

# The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, December 13th – 1:00p.m.

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

December, 2009

## Last Meeting of 2009!

**President – Joan Campbell – 672-7382**

**Vice President – Jerry O’Keefe – 407/767-2442**

**Secretary – Calandra Thurrott – 761-4804**

**Treasurer – Eve Krauth – 763-2084**

That’s right, ‘09 is just about behind us now and when you abbreviate the new year you won’t be able to use a single digit abbreviation again for the next 90 years – you might want to make a note of this somewhere so you don’t forget!

### **This month’s meeting...**

...is not going to include a speaker or a business meeting **because it will be our annual Christmas luncheon/party.** Isn’t Christmas a great time of the year? Everyone is in a festive mood, Christmas decorations light up the evening sky...and I get to use the same front page on the newsletter that I used last year! I hope to see everyone at our annual Christmas party at the Finney Garden Center (our usual meeting place – the address is 837 N. Oleander Ave. in Daytona Beach) This is always a lot of fun with plenty of good food (I know you are all either excellent cooks or know where to go for good food!) and some great plants in the plant gift exchange. **Please note that the time is one half hour earlier than normal** – we will begin at 1:00 p.m. instead of 1:30. We started this time change quite a few years ago since some folks (myself included) can get pretty hungry by 1:30. **We’re asking each person to bring food.** Now this can be most anything from a box of Little Debbies from the corner 7-11 store to Oysters Rockefeller for 25 – whatever you are

comfortable with providing! Just like in past years, we will be having a **Christmas Plant Exchange.** These are always fun! Bring a nice bromeliad that you think the other members will be interested in and wrap it, put it in a box, or bag it so that prying eyes can’t tell what it is. As in past years, a mystery prize goes to the best wrapped gift! We’ll line the gifts up on a table and everyone who brings a plant for the exchange will receive a ticket. Tickets will be drawn one at a time and the owner of that ticket number will get to select from the wrapped gift-plants on a table. He or she then unwraps the plant and tells the rest of the group what it is. I know, sometimes it’s difficult to tell and some of us didn’t bring our reading glasses, so we can’t read the tag but we’ll have plenty of help to try to identify each plant. **Everyone who brings a gift will get to select a gift.** Bring family, friends - maybe even potential new members – this is a great way to get acquainted! Plan on having a relaxing afternoon with some good food, good company and, of course, nice plants!

### **At last month’s meeting-**

The Nominating committee presented their recommendations for officers for the next year and the membership approved the slate of officers as presented. This means that the heading on the newsletter will change with

next month's issue...but it won't change that much. We're extremely fortunate that Jerry O'Keefe has volunteered to serve another term as Vice President and Eve Krauth will continue as Treasurer. Thank you both for your contributions over the past year and for your willingness to continue in these positions for another year! Audrey Hayes will be taking over the Secretary's position from Calandra and Joan will be turning over the gavel to your newsletter editor. The membership is extremely grateful to both of you for a job well done while serving as officers last year! And last, but by no means least, I would like to extend our appreciation to Lisa Upham for agreeing to take on the responsibilities of club librarian. Thank you, everyone for volunteering to serve in these positions. Any organization like ours depends on the voluntary efforts of its membership to not only survive but to continue to move forward!

#### **Club Members Corner-**

We're always looking for members to contribute material for the newsletter. This can be anything from a simple note regarding what is in bloom at the moment to an unpublished novel...and everything in-between. This month Virginia Dornbach has sent the following guidelines on bromeliad cultivation. Thank you Virginia!

#### **GROWING BROMELIADS IN CENTRAL FLORIDA By Virginia Dornbach**

Bromeliads belong to the plant family Bromeliaceae. Few families in the plant kingdom surpass bromeliads with their wide variation in size, shape and foliage color. It encompasses over 2700 species plus thousands of hybrids. Bromeliads are native to the American Tropics.

**Basic culture:** The majority of bromeliads can grow outdoors in the Central and Southern frost free areas of Florida, or grow

in containers that can be moved indoors when danger of frost occur. Bromeliads tolerate wide range of light intensities. Generally bromeliads with hard thick gray or gray green or fuzzy foliage with stand part shade to part sun. Species with soft green, thin leaves grow best in full shade to part shade. In most instances, they will indicate by its growth habit whether light levels are satisfactory. A yellowish or pale green plant may indicate to high of a light level. Bromeliads due to their epiphytic nature require good air circulation. They are also tolerant of low moisture and will survive period of drought. Most problems with bromeliads are associated with rot caused by over watering and poor drainage. It is not necessary to keep the cups filled with water. Bromeliads have a limited root system compared to other annuals and perennials. Roots only function primarily as a support and anchoring system. The plants absorb water and minerals through their leaves from moisture in the air and through their cups. They are not as dependent on their root system as are most other plants. It is important however to keep the root system alive and in good health. Bromeliads cannot tolerate heavy clay soil. The sandy well-drained soils of Florida are good for growing bromeliads.

