

S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

Vol 40

Number 2

April/May/June 2016

PUBLISHED BY:

The Bromeliad Society of South Australia Inc

Editor- Derek Butcher. Assist Editor – Bev Masters



Born 1977 and still offsetting!

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: Adam Bodzioch

58 Cromer Parade Millswood 5034 Ph: 0447755022

Secretary: Bev Masters

6 Eric Street, Plympton 5038 Ph: 83514876

Vice president: Peter Hall

Treasurer: Trudy Hollinshead

Committee: Glenda Lee

Penny Seekamp

Julie Batty

Dave Batty

Sue Skrabei

Jeff Hollinshead

Life members: Margaret Butcher, Derek Butcher,

: Len Colgan, Adam Bodzioch

: Bill Treloar



Email address:

Secretary – bev.masters@bigpond.com

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

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

List for species names <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php>

<http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/brom-1/> altern site <http://imperialis.com.br/>

Follow us on Face book

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

For special orders/ larger quantities call Ron Masters on 83514876



Section of Neoregelia display (Photo J. Batty)

Meetings Venue:

Maltese Cultural Centre,

6 Jeanes Street,

Beverley

Time: 2.00pm.

Second Sunday of each month

Exceptions – 1st Sunday in March

May, June & August & 3rd Sunday

September- no meeting in

December or unless advised

otherwise

**VISITORS & NEW MEMBERS
WELCOME.**

MEETING & SALES 2016 DATES

10/07/2016 (Christmas in July & uncommon genera in SA), 7/08/2016 1st Sunday (winter brag) 18/09/2016 3rd Sunday (Mini's) 9/10/2016 (Billbergia) 22/10/2016 & 23/10/2016 Sales 13/11/2016 130PM start, pup exchange, special afternoon tea – bring a plate of finger food to share, plant auction.

Applications for membership always welcome – Subs now due: \$15 single \$25 Dual

April/May/June 2016 Index

Page	Details
1	Cover page – Photo: Committee: Meeting & sales dates 2016
2	Index: Roving Reporter April 2016
3	Roving Reporter April cont.:
4	Roving Reporter April cont: Notes on <i>A. Flavo- rosea</i>
5	Notes on <i>A. Flavo- rosea</i> cont: Roving Reporter April cont
6	April Sales overview: Trophy & certificate winners: Festival of Flowers
7	Festival of Flowers cont: Festival of Flowers guidelines: Roving Reporter May 2016
8	Roving Reporter May 2016 cont:
9	Roving Reporter May 2016 cont:
10	Roving Reporter May 2016 cont: Len’s presentation
11	Roving Reporter May 2016 cont: Len’s presentation cont: Article ‘Again with patience’
12	Bromeliad Society of S.A. show & sales guidelines 2016: Roving Reporter June 2016
13	Roving Reporter June 2016 cont:
14	Article ‘Extreme effects of overdosing sulphate of potassium’: Dates for your Diary



Roving Reporter April 2016

Sorry that I did my roving at home for the meeting but luckily I did get Julie to report on odd happenings.

First I have to report that we have a new Life member in the form of Bill Treloar where I have it from several sources, ‘Bill was lost for words!’ We have a photo to prove this is correct. Many many years ago Bill joined our Society and we found out that he had originated in the depths of the city of Melbourne but had migrated to the wilds of Bute to look after the Post Office there. A cultural shock? We quickly found out that he was a keen long distance driver because he rarely missed meetings. He also found trying to grow Bromeliads in Bute a challenge because it seemed to be a few degrees hotter in Summer with accompanying winds and a few degrees colder in winter. But he persevered and persevered – something else Bill is known for. So much so he even set up a Bromeliad nursery there. As far as the Society goes I remember him as our Librarian for several years. He was then promoted to Treasurer for what seemed like ages. When he was given the opportunity he talked about the plants we bring in for display so he was and still is a valued member. He is well known as the Bromeliad man for the ‘Copper Triangle Plus’ and is truly our Ambassador for the area. So he well deserves this life membership



Adam presenting Certificate to Bill
(Photo J. Batty)

Most popular plant was that entered by Ron Masters and was called Neoregelia ‘Norman Bates’ and let it be known this name meant nothing to me. You see I am not a film-goer and while I had heard of Hannibal Lecter I did not realise that Norman Bates was a psycho of the same ilk.



Neoregelia ‘Norman Bates’ (Photo J. Batty)

I understand that the presentation from Neutrog was well received. I hope that you realised that the epiphytic bromeliads evolved to become what are called keystone plants and got there because of their ability to survive on the minimum of nutrients. Julie tells me about the talk, “In summary, there isn’t a product specifically for broms although both Strike Back for Orchids and Seamungus may be suitable in small doses. The issue of rainwater wasn’t mentioned and do we really need to know about all the nasties a roof can provide? (Derek’s comment – where we arrived in Australia on the Strathmore in 1957 we learnt that the ship would not take on water in Aden or in Adelaide) There were the usual leaflets and ample free samples of GoGo Juice and Strike Back in liquid form for all members. I do believe that some broms benefit from a regulated light feed but have my own routine which I’ll stick to although am trying out the Strike Back for Orchids on some mature underperformers this week and will take note of the results. As for it being the wrong season for fertilising – some rules are meant to be broken!” I am perhaps in the minority by saying that I rarely fertilize and still get plants to flower. Nurserymen advocate fertilising because it means faster growth and a quicker turnover. I suppose it depends on whether you are a patient person or whether you want things done yesterday. One such person is Adam who still plays with ‘Ethrel’ to get his plants to flower earlier than they want to.

