



CALOOSAHATCHEE  
BROMELIAD  
SOCIETYs  
CALOOSAHATCHEE  
MERISTEM

3836 Hidden Acres Circle N  
North Fort Myers FL 33903  
(239) 997-2237

DrLarry@COMCAST.NET

*August 2009*



# CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OFFICERS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**PRESIDENT** Donna Schneider (sgarydonna@aol.com)  
**VICE-PRESIDENT** Ross Griffith  
**SECRETARY** Luli Westra (lulidave@yahoo.com)  
**TREASURER** Betty Ann Prevatt (bprevattpcc@aol.com)  
**PAST-PRESIDENT** Steve Hoppin (steveandlarry@comcast.net)

## STANDING COMMITTEES CHAIRPERSONS

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR** Larry Giroux (DrLarry@comcast.net)  
**FALL SALES CHAIR** Brian Weber (BrianWeber1b@aol.com)  
**FALL SHOW CHAIR** Steve Hoppin (steveandlarry@comcast.net)  
**FALL SHOW Co-CHAIR** Betty Ann Prevatt (bprevattpcc@aol.com)  
**PROGRAM CHAIRPERSON** Bruce McAlpin (863)  
**WORKSHOP CHAIRPERSON** Steve Hoppin (steveandlarry@comcast.net)  
**SPECIAL PROJECTS** Gail Daneman (bob@fesq.net)  
**CBS FCBS Rep.** Vicki Chirnside (vickychirn@aol.com)  
**CBS FCBS Rep.** Debbie Booker/Tom Foley (tefolcy24@gmail.com)

## OTHER COMMITTEES

**AUDIO/VISUAL SETUP** Bob Lura, Terri Lazar and Vicki Chirnside  
**DOOR PRIZE** Terri Lazar (terriLML@earthlink.net)  
**HOSPITALITY** Mary McKenzie; Sue Gordon  
**SPECIAL HOSPITALITY** Betsy Burdette (betsy@burdetteinc.com)  
**RAFFLE TICKETS** Greeter/Membership table volunteers - Dolly Dalton, Eleanor Kinzie, etc.  
**RAFFLE COMMENTARY** Larry Giroux  
**GREETERS/ATTENDENCE** Betty Ann Prevatt, Dolly Dalton (dollyd@comcast.net), Luli Westra  
**SHOW & TELL** Dale Kammerlohr (dzdase@mbrqmail.com)  
**FM-LEE GARDEN COUNCIL** Mary McKenzie  
**LIBRARIAN** Sue Gordon  
**ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN** Kay Janssen

The opinions expressed in the Meristem are those of the authors. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor or the official policy of CBS. Permission to reprint is granted with acknowledgement. Original art work remains the property of the artist and special permission may be needed for reproduction.

The inflorescence of *Aechmea fasciata* has been one of the best selling points for buying and growing bromeliads for most of the 19th and 20th centuries. Our front cover shows the exquisite appearance of a fresh “bloom”. Even when the flowers wilt, the bracts keep the inflorescence eye-appealing for many months. On the back cover is one way of displaying a clump of this epiphytic bromeliad to full advantage, mounted in a tree. Don’t miss the article about *Ae. fasciata* in this issue. Photos by Larry Giroux.



# THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY

MEETING TIME AND PLACE:

**August Meeting Sunday August 16th 2009**

ST. JOHN the APOSTLE CHURCH 3049 MCGREGOR Ave. FT. MYERS.

DOORS WILL BE OPEN AT 12:30 FOR SETUP.

**MEMBERSHIP SALES WILL BE PERMITTED**

**at the August Meeting.**

Friendship plants, Raffle items are always welcome.

There will be a Door Prize and Show and Tell

## **August Program**

**“Working with the Terrestrial Bromeliads”**

**By Rick Richtmyer**

Our speaker this month comes from the Houston, Texas area (which by the way has many of the same growing conditions we have here) and has been involved with all aspects of bromeliads for decades. Both Steve Hoppin and I have been privileged to visit Rick's and his wife Carole's home on several occasions and have been awed by the vast collection of bromeliads, especially terrestrials they have amassed. Earlier in the year Rick gave a similar program to the Austin Bromeliad Society where it was well received. You will not want to miss this program about growing bromeliad terrestrials by our special guest speaker.

**August Workshop** (starts at 1:15PM)

**“Cryptanthus Culture”**

**By Carole Richtmyer & Steve Hoppin**

With the Richtmyers coming to town, we were not going to lose the opportunity to have Carole, one of the foremost experts on the growing and hybridizing of cryptanthus, to educate us about this genera. Along with our own Steve Hoppin, who has emerged as an outstanding exotic plant grower, especially of cryptanthus, Carole will co-present this workshop. This demonstration will include all the cultural details for growing spectacular cryptanthus for your home and exhibition.

The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society is an active Affililate of:



FM-LCGC



Cryptanthus  
Society



Bromeliad Society  
International



FCBS

## Society News

### Bus Trip to the FCBS Extravaganza

Due to the persistence of Gail Daneman, our Special Projects Chair, we now have a bus company we can work with, a smaller sized bus and a cost more attractive to more of our members. At the July meeting there was a great renewed show of interest for the one day bus trip to attend the activities of the FCBS Extravaganza on November 14th, 2009. Let's fill up the bus; please confirm your reservation and contact Donna Schneider at 239-283-4874 or [sgarydonna@aol.com](mailto:sgarydonna@aol.com).

