

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, February 12th, 2017 1:30pm.

Colony in the Wood – club house

4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

February, 2017

Everything You Want to Know About Zika!

President – Rick Ryals 386/679-8700

**Co-Vice Presidents – Hedy Quirk and Jane Vila-Lobos
386/427-2314 and 386/446-0341**

Secretary – Rose Vincel 386/453-3229

Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/871-1041

Well, here we are into February and despite predictions by that famous groundhog, it looks like Spring can't be far off for east central Florida. We saw two nights when temperatures dropped into the 30s in Port Orange at the end of January, but I don't think it caused too much plant damage. Don't be too hasty in starting your spring bromeliad chores (separating, potting up, replenishing beds, etc.). February has been known to surprise us in the past with some nasty cold weather so it's best to wait until any such threats are over before you go too crazy with your gardening work!

As we ease into Spring, be sure to pay attention to the "looking ahead" section of the newsletter – we're beginning that time of year when there are so many terrific bromeliad or garden related events that you may have to pick and choose which ones to attend.

This month's meeting –

Zika virus is not transmitted by bromeliad-dwelling mosquitoes in Florida –

There - have we got your attention now? Dr. J. Howard Frank has been at the forefront of insect ecology research and has become a very familiar name among bromeliad enthusiasts everywhere for his pioneering work related to the incursion of the Mexican bromeliad weevil into Florida and the search for its control. 2016 was a year for newspaper headlines reporting on the discovery of the Zika virus in Miami and, not surprisingly, over-reaction on the part of local politicians...to the point of actually banning the landscape use of bromeliads within the city limits! Are your bromeliads likely to harbor the mosquito varieties that can transmit this disease? If anyone can give us the straight story about the recent introduction of the Zika virus into our nightmares, this is the man to do it! In typical, modest fashion Dr. Frank has supplied the following short biographical info:

Howard Frank was a professor of entomology at the University of Florida in Gainesville, but retired in mid-2012. His job was applied insect ecology, especially the use of biological control, against pest insects. He taught a graduate level course on biological control, another on tropical entomology, and has guided many graduate student projects. He

headed a successful project on biocontrol of pest mole crickets. A still incomplete project is on the control of *Metamasius callizona*, the "Mexican bromeliad weevil" that is trashing native bromeliad populations in Florida. He has been interested in bromeliads and the insects associated with them since he lived in Jamaica in 1968-1972. After arrival in Florida from Jamaica, he worked on ecology of mosquitoes, especially those that live in leaf axils of bromeliads: that's the topic of today's discussion. He is a member of the Gainesville Bromeliad Society.



Howard Frank observing bromeliads in the morning fog somewhere in Honduras – photo courtesy of Dr. Teresa Cooper.

Last month's meeting –



The officers of FECBS for 2017. Photo by PM Reddy

We started the new year off with our new slate of officers taking their places at the head table. Thank you, each of you for volunteering to steer our group through the next 12 months!

Sometimes we hear from our northern friends and relatives that it's hard to tell the difference between winter and summer in Florida. This photo from our last meeting

suggests otherwise – look how warmly everyone is dressed!



January's meeting centered around a session of "Show and Tell" (always my favorite part of our meetings!) with an interesting group of bromeliads in bloom. By coincidence, many plants in the *Aechmea orlandiana* group were in bloom in our area and we had a chance to compare some of their similar (and dis-similar) features.

Also of interest at the Jan. meeting was a clump of *Fernseea bocainensis* that was just beginning to come into bloom. That bloom has since progressed to its peak and here is a photo of this seldom seen bromeliad:



Fernseea bocainensis

A note from Jean Hochdoerfer –
A special thank you goes out to the Bromeliad Club for their generous cash donation that goes towards even more gifts for the angels. Every Angel on our tree received items they requested. .and more! We're sure you helped make

someone's holiday a little brighter. Thank you!
J.H.



President's message –

Folks,

This morning Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow and therefore as ritual has it, predicted six more weeks of winter-like weather. And as usual, no one told us here in Florida!

It's 1pm on Thursday and it's a beautiful 75 degrees outside. So beautiful, that I've already re-filled the hummingbird feeders, cleaned up some potted bromeliads and watered others that looked particularly dry. Our next full moon is February 10th, the days are getting longer and the extended weather forecast is looking great. I'm hoping we'll be in summer conditions in no time!

My yard is just bursting with plants and I can't wait to start separating and potting them up for our club sales, raffle table and our big Hawaiian Luau we'll be holding this summer. We have a great year of speakers and topics for our club meetings and I'm sure everyone is interested in hearing Dr. Howard Frank discuss Zika (our February meeting) and next month (March) when we hear all about hummingbirds.