Let us go back to when the Society first started when we found out that acetylene gas was one that tricked Bromeliads in flowering early. Eric Tonkin was able to get a small quantity of Calcium Carbide and we were away experimenting. Let me digress. I well remember Carbide Lamps as a child in WW2. They gave off a much brighter light than the hurricane lamp but were much harder to turn off if you heard the shout of “Put out that light” by the Air raid Wardens. Anyway we had no luck with our hit or miss experiments. If my memory serves me correctly we only lost 2 Billbergias. Next up was Len Colgan who got a supply from Queensland of what the Pineapple growers use. Here we could not work out the right dose because most Broms only need just a trace and all weird things happened when used in excess. I do not know where Adam gets his supply but he keeps playing. The big Brom Nurseries like Deroose use gas to trigger flowering so that a batch of plants flower at the same and therefore can be sold at the same time. Early flowering does not come into the equation. You can buy pills for the ordinary gardener to play with and are certainly an improvement on my efforts. I call them Plever Pills because I got my supply from Herb Plever in New York but they must be available by their proper name in the USA and Europe - somewhere!

Plever’s Pills by Herb

For those who are tired of waiting for plants to flower and don’t have access to the mixtures used by Pineapple growers or are not willing to experiment with such.

About the pills, I intended to give instructions on their use at the World Bromeliad Conference in Cairns 2008 but I ran out of time in my talk. I should have prepared a handout. Here, in brief, is the procedure I use (this may be helpful to your members):

1. Don't fertilize for 2 weeks before treatment and one week after treatment. The plant should be at least 3/4 mature. But in any event, if the treatment doesn't produce a bloom the plant will continue to grow and no damage will occur from the pills.
2. Dump the water out of the plant. If it is a huge plant like a mature *Alcantarea* and hard to turn over, just let the water dry out.
3. Place 1-1/2 inches to 2 inches (3 –5cm) of water in the centre cup. The idea is to restrict the water area and thus the ethylene bubbles to a small area around the meristem to increase the chances of one molecule being absorbed by the growing tip.
4. Drop 3 to 4 pills into the water (depending on the size of the plant). You will see the water bubble like seltzer. You can leave the pills in the cup. They are made of zeolite clay and are safe - and so is the ethylene. (All flowering plants genetically produce ethylene when they are programmed to flower. The ethylene triggers enzymes which change the meristem from leaf production to inflorescence cells.) It is easier to tap the pills into the vial cap and drop them into the water with the cap. If your hands are sweaty the clay may immediately expand and allow the ethylene escape before it reaches the water.

Roving Reporter April 2016 cont: 3

5. *Billbergia* and tubular plants like *Q. marmorata* will produce full bloom within 4 to 5 weeks after treatment. *Aechmea* and other bromelioids and *Guzmania* and *Catopsis* will produce full bloom within 3 to 4 months. In your light, *Vriesea* and soft-leaved *Tillandsia* with reservoirs will produce full bloom in 4 to 5 months. They take longer for the bracts to colour up. If you are hoping to bring a *Billbergia* to a show and you see that the inflorescence is coming up too fast, place it where it is cool and shady to slow down the bloom growth. Other plants stay in colour a much longer time so the timing for a show is not a problem. Helicoid *Billbergias* such as *B. decora* keep their bract color for about 2-1/2 weeks after they reach full bloom. As far as my experimenting goes I did have success with a ripe apple in a plastic bag and *Tillandsia marconae*

Adam had brought in a x*Guzvriesea* 'Hapa' which is not common plant so you would think its name would be correct. I first came across x*Guzvriesea* 'Hoppa' in 2004 when I was Registrar and was already at war with BSI trained judges. They just did not acknowledge there was such a thing as a Bromeliad Cultivar Register and here they had awarded 'Best in Show' to an unregistered bigeneric. Luckily the exhibitor was Jason Mellica who I was able to convert to being a registry proponent. The actual hybridist was Herb Hill but it took several years to agree on the 'right' spelling and to register it as 'Happa'. Now for an interesting twist. 'Hapa' is a word used in Hawaii for persons of mixed race. Is it derogatory when applied to plants names? Is it racist to use such a word? But then if called 'Happa' you wriggle out of such argument. Who would be a Bromeliad Registrar?



x*Guzvriesea* 'Hapa' (Photo J. Batty)

I understand there was a discussion as to links between the exhibited plant *Aechmea flavorosea* and *Aechmea nudicaulis* because of the thumbprint between leaf sheath and leaf blade. The botanist will tell you no. You look for similarities or differences in the sex parts (the flower) which goes back to Linnaeus times. This does not mean there was no controversy because



Aechmea flavorosea (Photo J. Batty)

Notes on *Aechmea flavo-rosea* by Elton M.C. Leme in J. Brom. Soc 40(6): 261-2. 1990

Since Edmundo Pereira described *Aechmea flavo-rosea* (in 1979) there has been some discussion about the validity and the maintenance of such an interesting bromeliad in the rank of species. The description was based on a specimen that bloomed in cultivation in Roberto Burle Marx's collection and he does not know the exact place where it was collected.