### The July Program



Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society member, Dr. Terrie Bert returned in July to the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society to continue her program series on the uncommonly cultivated bromeliad genera beginning with the letters D, E, F and G.

With the style and enthusiasm we have come to expect from Terrie, she introduced this time us to plants of the genera we are much less familiar with. She showed us how we can now include them into our landscape and home gardens and the proper way to care for them.

Many thanks to Terrie for her informative program. We will be awaiting more programs of the "bromeliad genera alphabet" from her in the future.

### The July Workshop

Many hobbyists, myself included felt we were in a foreign country when we were around more experienced bromeliad growers when they were speaking about the characteristics and names of the plants. Betty Ann Prevatt gave us a brief course on how to communicate in the "bromeliad language".

It is an acquired talent and becomes much easier the more you become familiar with your plants and their names. Fortunately a lot of names, especially those of species, are descriptive or associated with a person. In the mean time, to help yourself along, consider purchasing "A Bromeliad Glossary". These are available from the BSI's Book Store.

Thank you Betty Ann for providing us with a better understanding of our plants and their names.

### Welcome to New Members

**Bob & Diane Nicastro**  
3826 Hidden Acres Circle N  
No. Fort Myers, FL 33903  
[drnicastro@msn.com](mailto:drnicastro@msn.com) xxx-xxx-xxxx

**Julie Driscoll**  
1711 SE 8th St. Cape Coral, FL 33990  
xxx-xxx-xxxx  
[cocopalmgirl@gmail.com](mailto:cocopalmgirl@gmail.com)

**Catherine Peterson**  
3606 Bonaire Ct. Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
xxx-xxx-xxxx  
[cpeters3606@yahoo.com](mailto:cpeters3606@yahoo.com)

## The August Speaker

Rick Richtmyer joined the Bromeliad Society/Houston along with wife Carole in 1981 when he first became interested in bromeliads, then was transferred to Dallas in 1982 where his interest in bromeliads continued and grew. Rick served the Greater Dallas-Ft. Worth Society as President, Vice-President and Show Chairman during his years there.

Since moving back to Houston in 1996, he has served the Bromeliad Society/Houston as a Director, President and Vice President, as Judges and Classification Chairman for numerous BS/H shows and is the current "Show and Tell" Chairman. He is an International Accredited Master Judge and Judging School Instructor, has served on the BSI Board of Directors, and acted as Judges Co-Chairman, along with Carole, at the 1996 World Bromeliad Conference, and General Show Chairman for the 1998 WBC. Rick has given many programs on his favorite "mean, green" bromeliads.

## Editor's Edict by Larry Giroux

The Bromeliad Identification Center (BIC) has recently celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> year anniversary serving the international community of bromeliad horticulturists. Harry Luther has been its Director since its inception in 1988 at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. Most of us know him from his multiple publications and programs, which he has given to plant societies including our own Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society, World Bromeliad Conferences and at other events. During these three decades the Bromeliad Society International (BSI) has assisted in the funding of the BIC by paying the portion of the cost not covered by the MSBG's operating funds. Additional help has been forthcoming over the years from plant societies, including the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society, from private donations and fees charged for the identification services specifically provided by Harry Luther.

Just like many institutions today, the MSBG is facing decreasing income from its investments and diminished donations from its supporters. This has resulted in the closing of the Orchid Identification Center (OIC) and further staff cuts in personnel and salaries. However, a recent letter from the new CEO, Thomas Butcher assures us that MSBG is facing these financial problems and will maintain its highly respected programs at their current levels. Ideas are being reviewed to hopefully reinstate programs and staff that had to be restricted in the past months. (See this letter in its entirety in the electronic version of the Meristem.)

The following is an article that first appeared in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society, volume 58 (2); 49-96, March - April 2008. In this article, Joyce Brehm, the President of the BSI, explains the relationship of the BSI and the BIC and the workings of the BIC.

## Did You Know?

### Message from the President of the Bromeliad Society International Joyce Brehm

The Bromeliad Society International, Inc. sponsors many programs that support the interests of all members of the Society. We sponsor the Mulford B. Foster Bromeliad Identification Center (BIC) housed at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, where Harry Luther is the Director. Marie Selby has one of

the largest collections of living Bromeliad species and herbarium collection of bromeliads as well. It is the responsibility of the BSI to cover the overage costs for this service. The majority of this funding comes from the Rare Plant Auction. This event held is every two years during the World Conference. During the in-between years we are helped by donations from Affiliated Societies and personal donations.

Any BSI Member can have a species bromeliad identified for a mere US five dollars (\$5.00 US). Since it is almost impossible to identify hybrids this service is best for true species, however if you truly don't know if you have a species or a hybrid, the \$5.00 may give you that information, although you probably will not learn much about its ancestry.