Growing bromeliads in containers the following potting mixes are suggested:

1. One part peat One part bark One part coarse sand
2. One part peat One part bark One part perlite
3. One part peat ½ part leaf mold One part coarse sand

**Fertilization for containers:** A general-purpose liquid houseplant fertilizer can be applied to the potting mix at ½ the recommended dosage every 2 months. Do not add fertilize to the cups as this may burn emerging leaves.

**Propagation:** Bromeliads can be propagated by removal of pups (offsets) from the mother

plant Bromeliads slowly die over a period of year or two after flowering. However, several pups may develop during the flowering cycle. The pups should be separated from the mother plant when they are about 1/3 the size of the mother plant. To remove the pup use a serrated knife, pruning shears or small saw. Put the tool between the pup and the mother plant and cut through near the base of the plant. Have small container of potting media ready for the pup. Place the base of the pup no more than 1 inch into the mix and brace it with rocks or stake it until the roots can hold it in place. Keep new plant in a shadier more humid location for a few weeks. Keep soil on the dry side do not over water.

For more information on Bromeliads go to the following web sites:

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies at [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org)

Bromeliad Society International at [www.bsi.org](http://www.bsi.org)

University of Florida (publication Bromeliads1 cir 1090) at [www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu](http://www.edis.ifas.ufl.edu)

Publications Bromeliads A Cultural Manual, BSI Publication Sales, 2265 W 239<sup>th</sup> St., Torrance CA 90501

10/30/09

### **The annual Bromeliad Extravaganza...**

is now history and what a great event it was! Our club was very well represented with something on the order of 15 members present at one time or another (not everyone was there for the whole 3 days and I had a difficult time counting everyone – they kept moving around). The hotel was a beautiful setting for this, the plant sale had an incredible variety of bromeliads available for purchase, the seminars were excellent (our own Calandra Thurrott presented a program on the Australian World Conference) and the tours on Sunday were just fabulous! Even the banquet was great – no complaints of rubber

chicke. There was quite an international flair to this event with bromeliad enthusiasts present from as far away as India, Puerto Rico and Australia and outside of Florida in this country we met friends from Louisiana, Arizona, and California. The Central Florida Bromeliad Society is certainly to be commended for an outstanding job in pulling all of these activities together for a great Extravaganza!

### **Frost Blanket**

The frost blanket material that a number of members signed up to purchase will be available at this month's meeting. You may recall that the price is \$1.25 per running foot (Example: 10' x 15' piece is \$12.50.).

### **Other stuff...**

Club Member Sandra Hudson was recently recognized by the Daytona Beach City Commission for a beautification award for her "water-wise" landscaping at her home. Congratulations Sandra!

Jay Thurrott presented a program on bromeliads to the Halifax Country Garden Club in Ormond Beach recently.

Jerry O'Keefe is working on the arrangements for the Council of Garden Clubs of the Halifax Area's annual May luncheon. FECBS has been asked to host this event and plans are well underway. Target date is May 3<sup>rd</sup>, but this is subject to change.

I was first introduced to Florida Gardening magazine a few years ago when a native plant vendor at the Spring Master Gardener's sale was offering back issues along when you signed up for a subscription and now find myself anxiously awaiting delivery of each issue. Florida Gardening magazine is only \$21 for a one year subscription. There are 6 issues each year and there always seems to be something of interest in each issue. The current (Dec/Jan 2010) issue just arrived at

my house and one of the articles is titled “Go Green With Bromeliads” – a surprisingly well researched overview on the use of bromeliads in the landscape. There is also an article on “ball moss”, *Tillandsia recurvata* that would be of interest to everyone in our group. Looking for a present for that special gardener in your life? Maybe that special gardener is you.

We have been invited to participate by selling bromeliads once again in the **Volusia County Master Gardener’s Plant Faire on Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup>** at the Volusia County Fair Grounds. This has been a great event in the past and has served as an efficient fundraiser for our club. We need to respond to the invitation so we’ll be asking the membership at our Christmas party gathering this month if we want to take part in this again this coming Spring.

Have you checked out the Florida Council website lately? A recent addition to the already outstanding selection of features on the site is a bromeliad glossary – for those of us who stumble over pistils and peduncles and can’t tell a rachis from a raceme. Your answers to all of your questions regarding the pieces and parts of bromeliads and what they are called can be found in this glossary. Check it out: [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org)

### **Upcoming Events:**

#### **December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

December meeting of the Halifax Council of Garden Clubs at the Garden Center, 10am

#### **January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010**

Halifax Council of Garden Clubs annual garage sale fund raiser at the Wm Finney Garden Center – corner of Jessamine and Oleander Avenues.

**April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010** 8:30am to 12:00noon only!  
The Volusia County Master Gardeners Eleventh Annual Plant Faire (someday someone will learn how to spell *Faire* correctly)

#### **April 17-18, 2010**

Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay Show and Sale.

#### **July 28<sup>th</sup> – Aug. 10<sup>th</sup>, 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](http://www.gnobromeliads.com/GNOBS_WBC2010.htm)

