overnight before hanging up. For the non-pointy ones you need a large blob on the base and carefully place on the mount. Here you will need a longer wait or the plant will fall off before the sealant has solidified a bit. You can give extra support with strips of panty-hose or plastic coated wire you find in telephone wires or computer leads.

The best way to learn is to do it yourself and make your own mistakes. You get a warm fuzzy feeling when you succeed.

Last but not least do not forget to write the name on the label. For my private collection many will have seen that I actually attach the name on a label to the front of my mounting as well as having a normal one at the back. A sort of belt AND braces

A Picture is worth a thousand words

Len "snapped" by Rose as he was giving Derek a "Lecture" on his *Tillandsia confertiflora* at a recent garden visit



Tillandsia.confertiflora

There was a good roll-up even though it was the Annual General Meeting. Perhaps it was because Sophie Thompson was talking or Peter Hall was acting Chair.

Sophie certainly is a breath of fresh air and is a fervent convert to all things organic. Even though the subject was mainly general husbandry in the garden all eyes and ears were fully open as was evidenced by the answers given to the quiz held at the end. It shows, I suppose that not all members are one eyed epiphytic plant growers like myself.

The information she gave regarding the importance of organic matter in our soils could certainly be translated to our pot culture. Her attitude to 'Wait before you spray insecticide' also rings true. I was a bit dubious about the bats because I have never seen them in Fulham.

Perhaps I am not a night-hawk and spend my night-time activities watching TV. Anyway, Broms are good for mozzies too. Yes, neuroglias etc do have a centre that holds water and yes, you sometimes see Mozzies there too but not for long if you let the natural predators feed up. If you live in more tropical areas like Queensland the first burst of summer rains brings on the Mozzies in the swamps and some venture into bromeliads. Here you have some explaining to do when the Mozzie Inspector calls, but then you don't have that worry in Adelaide. I was telling Ray Clark that I had more Mozzies in my backyard when I grew Cactus that when I grew Broms. He had this disbelieving look on his face but when I showed him my Broms (Margaret's!) he found no Mozzies so he 'borrowed' some of the water containing 'Goodies' to take back to Sheidow Park to mix with his plants. Now you might get a heavy downfall of rain which messes things up or a heavy handed hose operator in the house to mess up your experiment. BUT if you do have a Mozzie free plant you could transfer over some of the water. All good fun for the organically minded.

The election of officers went over fairly smoothly thanks to the charisma (or persuasiveness!) of the Returning Officer, Jeff Jarrett.

There were lots of Raffle Prizes etc, - enough for everyone present to win a prize! So much so the Chairman had to ask if they wanted me to perform. It seemed unanimous!

There were several plants to talk about which had been brought in by a wide range of members and remembering we did not have the usual renderings from Adam or Big Len.

The stars denoting personal preference choice were scattered amongst the exhibits with two billbergias sharing the honours. These were Peter Hall's B. 'Hallelujah' and Julie Batty's B. 'Domingos-Martins' Another *Billbergia* of interest was a *B. amoena* var *carnea* which came in a clump with 3 flowering – something you do not expect at this time of year. The word 'carnea' has always confused me because it means flesh coloured which I wrongly interpret as skin coloured. If you after confusion you can have an extensive collection of all the forms of *B. amoena* from the very small to the very large, some with short stolons and some with long stolons. AND I have not mentioned the many man-made hybrids.

Talking of hybrids, we as consumers should never see hybrids shown in a formula such as (*carolinae* x 'Hannibal Lector') because this identifies the parents not the plant itself. Wouldn't it be great if we humans were known only by our parents names meaning I would have the same name as my sister! A formula should stay with the hybridist until he/she decides to let the plant leave home! We had on display a pretty little Neo. Hybrid with the number KG 041-93-30. 30 years ago Alan Freeman started hybridising and selected and named his hybrids as a good hybridist should. The seed raising bug got to him and he hybridised anything he could get his hands on. What was he going to do with all these punnets of seedlings? Keith Golinski of Palmwoods Nursery, Qld, came to rescue by coming to some arrangement with him. After some few years of pricking out these seedlings Keith Golinski was eventually ready to release them.