Being so, we must stress here that the pictures printed in this *Journal* were not taken in the habitat of *Aechmea flavo-rosea*. In fact, they show a vigorous clump from which the type specimen was selected. That clump can still be observed thriving in full sun along the back path of Burle Marx's mansion.

As was reported in the *Journal* (1980), Dr. Lyman B. Smith did not consider the characteristic mentioned by Edmundo Pereira good enough to assure to *Aechmea flavo-rosea* the status of distinct species when compared with its closest relative *A. caesia* E. Morren ex Baker. Concerning the same problem, Harry Luther recently stated that, in his opinion, the Pereira species would be better positioned from the taxonomic viewpoint in an infraspecific category, as a variety or subspecies of *A. caesia*.

Without doubt, before any future conclusion can be reached, it is necessary to accumulate more field data on these two species. With *Aechmea flavo-rosea*, the first step can be represented by a well-documented collection of the specimen shown in figure 8. It was found by Carlos Eduardo de S. Carvalho, a bird watcher, in the County of Santa Maria Madalena, Rio de Janeiro State, growing epiphytically in a humid and forested area about 600 meters high.

Roving Reporter April 2016 cont: 4

In contrast with the white cross-banded leaves of the type plant of *Aechmea flavo-rosea*, the new collection shows entirely dark green leaves forming a funnellform rosette, as well as more intensely colored bracts with visible loss of concentration of white scales; at least the yellow color of the petals remained unchanged, differing from the reddish lilac petals presented by *A. caesia*.

On the basis of this newly collected specimen we can better understand the degree of variation of *Aechmea flavo-rosea* and realize how close it could approach to *A. caesia*. On the other hand, of the two known collections of *A. caesia*, one of them was made in Santa Maria Madalena (or just Madalena) by Mello Filho, showing that both species are sympatric or just a case of misidentification (but not in Dr. Smith's point of view).

Now we know, at least where to start looking for *Aechmea flavo-rosea* in order to obtain other information, besides that presented here, which is not enough for a definitive conclusion, although I earlier agreed with Mr. Luther's suggestion to transform the Pereira species to a subspecies or variety (or even a form) of *A. caesia*.

I must mention Julie's *Tillandsia mauryana* which she had flowered. You may think that a green petalled plant would not be spectacular but you must remember that a Brom grower should always be on the look-out for something different. She had even been doing some studying because she had her plant attached to a rock. It has never been reported up a tree or in a bush in the wild.



Tillandsia mauryana (Photo J. Batty)

Finally, you may not know that Julie was cheating a bit with her flowering *Vriesea heliconioides* because Chris Larson had only brought over one from Victoria for our show. So she did not have much time to kill it. I can put her worries at rest because even Margaret and I can grow the plant here. It comes from hot and steamy country as an epiphyte in rainforest, 100-950 m alt, southern Mexico to Bolivia and western Brazil which does make you think that it would like growing in Adelaide. Mind you when it flowers you scratch your head and say, 'Is it really a *Vriesea*?' To those who read Latin you realise that the species name means like a *Heliconia* and my first reaction was that someone has a vivid imagination but then I saw the shape of the white petals. Keep looking!

Joke of the Quarter

Recently I was bragging on the *Tillandsia* Discussion Group about me flowering *Tillandsia copanensis* which had taken some 20 years to grow to a metre wide and 40 cm high. I had originally imported it from Tropiflora in Florida. This is what the records say

Dr. Juerg Rutschmann (Basel, Switzerland) received *Tillandsia copanensis* from the orchid dealer E. Kamm (Tegucigalpa, Honduras) and it flowered for the first time in 1986 in his collection. The plant is very rare in cultivation.

When flowering, *Tillandsia copanensis* is a striking species with the underside of its leaves silvery white and its spikes densely lepidote.

The flowers are in a tube that is almost black and contrasts with the white scales.

I knew that Chris Larson had flowered his plant a few years earlier. Our very own Ray Clark counter-bragged that his plant had just flowered that he had got a couple of years ago and here was a photo to prove it. With this speedy flowering it must have been living off the fertiliser Chris had given it! As a very observant OAP I noticed that the flowers were dead DEAD and pointed this out. Ray then had the cheek to say that my computer was on slow band because it was in flower when he sent the photo. Even for an OAP I am not that dumb.

April Sales overview



Trophy winners (Photo J. Batty)

Saturday morning was not the usual long queue waiting at the door; however there was a steady stream of people coming through the door for most of the day resulting in very good sales. Sunday was very slow similar to previous events.

The arrangement in the hall was great because it allowed the public to wander around and view at close range if they so desired. The Trophy winners table was a feature and a popular viewing spot.

Space was limited for taking out the tags at the cashiers' area due to the forced change of layout with pool room being no longer available.

Special thank you to those members who helped setting up, during the sales and cleaning up after, your efforts are greatly appreciated especially several new members.

