

FINAL MINUTES

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies First Meeting of 2026

Saturday, February 26, Mounts Botanical Garden, West Palm Beach

The meeting was called to order at 12:55 pm by Vicki Chirnside. She thanked members for their support over the past difficult year and introduced the new officers. Jack Dunlop, the new president, then conducted the remainder of the meeting. He had members introduce themselves. Those attending included:

Bromeliad Society of South Florida: Richard and Maureen Adelman

Bromeliad Society of the Palm Beaches: Jim Jackson, Tom Ramiccio, Michael Raiman

Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society: Vicky Chirnside

Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society: Jack Dunlop, Calandra Thurrott, Pam Reisen

Gainesville Bromeliad Society: Steven Provost, Brian Dey

Sarasota Bromeliad Society: Marian Kennell, David Denholm

Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society: Greg Kolojeski, Pam Reisen

Bromeliad Society of Central Florida: Betsy McCrory

Unable to Attend: Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society of Tampa, Steve and Marilyn Byram; Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society, Jean Homan and Joe Ventimiglia. The Tampa society has since disbanded.

Guest Rick Ryals, BSI President

REPORTS AND UPDATES

Minutes: Jim Jackson, outgoing secretary, presented the minutes of the September 27, 2025 meeting in Kissimmee. Minutes were passed and approved.

Treasurer's Report: Betsy McCrory reported through the end of 2025. All societies now owe their \$100 membership fee. Betsy stated we need to think about a donation to BSI. Greg Kolojeski moved to pass the report, seconded by Brian Dey. Report approved and filed for audit.

All societies were urged to share news with Michael Andreas, webmaster, including any changes and upcoming events,

A judge's seminar was held since the last FCBS meeting but there are no new judges' schools planned. All societies were urged to have shows, even if they are small ones. The judges only have 1 annual show and one biannual show to keep up their certification.

Archives: Steven Provost has spoken with the Director of the UCF archives to check on progress. He asked if we are comfortable with names and addresses being published as the archives are open to the public. He has more documents to be added to the archives. The archives are now on the BSI website. Jim Jackson stated he would like to see them added to the FCBS website also. Tom Ramiccio stated the newsletters are not archived by UCF and we may need a protocol for what to include. The archives are in the UCF Special Collections on the 5th floor. A full set of BSI journals are also archived there.

OLD BUSINESS

FCBS needs to select a parliamentarian. Mike Saunders was appointed though he was not present at the meeting.

EXTRAVAGANZA

Greg Kolojeski gave his observations. There were \$32,000 in plant sales with 25% going to the host society. This was much less than the \$117,000 in sales at the previous Extravaganza. The hotel was loose with the room nights. The host society asked for 200 nights but booked 20% less with no penalty. The hotel was very supportive. There was a 10 minute delay due to an errant alarm. They spent several hundred dollars on Facebook ads which helped a little. Any promotion to the general public was considered a waste of money as no one from the general public came.

Plant sales were the most important for income. 18 vendors did over \$31,000 in sales. The artwork did not do well. Eloise Beach was the top seller followed by Michael's Bromeliads and Tropiflora. They expected to do \$50,000 in sales so fell well below their prediction. He suggested future Extravaganzas have at least 6000 square feet of display space to have a successful sale. They had 6400 sf. It did not make too much difference where vendors were placed in the room. Lots of spiky plants sold this year.

FCBS receives 100% from the rare plant auction. The average from these auctions is \$3,000 to \$5,000. The auction cleared \$3734 less credit card fees. Only registrants bought at the rare plant auction. No one from the general public came.

He thinks the best location that will attract the most people is no further north or south than Ft. Myers to West Palm Beach as it is midway. No one from south Florida attended and there were no international visitors,

FCBS ROSTER: The roster is ready for the May (June) meeting. Send any updates to Betsy McCrory ASAP.

NEWSLETTER

There is still no editor for the newsletter. Jim Jackson suggested asking each club to write some content. We could also publish some old articles. Pam Reisen volunteered to send an article. Jim Jackson volunteered to write an article on new hybrids. We could have an article on cold protection and what plants survived the freeze and which ones did not fare as well. Callandra Thurrot suggested a What's In Bloom article with lots of photos. We could ask the local societies' editors to contribute articles. Or we could figure out an alternative to the newsletter. It was suggested that we could hire an editor and pay them per issue. Pam Reisen suggested we ask Terrie Bert, who is now retired, to become editor. Steve Provost suggested we make a list of what is required. The editor would be responsible for 3 issues a year and the roster. Rick Ryals also noted the editor needs to know how to format a newsletter as well as write it. Consensus was for FCBS delegates to survey their societies for volunteers to be paid and ask them what they think the job is worth. There was a discussion on 1099s and the maximum salary that does not require a 1099 ranging from \$600 to \$2000.

