

# S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

Vol 38

Number 1

January, February & March 2014

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 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in March  
May, & August & no meeting in  
December or unless advised  
otherwise

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

**For special orders/ larger quantities call Ron Masters on 83514876**



Display plants March 2014 (Photo J. Batty)

**VISITORS & NEW MEMBERS  
WELCOME.**

### MEETING & SALES 2014 DATES:

13/4/2014 no meeting to Festival of Flowers, 4/5/2014 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday (Bromelioideae) 8/6/2014 (Society & Vriesea PowerPoint presentations), 13/7/2014 (Pitcairnioideae), 3/8/2014 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday, (winter brag) 14/9/2014 (Visit to Sophie Thompson's garden), 12/10/2014 (short meeting during visit to Ron & Bev's garden), 25/10/201 & 26/10/2014 Sales, 9/11/2014 130PM start, pup exchange, special afternoon tea – bring a plate of finger food to share, plant auction.

**Applications for membership always welcome.**

**Subscriptions \$10.00 per year Feb to Feb now due**

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### **Roving Reporter January 2014**

Those who were not at the meeting missed out on yet another informative meeting. I don’t know why but the list of apologies seemed to go on forever. Perhaps they were preparing themselves for the scheduled heat wave which was not supposed to arrive until the next day. On this case the Met office were correct so those who did roll up only had 34C to encounter. Water bottles were in evidence but the name is a misnomer to an ex Pom where water bottles kept you warm in winter!

First the technical stuff which Adam and his side-kick Peter, had been swotting up on. The talk was on Tillandsioideae but do not let that long word put you off. It is just that Bromeliads come in mainly three sub families. I say mainly because there is one group that is being changed by the botanists because of DNA research and which I call the real oldies by a few million years! We grow very few in Adelaide anyway. So let us concentrate on those that have leaves with spines on the edges and seeds like a dandelion with parachutes. This means that seed is more easily dispersed by the wind. Anyway, this group includes *Tillandsia* ( who would have thought it?) *Vriesea*, *Guzmania*, then to the lesser known, *Catopsis* (this is an odd man out and still has the botanists puzzled) *Racinaea*, *Werauhia*, *Alcantarea* and finally *Mezobromelia* and *Glomeropitcairnia*. The last two would not be grown in Adelaide and *Alcantarea* being mainly large would be too big to bring in. So the other genera were represented except *Catopsis*, which as I said, is a wandering genus at the moment. All these plants come from a varied habitat so you must know their shade and watering requirements. If you are one who talks to your plants they will tell you what they prefer or die in the attempt especially if you were not listening to their pleas. It is no surprise that the grey leaved *Tillandsia* is popular here where Adelaide is known for its long dry summers.

It was good to see different plants brought in by different people. Regrettably you have to be a bit thick skinned when you know who is in the audience with off the cuff comments when set up by the speaker. But you must have noticed it is mainly about plant identity than plant growing and all done with a smile in the voice! I am sure that one or two go home grumbling under their breath and don’t change the label only to be caught out at some future meeting!

And so to the plants. First up was *Guzmania* which as Adam shows CAN be grown in Adelaide but you must listen to your plants and give the conditions they like. Yes, you can provide them with this if you are prepared to go that extra mile. Generally speaking hybrids (because of their hybrid vigour) are easier to grow than species but there are exceptions. One is *Guzmania monostachia*. This species is famous in being in the Everglades of Florida where it is protected from illegal collections. However, this is used to warm damp conditions and would be a struggle in Adelaide. However, this species is widespread in central America and I remember getting one such plant from Karel Knize some 30 years ago which he must have collected somewhere high in the mountains of Peru because it grows in the Butcher garden and it and its offsets has flowered 3 times in the last 30 years. It has tougher leaves than most. It certainly has an odd combination of colours in its inflorescence.



*Guzmania monostachia*  
(Photo J. Batty)

***Roving Reporter Jan 2014 cont.***

Adam mentioned that he had heard is called the German flag but as Vee pointed out that these colours are black, red and yellow. I even googled but could not solve the problem. Look carefully at the photo and see if you can see any yellow.

I suppose it is like the Aussie Blue Gum tree which comes in lots of shapes and sizes and is not necessarily blue! Whatever the situation it was good enough to get the popular plant award. There were other Guzmanias to look at and ponder that at least someone one in Adelaide is prepared to give them a go.

And so to *Vriesea* where we had many different forms from ones with nice flowers to indifferent flowers, completely green leaves and patterned leaves. One that always makes me think about is *Vriesea platynema* var *variegata* which is not really variegated and the sort where you think you might get a REALLY variegated offset. In reality it was named because of its leaves being green on the topside and red underneath. There is a *V. platynema* var *striata* but I have never seen one with that name! Then there is *V. 'Hoelscheriana'* which is a magnificent name if you practice how to spell it and it is in LATIN to make it sound posh. But it has a horrible drooping inflorescence. Why should it be grown? The only reason I can see is that it is very tough and you would have to kill it by beating it with a stick. In the 1990's I was able to trace how a plant got to Australia via the USA via Munich in the 1950's but it doesn't link to the parentage given by the Europeans 50 years earlier. Such are the interesting things you find out if you keep asking questions! A more recent problem with names but of a plant which is desirable to own is a *V. erythrodactylon* with an extra long flower spike. It is quite widespread and *V. erythrodactylon* 'Vista' appears on the label but there is a twist. There has been a long spiked *V. erythrodactylon* that has been grown for years in Brazil. It first got to Florida some 30 years ago via Georgia Waggoner and was marketed and registered as 'Waggoner'. BUT was forgotten. Perhaps the name was not exotic enough. Anyway, a new name was conjured up by the commercial world and will be hard to suppress. As with all things botanical, first come first served. So the name is really 'Waggoner'.

We usually associate *Vriesea* with leaf squiggles as coming from Brazil and a notable one is *V. fosteriana* which is very variable when grown from self set seed. This is even more so with its hybrids which makes it a commercial success. If you want to bypass this costly exercise of buying so called different plants, you can easily grow your own variations. It only takes time. The same applies to other species including *Aechmea chantinii*. Back to the *Vriesea* where *V. ospinae* and its variety *gruberi* have the same variability in its seedlings. Different looking plants could well be given different commercial names with or without registration so don't be too worried if your plant looks 'different'. DNA research has shown that these Colombian *Vrieseas* are different to the Brazilian ones and may even be a new genus.

It was nice to see a *Werauhia sanguinolenta* which was named because of its sanguine (blood red) leaves so it is really unnecessary to add the commercial 'rubra' when you think of this genus you think of Costa Rica and Jason Grant. After all it was Jason who dragged these plants out of *Vriesea* sensu Smith and his intuition seems to be paying off because DNA seems to be confirming this move. Over the last 15 years Jason has sent me seed and I have raised NONE. Even when I shared my load with whom I consider to be seed raising experts it produced nothing that grew to maturity. We did get success in New Zealand but that is another story. So this genus will be very rarely seen in Adelaide and because it does not like quarantine conditions throughout Australia. Plants only flower at night so they have limited appeal.

What about the plant that was taller than Peter? Normally *Racinaea* are small plants but Maurice Kellett tells us that in Ecuador *R. fraseri* is used to supply the flower trade with bunches of flowers instead of *Gypsophila*. So even if we thought it big it can be bigger. I first noticed its odd floral behaviour when I saw it in flower at the late Len Cork's garden. I did know that the flowers were secund – that is the flowers all point the same way even if they are from the opposite side of the rachis - but here the flowers were all pointing upwards. I would have thought this would capture any rain or dew making it difficult to pollinate. It seems the plant knows better than me!

You always know when Ray Clark has his shifts worked out correctly because we see a surfeit of Tillandsias, many in flower, and this meeting was no exception. Many of the plants brought in were grey leaved but one that did stand out was a large clump of *T. leiboldiana*. Not an easy species to grow in Adelaide.