Trophy & Certificate Winners were:

<i>Trophy</i>	<i>plant name</i>	<i>Winner</i>
Tillandsioideae Josie Tonkin Trophy	1 st Tillandsia Tectorum Filiform 2 nd Tillandsia 'Houston' HC. Tillandsia	1 st . Adam Bodzioch 2 nd Ron & Bev Masters HC. Peter Hall
Pitcairniodeae Margaret Reppin Trophy	1 st Dyckia 'Paulsen's Puzzle' 2 nd Dyckia marnier Lapostollei HC Dyckia 'Arizona'	1 ^s Peter Hall 2 nd Julie Batty HC. Julie Batty
Bromelioideae President's Trophy	1 st Aechmea 'Roberto Menescal' 2 nd Quesnelia 'Tim Plowman' HC Billbergia 'Hallelujah x Dominos Martins'	1 st . Adam Bodzioch 2 nd Ron & Bev Masters HC. Peter Hall
Specimen Plants-<u>Multiple plants joined with stem</u> Gummow Trophy	1 st Quesnelia 'Tim Plowman' 2 nd Neoregelia 'Groucho' HC. Dyckia 'Paulsen's Puzzle'	1 st Ron & Bev Masters 2 nd Peter Hall HC. Peter Hall
Vriesea complex Marie Robinson Trophy	1 st Vriesea 'Black Beauty x hieroglyphica' 2 nd Vriesea 'Joyful Charm' HC Vriesea 'Expresso'	1 st Adam Bodzioch 2 nd Adam Bodzioch HC. Julie Batty
George (Gerd) Rudolph Artistic Merit Trophy	1 st . Tillandsia branch 2 nd Hedgehog HC. Tillandsiasorus	1 st Peter Hall 2 nd Ron & Bev Masters HC Peter Hall
Neoregelia Trophy	1 st Neoregelia 'Alcatraz' 2 nd . Neoregelia 'Groucho' HC Neoregelia 'One & Only'	1 st . Adam Bodzioch 2 nd Peter Hall HC. Julie Batty
Jeanne Hall Trophy Miniature Neoregelia	1 st Neoregelia lilliputiana 2 nd Neoregelia 'Hot Embers' HC Neoregelia 'Domino'	1 st . Peter Hall 2 nd Peter Hall HC Julie Batty
BEST IN SHOW EDE SCHAEFER TROPHY	Vriesea 'Black Beauty x hieroglyphica'	Adam Bodzioch
Auntie Margaret & Uncle Derek Encouragement Award	Neoregelia Dr Oesers	Kallam Sharman

Festival of Flowers report

This was the 10th year for this very successful event which is great for networking & promoting our Society. Over 1,000 attended & special thanks to our members who helped in various areas during the weekend in particular Julie, Dave, Trudy, Jeff, Kallam, Bob, Pam, Terry, as a result our Society put in more than our share of effort & support.

At the end, when all moneys are counted and expenses are paid, each group received a tenth of the total money left over. **This year we received \$427.20** as our share slightly less than last year as Bonsia Society joined the event. Our sincere thanks to the Festival of Flowers organisers. *Bev*



Bev, Adam & Peter amongst the Bromeliads
(Photo J. Batty)



Peter & Ron presenting segment on division & potting Bromeliads (Photo J. Batty)

FESTIVAL OF FLOWERS GUIDELINES – 2016

- Just one part of an overall commitment that includes travelling to city, suburban and rural locations and providing presentations during the year.
- Be prepared to provide presentations at the Festival of Flowers events.
- Requirement for setting up on the day before the event commences, packing up and minimum attendance of 5 hours per day
- Be prepared for other duties e.g. raffle , BBQ, morning/afternoon teas, kitchen duties, general cleaning of venue at end of last day

When a vacancy occurs through one of the existing participants' non availability consideration can be given to



substitutions / willing to volunteer.

Roving Reporter May 2016

I do not know if I am imagining things but either I am getting older or members are getting younger. My motto is never trust the name on a plant label but certainly there were new faces around which augurs well for the Society's future.

This was the meeting I was really looking forward to because it was one of those Len Colgan presentations. Yes, Len has been spruiking around Australia with his presentation on the Big Tillandsias of Mexico and we were the lucky last. Before we get on the BIG PRESENTATION, Len did talk about the few plants that had been brought in for display.

Ron Masters again won the Most Popular plant award – his cabinet must be full of them! This time it was *Billbergia* 'Wild Thing' which might describe his younger years but certainly did not look wild. Len likes to guess parentage and suggested 'Hallelujah' was involved. Now Len was a Professor of Mathematics before he retired and knows about 'odds'. If I tell you there are currently 101 hybrids already registered involving 'Hallelujah' the chances of 'Hallelujah's involvement would be quite high!



Billbergia 'Wild Thing'

Tillandsia viridiflora was a talking point if only because it does not look like a *Tillandsia*. But ever since 1888 it had been known as a *Tillandsia*. In the 1950's Lyman Smith considered one of the main differences between *Vriesea* and *Tillandsia* was that *Vriesea* had little appendages at the base of petals. Mind you if any of you have tried to find these with the naked eye you are in for a surprise. In recent years the importance of these appendages has been downgraded. If the *T. viridiflora* had been in flower many would have thought it was a small *Alcantarea* with its white/green floppy petals.

Roving Reporter May 2016 cont: 2

These days phylogenetics is the buzzword amongst Botanists where they study the genetics of plants. *Tillandsia* and related genera are giving lots of headaches with lots of suggestions but no decisions so it pays to stay clear until the dust settles. In our own minds we can say that things look odd! Just a warning about this species, some clones produce normal offsets and some grass-like offsets. Remember if the grass-like offsets are not removed they will die with 'Mother'.



Tillandsia viridiflora



Grass-like offsets.



