

**FLORIDA COUNCIL  
of  
BROMELIAD SOCIETIES INC.  
Newsletter**

This Newsletter published by Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. & mailed to all paid up members of those Bromeliad Societies of Florida which make up the Council. Non-members may subscribe for \$2.00 per year.

Make checks payable to:

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

Mail to:

Carol Johnson, Editor at cover address

MATERIAL PRINTED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF FLORIDA COUNCIL OF BROMELIAD SOCIETIES AND MAY BE REPRODUCED ONLY IF CREDIT IS GIVEN AND OWNERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGED.

---

---

**VOLUME XIV = ISSUE II**

**MAY 1994**

---

CATCHING UP = STAYING EVEN

MEMBERS of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, Seminole Bromeliad Society and Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society are presently being polled regarding the possibility of the three societies hosting the 1996 World Bromeliad Conference, probably in the Orlando area. If approved, the conference would likely be held in the Fall of 1996. Results of the mail poll should be known at the time of the next Florida Council meeting in July.

The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society held it's annual rare plant auction to help fund the Weevil Fund of the Florida Council at their May meeting and it yielded a whopping \$1,437.00. Congratulations!! The weevil research will probably cost the Florida Council a goodly sum this year, so all donations are extremely welcome. There will be a detailed report in the next Newsletter.

If you are planning to attend the World Bromeliad Conference in San Diego in June and want to carry plants, please acquaint yourself with the laws of California which are very strict regarding the traffic of plants into that state. If you are driving, your plants could be confiscated at the California border if you do not have the proper paperwork. Also, Florida has always been most generous with the donation of plants for the rare plant auction at World Conferences, and hopefully this time will be no different. If you have any questions about the auction, contact Thelma O'Reilly; 10942 Sunray Pl.; La Mesa, Ca. 91941 (619) 670-0830. SEE YOU IN SAN DIEGO!!!

With this issue we welcome back into the Florida Council the members of the Bromeliad Society of Broward County. This Newsletter will now be mailed to all the members of that society, and that brings our mailing list to 722 Florida addresses. There are, of course, many dual and family members, but we mail only one copy to each address.

The next issue, August 1994, will be the annual state roster issue. If your address, phone number, zip or area code has changed, please let me know before August 1.

Expect a special mail-out regarding the Florida Council Annual One Day Extravaganza to be held in Clearwater on September 10, 1994, hosted by Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society. Plan to attend. It is a fun event.

Please see the special item from Betty Ann Prevatt, Judges Registrar for our district, on the Show Page. If you plan to enroll, please tell her--don't keep it secret.

## VARIATIONS AND VARIEGATIONS

Carol Johnson

The subject of variation and/or variegation in bromeliad species has been expounded at great lengths by all the experts, with many different theories being advanced. Visual variations are easily explained. Five pups separated from the mother plant, grown by five different owners, and reunited when mature, can look like five entirely different species. This variation can be caused by many things; differences in light exposure, potting medium, fertilizer, disease, pests, chemical content of water and environment--whether grown in a greenhouse or outdoors. Believe it or not, variations can depend on which side of the mother the pup is taken from, also.

When we grow bromeliads from seed, however, we must remember that each new seedling is the beginning of a new clone. Just as every new baby has its own distinctive fingerprints, each new clone is a separate entity. For example: we get a batch of Aechmea angustifolia seedlings, pot them up and label each one "Ae. angustifolia", but some of the plants grow up skinny tall, and green while others are squatty, red-spotted and very spiny.

Surely all of us who grow bromeliads from seed anxiously look for that one strikingly different plant which will bring us fame and fortune. Variations between clones of the same species are probably determined at the time of pollination, and by something as insignificant as a change in the wind direction, or an ant with dirty feet.

When we come to the subject of variegation (and by variegation we mean "striated", "marginated", or "variegated"), then the fun, the whooping and the hollering begins. I am not a botanist, so I have no pet theories of my own regarding the reasons for variegations in bromeliads. There have been a number of articles on the subject in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society during the past several years. These will be summarized, and then everyone can pick his favorite theory, or remain unconvinced as I am.

David Barry, Jr., writing in the July-August 1972 Journal stirred up considerable controversy by advancing the theory that variegations in bromeliads are the result of a virus infection which attacks and weakens the plants to the point of distorting the cell structure. He stated that, under ideal growing conditions, the variegation would often disappear.

In the same issue, Dr. Leonard Kent, writing on the same subject, suggested that variegations could be caused by any of the following:

1. Adverse weather or adjustment to climatic changes.
2. Injury to the meristem.
3. Starvation; soil too alkaline or lacking in trace elements.
4. Chemical imbalance; chlorophyll starvation.
5. Cell mutation, either by natural accident or by exposure to x-rays.

Also, in the same issue of the Journal, Kathy Dorr vigorously vetoed the idea of a virus, arguing that a virus infection would invade all the surrounding plants and not be confined to an isolated specimen.