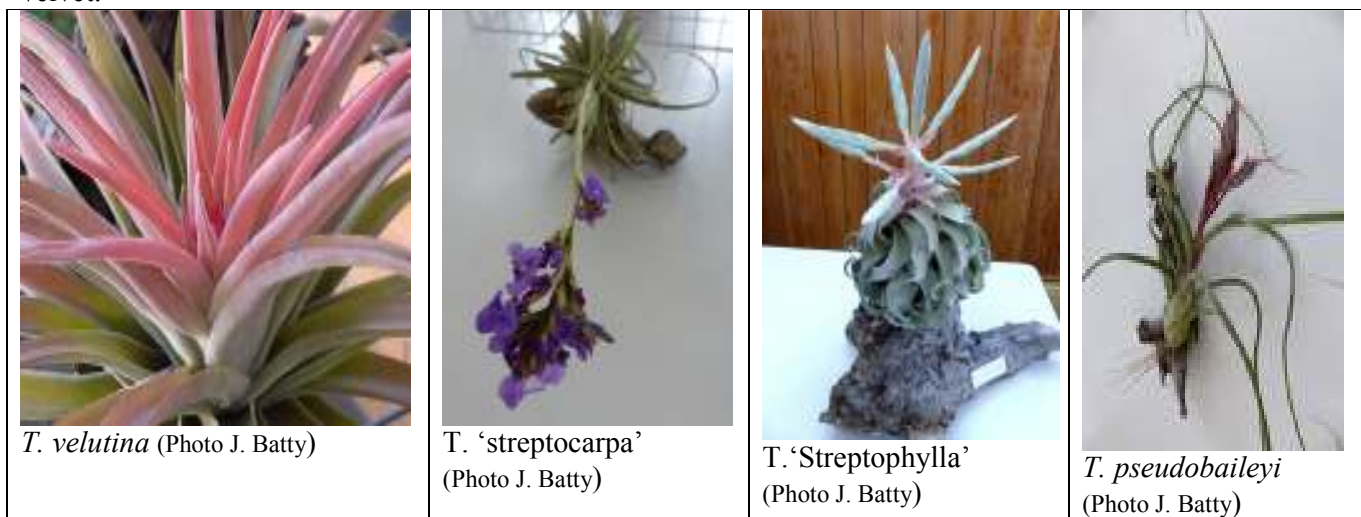
*T. leiboldiana* (Photo J. Batty)

Some may have noticed the similarity in names but difference in plants that started with ‘strepto’. If you are one of the ancient ones you will know that this is what the ancient Greeks used to cover twisted.

‘Streptophylla’ meaning twisted leaf which everyone could see but ‘streptocarpa’ means twisted fruit. We know that fruit in a Tillandsia is a long capsule which bursts open to let out the seed. In many cases this twists so it does seem illogical it should be used as a name just for this species. We saw several examples of *T. capitata* and luckily all had some geographical link as to where they could be found.

I prefer this when identifying a particular form than say ‘Marron’ which is Mexican for brown and not to be confused with maroon! Closely related to *T. capitata* is a plant called ‘Rio Hondo’ which Adam mentioned because he was - as a Tillnut- aware of problems about this plant as it had been discussed on the internet. Several of our members are already Tillnuts and anyone who is really keen on Tillandsias need only discuss their situation with me. Generally speaking a plant with a cultivar name covers a specific form or variation but here ‘Rio Hondo’ can vary considerably. So pressure has been put on the Germans to publish a *T. hondoensis* to cover this problem. Any keen Tillandsia growers should heed this!

Those of you who do have *T. velutina* are asked to gently stroke their plant and tell me if it really feels like velvet.



We had a bit of a doubt about the identity of a *T. pseudobaileyi* which prompts an interesting story. When our Society was formed there was only one *T. baileyi* which came from Texas all the way down to Nicaragua. In 1984 Sue Gardner decided that there were two distinct forms. One from Texas and nearby border with Mexico and the other from more southerly areas which she decided to call *T. pseudobaileyi*. This means that plants around with *T. baileyi* on the label could well be *T. pseudobaileyi*! Add this to the look-alikes *T. bulbosa* and *T. paucifolia* and you have to look twice. Eventually I think it was agreed that the right name was on the label!

And so to the other plants brought in for some sort of interest. First I must mention a Neo that had ‘Luminensis’ on the label which could well be a misspelling of fluminensis which in this case means pertaining to Rio de Janeiro, perhaps better than riodejaneiroensis, and is a plant that looks like *N. olens* so the owner of the plant was recommended to call it Neo hybrid. Yes, there are lots of plants around that should be called this.

There was this plant brought in from Nairne that was clearly a clump of *Aechmea nudicaulis*. This is the quality of plant that Pam grows. Anyway, Bob is going to buy some decent secateurs so when she does get another clump she can remove mothers that are past their use by date. If she is squeamish about the mother bit, call them old fathers!

There was a short period of merriment when members were asked technical questions which if answered correctly meant they won a packet of seed of *Pitcairnia heterophylla*. As the species name implies the plant has two forms of leaves – one normal and the other a bunch of prickles. However, when it flowers it is a spectacular burst of colour. It is one of the few Pitcairnia that does not mind a bit of drought. However, I have a feeling that it does not have a long life and needs to be replenished by seed raising. Luckily it self-sets seed by the bucketload. The problem is harvesting them because you need tweezers to get past the spiny bits!



**Roving Reporter Jan 2014 cont:**

When the Society was formed some 30 odd years ago this species was quite popular but is currently not in vogue. Can I suggest those who did get seed and are successful in raising seedlings that they share them around members?

Finally, Julie Batty tells me the Garden staff have been busy with Broms in the greenhouse at the Adelaide Bot Gardens and it is impressive. She even sent me a couple of photos which is great for those with rubbery legs. So, it may be worth a visit.

***Puya berteroniana* (Bertero 115) by Butcher Jan 2014**

This is one of the big Puyas and is not for the 'normal' backyard but can be found in Botanic Gardens with the Adelaide Botanic gardens being one example. You see, when it flowers it can get to 4.5 metres high so is an impressive sight when in flower. Each flower is a metallic blue-green colour. A plant that looks like this but only 2.5 metres high when it flowers is *Puya alpestris*. Both have an odd habit of having to top part of each flowering branch naked of flowers and looking like nature has provided the birds with somewhere to perch. The botanists call Puyas with this habit as subgenus *Puya* and they are generally on the large size. The other subgenus is *Puyopsis* where the flowering branch has flowers all the way to the top.

This is where the problem starts. In 1896 Mez decided to describe parts of a plant that had been found near Valparaiso in Chile by Carlos Bertero. Let us remember the transport situation at that time and ponder on the thoughts of such a collector. "How am I going to get this thing out of the wild – I'll just collect as much material as I am able!" Mez decided it had a totally fertile inflorescence and described *Puya berteroniana* which was subsequently placed under subgenus *Pitcairniopsis* which eventually became *Puyopsis*. As a side issue, current molecular studies are showing that the old notion that *Pitcairnia* and *Puya* are closely related is in error. Back to the plot. In 1935 in Das Pflanzenreich, Mez still had *Puya berteroniana* under *Pitcairniopsis*. In the same year Lyman Smith entered the arena and he was convinced an error had been made possibly because all the plants being found in the wild near Valparaiso that could be linked to *P. berteroniana* had an inflorescence that had cocky perches! Surely Mez had made a mistake.

So, up to 2013 we had *P. berteroniana* for the large plant found around Valparaiso and the more southerly smaller plant known as *P. alpestris*.

Was Bertero 115 a one off – a natural hybrid or mutation? Had Lyman Smith and all the subsequent writers made wrong assumptions? Georg Zizka and his co-workers thought so and we see details published in *Brittonia* 65(4): 387-407. 2013.

So, now we have *P. berteroniana* treated as *P. x berteroniana* and NOT in cultivation and a new *P. alpestris* subsp. *zoellneri* to take its place.

Just think, the next time you are in a Botanical Garden and you see a plant with *Puya berteroniana* on the label you can flash a copy of this article to put them on the right path!