Normal offsets (3 Photos by J. Batty)

Len seemed impressed with the few 'other' *Tillandsias* (well, ones that looked like *Tillandsias*) brought in. First there were a few *T. fuchsii* which are fairly common because they are easy to grow and are readily available from Gardenworld. To think that when this Society was formed this plant was called *T. argentea* and rare. It was not until 1990 that Walter Till pointed out the *T. argentea* only came from Cuba and Jamaica and the more common one called *T. fuchsii* came from mainland Mexico.

Len was very impressed with the flowering *T. crista-gallii* that Ray Clark had brought in that he had recently bought from Chris Larson already in flower! It was described by Renate Ehlers in 2002 and the following makes interesting reading

Trip report:

On our Mexico trip in 1988 we made a long stop at the pass of Buenos Aires on the route Motozindla to Tapazula. Mr Wulfinghoff from Pforzheim had reported to us a particularly fine undulating form of *T. fuchsii* he had discovered there, which we wanted to find. At the pass, we found a good parking spot on the edge of the soccer field of a small school. We were surprised by the diversity of the *Tillandsias*, which we saw very close on the trees. Except *T. fuchsii* we saw large clumps of a narrow undulating, looking pretty green plant. We thought it was like *T. polita* or *T. rodrigueziana*. But when we saw that the individual plants of the group connected with long stolons, and when we discovered that the leaves are much thinner and greener, we thought that it could perhaps be a new species.

We also had the luck, to discover a wonderfully coloured small plant with velvety leaves, which we had never seen before in Mexico. I remembered that you could buy this plant in Germany under the name *T. brachycaulos* var. *multiflora*, sometimes even in plant markets. But even we had never found this beauty. At home and after prolonged study I have noted that it is a separate species which is by no means a variety of *T. brachycaulos*. I have this plant, which is usually common in Guatemala, later described as *T. velutina*.

The plant with the stolon seemed also to be a good species, but we wanted to examine all aspects more exactly, so we went back to this area the next year. We stayed over-night in Motozindla. There were four hotels in the small town we selected Hotel Victoria in the Zocalo, which had rooms even with a warm water shower. It cost 18,000 Peso (= 7.50 EUR), such prices you can still dream about. And oh miracle, there was a Chinese restaurant, where we had excellent food for little money.

The owner is particularly nice and gives us free the local newspaper. Before the food comes, I occupy myself by reading the newspaper. I could have done better. The paper was full with reports of raids and bandits.

Roving Reporter May 2016 cont: 3

Individual ranches in the area had been raided; cars and trucks on lonely side streets were robbed in an evil way. One report was particularly bad: A truck was broken into by a small band at dawn, to be in time for the start of the market in Motozindla. It was full of coffee workers and women who wanted to buy or sell at the market. The robbers plundered the whole cart, intimidated women were examined even in their most intimate areas, and all objects of value were taken off them.

Quite early in the morning, we drove to the pass of Buenos Aires and it took us a lot of time to explore the area. We went into a small Gorge and explored the opposite slope, but except for a group picture of small *Catopsis* we found only the same plants as on our trip in the previous year.

At the parking lot at the mini school I make herbarium specimens in the open car of *T. velutina* and the narrow leafed plant with stolons. Soon, we are surrounded by children, and Klaus gave them a small special performance in sleight of hand. He had a lot of little magical tricks, and nowhere, had he had so attentive viewers who were really amazed and rejoicing than the children in remote areas of Mexico. This knack comes after some time of being a teacher, and he declared that the plant I was working on should be called cresta de gallo, Cock's comb, as it was known in the area. I answer that that is a really true and what better name could you have for the flowering state as it really describes the general shape.

I notice that I have sunburn on my face, and eyes full of tears from the strong wind. So it is time that we drive off. The children wave goodbye. After some time, we see a signpost on a foot path: Bremen. Klaus is fascinated and says we must necessarily go this way (we have a cousin in Bremen, who has a coffee shop!). In Chiapas, there are so many coffee farms, operated by Germans. Klaus takes charge and we drive in the direction of Bremen. It is already afternoon, we have no idea how far it is to Bremen and whether it really is German, and whether there is accommodation. The sandy trail is getting worse; it is often a defile with high edges on both sides. I am thinking of the reports in the newspaper and I am sure that there was no strategically better opportunity for a bandit in such a place. As we travelled two hours and still no farm in sight, I'm forever nervous and want to necessarily reverse, Klaus however is to continue and there is the first argument on the trip. Finally I got through and we turn back. When we're back in civilisation, he thinks, "See, nothing happened!"

In the meantime, I was once again on the 13. 3. 1998 with Jurgen Lautner at the Paso Buenos Aires and have the plant number EM 981003. As we discovered at the Pass, we had perhaps not enough petrol in the tank for a trip to El Porvenir, Jurgen reversed again, to fill up in Motozindla. In the meantime the rest of us have a pleasant walk along the road. It's amazing how much more you can see, if you are walking! Directly on the trees next to the main road grew *T. crista-gallii* also terrestrially with many colorful *T. guatemalensis* and *T. lampropoda*. It's amazing that this new plant was not discovered already much earlier by any botanist who came this way.

-Well, after so much time has passed, the plant is to be finally published. They grow and thrive in my collection. After flowering they willingly produce many offsets and I have quite a few Tillandsia friends who will be happy. You may notice the difference in spelling because Len and I got plants with the old Spanish name of 'Cresto de Gallo' whereas it was published with a Latin name. If this is not confusing enough let us ponder a while as to why the locals gave it a Spanish name. If it had some real significance like 'good food' or used in rituals it would have had a local name. So don't complain if you have this plant and do not know how to spell it!!

