



March 2013

March Meeting Details

TIME: Sunday, March 24th - 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, David Silverman

Our next meeting of the Gainesville Bromeliad Society will be on Sunday, March 24th at 2:00 pm. We are planning a Big Show and Tell. **Please bring a favorite plant to the meeting and tell us what about it is appealing to you.** Or, please bring a plant that is problem for you and ask our members for advice.

Also at this meeting we will have two important discussions led by our vice-president Woods Nesmith. The first is a continuation of the topic of our participation in Extravaganza 2014. The second is to plan for our workshop on April 28.

Agenda

- 1) Big Show and Tell
- 2) Further discussion of our participation in **Extravaganza 2014**
- 3) Planning for the **Bromeliad Workshop** at the April 28 meeting of the GBS. Please see the current plans below.
- 4) Refreshments and door prizes

Plan for the Workshop of April 28

The GBS will hold a workshop at our regularly scheduled meeting of April 28. The purpose is to acquaint interested people on growing and displaying bromeliads, increasing our membership, and perhaps adding a few dollars to our treasury.

Schedule of the April 28 meeting of GBS:

Introduction –welcome guests and tell them about GBS and the benefits of joining.

Talks – Selected members will give presentations

Nancy Mason on potting and mounting bromeliads (about 15 – 20 minutes)

Peggy Mixon on bromeliads in landscaping (about 15 – 20 minutes)

Show-and-Tell in which GBS members show examples of beautiful and interesting plants (about 2 minutes each)

Chris George on cold hardy bromeliads

David Silverman on Cryptanthus

Other volunteers needed here and to be listed below.....

Refreshments – We will need extra refreshments, volunteers please

Plant Sale – GBS members bring plants for sale. Proceeds go to the GBS.

Plant Sale

GBS members please bring plants to sell and tag each plant with a price.

Handouts for attendees

David will bring and distribute on April 28th copies of “Bromeliads are Easy to Grow” and sign-up sheets for attendees to place their names on our mailing list.

Advertising

Gainesville Sun – David will place ads in the Sun for two or three days at a total cost to the GBS of about \$150 – see sample ad below. Please change this ad as necessary. Nancy and Peggy, please provide titles. We need a black-and-white photo to place in the ad.

Volunteers needed to prepare fliers and distribute to public library and other places

Volunteers needed to place announcements in Wm. Thomas and Senior Times Magazine and other sites

Below is the preliminary draft of the ad for the Gainesville Sun –

Workshop on Bromeliads Ad



**Grow Beautiful Bromeliads in your Garden
and Home**

Workshop on Bromeliads

Sponsored by Members of the Gainesville Bromeliad Society

Sunday, April 28 at 2:00 pm at the Entomology Building on the UF Campus

For directions see: www.gainesvillebromeliadsociety.org

1. *Title for Nancy's talk*
2. *Title for Peggy's talk*
3. Examples of bromeliads by members of the Bromeliad Society

Various bromeliads will be available for purchase at this workshop

GBS Officers and Staff:

President:	David Silverman	352-378-7481	nmvrlis@hotmail.com
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Secretary:	Jean Thomas	352-213-9058	Jean.Thomas@ars.usda.gov
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Librarian:	Chris George	352-215-5533	Chrisg7989@yahoo.com

Secretary's Notes: From Last Meeting, February 2013

Our meeting was called to order at 2:05 P.M. at the UF Entomology Building. There were about 20 people attending.

Jose "Pepe" Donayre, from Broward County, FL, was introduced as today's speaker. He and his wife, Sarah, have been involved at the state, national, and international levels of the Bromeliad Councils for some time. Pepe's talk was entitled "More than you want to know about *Billbergias*". The *Billbergia* flowers may last only a week or two, so the main attraction of these plants is in the beautiful foliage. He spoke about the tremendous amount of hybridization that has been accomplished since the 1960's. It was enlightening to discover all the different forms this plant genus can take. He described many different *Billbergias*, and he brought a beautiful assortment of plants from his collection, some of which were for sale. Several of the plants he brought were being considered as possibilities for a competitive show in Miami. These were truly beautiful specimen plants.

Pepe mentioned that *Billbergias* were very desirable in that they are relatively easy to grow, they are somewhat resistant to diseases and scale insects, and they are relatively fast growing. Up to 4 generations can be grown in one pot because the original or "mother" plant is rather long-lived, even after flowering. In general, the plants prefer bright light and many are cold-tolerant. Fertilizer is rarely needed, and a 13-13-13 granular type of slow release fertilizer, like Dynamite® works well. A stronger fertilizer will sometimes turn the variegated foliage into a solid green, so it's important to be careful with this. As far as watering, the plants generally grow in rather compact tubular form. As such, they will collect water and filter it for their use over a period of time. Some of the plants are epiphytic and can be mounted on boards; most seem to be happy growing in pots with a regular soil mix including Canadian moss, perlite and mini- pine bark.

Flowers in the *Billbergia* subgenus, *Helicodia*, are distinguished by the "watch spring" nature of the flower petals. As the petals open and the flowers emerge, the sepals roll themselves up in a tight coil. In fact, the 5 parts of the *Billbergia* flowers can each vary in color, so that there can be 50-100 combinations of color in the flowers, depending on the hybridization the plant has undergone. Pepe divides these plants into 4 groups. The first two groups have dull, green foliage, with or without horizontal markings across the leaves. One of these groups has flowers that are all green, and the other group has very colorful flowers. The second two groups have colorful and variegated foliage. Flowers in the third group are all green, and flowers in the fourth group are brightly colored.

Pepe showed many slides; all were beautiful and descriptive. He seemed to stay with relatively simple, naturally colored backgrounds, which showed the plant specimens in detail. As a group, *Billbergias* grow well in bright light and many are cold tolerant. Many are suitable in the landscape and others are best in pots that can be moved around for placement in the best light. He spoke for about an hour, and there was time for questions. David then suggested we take our break, and sample the delicious treats. The meeting re-convened around 3:30, and David shared several pictures of *Billbergias* and other Bromeliads used in landscapes at both Wilmott and Kanapaha Botanical Gardens in Gainesville and further south at Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota.

We continued the discussion started in January about whether or not we should participate in this year's Kanapaha Spring Garden Festival, because it has traditionally helped the society to attract new members. We decided not to participate in the festival this year. Instead, we will encourage membership by hosting a workshop at our monthly meeting in April. We will teach what we know at the meeting during ~ 20-minute sessions by volunteers from our group, and we'll ask folks who are interested to join us. Current members will bring plants to show and/or sell. David presented an ad that could be posted in the Gainesville Sun. Other suggestions for publicizing the event included the "Senior Times" magazine, the Williams Thomas Funeral Home newsletter and the Gainesville Public Library system. We decided to organize things further at the meeting in March.

In January, Chris George asked us to consider hosting the 2014 Bromeliad Extravaganza with the Seminole Bromeliad group from Ocala. To follow up, we discussed bromeliad extravaganzas in general with our speaker, Pepe, and his wife, Sarah. They knew from experience both the benefits –and the work – involved. We talked about working with the Seminole group this time in a small way so that we can learn more about it. Eventually, we may want to host an extravaganza on our own. We need to decide our part in the 2014 Extravaganza before this April.

David let us know that he could not attend in March and asked Woods Nesmith to preside. Aside from the extravaganza discussion, we have some important planning to do before our workshop meeting in April.

Several beautiful plants in flower were brought for "Show and Tell", including a large *Quesnalia* and a smaller, native *Tillandsia bartramii*. Prize plants were awarded to lucky members after drawing tickets, and the meeting was finished around 4PM.