Finally a few words on natural hybrids. In *Brittonia* 65(4): 387-407. 2013. We find:

'However, *Puya berteroniana* Mez is here regarded to be a very rare taxon of hybrid origin. Up to now, *Puya* hybrids have been only reported by Luther (2010) who listed two species of hybrid origin (*P. x loxensis* Manzanares & W. Till, *P. x pichincha* Mez & Sodiro), but no hybrids between representatives of different subgenera have been recorded up to now. However, a hybrid between the genera *Puya* and *Deuterocohnia*, *x Pucohnia* G.H. Anderson ex D.A. Beadle, was published by Beadle (1991).'

Natural hybrids are generally on the backburner as far as botanists are concerned and many are referred to just by parental formula, and the only place they are listed is <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php> Just search on nat hyb to get a list.



*Puya alpestris* subsp. *Zoellneri*  
(Photo J. Batty)

*Puya berteroniana* article cont:

It is also possible if only one plant is found that the difference can be explained by mutation but we still treat it a natural hybrid with putative parents. It should be noted here that the parental species names are in alphabetical order to easily check on double entries because in natural hybrids nobody knows for sure which is the seed parent. There are also many natural hybrids that have been declared but nobody has bothered to publish the name with a multiplication sign.

The citation 'Beadle (1991)' may be referable by the academic botanist who has easy access to University libraries but mention could have made to the Bromeliad Cultivar Register

<http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/bcr/index.php> where easy access to this information is available



### **Roving Reporter Feb 2014**

This meeting was our AGM and what an exciting one for one who sits at the back and watches things evolve. Who would have thought about the new committee members that volunteered and were accepted with open arms? Thanks should also be expressed to those who have finished their stint. It behoves all members to have a go at being at the sharp end. It is a truism to say that the more you put in, the more you get out of it. But what about the surprise of the afternoon - A new treasurer. The best of luck to Jeff Hollinshead. When I find out what particular branch of Bromeliads turns him on I'll let you know. I do know he is an ex-POM - just like me - and has been growing Broms for 6 years. He has only acquired about 100 plants in this time. He lives in Nairne so must have space to expand despite efforts from his wife to calm him down. You see, he has that dreaded disease called Bromeliaditis.

There is nothing like new blood to keep us looking young again.

It was good to see some 'old' faces I recognised at the meeting including George Rudolph, Maureen Hick and Bob Dvorak. If I missed out on anyone, I apologise, but remember you may not be in the older class in my eyes.

And to the bromeliads that were brought in. Popular plant was *Aechmea* 'Kiwi' and the happy recipient of shiny metal Star was Ron Masters. The plant is a form of *Aechmea fasciata* that started off in New Zealand. It brought back memories for Maureen Hick of Bea Hanson.

Next to be discussed was a *Tillandsia* that I brought in as a talking point. It was a plant that had two labels. I had first got it as *T. limbata* from Mark Supple of Newcastle but he felt it could be the famous *T. izabalensis*. You see, his plant is one of the few 'Australian' plants that were involved with the name *T. izabalensis*. Let us go back 10 years when Renate Ehlers in Germany was wrestling with plants she had collected in Mexico and Guatemala linked to *Tillandsia utriculata*. I was kept busy translating her thoughts and asking questions as to why it is so. The group was a bag of worms mainly because it had been based in the past on herbarium specimens and yet differences were cropping up in live material. She decided to split off *T. cucaensis* (from Guatemala) from *T. makoyana* (from Mexico). About 5 years ago I got involved with a young botanist, Juan Pinzon who had decided to investigate the *T. utriculata* group for his doctorate. I was able to supply him lots of material I had got from Renate Ehlers but in English! I think this did help him in his field work. I thought he was brilliant fellow with his ability to understand my English and his logical way of looking at botanical problems. Things progressed and he got his doctorate and is now working in Vienna with Dr. Walter Till looking at the genetics of *Tillandsia*. In the meantime his thesis on the *T. utriculata* complex remains unpublished in Spanish. He intends to publish this work in English, which I helped in the translation, and which we now await polishing up. I can assure you it will be an interesting read for those inclined in such things! Anyway, he found that Renate had included two species in her concept of *T. cucaensis* which needed splitting again. Plants that came from the Pacific coast were really *T. cucaensis*. Those that came from the eastern coast of Mexico and Central America would be called *T. izabalensis* from a place called Izabal in Guatemala. Now to the Australian connection! Mark did have plants imported from Guatemala called *T. limbata* but he noticed differences in one when it flowered. This was referred to Juan and it was accepted as an example of this newly named species. The problem is that when not in flower, both *T. limbata* (the common one) and *T. izabalensis* (the rare one) look identical. I cannot claim my money back because Mark gave me the plant and I can assure you I had great fun taking this plant's photos in intimate detail! Yup! I have the common *T. limbata*!

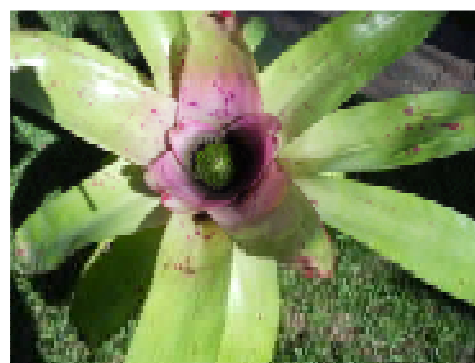
How many saw the *Neoregelia* 'Roehr's Best' and pondered about the name? Even if you did not ponder I think it is worth pondering over! If you had lived in New York State in the 1930's you may have seen 'lorries' with Roehr's Nursery painted on the side doing their deliveries. Yes, it was a big concern! In the 1980's 'Roehr's Best' arrived on Australian shores and is still around so it must be popular with growers.

Then there was the well grown *Aechmea* 'Xavante' which is one of the better forms of *Aechmea nudicaulis*. It used to have the nurseryman's name of rubra but there are lots of plants called rubra. This deserved a posh exotic sounding name and what better than Xavante. Adam even pronounced the name correctly – for an Australian – because I would hate to think how they would say it in Brazil. You see it is named after a Brazilian tribe that paints itself red. Mind you there are other tribes that used to do the same thing!



*Aechmea* 'Xavante' (Photo J. Batty)

And so to the big B that took over the whole of the corner of the bench – over a metre wide (you could get at least 5 other plants in the same space) But alas it had no name. I had a gut feeling that it must have been like when Grace Goode looked at a seedling she had raised from seed from her US friend George Anderson in the 1980's and said 'Gee Whiz'. The plant was huge and had LARGE parents! Could this be the name? As is my wont, I like to check the computer records and allowing for variabilities because of light and growing conditions I could not get past 'Gee Whiz'. I wonder how many others of these oldies lie hidden in back yards. No wonder they have trouble at the 'show and tell' sessions that they have at Societies in the Eastern States. Only the more outstanding ones can be identified.



Is this 'Gee Whiz'?

Seed raising. *Pitcairnia heterophylla*. Can you remember the clever ones at the January meeting who won seed to try. Well, you can throw away your attempts because Julie Batty reports success. She has hundreds of seedlings. What should she do? First you throw away a half which gives you something manageable. When the grass things reach a manageable size prick them out into flats remembering they will go dormant in the winter. I would tend to suggest you will flood the market if you get more than 20 adult looking plants!