The best way to accomplish this is to include a whole plant and its bloom wrapped in paper along with your \$5.00 per plant for which you are requesting identification and send to Harry E. Luther, Director BIC, Marie Selby Botanic Gardens, 811 Palm Ave, Sarasota, FL 34236, USA. This specimen may be fresh plant or herbarium prepared specimens. Check with Mr. Luther if you are unfamiliar with the preparation of herbarium specimens. This information is also provided on the Marie Selby Botanical Garden website: [selby.org](http://selby.org) under Research.

While this is easiest for United States residents, pressed, dried plants (herbarium specimens) can be sent through the mail (from anywhere) if the specimens do not contain any soil or disease, including mildew, along with a phytosanitary certificate. Therefore it is very important that any specimen be correctly prepared.

Mr. Luther will attempt to identify digital images of your blooming plant. This will take more time and may not be successful; however the fee is the same and should be sent by mail to him at the above address.

Whether or not the identification is successful, the fee is not refundable and plant material will be incorporated into the Selby herbarium and will not be returned. This helps to pay for the time Mr. Luther took trying to do the identification.

This service is available to the general public (non members of the BSI) for a fee of \$50.00. Special considerations apply to botanic gardens, museums, and universities. Contact Mr. Luther for details.

The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society plans to continue its support of the excellent work of Harry Luther and the staff of the MSBG in maintaining the extraordinary exotic plant collections at the gardens. The CBS Board of Directors encourages all bromeliad enthusiasts that have had even a slight association with MSBG or the BIC to show your support with letters to the new CEO, their Board of Directors and Harry Luther. Monetary donations are always greatly appreciated and submissions of bromeliad plant materials and photographs for identification along with the appropriate fees, which help provide funding, will continue to be accepted, reviewed and answered by the BIC.

Tom Buchter, CEO  
Marie Selby Botanical Gardens  
811 South Palm Avenue, Sarasota, Florida 34236  
Work Phone: 941.366.5731, Extension 226  
Cell Phone: 941.812.2713

Short bio: Thomas Buchter is the Chief Executive Officer of Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and a resident of Sarasota. He has more than 30 years of botanical garden experience.

## **Guest Column**

### **By Thomas Buchter**

Due to recently publicity, some people may be asking, “What’s going on at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens?” As the new CEO of the Gardens, it is my duty to answer that question.

I want to assure everyone that we will remain the botanical jewel you have grown to love in Sarasota County. We are eternally grateful for our passionate and faithful supporters. Our recent budget actions are designed to help us reach long-term financial strength. Simply put, we are in the same boat as businesses and organizations across the nation, trying to deal with a struggling economy. Both tourism and private contributions are down, so expenses exceed our income. Something had to be done.

Our staff and board spent months poring over every agonizing detail of our budget. During the process, we were determined to remain true to our mission and the legacy of Marie Selby, which is to further understand and appreciate plant life, with emphasis on epiphytes, and to provide enjoyment to all who visit the Gardens.

We have taken numerous steps to lower our operating costs, which should reduce debt and minimize the need for further staff cutbacks. We also reduced salary expenses for remaining staff and we are currently pursuing a Director of Development to increase income. This position will pay for itself through an aggressive fund-raising effort.

The most painful decision was to cut two positions in the Orchid Identification Center, a popular function among volunteers and supporters. Fortunately, these same supporters and our staff are actively pursuing other means of support so we can hopefully restore the cuts. In the meantime, the Center for Tropical Plant Science and Conservation will continue to curate and improve all of its physical assets.

In addition, the center will continue to build on the Gardens' 35 years of important botanical inventory, classification, and conservation projects. Immediately upon restoration of funding, the services that have been temporarily discontinued will resume. Several grant proposals have been submitted in the past six months or are being prepared for submission. The proposals aim to enhance research and collection activities at the Gardens, and if successful, will provide funding for the digitization of the Identification Center files, the construction of a basic plant molecular laboratory, a molecular-based study of gesneriads, three more years of funding for rare plant conservation work in Everglades National Park, and the implementation of a database and web portal for our collection information and images. Significant annual funding from the Bromeliad Society International and The Gesneriad Society supports ongoing projects.

Plant Collections staff will continue to maintain and grow our herbarium and liquid-preserved collections, which form the backbone of botanical research at Selby Gardens. Our Plant Records staff will continue its work of documenting and tracking the living collection.

Field work will continue with rare plant conservation efforts in Everglades National Park and Miami-Dade County, and we will continue botanical inventories of Sarasota County's environmentally sensitive lands. We will continue to collaborate on several international inventory and classification projects, particularly in the Neotropics, and we will pursue new opportunities to help promote biodiversity conservation. The Bromeliad Identification Center will continue in its present format.

We are optimistic about the future. But during these difficult times, we will reach out to the community for both understanding and support. You can show that by visiting Selby Gardens, becoming a member, volunteering and making a contribution. We promise, in return, the continuation of programs in research, conservation, education and horticultural display, even while we take necessary steps toward sound financial footing.