Finally there was a flowering *T. milagrensis* that I had brought in having got it from Chris Larson some years ago. It too has a story which follows

Subject: FW: *T. milagrensis*

Date: Fri, 11 May 2012

Hi all,

This is an unusual species.

It was first mentioned on pages 120-121 in 1993 in the book "Bromeliads in the Brazilian wilderness", by Leme and Maurigo. I suspect many people on this list have the book, but others do not. Anyway, the plant seems to have been discovered in the same year that the book was published, in a dryish area of Bahia, and was "one of the most recent acquisitions of science".

Also, it said *Tillandsia milagrensis* "is an atmospheric and probably evolved after the local isolation of populations of *T. tenuifolia*, which is widely distributed throughout South America."

However, no precise details were provided of the location, and bromeliad collectors couldn't find it for many years. There are many places called Milagres in Brazil, with some of them being in Bahia. In the accompanying picture in the book, on the left edge, there is part of a cactus. German cactus collectors, prevalent in Brazil, were contacted regarding a habitat of that particular cactus species near a place named Milagres. Needless to say, that provided the link, and Lydia Koehres made sure someone collected *T. milagrensis* once it was confirmed. I acquired the two pictured plants just after they arrived in Germany.

The current leaf stem of the plant in flower is 30cm, but I did snap off about 15cm where the old leaves had died. It is very dry, like a stiff elongated *T. tectorum*. I had been waiting more than two weeks for flowers to pop out until this morning when I examined the inflorescence more closely. Inside the lowest three pink floral bracts are white flowers. They were not obvious without the close inspection.

I know that Peter T. has also flowered this plant, and possibly others. But, to me, it is remarkable if this really has evolved from a form of *T. tenuifolia*, even over millenia. Yes, it is growing, probably on the ground, in a dry area. But the leaf stem would have been 45cm, hardly like *T. tenuifolia*.

I wonder how well it will offset, and how?

Regards, Len.

From: "Peter Tristram"

Subject: FW: T. milagrensis

Date: Fri, 11 May 2012 13:17:22 +1000

Hi Len

I am impressed you have flowered it in SA, Len. I was certainly a very happy collector when I first got a plant in Germany in 2006. Not only German cactus collectors collected it, but also Pedro Nahoum (He might have been the first!), who gave me a few forms from silver to almost green foliage when I visited him in 2007, but, alas, they are now adorning Brunos garden somewhere! He told me of the dangers of climbing those granitic inselbergs as I am sure it was where this Till grows that he fell some distance and broke his leg/ankle a quick return trip! I did get the silver form from Lydia and Dennis C and the bract colour varies from bright to pale pink, so more than 1 clone. The flowers will poke out a bit as in the attached pic, but are a different shape to those of *tenuifolia*. The good news is it pups well, but slowly. It did self-pollinate but the seed is all around my greenhouse.

Cheers, Pedro

Back to the presentation

As usual Len had done much investigation based on the field work of the late Juergen Lautner and had dedicated this presentation to him. Many of you will not have heard of Juergen but when I say he was often a traveller to the wilds of Mexico with Renate Ehlers you will begin to understand. He was different because he liked BIG Tillandsias and Len had lots of photos to show how big they can be. We know that Mexico is known for Tillandsias and that Tillandsias grow on trees and the Mexicans are tearing down trees to replace with agriculture to feed the ever increasing population. Tillandsias also grow on rocks and these cannot be converted to pastoral fields. In Australia we think of Uluru when large rocks are mentioned and from what Len showed there are lots of LARGE rocks in Mexico and craggy too. So you should be able to envisage the fluffy Tillandsia seed getting blown into crevices and with the right sort of climate and not in the full sun such seed would germinate and grow.

For a moment let us imagine that a few thousand years ago if such seed had fallen on bushes, plants would only survive if they stayed small. But lack of size would not be a constraint if the plant were in a rocky place and size could well help you survive. Mind you, size could be a problem and the strategy of producing offsets would mean falling off the cliff. So they have evolved by reproducing by seed. Many are what we could call monocarpic (Could even be a Hapaxanth!) where the plant flowers, sets seed and then dies. Needless to say in order to survive it produces thousands of seed. But such are the survival strategies it has already produced grass-like offsets at the base. See photos of 'normal' offset and grass-like offsets. As Len said these are as 'fast' growing as seedlings but they seem to have a purpose.

Roving Reporter May 2016 cont: 5

We have found in cultivation that if they are left on the plant and the plant flowers then all die. However, in the wild it would seem that if the inflorescence is destroyed before flowering one of the grass-like offsets will grow faster by using what nutrient it can get from a dying 'Mother' to eventually replace her.

Anyway we saw lots of photos of rugged cliffs and with the aid of telephoto lens saw huge flowering tillandsias. I hope many stay there even with climate change and I am reminded of the rules that the BSI suggests should be followed.

