



*Where Guests are Welcome and Members are Encouraged!*

## February Meeting Events

February 2014

**TIME: Sunday, February 23rd - 2:00 PM**

**PLACE:** UF Entomology/Nemotology Building, Natural Area Drive east of the Performing Arts Center on Hull Road, U of F. **OR** the 5th left turn on Archer Road coming East from 34th Street.

**PROGRAM: From the President, Woods NeSmith**

The agenda this week will be:

Bring 'My favorite and least favorite Bromeliad', one you really like and one you don't like and . . . Why? Members are asked to bring plants for this discussion, to include tips on growing etc. We will begin discussing our plans for the workshop in April.

**REMEMBER: ALL MEMBERSHIP FEES OF \$15.00 ARE DUE.  
IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY PAID YOURS,  
PLEASE CONNECT WITH LORENE JUNKIN.**

**Would anyone identify the bromeliad above and give me it's name? It's large!**

## GBS Officers and Staff:

President:	Woods NeSmith	850-878-8769	kalterhund51@gmail.com
Vice-President	Sandy Burnett	352-376-2040	sandyjo@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Lorene Junkin	352-375-0322	lorenepaul@mindspring.com
Secretary:	Jean Thomas	352-213-9058	jean.thomas@ars.usda.gov
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Librarian:	TBA		

## Gainesville Bromeliad Society: January meeting “Minutes”

The meeting was called to order just after 2 PM on Sunday, Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>, and was conducted by our new vice president, Sandy Burnett. She explained that we would start the meeting with the presentation of our guest speaker, Dr. Teresa M. Cooper. The talk would be followed by a short business meeting and then a plant raffle, with proceeds to benefit our society.

Our speaker was introduced by Dr. Howard Frank. Teresa studied and earned her Ph.D. with him here in Gainesville, and now works at the UF Indian River Research and Education Center, in the Biological Control Research and Containment Laboratory. Her talk reflected the focus of her research on Florida's native bromeliads and the invasive Mexican bromeliad weevil, *Metamasius callizona*, which is decimating 12 of our 16 native species. Teresa began with a description of the weevil, introduced in a shipment of ornamental bromeliads from Mexico. The larvae of this insect feed on the plants' inner leaves, damaging them so much that the inner portion of the epiphyte drops onto the ground. She showed us examples of how this looks in the field, and also pictures of the many Florida native species that are susceptible to damage from the “evil weevil”. She mentioned that the park biologist at Fakahatchee, Mike Owen, is keeping careful records. There may be a species of *Guzmania* there that is disappearing. Large specimens of our native *Tillandsia fasciculata* are now rare. Cultivated species are also at risk, and growers must watch for signs of infestation by checking the center whorls of their plants for damage.

Bromeliad ecology is crucial to many species of invertebrates, which then feed and support larger animals and birds. The epiphytic bromeliad tanks collect many liters of water over the course of the dry season. The loss of *T. fasciculata* would correlate to the loss of 1000's of liters of water that would normally be available in the forest. Dr. Howard Frank initiated a search for insect predators of the weevil in Central America. A fly was found in the Honduran cloud forest that eats the weevil and it was given the species name “frankii” after our colleague. Research to determine if this fly can be used in biocontrol is underway. In addition, a species of *Tillandsia* from Central America very similar to our *utriculata* was found to be resistant to the weevil. Nutritional and specific aspects of the biology of this alternate *T. utriculata* are being examined.

The business meeting began with Ron Schoenau's description of plants available to members in a silent auction. There were quite a few interesting species offered from various genera, like *Aechmea*, *Neoregalia*, *Vriesia*, and *Portia*. Proceeds from their sale will go directly to our treasury. We took a break for refreshments, and bids, before continuing the meeting.

**This year's officers:** President: Woods NeSmith, Vice President: Sandy Burnett, Treasurer: Lorene Junkin, Secretary: Jean Thomas and Webmaster: Hjordis were introduced as well as several new members, the Nelsons, Mary White, and Tim Artin. Bob McGraw, the representative of our society to the FL Council of Bromeliad Societies (FCBS), gave us a report of their January meeting in Ft. Myers. Ron Schoenau first told us a bit about the FCBS history. At the first meeting of 2014, they discussed officers to be: Ashley Graham will continue as chairperson and Betsy McCrory will be asked to serve as parliamentarian. The society decided that they would not hold a bromeliad extravaganza this year because

none of the local societies had volunteered to host one. There will be extravaganzas every alternate year, and the Bromeliad Society of South Florida will host one in 2015. There was a long discussion about the FCBS newsletter at their meeting, and each of us will receive a copy of it electronically. Bob McGraw said that Rick Ryals, the auditor for the \$26,000 treasury of the FCBS, gave a report. Apropos to the talk by Dr. Teresa Cooper today, the FCBS decided to give \$5000 from its treasury to research on the "evil weevil". Our society pays \$3 dues to the FCBS for each of our members, so we are each helping to fund the research through this society.

**The schedule for the Gainesville Bromeliad Society meetings for 2014 was announced:**

**February 23:** My favorite and least favorite Bromeliad. Why? Members are asked to bring plants for this discussion, to include tips on growing etc. We will begin discussing our plans for the workshop in April.

**March 23:** Ron Schoenau will share his experiences as a longtime bromeliad enthusiast, perhaps comparing and contrasting some of his favorite genera. We will continue planning for the workshop in April.

**April 27:** Bromeliad workshop, here in Gainesville, to include our new membership drive.

**May 25:** Ray LeMieux, from Tropiflora nursery, will discuss some of his favorites and will bring plants for sale also. (We held a vote to see if the date for this meeting, which is the day before Memorial Day, should be changed. We will hold the meeting on May 25<sup>th</sup>, the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month, as usual.)

**June 22:** Dave Johnston will speak about foliage *Vriesias* and will bring plants for sale also.

**July 27:** George Aldrich will speak.

**August 24:** Terry Burt will speak about 3 often forgotten genera: *Carnia*, *Teresia*, and *Puya*.

**September 28:** "In-house" auction of plants donated by members.

**October 26:** To be announced.

**November 23:** Holiday party.

**December** - No Meeting

Sandy expressed heartfelt **Thanks** from all of us to our outgoing president **David Silverman** for his excellent work over the last few years. She presented him with a beautiful plant mounted on driftwood for his wall as a gift from the club.

We finished the meeting around 4:00 with a drawing of numbers for door prizes of plants.

**Jean Thomas, Secretary**