W. G. Moir of Honolulu, writing in the March-April 1973 Journal, also vigorously opposed the "virus theory". He maintained that variegated plants are deficient plants which have been perpetuated by their owners because of the variegation (deficiency), in the meantime discarding all-green plants as undesirable, much as flawed coins become collector's items.

After studying all the theories advanced, my conclusion is that the causes of variegation in bromeliads are still unknown and/or unproven. In my opinion, Mr. Moir makes the best case, especially since most variegated plants are slow growing, shy bloomers, and may cast of the variegation when the notion strikes them. Consider these examples: Aechmea caudata variegata, Billbergia pyramidalis striata & Kyoto. My Aechmea caudata variegata regularly sets seed, but the seedlings are all albinos and die as soon as the chlorophyll supplied by the seed is exhausted.

It is interesting to note that the experts tend to accept without question the spots, glyphs, parallel marking, painted fingernails, heiroglyphics, silver barring, and on and on. To sum up, variations in species are caused by pollination or by the hand of man, but variegations are caused by the Almighty; and His children are going mad trying to second-guess Him.

Author's Note: The above article was assigned to and written by me for the August 1978 Bulletin of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida. Nothing much has changed since then except the people. The mystery of variegated plants remains unsolved, but there are a lot more of them in existence today than then, and reprinting the article now increases the number of copies in circulation from one to eight hundred. On the following pages I print my selection of the best and the worst variegated plants now in our collections. Your additions, corrections and protests to my selections are most welcome. I have surely left out some good ones and some bad ones. Let's hear it.

May, 1994

## VARIEGATED PLANTS

### BEST:::::

1. *Guzmania lingulata* major "Superb"
2. *Guzmania lingulata* minor "Ice Cream"
3. *Vriesea Pohlmannii* cv. White Lines
4. *Tillandsia cyanea* variegata
5. *Neoregelia carolinae* Tricolor & all its cousins.
6. *Neoregelia concentrica* albo marginata
7. *Canistrum lindenii* albo-marginata
8. *Aechmea mulfordii* variegata
9. *Billbergia pyramidalis* Kyoto
10. *Aechmea orlandiana* cv. Ensign

### WORST:::::

1. *Neoregelia* fireball variegata
2. *Vriesea* Gunther
3. *Aechmea* caudata variegata (and albo marginata)
4. *Aechmea* Mirlo variegata
5. *Aechmea* chantinii, cv. Samurai
6. *Neoregelia* Amazing Grace
7. *Vriesea* ensiformis variegata
8. *Aechmea* Foster's Favorite Favorite
9. *Aechmea* Compacta variegata
10. *Guzmania* zahnii variegata

Please note that the best of the worst is number 10, while the best of the best is number 1. The worst of the best is number 10 and the worst of the worst is number 1. You follow? Many of the above selections are based on the performance of the second generation.

Please note that the two top selections are both *Guzmanias*. *G. lingulata* major 'Superb' was selected because the plants, in addition to transmitting good variegation to nearly all the offsets, are very robust as well as reliable bloomers. The number two choice is a minor *G. lingulata* and it is a gem, and very popular as a hostess gift or a gift for a shut-in. It's variegation is also stable, and the plants pup profusely. Many variegated plants are the product of wishful thinking. I have an *Aechmea mertensii* seedling which is showing signs of variegation, but I am about the only one who can see it. I demoted Neo. Amazing Grace drastically because of it's tendency to quill and bloom off-center. The old Neo. Peppermint Stick has more reliable variegation.

FLORIDA COUNCIL OF BROMELIAD SOCIETIES, INC.  
Minutes of Business Meeting Held April 9, 1994  
Hosted by the Seminole Bromeliad Society at the  
Seminole Agricultural Center

PRESENT: Representatives from Caloosahatchee (Sam and Hattie Lou Smith), Central Florida (Ed Hall), Florida East Coast (Art Hyland and Ted Nuse), Florida West Coast (Lois Duffey), Imperial Polk (Whit Merrin), Jacksonville (Al Muzzell and Carolyn Schoenau), Seminole (Bud Martin and Charles Tait), South Florida (Nat DeLeon), and Tampa Bay (Judy Patterson and Tom Wolfe), West Pasco (Bob Steiger) and Carol Johnson, Treasurer.

ABSENT: Reps from Sarasota.

GUESTS: Howard Frank, Peggy Nuse, Ronald Schoenau, Walter Stahl and Jeanne Tait.

**1. Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm on April 9, 1994 by President Bob Steiger.

**2. Secretarial report:** The secretarial report was distributed with the meeting Agenda. Art Hyland requested that #11 be deleted from the minutes of the January 9, 1994 meeting. He explained the request was made in error. The motion was made by Art Hyland and seconded by Charles Tait that the minutes of April 9, 1994 be accepted as written and with the deletion as mentioned. Motion was carried without dissent.

