

# FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2015

*Celebrating over 60 Years in Bromeliads*

*floridabromeliads.org*



## July 2015 Newsletter

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### NEXT MEETING

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**Date & Time:**

Tuesday, July 7, 2015

Doors open at 7 pm; meeting starts at 7:30

**Location:**

Good Samaritan Church

6085 Park Boulevard

Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

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### Program

**Dr. Terrie Bert** will present *Surveying the Ultimate Wonders—the S through W Uncommon Bromeliad Genera*. This presentation is the last in her series of talks familiarizing bromeliad lovers with the many bromeliad genera that are not widely cultivated. Her talk will cover genera that start with the letters S through W and will include one genus that was discovered using bromeliad DNA, two genera composed of just one or two species, another composed of big, beautiful species, and another with species that seem to have little in common. Terrie promises that, as usual, there will be a short game at the end. These typically come with prizes for winners.

### Plant Sales

The speaker will be the sole plant vendor for this meeting and there will be no member plant sales.

### LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

#### Program

Alton Lee's presentation titled *Vrieseas: the Royal Family of Bromeliads* provided a brief history of the genus and growing tips. He also showed us examples of the range of Vrieseas available with plants that he, Marty Baxley and Linda Sheetz had brought in. The following are some remarks from the talk.

#### General

- Vrieseas come in a range of sizes and colors, greater than any other genus of bromeliads.
- Their bloom stalks are long lasting, some up to a year.
- They tend to be cold hardy.
- Natural habitats for Vrieseas are widespread throughout Mexico, Central America, South America and the West Indies.

#### History

- The genus is named after the Dutch botanist and physician Willem Hendrik de Vriese (1806–1862).
- They were first introduced into popular culture in Belgium in the late 1800s--early 1900s. They were slow to catch on there until the Belgians began hybridizing them.
- In the early 1900s the focus on Vrieseas moved to France where three men there, M.A. Truffaut, Leon Duval, and Joseph Marechal (Belgian), were prominent in hybridizing them.

- Bromeliads were introduced to the U.S. by Mulford Foster and his wife Racine, who were prominent in collecting and popularizing Vriesea.
- Early hybridization work in the U.S. was done by Nat DeLeon (Florida) and John Arden (California), to name a couple of prominent growers. Current large scale hybridizers in Florida include the Deroose nursery in Apopka (with main nursery in Holland) and Herb Hill in Lithia, who has contracts with Dutch and Belgium nurseries to hybridize and do tissue culture for them.

#### Growing Tips

- Vrieseas like good air circulation and should be grown with adequate space between them.
- They should be watered carefully. They do not like to be wet and prefer to grow in a medium that allows water to drain quickly. An example of a good mixture is 2/3 peat and 1/3 perlite with a bit of charcoal or small cypress mulch or pine bark pieces.
- They grow best in morning light until 11 o'clock.
- They like to be fertilized. Apply a time-release fertilizer such as Nutricote when they are first potted and then follow up with a foliar feeding in the summer. For foliar feed use a water-soluble fertilizer that is sprayed directly onto the leaves, and spray the plants in the morning to give them a chance to dry before dark. Be sure to read the fertilizer label and wear gloves and a mask when working with spray fertilizers.

#### Examples of Vrieseas



Hybrids from Herb Hill

V. 'Coppertone'



*V. racinae*



*V. flammea*



V. 'Hawaiian Magic'  
(V. gruberi white form)



V. 'Mela'



V. gruberi 'smudge' pattern



V. 'Robin'



V. 'Sunset'

**Show and Tell**  
*By Helga Tarver*

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Marty Baxley      | <i>Neoregelia</i> hybrid; a new hybrid by Marty (picture below)                            |
| Dick Dailey       | <i>Aechmea</i> 'Frederike' (picture below); cultivar of <i>Aechmea</i> 'Fascini'           |
| Franne Matwijczyk | <i>Vriesea splendens</i>   |
| Nicole Matwijczyk | <i>Canistrum alagoanum</i> (picture below)<br><i>Canistrum aurantiacum</i> (picture below) |
| Linda Sheetz      | <i>Nidularium leprosa</i> (picture below)  |

Show and Tell plants



*Neoregelia hybrid*



*Aechmea 'Frederike'*



*Canistrum alagoanum*



*Canistrum aurantiacum*



*Nidularium leprosa*

**THIS AND THAT**

**2015 Bromeliad Extravaganza® and Bus Trip**

If you have not yet made a hotel reservation for the 2015 Bromeliad Extravaganza, *Bromeliads in the Magic City*, September 25 through 27, in Miami, do so soon because the last day to make a reservation at the special Extravaganza price is July 26. For Extravaganza information go to [www.bssf-miami.org](http://www.bssf-miami.org). Also note that the bus our members will be taking to the Extravaganza, which will make stops at a number of nurseries on the way both to and from the Extravaganza, is filling up. To reserve a seat on the bus, do so by July 7 because after that date any open seats will be made available to other bromeliad and plants societies. To reserve a seat, contact Ashley at [adglaw@gmail.com](mailto:adglaw@gmail.com).

**Robert Stoffels**

Robert Stoffels, member Janet Stoffels' husband of 57 years, passed away May 3. We offer deepest condolences to Janet and her family.

**Blooming this Month**



*Aechmea haltonii*



The x *Vriecantarea* 'Seeger' shown above on the left as it was last January just beginning an inflorescence and on the right with its inflorescence currently in full bloom.



*Araecoccus flagellifolia*

The following pictures were submitted by Gary Lund:



*Billbergia* 'Bravo'



*Billbergia* 'Moulin Rouge'

*Dyckia brevifolia*



#### UPCOMING EVENTS, 2015

August 1, USF Bromeliad Sale

University of South Florida Botanical Gardens, Tampa, FL ([cas.usf.edu/garden](http://cas.usf.edu/garden))

August 15-16, Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society Sale

The Garden Club of Sanford, Sanford, FL (Ben Klugh at [Klughka@yahoo.com](mailto:Klughka@yahoo.com))

October 10-11, USF Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Sale

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL ([cas.usf.edu/garden](http://cas.usf.edu/garden))

September 25-27, Bromeliad Extravaganza, Bromeliads in the Magic City

Hosted by the Bromeliad Society of South Florida, Miami (<http://www.bssf-miami.org>;  
[bpartagas@bellsouth.net](mailto:bpartagas@bellsouth.net))

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