John Yates told us all about Carnivorous plants and as a Carnivorous man certainly knew his onions. The way botanical names just dripped off his tongue was a delight to behold – at least to me. The display plants and the 'slide' presentation gave you an insight into yet another branch of the plant kingdom that does not cease to astound you. Mind you, if you had a few million years to keep changing your mind it is reasonable to assume there would be differences! If you want to know more about the finer points I am sure John will oblige. But this is about generalities and musings. I am sure you are aware that Bromeliads have been evolving for some 70 million years and have found ecological niches to survive in, some live in the ground like normal plants but many are epiphytic, growing on trees and things. These have a tough time of it. They seem to have used their hairy trichomes to trap moisture and nutrients or have used their leaves to form tanks to hold water for their own gradual use. These reservoirs are somewhere to live for many animals where the big ones eat the small ones and the leavings are used by the plant as nutrient. But I think this is humane because life does not last long if you get eaten! But in some of these reservoirs you may find a carnivorous plant or two which either squeezes the life out of the poor insect or sucks out its juices. Now this is inhumane. So if you think that a carnivorous plant is like a carnivorous animal like a lion, then think again! Back to the plot. I think we can say that Bromeliads are one happy family called Bromeliaceae. Carnivorous plants do not have a common ancestor but ancestors that have evolved to survive in nutrient deficient habitats and have to be inhumane to survive. These habitats are scattered around the world and no doubt DNA studies are being made on them too to see what ancestors they evolved from and what current relatives actually look like.



## *Roving Reporter Feb 2014 cont:*

Remember that plants got on this world before animals and have had longer to evolve into many many sorts. AND yet there are people like me that try to fit them into boxes and get enjoyment out of it.

The other bit of news is that some may have seen me creeping out with *Nepenthes*. Yes, 20 years ago we tried to be Carnivorous but the desire to be dry meant the *Tillandsias* won out. Regarding, our latest purchase, Margaret has asked me why there are still flies in the kitchen.



*Heliamphora* (Photo J. Batty)



*Sarracenia* (Photo J. Batty)

This is what John said

Hi All

I would like to thank the society for the opportunity to talk about my plants, and have a very attentive crowd to chat to. I felt very comfortable talking to you all, gabbing on about my dear Carnivorous plants, being interested in them now for so long, the names finally are a lot easier to pronounce, (now I have to get used to a new set of difficult wordings from Bromeliads) but going on the trips overseas, and being with many different people from so many different countries, help me get the pronunciations somewhere near correct, as my Ozzie pronunciations didn't always come out right, and got a bit of a chuckle or two from other expedition members, so you soon got corrected very quickly. (Editor's comment Latin names are meant only for the written word and not the spoken word. As WT Stearn the compiler of the book 'Botanical Latin' asks, do you pronounce the words according the Spanish, the Roman Catholic Church, or what?! Certainly I would not follow the Yanks!)

My knowledge is more to the general side of things, like growing and propagating, not scientific, the whole in-depth thing really does not appeal to me, mainly from my dyslexic background, reading is and was never a thing that comes easy, so I just avoid it. I personally just like to grow and propagate them as a hobbyist grower, just on a larger scale than most. I produce many videos for help to grow and treat sick plants etc and just showing my green-house, and these are well received throughout the Carnivorous plant wider community. The internet has changed growing of Carnivorous plants so much over the past 10 years or so, with now so much information being put out, that the once hard to get, hard to grow, difficult climate growing conditions, can be now viewed very easily, and many more people have greater success in growing these plants. The use of forums now too is exposing the plants to higher popularity, as people post photos of their plants, and green-houses and growing areas, which might range from small to large glass ex-fish tanks to larger enclosed green-houses, like mine with air-conditioning, automatic misting, and fogging when required.

Not all the Carnivorous plants are grown in green-houses, many need the open air to grow well, the Venus Flytraps, trumpet pitcher plants, our local tuberous *Drosera*, pygmy *Drosera*, and most sun-dews, all like the open to grow, where the *Nepenthes*, *Heliamphora*, *Cephalotus*, *Pinguicula*, and some tropical sun dews and butterworts, like the controlled green-house conditions much better. Many are also dependent on semi and full hibernation times, as in USA, EU, UK for example.



### ***Roving Reporter Feb 2014 cont:***

Many have to cope with snow and well below zero temperatures, and go into a hibernation mode to ride it out, and rest till spring comes again. Here in AU our winters are mild, so most go into a semi hibernation time or just slow in growing. Most tropical plants don't appreciate the winter cold, but having the green-house helps keep day time temperature to a reasonable level, allowing them to get through the winter cold without causing serious harm.

Lowland plants suffer greatly and often die after just a few seasons not being able to recover in time from summer to the next winter. Highland plants are more adaptable to the cool.

The thing with many Carnivorous plants is what works for me, may not work for someone in Europe or USA , mainly because of climate conditions , it can also be within AU as well , because our different climate zones can make many growers confused and wondering why. Adapting to climate conditions is a very big issue and is being addressed all the time in forums and internet media like face book, many young growers and beginners are baffled by this and find it hard to grasp the concept of tropical, subtropical, temperate and lowland conditions, not being able to grow plants of many climate zones in one micro climate. Explaining this and getting it to sink in can be very tedious indeed.

This is where my experience in seeing first-hand the conditions under which most of the plants I grow in the natural habitat has helped me understand and grow the plants much better, and helps to explain the reason for troublesome plants, that many find hard to grow in the unsuitable micro climates. It is even more so when they realise the cost involved in setting up proper conditions. This puts many off or they chose to ignore the advice and most times, come back and ask why are their plants all dead or looking very sick. For me, seeing the plants in the wild have more than given me a visual sight of them, but a greater understanding of the habitats , growing conditions and what they grow in, weather, rainfall, sun etc and I can tell you it is a very distinct advantage.

Coincidence. Just look at what has cropped up in the latest New Zealand Journal. Margaret has a feeling that a friend of Bea's was also involved somewhere with a Scottish sounding name but alas such things are lost in time.

Aechmea 'Kiwi' by Graeme Barclay in New Zealand Journal Feb 2014

This month we look at a unique plant that helped put New Zealand 'on-the-map' as a new origin of outstanding bromeliad cultivars.

Is it a species?...Is it a hybrid?... Is it a sport?

*Aechmea* 'Kiwi' is a good example to see how we classify bromeliad cultivars. This plant apparently came to be in a batch of *Aechmea fasciata* var. *purpurea* seed, that the late Mrs. Bea Hanson imported and grew sometime in the early 1980s. A single seedling showed dark, reddish-brown striations down the centre of each leaf and eventually developed into a stunning *Aechmea fasciata* type plant.



*Aechmea* 'Kiwi' (Photo J. Batty)

No doubt Bea considered this special seedling a possible hybrid, but flowering revealed an inflorescence where the floral bracts were all a pale creamy-salmon colour, rather than the bright pink that *Aechmea fasciata* normally has - otherwise the flower spike was identical. Therefore, this plant was unlikely to be a hybrid and more likely a 'seed mutation' of the seed parent, so it can technically be classified genetically as a species. However the key difference to remember is that it is not a true botanical species as found in the wild. In 1998 it was finally registered as *Aechmea* 'Kiwi' in order to differentiate it from the normal varieties and document its origin. Due to it being a stable plant with pups showing the same unique features, it was now in circulation worldwide, though I am unsure how Bea got it out of New Zealand possibly via the post to friends overseas?

### ***Roving Reporter Feb 2014 cont:***

*Aechmea* 'Kiwi' seems to be a slower grower than the normal green *Aechmea fasciata* and often provides only one or two pups after flowering. It is best positioned in a warm area with filtered light or dappled shade, as too much sun can cause bleaching and stress.

Be careful not to over feed or over water, excesses can cause soft, strappy growth and sometimes loss of the red variegation. It's certainly a plant to experiment with to find the optimal growing needs and environment. It will grow well as an epiphyte, but probably best left to clump up in a pot, where it makes a great indoor or conservatory feature plant.

### **2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS**

PRESIDENT: Adam Bodzioch VICE PRESIDENT: Peter Hall

SECRETARY: Bev Masters ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Glenda Lee

TREASURER: Jeffrey Hollinshead ASSISTANT TREASURER: To be nominated by Committee

COMMITTEE: Penny Seekamp, Trevor Seekamp, Julie Batty, (New) Dave Batty (New)  
Glenda Lee (New)

POSTAL CLERK: Bev Masters

ASSISTANT POSTAL CLERK:

LIBRARIAN: Trevor Seekamp

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN: Penny Seekamp,

AFTERNOON TEA ORGANISER: Bev Masters

AFTERNOON TEA HELPERS: Rhonda Jarrett, Bev Masters, Sue Sckrabei, Penny Seekamp & others on the day

DOOR TICKETS: Sue Sckrabei, Rhonda Jarrett

RAFFLE TICKETS: Sue Sckrabei, Rhonda Jarrett and other helpers on the day.