“ C. Responsibilities in the field:

1. Never jeopardize natural populations. Collect only a small percentage of the plants present. If the site shows signs of previous heavy collections, or other signs of damage, seek another locality.
2. When possible, collect seeds or offsets rather than entire plants. When collecting whole plants, choose small ones and leave the large ones for seed production.
3. Make careful field notes. Include precise locality elevation, host plants or rock (if epiphytic), plant associations, date, and your field number. If possible, assess population density and range. Take photographs of the habitat.
4. Make herbarium specimens whenever possible, especially when collecting in remote locations or when you find something unusual (it is not necessary to know the identity of your specimens). Collect at least two specimens: one for the national herbarium of the host country (often this is a condition for obtaining a collecting permit), and one for the M.B. Foster Bromeliad Identification Center at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens.
5. Do not collect more plants than you can care for, either during the field trip or when you return home. Do not collect plants that you will not be able to grow under the conditions you can provide for them (e.g do not collect in a cloud forest if you cannot cool your growing facility. If you encounter a population or species which appears to be endangered or if you come across information regarding its possible preservation or destruction, please report it to the Conservation Committee chairperson.”

Large Tillandsia plants are not suitable for the hobbyist because of space and the time it takes to flower and what better way to see them in their magnificence, au naturale, is by photograph. In pondering the survival of plants I think that they have been evolving for millions of years whereas survival of the human race is dodgier with its population explosion!

Again with patience, worth waiting for.

Obtained in April 2012 and first flowered in April 2016. As usual the plant has been hanging on the side of a pot of native orchids, generally facing in a north easterly direction, getting dappled sunshine all day and open to all the elements. It has never been fertilised. Very happy with the outcome.

Geoff Edwards



Tillandsia. tenuifolia 'Emerald Forest'(Photo G.Edwards)

'Our rock garden'



Another flowering in rock garden (Photo G.Edwards)

In another article I identified our rock garden which was open to all of the elements, got lots of tatty leaves with sunburn; however produced lots of flowers, lovely leaf markings etc.

This is another flowering in March 2016

Geoff Edwards

The Bromeliad Society of South Australia Show & Sales guidelines- 2016

- Show Marshall appointed –in charge of all aspects of the show
- QUALITY show plants for show - minimum of 5-6 QUALITY plants
- HELP - If possible be available for setting up the venue.
- Should be available to pack up and clean the venue at closing of last day.
- No of Display plants to be noted on a Register.
- Display plants are to remain on display until closing time
- 25 plants for members initially on the sales tables.
- Must be present for minimum of 4 hours each day to aid the buying public.
- Sale plants shall be in good condition- NO damage and presented in clean pots.
- Be free of water.
- Plants should be the quality you would purchase if you were buying
- Plants shall be ‘rooted’ and stable in pots or marked with date of potting. Bare rooted plants to be labelled accordingly.
- All sellers to take home cloths to wash.
- Pups must be (ready to pot up and grow, some semblance of roots)
Plants will be removed from tables if they do not meet the quality criteria.
Packing up etc must not start until advertised closing time



Roving Reporter June 2016

Trophies awarded from our Show were handed out. I felt you just had to see a well-known pair from our engine room. A Society without an engine room is destined to failure!

Bev & Ron with ‘Gummow’ Trophy
(Photo I. Cook)

Meeting was scheduled to be on plant husbandry but the report will be more on hearsay because I just whizzed in and whizzed out because I could not leave Margaret too long at home on her own. I just had time to drop off a few plants and a quick word with just a few. What Julie and I had arranged was for Ian Cook (Cookster to some) to take pictures as a temporary Society camera-person. Wow! I learnt all about the meeting without the chatter because Ian sent me 86 photos! It is a pity we cannot show you the lot because there were some candid camera ones!

Adam again presided over the display plants and of course some attracted my attention more than others. Perhaps ones of special interest came from up-country Whyalla. There is an article in this issue by Glyn Francis on the problems of over fertilizing and here you could see the results in the flesh – so to speak. I am known as one who stays away from fertilising as much as I am able. I know that Bromeliaceae evolved to grow in the hardest conditions including growing on trees. I have no idea what caused them to do this but it means they can survive on the smallest amount of food. Almost the smell of an oily rag. I am always chiding Herb Plever in New York with his weekly watering his plants in the bath including feed. As I say, what happens when he pulls out the plug.

Roving Reporter June 2016 cont: 2

All must eventually get to the Hudson river! A similar situation occurs in Queensland where the coral eventually gets stomach ache from the Cane farmers.

Sporting/mutation is always in the mind of the Bromeliad grower because every now and again you will get an offset or seedling that is different to the mother plant. Invariably this comes in the form of variegation but it can disappear just as quickly as it came. It happens in the wild but when it happens in cultivation this oddity is selected for the future but is never really what I call stable. One photo that took my eye was *Vriesea* 'Bianca' which looked like the common or garden type of *Vriesea fosteriana*.

The Bromeliad Cultivar Register just says large areas of white in the leaves. I well remember being at Maurice Kellett's in Melbourne some 30 years ago. Maurice was growing *V. fosteriana* from seed and there was this one small plant that was almost white. There was a lot of grovelling but this plant made it to Adelaide. You certainly could not blame fertiliser but the plant slowly went green. Now the poser is? Should you still call the plant 'Bianca' when it isn't white?

Lots of plants make their way to Bill's place in Bute and many get lost there. Sometimes Bill rings up and says he is flowering an oddity and can I remember the name. We have had some beauties like *Aechmea perforata* with its large white tennis ball inflorescence with blue flowers sticking out like cloves. Now that is easy to remember. The latest problem was a bit harder and seemed to relate to the days when Keith Bradtberg grew seed from the BSI seed bank. I think we were the only ones who ever queried the name on the packet. The following was in 'Auntie Margaret says' in fcbs website and shows how long ago it was.