The number 041 means the seedling batch obtained in 1993 and this plant was the 30th in the litter! Only now has our plant acclimatised to Adelaide conditions and seems worthy of a name BUT we only have ONE plant. Only when it has at least two offsets can we start giving it a name of its own and registering such name.

A less desirable way is shown by a plant we got from Olive Trevor called Neo. *carolinae* x 'Hannibal Lector' x 'Tiger Cub' x *punctatissima* which we know came from Chester Skotak as one he did not consider worthy of a name for the wholesale market. No much hope in getting this properly identified with only grandparents known. How many of the rest of the litter are out there?

Roving Reporter Feb cont:

We all know how Len Colgan complains about the offset of one of his beloved tillandsias flowering too soon and therefore not as large as he would like. But that is nature's way of producing seed with the minimum of effort. Plants can be as lazy as humans! This sort of thing happens in all our Bromeliads and there is nothing as weird as a *Neoregelia* producing a flowerhead from the side instead of an offset! So it was not a surprise – at least to me – to see *Vriesea* 'Erotica' behaving badly too.



Vriesea 'Erotica'(Photo J. Batty)

One of these days our 'Orchid' man will bite the bullet just the same as Peter Huddy (one of our past Treasurers) did some 15 years ago. Peter felt this and a similar looking plant needed names so they could be recorded.

He chose 'Highway Beauty' and 'RoRo' but because of difficulty in getting the plants to flower did not compare flower traits. This is still being investigated where we are hoping the Floridians can help out. Meanwhile, our 'Orchid' man still has *Vriesea platynema* hybrid on his label

It was good to see Maureen Hick who brought a few plants with her from Greenock. One was of a *Neoregelia* 'Shelldance' in flower. You don't often see this hybrid in flower to discuss its oddity because it does not look like a 'normal' *Neoregelia* . The more I looked at it the more I saw traits of a *Nidularium*. Julie Batty, our official photographer, thinks *Cryptanthus* and she has grown more of this species than I. She even backs her view by quoting from Steen. Did anyone else notice this? I think we are on safe grounds in saying it is a bigeneric but there are too many doubts to say which one. In any event we will be adding a little note to the Bromeliad Cultivar Register.



Neoregelia 'Shelldance'(Photo J. Batty)

The plant is shrouded in mystery because it originated in California, pollen parent unknown, but was actually named in Australia.

Seeing Neo. 'Maggies Pride' brought back lots of memories because of its links to South Australia and Maggie Hick. 30 years ago we had many members who grew from seed obtained from overseas because we did not have the variety of plants we have available to us now. Well, we were all envious when Maggie had one *Neoregelia* seedling came up that was variegated AND it had vigour. It grew to maturity and the offsets were in great demand especially in NSW and Qld. In 1996 when on holidays in the USA I was astounded to see thousands of 'Maggies Pride' growing at Tropiflora in Florida.

Margaret and I were asked to try to identify two neoregelias that had come down as unknown from Queensland. Sometimes you can be lucky in this guessing game but most times it is an impossible task. First we could have said 'Neoregelia hybrid' which is an improvement on 'Bromeliad' or 'Bromeliad Hybrid' you often see in Bunnings. One clearly had *N. concentrica* traits so we decided on *N. concentrica* hybrid. The other was harder but seemed to have links with *N. spectabilis* and thus *N. spectabilis* hybrid!

Note here the use of hybrid linked to a species name. But what does 'Pink Fairy Floss' hybrid mean. We

know by the way 'Pink Fairy Floss' is written it is a hybrid so the extra use of the word hybrid can mean seed from 'Pink Fairy Floss'. This can be quickly solved by referring to the BCR

<http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/bcr/index.php> .

Roving Reporter Feb cont:

In this case you may recall me getting our Secretary to promise to check her plant. What is revealed is that this Aussie named plant has strong links with the American ‘Cotton Candy’ and could well come from the same litter. In other words writing ‘hybrid’ on a label which also has a hybrid name on it is confusing. The same applies to putting ‘x’ in front of a hybrid name. Confusion can reign! The word is tautology!

Finally we have a query to put to you from Bob McGregor that we did not have time to put to you at the meeting. It was about those grass-like plants growing in the pot of his *Neoregelia*. Please send your comments to the Editorial board. Members of the family need not apply. Recognition will be given to the most intelligent reply.