## Bromeliad Expose By Larry Giroux

Thank you for the comments from our readers about the photographs that I have included in the Meristem these past 16 years since I have been the Co-Editor and Editor of the CBS Newsletter. And although, Michael Andreas has given the CBS permission to use the vast library of photographs on the FCBS website in its publications, I have tried to use mostly the pictures I have taken. I have tried to use pertinent and colorful pictures on the back and front covers. It has been these, about which I have heard the most comments. Starting with this issue of the Meristem, I will as space allows expand on the information about the bromeliads displayed on the covers. I hope you find these articles informative and interesting.

### The Meristem's Cover Photographs



**A collage of bromeliads featuring *Aechmea fasciata* by the late CBS member Kiti Wenzel.**

*Aechmea fasciata* is probably the most identifiable bromeliad in the world not only by bromeliad growers, but also by the general population who have ever given a bromeliad from a florist as a gift to a relative or friend for a special occasion. Common names given to this plant include “Grecian Urn” and the “Silver Urn” among others. *Aechmea fasciata* has been and remains one of the most sought after bromeliads since its introduction into cultivation over 185 years ago. Many of its attributes makes it the ideal bromeliad for the home, as a potted plant in the house, the patio garden and yards as a planted or hanging plant in semi tropical regions. Its rosette has a beautiful vase like form and its strap-like bright green leaves are barred with wide silvery cross banding. The pyramid shaped inflorescence is a bright eye-catching pink color with

contrasting lavender – blue flower petals. Although the actual flowers bloom out rather quickly, the stiff tufted pink bracts remain appealing for several months.

50 years after its introduction, in 1879 Baker described this plant. It was in 1828 when it was first described by Lindley and given the name *Billbergia fasciata*. During the next 50 years taxonomists included this bromeliad in the genera: *Hohenbergia*, *Quesnelia*, *Aechmea* and *Hoplophytum* before the name Baker gave it stuck. It was in 1934 when the distinction between *Aechmea dealbata* and *Aechmea fasciata* was made by Mez and these two plants were considered different species.

As expected with a plant around for as long as *Aechmea fasciata* has been, several distinctly different varieties have been discovered both in habitat and in cultivation. There are certain plants of this species which have varying



This grouping of *Aechmea fasciata* has been growing in a portion of SW Florida which is prone to several freezes in the high 20's each year. They are grown hard with no added fertilizer and little water during the winter. Nevertheless, the urn shape of each plant is ideal and each year they never fail to give an explosion of color via their inflorescences.

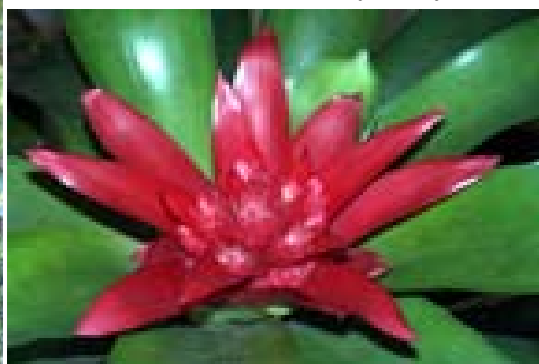
From the beginning of the emerging of the inflorescence until the bract fade out, you are never disappointed with this plant. Here it is at a stage that reminds me of a lotus blossom. This particular plant has been grown in shade, so its rosette is more lax compared to the leaves in the above photo..



An added bonus with some clones of *Ae. fasciata* is the development of extra tufts of bracts within the developing inflorescence; giving a more full appearance to the inflorescence. To the left is *Ae. dealbata*. A *Ae. fasciata* look-alike, it wasn't until 1934 that this was determined to be a separate species.



Above is the albomarginated form of *Aechmea fasciata*. This was discovered in cultivation in the 1960's. The plants pictured here appear to be grown as house plants and may have received diminished light and extra feedings. The inflorescence also appear smaller than in the normal form. Photo by Jack Holmes. To the left, above is a cross of *Ae. fasciata* x *Ae. nudicaulis*. Left, below is another early hybrid of *Ae. chantinii* x *Ae. fasciata* called *Ae.* 'Fascini'. It was from this cross that *Aechmea* 'Friedericke', a spineless aechmea, sported. These three photos are from the JBS V20 (3), V20 (6) and V24 (1). Below is the beautiful bigeneric cross of *Nidularium* 'Francois Spae' and *Ae. fasciata* made by Nat DeLeon. Photos other than mentioned above by Larry Giroux.



***Aechmea fasciata***  
**var. *flavivittata***  
painting by Fossari



***Aechmea fasciata***  
**variegated**



The painting of *Aechmea fasciata* var. *flavivittata* by Domingos Fossari beautifully demonstrates the banding of scurf on the lower portions of the leaves and the creamy white variegation of this plant. (picture courtesy of fcbs.org) The lower photo by Geoff Lawn of Perth Australia, shows the variegated cultivar of *Aechmea fasciata*. To my eye these are the same variety of *Aechmea fasciata*. I would have to get clarification from a taxonomist familiar with these plants, but I suspect that var. *flavivittata* was discovered in its natural habitat, while the variegated form seen here was sported in cultivation.



Aechmea 'Chantata' photo by K Golinski

Two other cultivars of *Ae.fasciata* and *Ae. chantinii*. The first is named 'Chantata', (Photo by Keith Golinski.) and the second is an unnamed plant that showed up on the CBS "Show and Tell" table.