HOST/ESS: Sue Sckrabei, Bill Treloar

POTS & LABELS: Ron Masters

NAME TAG MAKER: Ron and Bev Masters

GAZETTE: Derek & Margaret Butcher/ Bev Masters



### ***Roving Reporter March 2014***

March was Summer Brag and with all that hot weather we had it was a bit of a surprise to see so many plants brought in. One reason why we did not see too many plants with scorch marks could be because they totally succumbed! Big Len had been brought out of retirement to help Adam preside over proceedings and Adam did get a word in edgewise. Interestingly neoregelias predominated which may be why the popular plant was not a Neo! Lots of people must have wanted to be involved because there seemed to be more gold stars allocated than usual, and for the first time we had a tie but only one miniature trophy. So we had a show of hands and the *Cryptanthus* 'Jean Nicol' won out but both are worth having a chat about. Colin's *Vriesea ospinae* var *gruberi* is interesting in that it is a difficult plant to make into a specimen plant because of its caulescent behaviour. Yes, it just keeps growing upwards and flops around. In the jungle it has bushes to fall into but in the shadehouse it generally squashes its next door neighbour. Certainly in our garden the plant is regularly decapitated and the top half re-rooted. I have never tried to grow on the bottom half. In so many of the caulescent types of Bromeliads it is only the top bit that is capable of producing offsets. The moral of the story is never give away the top half assuming the rooted bit left will offset! *V. ospinae* was described in 1983 by Harry Luther even though he did not know where it was found in the wild. The plant was often called Espirito Santo in the 'trade' and when you see Espirito Santo is in Brazil you can be excused about knowing how to grow it. The true link was with the Ospina family in Colombia. In 1992 Harry introduced us to the variety *gruberi* and here he did know where it could be collected at about 500 m altitude. We now come to the bit where Big Len threw up his arms in arms in horror because he is a firm believer that plants from Colombia will die when at the Colgan residence. The problem here is that this species does not mind living in Adelaide and a clue may be in the 500m. Certainly the high altitude plants do not like it here and those closer to sea-level would also be in a different climatic zone. So those who may be after such a plant, I did notice that Colin's plant had lots of offsets!

### ***Roving Reporter March 2014 cont:***

And now to the *Cryptanthus*. When the Society was formed everybody grew *Cryptanthus* even though they were temperamental but in those days we liked challenges. THESE days so many growers take the easy option! Anyway, one of our favourites was 'Glad' and she may need some introduction.

Bromeletter 17(3): 9. 1980

*Cryptanthus* 'Glad': (after Gladys Lawrence, Sydney grower); broad-leafed pinkish tan rosette to 30cm, with central deeper brown banding; also known as Foster's No. 1 hybrid.

Nomenclature by Olwen Ferris in Bromeletter 18(4): 16. 1981

*Cryptanthus bivittatus* and *Cryptanthus bivittatus* var. *luddemannii* - see Illustration 106 opposite p. 100 in "Bromeliads in Cultivation" by Bob and Catherine Wilson.

In the text the variety *luddemannii* is given a horticultural variety (should be cultivar?)

A robust edition of the above will make a plant up to two feet in diameter with the same leaf colouring. It has come to my notice that some people are calling one of the three Hybrids that came from Foster in the early 1960s *C. bivittatus* var. *luddemannii*. This is the hybrid known as *C. "Glad"*. The other two hybrids are known as *C. Green Ice* and *C. Foster's long leaf hybrid*.

So it was a bit of nostalgia when old 'Glad' turned up at the meeting. The problem was that the plant had 'Jean Nicol' on the label. Let me explain. In the 1980's Jean Nicol in Victoria noticed her "Glad" was behaving badly with some of the offsets showing variegations but never really stabilising. It is said in the Cultivar Register that it is a sport of 'Glad' with seasonal variegation. We all agreed that its temporary change to 'Glad' was rather attractive.



*Cryptanthus* 'Jean Nicol' (Photo J. Batty)

When trying to identify plants we must always remember Sporting because Bromeliads just keep on trying to confuse those of us who like plants in little boxes covering names and quoted variability. We seek to get stability in a good Sport by selection of successive offsets and we fail more often than succeed. Even those who claim to have got stability in say 5 years will not believe that said stability can become instability when the environment changes such as the sale of a plant.

This Sporting brings me to another plant on display. *Aechmea* 'Little Harv' variegated which is just another form of *Aechmea chantinii*. There are 45 of these listed and no doubt many unregistered. In the 1970's Harvey Bullis had an odd happening amongst the many *Aechmea chantinii* he was growing from seed and he named the plant 'Little Harv' because it was so big and was different in having extra scurfing on the leaves. The problem was that he claimed this was a result of apomictic behaviour. This may make your eyes water but what about parthenogenesis which has a similar meaning. Basically it is the production of viable seed without pollen intervention, in other words the progeny would have the same genes as mother and look like mother. Here the seedling was different so mutation was the culprit not a fancy apomixis.



*Aechmea* 'Little Harv' variegated  
(Photo J. Batty)

If you want to find out more about this aberrant sexual behaviour you can always join the Apomictic Society! Plants known to be apomictic are dandelions but so far Bromeliads are normal and need a father! Mind you, in human terms Bromeliads are not normal because there are 6 males to 1 female in the same floral bed which may upset some. This leads to Len's problem of getting look-alike seedlings from seed from John Murphy's *Neoregelia* 'Hannibal Lector' (Useless information – Did you know that the Poms spell it Hannibal Lector and the Yanks Hannibal Lector?) Anyway, normally you would expect seedlings in the second generation of a hybrid to show offspring with *N. ampullaceal* traits to *N. carcharodon* traits. But if they all look like Mother then is apomixis at work? Something to ponder over.

Back to 'Little Harv' variegated. We do know that Little Harv' did mutate/ sport to variegations and these are called 'Harvey's Pride' or 'Loie's Pride' but the problem is that they are patented in the USA and you are not allowed to sell them without permission.



### ***Roving Reporter March 2014 cont:***

Grow them yes. As far as I know there are no patents in Australia. But is the plant a variegated 'Little Harv'? The leaf structure does not look right and it seems to be yet another sporting just given a name to sell it. Perhaps it may be better to call the plant *Aechmea chantinii* variegated.

What about the monster clump of *Vriesea* that Sarka Laznicka brought in? Does she have a skylight in her car? It certainly impressed me AND Big Len. He recognized it as a *Vriesea* he had grown for years as *V. erythrodactylon* hybrid and remembered how long it took to flower. This was another plant that was around when our Society was formed but we never found out where it came from or how it got its name. At that time we were not even growing the 'true' *V. erythrodactylon*. He was very surprised to find two labels in the pot the other being 'Red Rock'. This had me asking questions and Sarka has confirmed that the 'Red Rock' label had fallen in from another pot. Sarka also confirmed she had been disappointed in lack of flowers for her clump and as a desperate measure thought it might benefit in a larger pot AND water. Well, it took off and we all witnessed the result of many flower spikes. Despite Len having had a plant for 25 years and flowered it 5 times in that period with successive offsets Len had never taken its photo.



*Vriesea* 'Crimson Spires'  
(Photo J. Batty)

Now I have its photo thanks to Julie Batty. The time has come to record a name in the Bromeliad Cultivar Register. After discussions with the Bromeliad Cultivar Registrar we have decided to call our plant 'Crimson Spires' which is a much more impressive name than *erythrodactylon* hybrid. After seeing what Sarka has done I am sure that members will be checking if it is hidden in their collection somewhere. Don't forget to change the label. I do know that it offsets like crazy, so there must be lots around somewhere and be patient regarding flowering.