**3. Treasurer's report:** Carol distributed the Treasurer's Report and noted that checks had been printed in error resulting in a difference of \$11.58 between Carol's records and the bank. The difference should be corrected prior to the next bank statement. The Weevil Fund had an expenditure of \$101.83 for shade cloth.

**4. Weevil report:** Howard Frank reported that the mosquito bulletin will be available soon at a cost of \$2.50 each. Bob Steiger suggested that he may be able to have some reprinted at no cost to the Council. Should he be able to do this, a copy will be mailed to each Council Rep. During Spring break, Howard toured Broward, Palm Beach and Northern Dade counties for weevils. Broward has been devastated by the weevil; however, there are no signs of the weevil in Madison county. The Rare Plant Council is attempting to have Tillandsia fasciculata and utriculata declared endangered plants. In June, Howard and Al Muzzell plan to search for natural enemies to the weevil in Panama. One reason for choosing Panama is that their permit to collect is less expensive than most other applicable countries. The total cost for the trip will be approximately \$2,942. Depending upon the outcome of the trip, the cost for weevil research during 1994 would be \$5,572 to \$13,214. The results of the Panama trip will be reported at the July Council meeting. At that time it will be determined whether or not additional weevil funds will be needed.

**5. University of Florida Foundation black tie invitation:** The invitation to the Florida Council via Carol Johnson was given to Ron and Carolyn Schoenau.

**6. 1994 Extravaganza:** Lois Duffey distributed some handouts regarding the Extravaganza. The cost will be \$15 or \$16 per person for the dinner. A separate room will be used for the sales and displays; a large outdoor patio is also available. Andy Price is in charge of plant sales; call him for a seller #. There is plenty of room for the sit-down dinner. Set up will be the previous evening. There will be no speaker at the auction; however, speakers and small seminars will be held throughout the day. The site is off I-275 near the St Petersburg/Clearwater Airport on State Road 686 (just off Ulmerton Road).

**7. Judges school:** A letter written by Betty Ann Prevatt concerning the Judges school was distributed. Chuck Tait made the motion to approve the judges school if sufficient numbers of students are interested. Art Hyland seconded and the motion was carried without dissent.

**8. World Conference future sites:** Tom Wolfe reported that Chicago had considered hosting the conference in 1996 but had declined. Caloosahatchee is considering hosting it in either 1997 or 1998 provided a suitable facility is available. Carol Johnson suggested Caracas. Bud Martin said he felt that Central Florida, Florida East Coast and Seminole could co-host the 1996 conference either in Daytona Beach or Orlando.

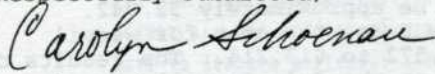
**9. Membership roster:** Bob Steiger will mail out the new membership roster to Council members.

**10. Bromeliad Society of Broward County:** The BSBC has requested to rejoin the Florida Council. Art Hyland made the motion that the initiation fee be waived, seconded by Al Muzzell and the motion was carried without dissent.

**11. West Pasco Bromeliad Society and meeting site for next Florida Council:** Bob Steiger announced that the West Pasco Society was having some difficulties due to the resignation of its officers. Nevertheless, West Pasco will host the July Florida Council meeting.

**12.** The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn Schoenau, Secretary  
Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc.

FLORIDA COUNCIL OF BROMELIAD SOCIETIES, INC.

TREASURER'S REPORT

First Quarter 1994 at 3/31/94

---

Balance at 1/1/94, GENERAL FUND 7,348.94  
Deposits -0-

Expense:

Refunds, Adopt a Garden	97.50	
C. Schoenau, Tape Recorder	77.02	
Print Vol. 14, #1	335.98	
Mail " " "	68.57	
Fla. Dept. State, Corp. Fee 1994	61.25	
100-29 cent stamps	<u>29.00</u>	<u>669.32</u>

Balance General Fund 6,679.62

WEEVIL FUND:

Balance, 1/1/94	10,382.00	
Deposits:		
Caloosahatchee B.S.	191.00	
Nat DeLeon	100.00	10,673.00

Expense:

V.J. Growers, Shade Cloth	101.83	
UPS, Ship same to G'ville	10.20	<u>112.03</u>

Balance, Weevil Fund 10.560.97

Add General Fund 6,679.62

Balance, 3/31/94 \$ 17,240.59

Note: There is a difference of \$11.58 (due us) between my records & the bank involving an incredible mixup over charges for check-printing, but we should be reconciled by next time.

Petty Cash:

Balance Fwd;		27.62
Copies	2.69	
Bulk Post.	1.25	
Priority	2.90	<u>6.84</u>
New Balance		20.78

Submitted: Carol Johnson, Treasurer  
4/9/94