(Photo J. Batty)

2012 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

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	Warren Thompson (New)	Jackie Thompson(New)	
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AFTERNOON TEA HELPERS: Jeanne Hall, Eileen Mullins, Rhonda Jarrett
DOOR TICKETS: Sue Scrabei, Rhonda Jarrett
RAFFLE TICKETS: Sue Scrabei, Rhonda Jarrett and other helpers on the day.
HOST/ESS: Colin Waterman/ Sue Scrabei, Bill Treloar (new.)
POTS & LABELS: Ron Masters
NAME TAG MAKER: Ron and Bev Masters
GAZETTE: Derek & Margaret Butcher/ Bev Masters

Herbaria are a major frontier for species discovery By Derek Butcher 8/2011

The amount of botanical material you can find on the internet is astounding and sometimes thought provoking. In this case I was referred to an article in PNAS 107(51): 22169-22171. 2010, where the title caught my eye. What was it all about? I'll quote from a few areas to show what I learnt:

“The data from our sample of new species published between 1970 and 2010 show that only 16% were described within five years of being collected for the first time. The description of the remaining 84% involved much older specimens, with nearly one-quarter of new species descriptions involving specimens >50 yr old. Extrapolation of these results suggest that, of the estimated 70,000 species still to be described, more than half already have been collected and are stored in herbaria.

Herbaria cont:

Effort, funding, and research focus should, therefore, be directed as much to examining extant herbarium material as collecting new material in the field.”

First, I must say that in my experience things are not that bad in Bromeliaceae but it does show a bias as far as taxonomists are concerned to the dead dried plant. I can think of what 5 years delay can mean when going back to the place of discovery only to say “Whoops!” Where are they? The habitat has been changed by man! How do you look realistically at plant conservation especially with our epiphytes which regrettably rely on trees to survive!

Many of us do acquire plants or seeds from the wild which have not been properly identified. We should not immediately rush in to hybridise so we can make money out of them, but should consider their conservation. We should not just give them any name and forget about it. Instead, we should retain as much information of where the plant or seed were collected for future reference. For really outstanding ones a Cultivar name should be given and put into the Cultivar Register with photos and other data.

In other words taxonomists may be responsible for the dead plant, but we, as growers are responsible for living material.

Thoughts from a couple of not so newbies

My wife & I have always been collectors of plants. In the past it has been mainly ornamental conifers & Bonsai.

When we moved to Adelaide, these cold weather lovers did not travel with us and the Bonsai took too long to get a result.

And so it turned out that my wife started to collect Bromeliads, first there were “living air plants” & then all sorts of other bright & sometimes outrageously coloured plants. At first my involvement was limited to how to fix these little plants to bits of timber. And where can we put a shelf for these plants, and can you make something to hang this on!?

Then I started to take an interest in these peculiar little plants called tillandsias! Here started the problem! I’m told it’s like many forms of addiction, one is too many, and a thousand is not enough!!!!

At first, it’s a bit like John Catlan describes it in his book under the Mango tree: you’re happy to collect almost anything, you don’t have a wish list, there’re all great! And then quietly but very very surely the obsession begins. Firstly we managed to fill an 8 metre by 4 metre pergola, then there were more shelves and then some hanging rails and then we needed a shade house. The shade house is 12 m long & can easily accommodate 2000 plants. (We’re already planning how to expand along the next fence with more shelving!)

Now we have entered what Mr. Catlan calls the second phase, we both have lists of must haves and we are actively seeking out people who have the objects of our desires.

But wait, there’s more, the Crypts have a demountable hot house for winter, it’s heated, via a digitally controlled fan heater, which also allows us to buy in pups from Qld in the middle of winter and they don’t go into shock. The questions, the endless questions, how do I grow this, what do I do about that, the answers are almost the same; you largely work it out as you go. It takes a while to believe the advice that yes you are the best person to judge the environment that you share with your plants.

One of the better aspects of the Brom world, are the great people that we are starting to meet, I suppose it helps when you have a common addiction!

Where do we go from here? Who knows, the direction of the collection is continually evolving, we are merely passengers on the journey of the Brom!

Vee & Ray Clark

"WANTED"



Vriesea Bianca

Bev

83514876



Purchase

Reminder
Membership renewal(s) due Feb 2012.