Below are two spineless aechmeas. *Ae. fasciata* 'Morgana' (photo by Herb Plevier) was engineered in Europe for mass commercial sales. The variegated form of *Ae. 'Friedericke'* (photo by Michael Andreas) is seen below, right. As mentioned in the article, 'Friedericke' is a cross of *Ae. fasciata* and *Ae. chantinii* and was one of the first spineless aechmeas available for sale.

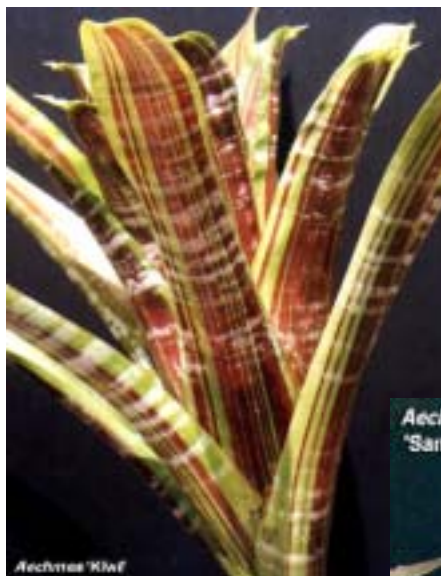


Aechmea 'Friedericke' variegated

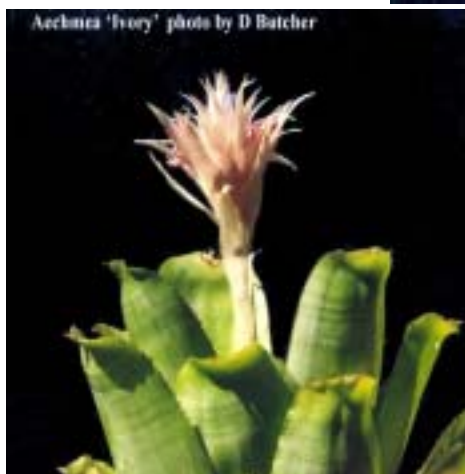
Also mentioned in the article is that there are several varieties of *Aechmea fasciata*, which differ by the amount of scurf on their leaves. To the right is *Ae. fasciata* 'Silver King' whose scurf is very dense and nearly completely covers the leaf surface. Photo by Terry Varney.



Aechmea 'Silver King'



Above and to the left is a New Zealand cultivar called *Ae. fasciata* 'Kiwi' (photos by Derek Butcher). While to the right is a cultivar of the species variety, *Ae. fasciata* var. *purpurea* called *Ae.* 'Sangria' (photo by Wally Berg). Note that 'Kiwi' has vertical red stripes running along the green leaves with scurfy barring, while 'Sangria's' leaves are reddish coloration and have the scurfy barring.



Unlike other cultivars of *Ae. fasciata*, *Ae.* 'Ivory' (photos by Derek Butcher) differs by having more pastel colored primary and floral bracts as well as petals.

degrees of scurf. The classically appearing type has the conspicuous barring, while there are others of this species where the barring pattern is obscured by the overall dense silvery scurf. The Alphabetical List of Bromeliad Binomials updated every two years by Harry E. Luther and the staff of the BIC at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens lists three varieties including var. *purpurea*, var. *flavivittata* and var. *pruinosa*. Other common varieties found in collections include Cv. ‘Variegata’, which has leaves with longitudinal, creamy white stripes and green edges while the Cv. ‘Marginata’ has leaves with creamy white margins with green centers.

Besides the taxonomic varieties and cultivars, there have been numerous hybrids made using other aechmeas as well as plants of other bromeliad genera. One particular cross which used *Aechmea chantinii*, created a plant called *Aechmea* ‘Fascini’. This plant which has characteristics of both of its parents is quite attractive in its own right. However, a cultivar of this plant called *Aechmea* ‘Friedericke’, which is actually a patented plant, has entirely smooth spineless leaf edges, which is a trait extremely unique for an aechmea and has made it a popular plant.

*Aechmea fasciata* is considered easy to grow. I have seen it growing in nearly lightless conditions as well as in full sun. There is a trick to get the proper urn shape of its rosette, keep it from rotting and prevention of scale infestation. In wet locations, grow it using epiphytic conditions, that is, in the ground or in a pot using a very well draining loose media. Otherwise grow this plant mounted to a tree, a rock or other such mount. The most attractive specimens of this plant have usually been grown hard, that is, with bright light, slightly on the dry side and with little fertilizer. The var. *purpurea*, grown under these conditions, seems able to better achieve the beautiful red color that is characteristic of this plant. Scale seems a common problem with this plant, especially when grown in clumps. Good air circulation, hanging a mounted clump and spraying the leaves seem to help. If all else fails use your favorite “scale-icide”, using safe spraying measures for your own protection.

*Aechmea fasciata* and all of its varieties, cultivars and hybrids will continue to remain sought after plants by bromeliad growers for their yards and homes because of these plants’ unique form, colorful and long lasting inflorescences and their ease of growth within a wide range of growing conditions.

#### **References:**

Bromeliads by Jack Kramer. Harper & Row, New York, New York, 1981.