And what about the other brain teaser that Ellen Van Wijk brought in the form of a flowering *Billbergia* that she had won on the raffle about a year ago. No name! Bill Treloar suggested that the creases/knuckles/thumbprints in the leaves suggested *Billbergia horrida* and Auntie Margaret suggested *B. amoena* for the flower. So we left it at that and prepared for homework. Well, the homework has been done and we are fairly confident we have the answer.

This is what we found:

*Billbergia* 'Jean Black' by Grace Goode before 1982 (*amoena* v. *minor* (*elegans*?) x *horrida* v. *tigrina*, short, heavily spotted squatty knuckled tube, banded as in *horrida*. Named after Grace's sister.

The heavily spotted bit had us worried but on closer examination of the plant you could see traces of many spots and Ellen did confirm that the plant had been grown in the shade. Another explanation of the slight difference is that there would have been several seedlings in that grex and no selection of just one seedling.



*Billbergia* 'Jean Black'

Now for a mention about *Quesnelia* 'Tim Plowman' which was Len's lament because it had just finished flowering. He did say that he gets the leaf tips to curl by carefully initiating the curl with finger and thumb. But have you seen Big Len gently remove an offset from a *Tillandsia* – you close your eyes and shudder. No pegs were used. I have never seen Auntie Margaret do such a thing and yet ours get kinky too!



*Quesnelia* 'Tim Plowman' (Photo J. Batty)

Another Len's lament (Yes, Len loves to lament!) Was his collection of a *Tillandsia* in Ecuador some 3 years ago which decided to start the flowering process in our heat wave and consequently decided it was not going to flower under those conditions. He still thought it had to be *Tillandsia barclayana* and I agree with him. But alas no photograph of it in its splendour for future bragging rights.

And as for the other *Tillandsia* that looked sorry for itself that Len had got from Brenton Cadd in Victoria several years ago, my records show that it had been imported from Mexico in the late 1980's. the name of

### ***Roving Reporter March 2014 cont:***

It was given the name of 'Conned' because of its resemblance to *T. concolor*. Please do not suggest to Len that he was conned like I was.

### ***March Show Time by Roving Reporter***

Perhaps I am getting old but this year things seemed different somehow. I never judge a good show on the amount of money we make but the interaction between the workers. We had volunteers coming out of our ears. I can imagine Jeanne Hall looking down on us lot and saying I told you that volunteering is infectious. Almost as bad as Bromeliaditis. To think that I thought that selling raffle tickets was my speciality and needed special attributes. How wrong could one be with so many wanting to take my place! The only thing I missed was me mate from Strathalbyn. Volunteers were so easy to train. Some even became checkout chicks down down at the end of the room. Mind you if they had been there on Friday arvo they would have wondered if they had to be Maltese or Polish to apply for the job. Apparently the printer of signs had turned off the 'spell-check' on her computer. Talking of spelling did you notice the T-Shirt with I love Bromelie on the front. Every self-respecting Aussie knows you do not spell Bromeliad that way but then we are a cosmopolitan lot and realise it is in German

If a job is worth doing it is worth doing well because I found out that the Judging panel stayed on till 6 pm on the Friday. They then adjourned to the Half-way hotel (My favourite watering hole) where I am sure more discussion continued. I am the odd man out regarding Judging because I believe there is no real difference between the rough and the smooth but the name on the label is paramount. Auntie Margaret must have the same opinion because she chose me.

Tale of the toilet roll. On Friday the Secretary brought in our own super Soft toilet paper but on Saturday morning they had gone missing and we can only assume that the Maltese were in dire need. So Saturday extra stocks were brought in only this time extra rolls for those who were said to have verbal diarrhoea. I now know that Bev has laughter lines.

Thanks go to the electrician who was a good locksmith but not finder of books and to the birdwatcher who could find books to help out the ancient Raffle ticket seller. Thanks also to the Nairne community for providing cardboard boxes on the Sunday. I said there were more in number that expected customers but was proved wrong – again.

Did you know that someone dropped off a chocolate cake with cream in the middle for morning tea for the workers? She wished to remain anonymous only to say it was in appreciation of the letter that Adam had sent her, reminding her of the show.



Display plants March 2014 (Photo J. Batty)



Display plants March 2014 (Photo J. Batty)

Did you know that Jenny Burrows came all the way from Queensland just to meet the legendary Uncle Derek. Julie Batty confirmed with hugs that this was the lady who provided her with plants from Queensland. I did get the opportunity to tell her that my mnemonic for QLD is Query Label Diligently. I did not get the opportunity to say that we in SA spend so much time acclimatizing Qld imports to Adelaide water we don't get a chance to export and is why SA stands for Sod All!

On the Saturday afternoon I did get the odd chance to look over at our new Treasurer counting labels and felt sure I could feel him wondering why he had volunteered for such a job, especially as he did not have enough elastic bands. But then I reminisced of the time when I was adding up such things. The price tags were either plastic labels, half plastic labels, paddle pops, Venetian blinds or wooden sticks. AND THAT IS NOT ALL. Prices ranged from 45c to \$2.50 in increments of 5c. Boy was it a labour of love in those good old days. Jeff knows his onions because on Sunday he came along with a good looking assistant to help him out with his rubber bands. AND I now know that there are at least two families living in Nairne.

**March Show Time by Roving Reporter cont:**

The case of the missing *Dyckia* and who blames who. Friday had me rushing around for a *Dyckia* that Penny Seekamp had mislaid. We found out the answer that it had been left home. BUT the story does not end there because it had the label *Dyckia rariflora* on the label. Now even those of you who cannot read Latin will realise that this means rare flower but the problem is that it can also mean rare plant because few people know where to find it in the wild. In 1830 Schultes named *Dyckia rariflora* but in 1835 Graham (A Pom) named a different plant *Dyckia rariflora*. Problems! Luckily Graham’s plant was the same as *D. remotiflora* that had been described by Otto & Dietrich in 1833. These days Graham’s plant should have *D. remotiflora* on the label. Now we come to the tricky bit because Penny said that the plant had come from the Adelaide Bot Garden but I said that some people are slow to change their labels. In this case well over 100 years!

*D. remotiflora* (The right one) is common in Australian collections. The next problem is that I think the Adelaide Bot Garden plant is a hybrid and we now go back to the situation where the Adelaide Bot Gardens got seed from Huntington Gardens in California. I was at Huntington in 1982 and was really impressed with their *Dyckia* collection. Huge clumps growing close together and when I asked the Docent (American name for knowledgeable Guide) the name I was told in no uncertain terms to find the label myself! There were insects and things buzzing around everywhere and swapping pollen!

And now for the exciting bit because I have just found a chap in California who regularly visits Huntington and photographs plants in flower AND the label. We have already got the Curator to agree that plants don’t move but labels do. We have already solved one problem. How did *Dyckia* ‘Naked Lady’ (without spines on the sides of the leaf) which I am sure many of you will have, lose her clothes? Len Cork sold enough of this cultivar so it must be around. Anyway, we have found strong links with the prickly version still growing at Huntington with the new name of ‘Soldena Gold’. The only problem is whether the name is Naked or Nude. The Californians are trying to convince me that Vivienne Doney had used ‘Nude’ but she is not around to verify this! There is a moral here. Don’t procrastinate.

