

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, February 14th 1:30p.m.

Wm. A. Finney Memorial Garden Center
837 N. Oleander Ave., Daytona Beach 32118

February, 2010

Happy Valentine's Day

President – Jay Thurrott – 386/761-4804

Vice President – Jerry O'Keefe – 407/767-2442

Secretary – Audrey Hayes – 407/421-4026

Treasurer – Eve Krauth – 386/763-2084

...and Happy Race Day

Our meeting date this month not only falls on Valentine's Day, but it's also the day of NASCAR's "Great American Race" - the **Daytona 500**, so please plan your route to our meeting place accordingly. There shouldn't be a problem for those of you who travel roads that are East of Nova Rd. – traffic should be normal in those areas but if you're coming into town from anywhere west of I-95, choose an alternate route. Consider using either US40 in Ormond Beach or Dunlawton Ave. in Port Orange. Traffic on both of these roads should flow smoothly to the east across the river. In Ormond Beach you can then head south from US40 on Riverside Drive. In Port Orange, take Dunlawton Ave. across the river and then north on Peninsula. Both these routes should be relatively traffic free and provide a pleasant change in scenery. It will be worth the extra inconvenience in coming to this month's meeting – you won't want to miss Al Muzzel's program!

Last month's meeting...

I think we all came away from January's meeting inspired by Bradley Rauch's program which showed us how easy it is to produce beautiful displays of mounted bromeliads. Thanks Brad!

This month's meeting...



Al Muzzel has been a fixture in the bromeliad world for many years. He is a commercial grower with an unrelenting curiosity about the family Bromeliaceae that has driven him to work with researchers, collectors and hobbyists alike. Involved with the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies since its inception, Al has served as a representative and past president of that organization. He has also been instrumental in getting the Florida Council involved in funding the weevil program and was the Council's chairman of that project for many years. Mr. Muzzel will be coming from his home in Gainesville and will be bringing lots of plants for sale that you are not likely to see elsewhere, so plan on attending February's

meeting. You will no doubt be entertained, enthralled, educated...and you just might walk away with some new plants for your collection!

Show and Tell

Don't forget to bring a plant or two for our Show and Tell feature. This provides the opportunity for everyone to learn from our mistakes and our triumphs and I think that we all just enjoy looking at the plants and hearing the descriptions provided.

Time to Pay the Piper...

It happens every year. We have a great year of programs, interesting show and tell features, beautiful plants at the auction or for sale and the newsletter arrives at your door each month to keep you advised of upcoming events in the wonderful world of bromeliads. Each year however there comes a time when we have to ask you to pay your club dues to finance our little operation. Now is that time, so please make sure that your membership is uninterrupted and make out a check to FECBS or pay cash to our Treasurer for \$10 for an individual membership, \$12.50 for a family – one of the great bargains still to be found!



No, those aren't snow drifts although there were reports of snow falling in some parts of Florida. Frost cloth provided protection to the Thurrotts' bromeliads in Port Orange.

Recovery...

This has been an unusually cold and wet Winter so far, and it's not over yet! Many of us have had plants in our collection damaged or even killed by the week and a half in January where we saw temperatures drop below freezing each night. You're not alone if every time that you look at your bromeliads, you cringe at the sight of browned and damaged leaves – and that's if the plants were fortunate enough to have been covered during the cold weather.

What should you do for your bromeliads at this point? The short answer is "nothing". You've got a lot of work ahead of you when the weather warms once again, but it is far too soon to begin recovery efforts. Instead, this is a good time to take note and document which plants have been affected, which areas of your yard seemed to provide the most protection, and which cold protection methods that you applied were the most effective. This is invaluable information and should be written down as soon as possible, since memory often can't be trusted once time has passed.

If you must work on your bromeliads, concentrate first on uncovering everything that you protected with a layer of mulch, old blankets or frost cloth (thanks to the Aldrich's for their timely delivery of frost cloth just before the freeze!). Shake out the leaves, litter and lizards and fold this material up for storage – and put it somewhere where you have easy access to it. Remember, Winter is not over yet! You may have to drag it out and cover things up again.