Bromeliads by Victoria Padilla. Crown Publishers, New York, New York, 1973.

The Bromeliad Cultivar Registry by Don Beadle, BSI, 1998.



## **What's Happening on the FCBS Website?**

Those of you who use the “Bromeliad Encyclopedia” on the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies’ web site on a daily basis to keep up with your collection and acquisitions of new bromeliads, have already realized that the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry is no longer available for use on this site.

At the request of the BSI (Bromeliad Society International), the BCR is being moved to the BSI website after 10 years at its current location.

There will still remain a link from the FCBS site to the BSI site for users of the FCBS site to more easily access the BCR. Unfortunately due to technical difficulties, as of the writing of this article, the BCR is not available for viewing at this time at [www.bsi.org](http://www.bsi.org).

At [www.FCBS.org](http://www.FCBS.org), under “What’s New” is a letter from Michael Andreas, the Webmaster explaining changes being made to the FCBS web site at the request of the BSI. Please read this letter to get a better understanding of the situation.

Although discussions about such a transfer of the BCR has been going on for several years, the Board of Directors finally felt that the BSI website has sufficiently matured and was in the hands of an accomplished webmaster to warrant the change at this time.

Many of us are feeling anxious that this change in the content of the FCBS site would dramatically affect our access to information about bromeliads. This is not necessarily the case. It will indeed make a lot less work for Michael Andreas, who has diligently volunteered his time and expertise over the past 10 years to provide a comprehensive and timely update to the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry online for all to use and benefit from. All bromeliad horticulturists world wide owe Michael our sincerest thanks for his outstanding efforts at maintaining the BCR database and associated photographs. This job will now fall on the shoulders of Nick Bethmann, the new BSI Webmaster (he took over from Ken Marks), who has spent the last several months retooling the look and functioning of the BSI’s presence on the internet.

While I’m passing out accolades, we can not forget to be grateful for the work of Derek Butcher, Don Beadle before him and Geoff Lawn the current Bromeliad Cultivar Registrar, which they have done in preparing the listings and sending this information and photographs to Michael for posting on the [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org) these past 10 years. Also thanks to all the volunteers, the FCBS and the BSI who have provided and made it possible to provide such great educational and informative services to the bromeliad world, the whole purpose for having these sites on the internet.

## Minutes of the July 16th, 2009 CBS Meeting

**DATE:** Sunday, July 19, 2009. **LOCATION:** St. John the Apostle Metropolitan Church, Fort Myers, FL **ATTENDANCE:** 39 members and guests. **WORKSHOP:** Betty Ann Prevatt presented her program on “Bromeliad Lingo”, at 1:15. **CALL TO ORDER:** Donna Schneider welcomed our new members, Diane and Bob Nicastro, Julie Driscoll and Catherine Peterson. She reminded members to sign in at the greeters table and pick up your door prize ticket. Also, to bring named, healthy plants for the raffle table. Special thanks to Ross for setting up the meeting rooms, and a plea to the membership to please help take down after the meeting. Also, thanks to David and Geri Prall for continuing to bring landscaping plants for the Friendship Plant area. **MINUTES:** Minutes were approved as printed in the newsletter. **OLD BUSINESS:** Gail Daneman found a less expensive bus to take



members to the Extravaganza on November 14th. It is a smaller bus and would cost each rider \$33.00. Those who are interested should get in touch with Donna.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Deb Booker and Tom Foley can no longer represent our society at the FCBS meetings. Vicky explained the duties of a FCBS representative. One replacement (volunteer), since CBS is entitled to 2 votes at the meetings, is needed to attend the four meetings a year. Vicky asked for old bromeliad catalogues as requested by Michael Kiehl. Bruce McAlpin suggested she ask Bob Alonzo.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Betty Ann announced that the financial report for the first 6-months of 2009 is available at the head table. Bob Alonzo donated two books to our library, Fern Growers Manual and The Bromeliads by Leon Duval. Vicky said the New Orleans Bromeliad Conference to be held July 2010 has asked if anyone would like to donate awards. It was announced that Selby Gardens closed down the Orchid Identification center for lack of funds and is in danger of closing the Bromeliad Identification Center also. They are in critical need of funding, as explained by Terrie Bert. Vicky read an on-line article written by Tom Buehter, CEO of Marie Selby Botanical Gardens on Selby's latest struggle with the economy. Bruce suggested someone compose a letter to Selby's board of our concern over this situation and our ability to help. It was suggested to ask Larry Giroux, who subsequently accepted.

