

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

July 2009



JULY MEETING

Date/Time:

Tuesday, July 7, 2009
Doors open at 7 pm; meeting starts at 7:30.

Location:

Hope Presbyterian Church
1698 South Belcher Road
Clearwater, Florida 33764

Program:

Ray LeMieux of TropiFlora Nursery in Tallavast, Florida, will talk about plant propagation, potting, and growing techniques they use at the nursery. Please note this program is a change from the picnic with games we have typically had in the past few years in the month of July.

Refreshments:

There have been no specific volunteers to provide refreshments for July, so we ask members to repeat past generous contributions to the refreshment table.

JUNE MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Mike Owen, Park Biologist, Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park, gave a lively and informative talk about Florida native bromeliads found in the Fakahatchee Strand. The park, located about 20 miles east of Naples between I-75 (Alligator Alley) and US Highway 41 (Tamiami Trail), is about 19 miles long (north-to-south) and 5 miles wide. The strand is home to 14 of the 16 bromeliad species native to Florida, 12 *Tillandsia*, three *Catopsis* and one *Guzmania*. One of these, *Catopsis nutans*, is considered rare and occurs only in the Fakahatchee Strand. Bromeliads and other epiphytes thrive there due, in part, to the tree canopy and surface water below that work together to moderate extremes in both high and low temperatures, resulting in a narrower range of year-round temperatures that is more suitable for their growth and survival.



Til. fasciculata

The exotic Mexican weevil (*Metamasius callizona*), was first documented in Florida in 1989 and was discovered in the strand in 2002. Dr. Howard Frank, University of Florida, and others researcher have released a Honduran fly (*Lixophaga* sp.) in the strand that has proven to be a natural predator to the Mexican weevil. Mike stated that while this parasitic fly also attacks native weevils, if the Mexican weevil is allowed to go unfettered, it will destroy native bromeliads and the micro-environment they foster, such as arthropods that live in them, lizards that sun on them and eat the arthropods, and so on up the food chain.



Mexican Bromeliad Weevil

Mike has started a *Til. utriculata* monitoring program at the park to document impacts from environmental factors such as the Mexican bromeliad weevil, hurricanes, droughts, and frost events. He is currently tracking about 532 specimens of *Til. utriculata* over an area of 84 acres and plans to document annual winter survival and spring seed production.

For more information about Florida's native bromeliads, check out the book of fact sheets found in our library. Ask Sharon Philyaw, the Librarian.

Show and Tell

- Barret Bassick: *Nid.* 'Leprosa' (grown in bright light)
- Mike Gimeno: *Aec. fuerstenbergii*
- Chip Hill: *Til. harrisii*, *Til. sreptophylla*, *Til. streptocarpa*
- Dave Johnston: *Edmundoa perplexa*, *Til. beutelspacheri*
- Michael Kavanagh: *Aec.* 'Patricia'
- Alton Lee: *Vr.* 'Christina', *Vr.* 'Striped Jade', *Guz.* 'Orange Crash', *Aec. moorei*, *Aec. fasciata* 'Silver Giant'



Nidularium fulgens

- Bob Levine: *Neo.* 'Fay's Big Purple'
- Kathy Lockwood: *Aec.* (species unknown), *Nid.* 'Leprosa' (grown in shade)
- Andy Philywa: *Neo.* 'Patricia', *Neo. Eleutheropetala*
- Kathy Risley: *Neo.* 'Red Dot', *Neo.* 'America', *Neo.* (unknown species or hybrid), *Aec.* 'Burgundy'
- Linda Sheetz: *Nid. fulgens*, *Aec. pectinata*, *Vr. Pardalina*
- Helga Tarver: *Til. flabellata* (small and large forms), *Til. caput-medusae*, *Til. pseudobaileyi*, *Til. tricolor*

Raffle Table

Congratulate yourselves! Members responded generously to last month's reminder regarding donations to the monthly raffle table and their plants filled the table and overflowed onto the floor. As a result, ticket sales were among the best to date and many who bought tickets walked out with their arms full of plants. We can all say we have acquired some of our best and most attractive garden surprises from the raffle table. Keep up the good work, spread the green...and red and orange and white and pink.

New Members

We are pleased to welcome new members Elizabeth Adams, Pat Frey, and Christine Ross, who joined at the June meeting, and former member Bob Levine, who rejoined at the same time. Bob had been a member for a number of years and held the office of Vice President for three of those years. Welcome back, Bob.

THIS AND THAT

Forgotten Auction Plant?

Someone who bid on and won a plant in the May auction did not claim it. If that is you and you can identify it by name, it will be waiting for you at the July meeting. If not claimed by then, it will be put on the July meeting raffle table. So, don't wait!

New Library Book

Our library has acquired a signed copy of *Native Bromeliads of Florida*, a new book hot off the press written by Harry Luther and David Benzing, PhD, botany. Harry is the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens Bromeliad Identification Center Director and David is a recently retired Oberlin College (Oberlin, Ohio) biology professor and currently holds the Jessie B. Cox Chair for Tropical Botany at the Selby. In view of our June speaker's topic, this is a timely addition to our library. It profiles Florida's 16 native bromeliad species and related hybrids and subspecies, and includes range maps, descriptions, their ecology, conservation status, and associations with animals, and a glossary of technical terms. As a further note, pending no changes in his schedule, David will be our guest speaker in January 2010.

Newsletter Editor Linda Sheetz, lsheetz@tampabay.rr.com