WEEVIL COMMITTEE

Tom Wolfe, Chair, was not present. Tom Ramiccio gave a presentation. He reviewed what has been done so far with little success and noted there has been more damage on the west coast of Florida than the east coast. Tom R. suggested we pivot to a conservation stance. He suggested seed collection and would like to collect 1 million seeds and repopulate in hard hit areas. *T. fasciculata* would be easier as it flowers more. *T. utriculata* takes 10-20 years to flower and will be more difficult to collect seeds from. Each flower contains up to 1,000 seeds though only 5% survive. We would need a permit for endangered areas and will need money to run the program. The Department of Agriculture requires a permit to cut inflorescences from these plants. Seeds are to be sent to Tom Ramiccio or Bryan Wyndham. Tom R. suggested using kids to place the plants in trees much like the Million Orchid project at Fairchild Garden. Two companies have volunteered space to grow the seeds and ship them back to us. It was noted that the #1 enemy to bromeliads is habitat loss, not the weevil. In fact, in Mexico where the weevil is native, they are not destructive. Tom Ramiccio and Tom Wolfe plan to meet to discuss this further.

STANDING COMMITTEES

AUDITOR: An auditor is needed and Jim Jackson volunteered to fill the opening.

Webmaster: Michael Andreas

Newsletter: Looking

Education Committee: Open

Parliamentarian: Just appointed Mike Saunders

Weevil Fund Committee: Tom Wolfe

NEW BUSINESS:

BSI: Rick Ryals encouraged everyone to attend the World Conference in California. They have 160 registrants so far. A sponsorship program has raised \$20,000. In honor of the 75th anniversary of BSI digital memberships are being offered at \$7.50/yr. BSI has a digital website that they may share with local societies to help them find sales. BSI's highest honor, the Wally Berg Award, is now accepting nominations. March 15 is the deadline. FCBS usually makes an annual donation to the BSI scholarship program. Last year we did not. Normal donation is \$1,000. A motion was made by _____ to donate \$2,000 to the program, seconded by Steve Provost. The motion was passed.

FLORIDA SPEAKER REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

This program reimburses societies up to \$1,000 for an out of state speaker. At least 2 clubs must participate and the fee must be approved in advance per the bylaws. David Shiigi will not be a speaker as he was involved in an auto accident t recently.

COLD HARDINESS – Jim Jackson is updating the cold hardiness info on the website. Please send him any info you have on plants that suffered damage or died during the recent freeze event.

2027 EXTRAVAGANZA – by June 2026 we must have our next location for the 2027 Extravaganza. Two clubs can share responsibility. This will be the main subject of our next meeting. Caloosahatchie would be perfect but they are hesitant. The president is to check on the Tampa Society but they are down to just 12 members. The opinion was expressed that FCBS should sign the contract for the hotel instead of the local societies to remove some of the financial stigma from hosting.

The next meeting will be in June

MEMBER SOCIETIES NEWS, SPEAKERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sarasota Bromeliad Society –

- October – Bruce Holtz, Collecting in the Tropics
- November – Mosquito Control
- December – Holiday Party
- January – Dr. Terrie Bert discussed cold damage

- February – Dr. David Benzing, a very scientific presentation
- March - David Turner to discuss Spanish Moss

Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society-

- November – Pinky Ormond, potting advice
- December – Holiday Party
- January – Alex Bello, Billbergias
- February – McCrory's Sunny Hill Bromeliads field trip with Sanford and Central Florida societies

West Palm Beach Socoeety-

- September, Alex Bello
- October – Dennis Cathcart video
- November – Lee Magnuson
- December – Holiday party
- January – K. Smith, Bromelads A-Z
- February – Alex Bello, Vrieseas
- March – 2 trips to Grants Nursery and Lee Magnuson's nursery, and to Chip Jones nursery with the Palm and Cycad Society

Gainesville Bromeliad Society

- October – Dr. Terrie Bert discussed Pitcairnia and her Favorites
- November – Holiday party
- December –
- January – Sandy Burnette, Commemorative meeting. Bob Stevens, Brian Dey and Steven Provost gave a potting demo.
- February – Jason Mellica – Basics on Bromeliads
- March – Plant Sales with speaker, Marty Baxley

Seminole Bromeliad Society –

- October - Jason Mellica
- November – Chip Jones
- January – Kenneth Stokes
- February – Tour of McCrory's Nursery
- March – Anthony Warfield, Cryptanthus

Caloosahatchie Bromeliad Society-

- October – David Sand
- November – Alex Bello, Tillandsias
- December – Holiday party
- January – Jason Mellica
- February – Bryan Wyndham
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Bromeliad Society of Central Florida-

- No list of meetings but having a sale at Lew Gardens March 14 and 15.

Bromeliad Society of South Florida-

- October – Annual Auction
- November – Annual Fairchild Garden tram ride and elections
- December – Annual holiday party and field trip to Ft. Myers for Caloosahatchie show and sale and a visit to Chip Jones' nursery
- January – Stephanie LaRusso
- February – Hands on project – Cocodoma

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Thank you to the West Palm Beach Bromeliad Society for hosting and providing lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Adelman, FCBS Secretary

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