**DOOR PRIZE:** Introduced by Terri Lazar, donated by Ross Griffith, a beautiful Vr. Splendide. **SHOW & TELL:** Conducted by Ross Griffith. **REFRESHMENT BREAK:** Set-up by Mary McKenzie and Sue Gordon. Mary announced that it was Betty Ann's birthday and so was serenaded with "Happy Birthday". And cake! Mary will not be here next month to handle refreshments. Two volunteers stepped up. **PROGRAM:** By Terrie Bert, Diving Even Further into Unusual Bromeliad Genera". In this presentation, she talked about uncommonly cultivated bromeliad genera starting with the letters D, E, F and G. **RAFFLE:** Conducted by Ross, assisted by Dolly Dalton. Boy! Ross was busy this meeting! But he always is. **ADJOURNED:** Donna adjourned the meeting at 4:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Luli Westra, CBS Secretary

## Read the Expanded Newsletter

**I have been asking members who have e-mail, if they can start receiving the Meristem exclusively by e-mail and I have gotten a good response from the membership. I want to remind the members that even if they can not receive the e-mail version mainly because they have dial-up internet service, they can still go to [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org) and read the expanded Meristem directly online. The August issue has additional pictures of bromeliads, letter from the CEO of Selby Gardens, submitted photos and the monthly update of the Clone Preservation program from Alan Herndon. Go to [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org) to view this expanded electronic issue, if you are not already opting to receive it or let me know if you want me to send it to you. Editor**

# The Clone Preservation Project

By Alan Herndon

Greetings,

Attached is the latest request for information. This month, I am concentrating on the *Neoregelia olens* complex. This group differs from those previously investigated because there is reason to believe that there may be more different forms of the plants than there are available names. We need to find as many of the clones in cultivation as possible, so I am proposing that you take photographs of plants in the group where you are unsure of the name. There will, of course, be differences in plant appearance due to differing growing conditions, but we should eventually be able to learn how to recognize those differences.

Due to the robust growth of plants in this group, I do not anticipate finding any rare clones. We may, however, find some clones that are found only in certain regions of the state. If that turns out to be true, we will try to facilitate informal swapping between the regions rather than run the clones through a formal distribution process.

Remember, you can always recheck your collections for the plants previously listed in these updates. And, if you have a strong interest in, and knowledge of, a group of bromeliads, feel free to contribute your own interpretation (especially if it is a group I have treated already, and you have contrary opinions about the proper treatment.)

Until next month \_ I wish you good hunting.

Alan Herndon (Alanherndon@aol.com)

## The *Neoregelia olens* complex

As currently recognized, members of the *Neoregelia olens* complex are easily recognized by their small, stoloniferous growth habit with relatively wide leaves having conspicuous spines. Overlapping leaf sheaths form a more-or-less tubular rosette. The maximum number of leaves is around 20, but blooming plants usually have fewer leaves and plants can bloom with ca. 10 leaves. Leaves frequently have small red dots scattered over the surface. Portions of the inner leaves color up during bloom, forming an orange-red circle around the inflorescence. The sepals are frequently red, while the petals are predominantly a dark violet-blue.

*Neoregelia olens* was introduced to collections in southern Florida around 1978. It was apparently introduced into other areas of the country at the same time, and in a variety of forms. It was available in at least 3 forms in southern Florida. *Neo olens* var *olens* was the largest. *Neo olens* cv. '696' was the smallest and darkest form. *Neo olens* cv. 'Marie' was intermediate in size.

Prior to the introduction of *Neo olens* to North American collections, there were three mentions of the species in the pages of the Journal of the Bromeliad Society. Two of these dealt with the fact that the specific epithet *olens* suggests the plant is fragrant. (In the original description, W. J. Hooker explicitly states that *olens* refers to the odor produced by the decomposing inflorescence.) The third is a picture on the back cover of vol 25, number 3 that is labeled *Neo olens* from the collection of Rolf Rawe. The pictured plant has far longer leaves than other plants currently placed in the *Neo olens* complex.

After the plant was introduced, it was identified by Robert Read as *Neoregelia olens*. Since the early introductions included several different clones, much confusion was generated. This called forth a review of the species in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society 37(4): 167-170. 1986, as well as a reproduction of the original color plate on page 152 of the same issue.

Three other species closely related to the plants we call *Neo olens* have been described. *Neoregelia camorimiana* E. Pereira and I. A. Penna, *Neo. eltoniana* W. Weber and *Neo. indecora* (Mez)L. B. Smith. Plants we grow as *Neo. eltoniana* have distinctly wider leaves, and a different appearance, than other entities in the *olens* complex, but the other two species are not as clearly distinct and could be treated as extreme expressions of a variable *Neo. olens*. In *Neo camorimiana*, there are usually a larger number of leaves on each plant, and the leaves are longer, relatively narrower and stiffer. In *Neo indecora*, there are fewer leaves, the leaves are shorter and relatively wider. More information on the distribution of these forms in the wild would help us decide the proper taxonomic treatment.

*Neo 'fluminensis'* is a trade name for what appears to be a very nice clone of *Neo olens* introduced in the 1990's. The leaves take on a uniform red color when grown hard. When the plants are growing rapidly, a scattering of red spots is evident on the leaves. Karl Green has in his collection a plant of this type collected by Wally Berg. It is labeled *Neo aff. sapiatabensis*. Aside from being at the larger end of the size range and the leaf color, it appears to fit well with the *Neo olens* forms introduced in the 1970's.