**SHOW WINNERS**

<p><b>Pitcairniodeae</b> – Margaret Reppin Trophy  1st <i>Dyckia brevifolia</i> - David &amp; Julie Batty  2nd <i>Deuterocohnia brevifolia</i> – Peter Hall</p> <p><b>Bromelioideae</b> – President’s Trophy  1st <i>Cryptanthus</i> ‘Black Mystic’ – David &amp; Julie Batty  2nd <i>Aechmea</i> ‘Pickaninny’ – Margaret Butcher  Highly commended  <i>Billbergia</i> ‘Afterglow’ – Ron &amp; Bev Masters</p> <p><b>Specimen plants</b> – Gummow Trophy  1st <i>Tillandsia</i> ‘Widgee’ – Ray &amp; Vee Clark  2nd <i>Neoregelia lilliputiana</i> – Ron &amp; Bev Masters  Highly commended  <i>Araeococcus flagellifolius</i> – Ron &amp; Bev Masters</p> <p><b>Tillandsioideae</b> – green Leaved – Marie Robinson Trophy  1st <i>Vriesea</i> ‘Montezuma’s Gem’ – Adam Bodzioch  2nd <i>Guzmania</i> ‘Puma Gold’ – Adam Bodzioch</p>	<p><b>Tillandsioideae</b> – grey leaved – Josie Tonkin Trophy  1st <i>Tillandsia xerographica</i> – Adam Bodzioch  2nd <i>Tillandsia yuncharaensis</i> – Ray &amp; Vee Clark  Highly commended  <i>Tillandsia</i> ‘Agua Blanca’ – Ray &amp; Vee Clark</p> <p><b>Neoregelia</b> Trophy  1st <i>Neoregelia</i> ‘Birdrock’ – David &amp; Julie Batty  2nd <i>Neoregelia</i> ‘Macho’ – David &amp; Julie Batty  Highly commended  <i>Neoregelia</i> ‘Uncle Derek’ – Margaret Butcher</p> <p><b>Artistic Merit</b>  1st Picture Perfect – Teresa Wood  2nd High Tea – Bob &amp; Pam Whisson</p> <p><b>Uncle Derek &amp; Auntie Margaret</b> Trophy – for Novice’s encouragement  <i>Billbergia</i> ‘Robert Saunders’ – Ellen Van-Wijk</p> <p><b>BEST IN SHOW – EDE SCHAEFER TROPHY</b>  <i>Tillandsia xerographica</i> – Adam Bodzioch</p>
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**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL WINNERS**

Of those mentioned above, there were 4 that caught the eye of our resident photographer and will have a little comment on each.



### ***March Show Time by Roving Reporter cont:***

First, the Best in Show.

These days you do not hear much about CITES plants which was designed to help conservation of plants in the wild by banning exports from the land of origin. Bromeliads are involved but only 7 species of which *T. xerographica* is one. I have always doubted the effectiveness of these restrictions because it also includes seed. Seed raising by gardeners relieves pressure on exploitation of plants in the wild provided they have space in their native habitat to grow! There are reports of places in Guatemala that used to be covered with *T. xerographica* but alas are now few and far between. Undoubtedly they get smuggled out to the USA and Europe. All I can say is that my plants are remnants of a seed raising program by Rolly Reilly in Qld in the 1980's. Alas, I have not heard any recent programs other than hybridising. It is easy to grow in Adelaide if you take care with the water in winter. Yes, they do offset quite readily and I remember the late Len Cork bragging about having 8 large offsets. All went quiet after an extra wet winter and all I can suggest is not to be too complacent!



*T. xerographica* (Photo J. Batty)

Now to *Cryptanthus* 'Black Mystic' which Len Cork brought back from Singapore with a load of other *Cryptanthus*. This particular one was a bit of a mystery at the time and I kept confusing it with 'Black Magic'. Anyway, Len fixed up special heating in his glasshouse and nearly dropped dead when his next electricity bill came in. He immediately shut off the power with some dire consequences. There is a moral here – somewhere. I was not the only one confused – read on:



*Cryptanthus* 'Black Mystic' (Photo J. Batty)

*The saga of Cryptanthus 'Black Magic' by Larry Giroux in CSJ 22(4): 109-114. 2007*

Several months ago while delivering several "first release" cryptanthus hybrids by Lisa Vinzant to Michael's Bromeliads in Venice Florida, I had the opportunity to check out Michael's vast collection of bromeliads and especially his cryptanthus. Among the cryptanthus was a pot full of a shiny wide leafed cultivars labeled as *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic'. Since I had written an article several years ago about the cryptanthus of Grace Goode from Australia and had scanned some original slides from Grace found within the Cryptanthus Society archives for use in the article, I felt I knew this plant relatively well. The plant that Michael was selling as *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic' was very different in both shape and color from the photograph. I inquired from Michael where he had gotten the plant and told him I felt it was incorrectly labeled. It more resembled *Cryptanthus* 'Witches Brew', a hybrid of Jim Irvin, in its leaf shape, conformation and color pattern. This plant was readily available in this area and could have easily been mislabeled *Cryptanthus*. 'Black Magic' on the other hand was a much more uncommon cryptanthus and in 16 years I'd personally never seen one in a collection. As I was leaving I told Michael that I would be confirming my suspicions and would get back with him. My investigation has led to some interesting findings; and although some of my assumptions cannot be documented because of the lack of facts, my research clarifies some misnomers of a few cryptanthus. Prior to 1982, Grace Goode had a limited number of species and cultivars available to her for hybridization. The cross of *Cryptanthus* 'Racinae' X 'Arautiac' by Grace in those early years created several uniquely different plants. Of these 'Black Magic', 'Red Magic', 'Roseline', 'Silver Delight', 'Silver Lining', 'Silver on Burgundy', 'Silver on Rose', 'So Much' and 'Superb', were deemed distinctly different to be registered by Derek Butcher in Australia for Grace Goode in 1982. By the late 1980's, Bob Whitman was offering several plants of this grex for sale through his Southern Exposure Catalog. By 1991, Cornelius Colins of Apopka Florida was providing quantities of select plants of the same grex. In the CSJ Vol. 4, No.3 and in the 1992 Southern Exposure Catalog, the same black and-white reproduction of the slide of *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic' submitted by Grace Goode was published.

**March Show Time by Roving Reporter- C. 'Black Magic' saga cont:**

The accompanying description in the CSJ was the following- "C. 'Black Magic' by Grace Goode. 'Arautiac' x racinae. Large, open round +/- 14 translucent satiny black purple elliptical leaves with a mottled underbase and a dense purple center stripe. Light scurf to center of plant. Dense, slightly irregular serration and wavy undulation. Pups on short stolons. White narrow petals. While, Bob Whitman abbreviated his listed description of 'Black Magic' for sale as- "(L) blackish with red marbling". There is no doubt that the pictures in the CSJ and SE catalog are the same; since both show the unique 4 petaled flower. Fortunately I was able to find the original slide submitted by Grace Goode, which was in color. My description of the plants in the slide would be that the base color of the lancelet leaves is a dark purple or charcoal black covered with a medium dense scurf arising from the base of leaves and becoming less dense as it extends toward the tips of the leaves. Somewhat different than the earlier published description.

Geoff Lawn conducted a survey several years ago and this census revealed that *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic' was the second most frequently grown cryptanthus in Australia. It was grown on both coasts and in varied climates. More recently at my request he asked some of these growers to comment on this plant and submit pictures. Reprinted here is a sampling of those responses. Geoff Lawn of Perth, Australia - 'I think my 'Black Magic' came ex East years ago, not sure where now, but true to name I think it's a very variable cultivar excessive light makes it brown with little mottling, too shady and it turns green (like mine at present). Medium light gets that black foliage marbled red. "Margaret Paterson (166kms north of Brisbane) says - "I do not have Red Magic. The Black Magic I grow originally was obtained from Grace Goode. It has mottled leaves, but when it ages the leaves look black. Sorry but do not have a plant suitable to photograph at this time. "

Rhonda Symmonds of 340km north of Brisbane - "My 'Black Magic', which came direct from Grace Goode is mottled and goes more mahogany with less mottling in bright light (as per the attached photo). " (As Rhonda inherited most of Grace 's Crypts when Grace scaled down, labeled by Grace, I think the mottled version would be correct. I cannot fully explain why Grace's slide specimen shows solid black leaves unless it was grown in deep shade (the elongated leaves support this view) plus it was photographed in low light, hence no shadows evident. As far as I know, a C. 'Black Magic' with solid black leaves does not exist in Australia. Comment supplied by Geoff Lawn)

Alice Williams (10kms north of Sydney) writes - "Unfortunately I no longer have 'Black Magic' but attach photos of 'Red Magic' which I obtained when I bought the crypt collection of Peter Kearney in the early 90's. I do know that Peter originally imported many of his plants from USA (many from Kents). I also attached a photo of a crypt labeled 'Dark Magic' which I purchased from Ern Bailey in 1999. Frankly I cannot see the difference between the two. I do remember that the 'Black Magic' I had was marbled (or mottled) and I never grew it with solid black leaves. The 'Black Magic' was also in Peter's collection. "

Most will agree that a description is very subjective. Pictures of plants on the other hand are much more objective, although cultural growing differences must be taken into account when comparing the same hybrid grown in different locations. Included in this article are a group of pictures provided by growers of 'Black Magic'

The question now arises, "If the original slide of the plant submitted by Grace Goode of 'Black Magic' for registration, looks significantly different than the 'Black Magic' imported to the United States and is grown in Australia, where did this plant come from?"