If you just can't stand the sight of plants damaged by the cold, concentrate on removing obviously dead leaves – these can harbor fungal and rot organisms and may lead to additional damage if not controlled. If the entire leaf has turned brown but doesn't easily pull away from the plant, use your fingernail to split the leaf, then pull the two halves in opposite directions and – presto! Your plant will look much better.

If the entire plant appears lifeless, resist the impulse to discard it just yet. Bromeliads are amazingly resilient plants and often produce offsets when they appear to be 'stone-cold-dead'. I have an example of this in a Tillandsia specimen that some years ago after a freeze turned completely brown with no hint of life remaining. Set aside in a protected area, this "dead" plant eventually produced an offset that grew into a beautiful plant that went on to bloom and produce more offsets. Have a little patience – I know you want to clean up your collection and make it look nice again, but you would do well to wait a few more weeks until the danger of frost or freezing weather is behind us (at least statistically, the weather man says after this month the chance of frost is very low).

Next month we'll talk more about how to continue recovery from the effects of this winter's cold.

The Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies...

...voted at their January meeting in Miami to volunteer to host the 2012 BSI World Conference at a location and date still to be determined. Several potential sites were discussed and will be further reviewed at the next meeting in Gainesville in April. What does that really mean? The BSI board now has to vote on accepting the offer – and there may be several such offers for them to consider (but it's not likely). Then, the Florida Council will need to establish a date and location for this event...and then the work begins. Over the following 2 year period, committees will have to be formed to handle all of the duties associated with a World Conference – and all of the member societies will be expected to help out as plans and programs become finalized.

Also at this meeting it was noted that no member societies had volunteered to host the 2010 Extravaganza and, therefore, the

Council will plan to host a somewhat scaled-back year's event this year. This location will likely be decided at the next Council meeting.



It was a cold and rainy day at Fairchild Gardens when the FCBS held their January meeting.

We were saddened to hear

of the unexpected death of FECBS member Sherry Stearns. She passed away in November of 2009. Sherry had been an active member of our club as well as the local African Violet society. I know that she will be missed by all in our group.



Sherry Stearns at the FECBS Christmas party in 2008.

Harry Luther to leave the state -

We have received word that Harry Luther will be leaving his position with the Bromeliad Identification Center at Selby Gardens. He will be relocating to Singapore and will serve in the position of Assistant Director/Horticulture at the Gardens By The Bay. It is hoped that he will continue to work with bromeliad taxonomy in his new job, but this leaves the question unanswered regarding the continuing status of the Bromeliad Identification Center and the bromeliad collection at Selby Gardens. These are issues to be reviewed and discussed by the BSI board.

Upcoming Events:

February 8th, 2010

FECBS to host the monthly Halifax Council of Garden Clubs meeting. We'll need to provide coffee and some tasty snacks.

March 20, 2010

Judges school #2 in Ft. Lauderdale. After this school is completed, students will be qualified to be "student judges" and may be asked to participate in judging bromeliad shows.

March 27 – 28, 2010

University of Tampa Green Fest Plant Sale at at (of all places...) Tampa

April 10th, 2010

Quarterly meeting of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies. Hosted by the Gainesville Bromeliad Society

April 10-11, 2010

USF Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale at the University of South Florida in Tampa

April 17th, 2010 8:30am to 12:00noon only!

The Volusia County Master Gardeners Eleventh Annual Plant Faire (someday

someone will learn how to spell *Fair* correctly).

April 17-18, 2010

Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay Show and Sale.

April 17-18, 2010

Bromeliad Society of South Florida annual Show and Sale

May 17th, 2010

Annual Halifax Council of Garden Clubs luncheon/business meeting. This year we will be hosting this event at Knicker's restaurant at the LPGA golf course.

July 28th – Aug. 10th, 2010

"Bromeliads in the Big Easy"

BSI World Conference in New Orleans. Not registered yet? What are you waiting for? This promises to be a party like no other! For more information, check the following web site:

http://www.gnobromeliads.com/GNOBS_WBC2010.htm