There is still clearly no consensus on how to identify the different members of this complex. Harry Luther (in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society 47(4). 1997.) published photos he labeled *Neo indecora* and *Neo cf. eltoniana*. His *Neo cf. eltoniana* looks much more like the plants we grow as *Neo camorimiana* than the plants we grow as *Neo eltoniana*. In the Photo Index on the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies (FCBS) website, the photo by Bromelario Imperialis under *Neo camorimiana* looks more like the plant we grow as *Neo eltoniana*. The photo labeled *Neo indecora* by Derek Butcher has way too many leaves for the plants we grow under that name.

The most important question surrounding the *Neoregelia olens* complex is: how many distinct clones are currently in cultivation? From what I know so far, *Neo olens* cv '696' and *Neo olens* cv 'Marie' are well-defined clones. It also appears that the *Neo camorimiana*, *Neo 'fluminensis'* and *Neo indecora* in this country are each single clones. Many more distinct clones of *Neo olens* that never received names may have been imported during the late 1970's and early 1980's.

What is in your collections? Do you have a single form, several distinct forms, or several plants labeled as distinct species? If you have any plants in the complex that can be traced back to wild-collected plants (regardless of whether you have a name on the plant), please let us know. If you made the identification based on a specific picture on the internet, please let us know what picture your plant most closely matches.

Try sending photos of plants if you are unsure of the name and cannot match it to any of the available pictures.



**Colored pencil drawing of *Neoregelia olens* done by the late Kiti Wenzel probably during the 1980's.**

# Inner City Community Gardens

## Letter to Tom Foley for distribution.

Hello!

The lot has been surveyed and staked as of yesterday. Now, the next step is to hold an informational meeting for all participants and interested parties. This will be on Wednesday, July 29th at 6:30pm at the Cape Coral Library in the meeting room. I apologize if anyone attends church that evening, but it was the ONLY date and time the Library had available.

Applications will be available at the meeting. We are only going to have so many plots available and they will be on a first come, first served basis. We will be measuring the plots this weekend and we will know exactly how many we will have available.

If you do not get to participate in this Pilot Project, please do not get discouraged. This Garden will set the standard for all future gardens and, if all goes well, we will be able to establish gardens throughout the City next year. The object is to have neighborhood gardens so that people do not have to drive to it to participate. I appreciate all of the interest and everyone's willingness to drive to this one this year, but I hope to be able to establish gardens in your neighborhoods so that you can enjoy the convenience and fellowship with your own neighbors. That is our main goal. If you are able, please attend the meeting on the 29th.

I am looking for a place now that will donate rain barrels. If you have a resource, please share it with me. I would also like to have materials donated, but if that doesn't happen, each gardener will have to be responsible for their own soil, plants, mulch, tools, etc. I have sent out letters to Home Depot, Lowes, Walmart, and Target to see if they will contribute anything to this project. I will let you know if they are willing to help our community.

Chad Boyko, City Planner, was able to find a surveyor to survey the lot pro bono. He has been working diligently on the Guidelines and Waiver for us. He has really been helping with this project full force. We are also going to have a sign erected at the lot to let people know what it is, how to contact the Garden, and our donors for this Pilot Project. If anyone is handy at sign making, please let me know. I'm not sure if Chad is working on having the City make one or not, but if not, maybe we can make our own.

Thank you and I hope to see you at the meeting.  
Melonie Busch



**CBS presents at**  
**Terry Park,**  
**Fort Myers.**  
**Judged Standard BSI**  
**Show on Friday,**  
**December 4th 2009**  
**Show and Sale open**  
**to the public**  
**Saturday, Dec 5th**  
**& Sunday, Dec.6th**

## Calendar of Bromeliad Events

### September 25-26, 2009

The International Cryptanthus Show and the Southwest Bromeliad Guild Show is being hosted in Baton Rouge, Louisiana by the Baton Rouge Bromeliad Society. For additional information contact Steve Hoppin at [steveandlarry@comcast.net](mailto:steveandlarry@comcast.net).

### November 13-15, 2009

The FCBS Bromeliad Extravaganza, hosted by the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, will be held at the Renaissance Orlando Hotel Airport in Orlando Florida, Sales, Seminars, Tours, Banquet and Rare Plant Auction. Information to follow.

### December 4-6, 2009

The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society's Show and Sale, Terry Park, Fort Myers, Florida. Judged Show on Friday with Show and Sale open to the public Saturday Dec 5th-9AM-5PM and Sunday 10AM-4PM.

### December 20, 2009

The CBS Holiday Party

### July 26-August 1, 2010

The BSI World Bromeliad Conference - Bromeliads in the Big Easy (Astor Crowne Plaza - New Orleans). "Catch the Fun".

To all of our of our readers

**Join the Bromeliad Society International**

*for less than \$0.80 per week*

**Join the Cryptanthus Society**

*for less than \$0.40 per week*

and as a first time subscriber the CBS will pay for 1/2 of the first year. So for \$0.60 per week you can get 2 great colorful Journals and be part of the bigger picture.

See Betty Ann Prevatt for more information.



**Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society**  
**3836 Hidden Acres Circle N**  
**North Fort Myers, FL 33903**  
**E-mail - DrLarry@comcast.net**



***The August Meeting Speaker is Rick Richtmyer of Houston, Texas. His wife Carole, a renowned cryptanthus expert has agreed to co-present the August Workshop with Steve Hoppin. See inside for details of both the Program and Workshop***