This question may never be adequately answered but there are a few clues to what may have happened.

1. The slide originally submitted to the CS Registration Committee, was to reserve the name 'Black Magic' once a second generation picture was submitted. Although this was the policy rules during the early years of the Registration Committee, they were not strictly adhered to. Grace may have changed her mind or inadvertently labeled another plant of the grex with this name. Grace like many of the earlier hybridizers, labeled the grex of the cross with a name. Usually one of the seedling would retain that same name while others were given different names. Cryptanthus Society records confirm that this was the case with this grex.
2. I thought about the idea that the labeling error could have occurred in Bob Whitman's nursery, but I'm pretty sure evaluation of the evidence concludes that the same plant is grown under the same name in Australia and the US and this is not the plant pictured in the original slide.
3. Even the parentage ('Arautiac' x 'Racinae') is questionable when looking at the plant currently grown in cultivation. 'Arautiac' the seed plant is probably a cultivar of bromelioides, where 'Racinae' is a hybrid of the two species - bivittatus and fosterianus. To produce a mottled black and red coloration without any hint of barring or the strong vertical stripes of these patterned species grand-parents, is hard to comprehend.

In 2003, Geoff Lawn obtained the hand written "stud" list of all of Grace Goode's crosses. Included on this list were the names and dates of her acquisitions of new cryptanthus from overseas or from other growers within Australia. From this list it is possible to surmise that accidental pollination may have occurred from available pollen plants such as 'Madam Ganna Walska', beuckeri or 'MacIntosh' among a few others of which we have no idea what they look like.

As I said above, we will probably never know what occurred to create this mystery about the smoky black cryptanthus photographed on the background of rosy colored bricks, on which so many of Grace's hybrids were photographed. All the reports submitted by growers in Australia confirm that this slide of the plant *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic' from Grace Goode and published in the CSJ and catalogs in the United States, is not the *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic', which is present in collections of growers around the world. Nevertheless, the current *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic' grown in collections in both the US and Australia, which is the same plant, but grown under varied conditions, is a beautiful, mottled black and dark red plant. At present the only place I know where this plant is available commercially is from Michael's Bromeliads in Venice Florida. (See The Cryptanthus Shoppe posting in this issue for contact information.)

As a postscript I need to mention the plant *Cryptanthus* 'Black Mystic'. This is an extremely popular plant from Europe, which has been in cultivation for over 30 years. I have found as recently as last week, this silvery barred cryptanthus, which resembles *Cryptanthus* 'Zebrina' is labelled 'Black Magic' in collections.

I have also noted this plant for sale on the Internet as 'Black Magic' and Geoff Lawn informs me that it has been sold in stores in Australia under this same name. So to put us all on the same page, there are no bars on the crypt we now call 'Black Magic'. There should be no difficulty distinguishing these two plants apart, regardless of cultural growing conditions.

I am indebted to several Australians for providing information and photographs of *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic' and several other plants mentioned in this article. Special thanks to Geoff Lawn, Alice Williams, Rhonda Symmonds and Margaret Paterson for taking the time and effort in responding to my inquiries about this crypt.

*Neoregelia* 'Uncle Derek' is an interesting one. First its parents are 'One and Only' and 'Mon Petite' and its sibling is 'Dear One'. Lots of luvy duvy names there, however I must point out that it must have been in Margaret Paterson's S-M phase and she wanted some name in the Small to Medium range! I have known Margaret for years and is from the time when my Margaret and I went north in Adelaide winters to visit Brom collections in northern NSW and Qld. I would recommend this to younger members because not only do you learn about plants but meet some great people that speak the same plant language as you do. Anyway, I was always helping out Margaret P with the names on her plants and on the odd occasion I lost the discussion you could see her eyes lose that glazed look.



*Neoregelia* 'Uncle Derek'  
(Photo J. Batty)

*Vriesea correia-araujoii* is a little charmer and can be successfully grown here but can be confused with any in what is loosely called the 'Corcovadensis Group' which contains some 11 species. The Brazilians did a great job in 2011 explaining to us the differences and similarities to look for. The problem in Australia is that there are hybrids within the group. The problem in Brazil is natural hybrids within the group which has me mate Oscar Ribeiro tearing out what hair he has left.



*Vriesea correia-araujoii* (Photo J. Batty)



## March Show Time by Roving Reporter cont:

Finally, a couple of plants that my Margaret thought were worthy of comment.

*Quesnelia* 'Rafael Oliveira' is not a variegated sport of 'Tim Plowman'! Tim Plowman worked at Marie Selby Bot Gdns before Harry Luther and was the name used by Harry in 1983 as a cultivar name for an outstanding form of *Quesnelia marmorata*. It had been found by D. Sucre at Rio Bonito, Rio de Janeiro and sent to Marie Selby. In 1995 Rafael Oliviera de Fario found a variegated *Quesnelia marmorata* in Bananeiras, near Silva Jardim, Rio de Janeiro which got to Chester Skotak and was named by him. So the plant was now in Costa Rica and then an offset to Australia and finally to South Australia. Because this plant does not offset profusely it is somewhat rare.

*Tillandsia andreana* comes from Venezuela and as such does not like growing in Adelaide without special care. It could be described as a *T. funckiana* that is not caulescent (an elongated plant). What may be interesting is that the legendary Lyman Smith considered they were the same species until spirited resistance from the Germans saw them separated. In Queensland especially in the northern parts, they have noticed some have different shapes and colours in the leaves leading them to have pet names.

## Raffle prizes!

The 11 raffle prizes drew a lot of attention especially the 4 baskets of various sizes with multiple plantings of mini Neoregelias' - we thank Sue for her artistic skills & hard work

Another that was of interest to many was the log of Tillandsia by Len & we thank him for his efforts again this year.

All plant donations greatly appreciated.



Raffle prizes (Photo J. Batty)

1. Vriesea Jeanes feather	C97	Sophia -Unable to contact winner.
2. Large cane basket	C33	Leslie (Collected at venue)
3. Tillandsia log	C41	Joy (Delivered)
4. Red basket	C14	Pat (Collected at venue)
5. Purple basket	D09	Kevin (Picked up from Plympton)
6. Small red basket	D76	Katherine (Collected at venue)
7. Neoregelia Marble pink	D59	Tony (Taken by Glenda)
8. Purple basket	C78	Warren (Collected at venue)
9. Vriesea Bitumosa	D90	Glenda (Collected at venue)
10. Neophytum	D36	Colin (Picked up from Plympton)
11. Billbergia Perrimans pride	D76	Warren (Collected at venue)

# Reminders

**There is no meeting in April** – Please join us & other gardening enthusiasts (African Violets, Pelargoniums, Ferns, Cacti & Succulents, Cottage garden plants & Carnivorous plants) @ Festival of Flowers either Sat 12<sup>th</sup> April or Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> April -10.00 to 4.00. Enfield Community Centre. 540 Regency Rd, Enfield. Volunteers to assist with Devonshire tea &/or BBQ needed.

## Membership Fees/Subscriptions now due.

\$10 per person Feb to Feb. Thank you to all who rejoined or joined.

Enjoy your Broms & garden.