Aechmea 'Que Sera'

Seed was offered in the BSI Seed Fund in Nov. and Dec. 1990 as *Aechmea serrata*. Keith Bradtberg grew the seed and showed me the sole surviving plant to identify because he knew it was not *Aechmea serrata*. Is it a species which both Uncle Derek and myself cannot identify or is it a hybrid of some sort? The only thing it has in common with *Aechmea serrata* is the colour of the petals! If it were a hybrid we could not even guess its other parent.

If you have seen this plant before and know its name please let us know. In the meantime we'll call it 'Que Sera' from the song from the Doris Day era and which we are led to believe means "Whatever will be!"

Auntie Margaret



Aechmea 'Que Sera'
(Photo I. Cook)

In 2007 we were again confronted with a bucketful of plants with one flowering. It also had *A serrata* on the label and was seed raised but we were not certain of the seed source but had strong suspicions that it had strong links to the 1990 fiasco. Could it be seed from 'Que Sera' in an attempt to find out its parentage? It took something like *A serrata* or *A smithiorum*. For want of a name we called it 'Que Sera Superior'. There are strong suspicions that Bill got his plant from that bucketful in 2007 and it lay dormant for the last 9 years. As an aside you may come across an *A. serrata* which is really an *A. smithiorum*. Ross Little tells me he still comes across *A smithiorum* with the wrong label. It has an impressive inflorescence but takes ages to flower. I am sure Bill will eventually have offsets but if you are after one you will need to be young.

The workshop went off well if the photos are anything to go by. At least Adam and Ron (with his regulatory mask and gloves) performed and members must have learned something. I do know that Margaret felt her clump of *Neoregelia* 'Chiquita Linda' was a bit unruly and that Ron would have great fun cutting it to bits. What I did find out via the candid camera-man was that Ron even let members borrow his secateurs. For the enquiring minds N. 'Chiquita Linda' was named after Linda Cathcart from Tropiflora and was (lilliputiana x 'Fireball') Whether it was the original Skotak hybrid or the Aussie remake I do not know.



A member helping Ron with N. 'Chiquita Linda'
(Photo I. Cook)

Extreme effects of an overdose with sulphate of potassium- By Glyn L. Francis

We have been keen gardeners most of our lives and although my main hobby had been mineral collecting for over 50 years, approaching early retirement I needed another hobby. My wife started growing orchids and I soon followed her, but I needed a challenge, so tried tropical orchids in a cool glasshouse followed by growing Australian native dendrobiums. A friend showed me how to make crosses, gather the seed and sowing Agar in my home made flasking cabinet. This was fun, replanting them into thumb pots.

I could get most to flower within 2 years, pick out the best to keep and donate the rest to the orchid club. However, the novelty wore off and some 10 years ago was given my first brom, even though we found out later we had been growing several, but did not know what they were. So then the collecting bug took over and we have collected them from all over the country, but of course Bill Treloar at Bute certainly contributed the most and introduced us to the Brom Club.

Getting back to the heading, the first Brom I was given was a commercial hybrid, plain green leaves which go grey in bright light, no prickles and looks like a fasciata in flower but bracts are red and flowers a light brown. The nearest I could find was A. Starbrite, I also have an orange bract one. These plants grow into a large plant, throw out plenty of pups but would not flower. After they reach maturity they stop growing and slowly start losing their old leaves, the pups are still healthy. I have a number of these plants and grow them in different light levels to no avail.

In desperation after feeding potassium to the fruit trees I threw a small amount into one of the pots where the plant was going backward. Some months later a flower head appeared, however the head was made up of 4 centres, joined together on one stem. This looked like the answer to get them flowering so the next plant to start dying also had a dose, but alas, I did not measure it. This plant then threw new narrow distorted leaves for some 6 months before a flower head appeared, but this one had 5 main stems from the centre of the plant with 2 which also branched, creating 7 flower heads.

After flowering the first plant threw 4 pups which appear normal.

After joining the Brom society I decided to change some of my mixes and fertilizer. I had several Vriesea and others which I found slow at flowering, so changed from 6 month slow release 15/2/12 to 3 month 13/2/15 plus a small amount of Seamungus in the mix.

I am still not sure what caused the effect but 3 of the 4 plants of Vriesea No1 flowered with a strong main stem, but then threw up to 6 small spikes from the lower leaf bases. These did eventually put up several normal pups. A Vriesea Margot also flowered with multiple spikes.

So all of this I blamed on higher potassium, however, I also had a tillandsia jucunda hybrid put up two extra flower spikes from the lower leaf axils. (Perhaps its something in the air from OneSteel?)



Original Aechmea Starbrite, commercial flowered.



With part of 7 head & 5 stems and smaller twisted leaves
(Photo's G. Francis)

Dates for your diary



- ✓ Royal Show 2/9/2016 -11/9/2016
- ✓ Adelaide Gardening & outdoor living 7/10/2016-9/10/2016
- ✓ S.A. Geranium & Pelargonium Society Spring show 15/10/2016-16/10/2016
- ✓ South Australian Begonia Society Spring show 22/10/2016
- ✓ Bromeliad Society of South Australia 22/10/2016-23/10/2016

Do you have any tips, successes or challenges to share with your fellow bromaholics??? Please let us know.