Please help make our club a success by bringing plants for our monthly raffle table and keep purchasing those raffle tickets. Bringing a friend with you to a meeting is always encouraged and in the coming months we'll offer excellent opportunities for novices to learn all about bromeliads.

The very first, big plant sale of the season - GardenFest is this weekend in Vero Beach and I know several of you plan to attend! Happy garden hunting! And remember, you can never have enough plants! And especially- bromeliads!

- Rick

Out and about –



A yard fixture for over three years and sitting at over 5' wide is this beautiful Alcantarea, which if memory serves me correct, is actually a cultivar, named 'Purple Skotak'. Purchased from Eloise Beach as a small pup while attending the Bromeliad Society of South Florida Show & Sale in Miami it's grown into a monster, one that I refer to as Big Mamma! Fortunately or (unfortunately as some may see it) she is flattening out and her center is tightening up in order to push her inflorescence. More pictures to follow in the coming months!

It might be 60 degrees outside but that hasn't stopped bromeliads from blooming as seen in this photo from Francisco Cardoso. This clump of Aechmea 'Little Harv' is a regular bloomer, but you can see just a little damage from the cold on its sepal. It certainly will not hurt the full bloom which may be a little shorter and not as robust at this time of year.



Aechmea 'Little Harv' inflorescence-just beginning

Several years ago Francisco Cardoso picked up this *Tillandsia utriculata* on the side of the road and set it on a tree branch in his backyard. It's grown from just a hand full of leaves to this spectacular plant which you can see in the photo. And just discovered, is the spike its sending straight up.



For those native plant enthusiasts in our group – *Tillandsia utriculata* is the largest of the native Florida bromeliads. Volusia County is pretty much its northern limit although some plants may be seen in isolated areas of Flagler County as well.

We saw lots of this bromeliad at our last meeting on the raffle table and it's a wonderful plant as shown in this photo from Francisco Cardoso. *Aechmea* 'Bert' was attached to a tree using some plastic mesh found after unwrapping a fresh Christmas tree several years ago. You can see that as the bromeliad has grown and produced pups, it's becoming healthier each generation.



Thank you Rick and Francisco for those photos and text!

Like Rick mentioned, January's meeting had a terrific selection of plants for the Show and Tell program as well as for the raffle. We're fortunate to have a photographer in our midst with club member P.M. Reddy, who sent a selection of photos that he took at the January meeting. I've included a few of those here:



Beautiful light colored form of *Aechmea orlandiana*

Very dark form of *Aechmea orlandiana* mounted on wood



Tillandsia hybrid (possibly *T. stricta* x *T. ixioides*?)



Aechmea 'Bert'

Thank you P.M. for those photos!



It looks like *Aechmea orlandiana*, but it's not!
Aechmea correia-araujoii mounted on wood.



Bromeliad math: Add one *Aechmea fosteriana* (on left) and one *Aechmea orlandiana* (on right) to produce (center) the hybrid *Aechmea 'Bert'*



Encholirium horridum – brought in by Bill Hazard



Thank you everyone for donating plants for our ever popular raffle!

Send in your photos and articles about bromeliad events, blooms in your garden, or newspaper and magazine articles that may be of interest to our members. Email to cajat@aol.com or mail to Jay Thurrott, 713 Breckenridge Dr., Port Orange Fl. 32127

Birthdays for February:

Happy Birthday to the following FECBS member (Not a lot of February birthdays!):
Linda Haworth Christina Reed

Looking ahead:

February 4, 5, 2017

Garden Fest in Vero Beach
3250 Riverside Park Dr., Vero Beach FL

February 25th, 2017

FCBS meeting hosted by FECBS at the Thurrotts' home in Port Orange

March 11, 12, 2017

Leu Gardens Spring Sale
Leu Gardens - 1920 North Forest Avenue
Orlando, FL

March 18, 19, 2017

Kanapaha Gardens Spring Garden Festival – this year's theme is "bamboo gardens"
Admission: \$8, free parking and shuttle.
The Kanapaha Botanical Gardens entrance is on SW Archer Road (State Road 24) 1 mile west of Interstate 75 (exit #384).

April 1st, 2017 (tentative date)

Water-Wise festival on Canal St. in New Smyrna Beach. More info as it becomes available.

April 8th, 2017

Volusia County Master Gardeners Plant Fair
Volusia County Fairgrounds. ½ day only!
8:30-noon

April 22-23, 2017 Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society Spring Sale
Garden Club of Sanford, on 17-92, one block south of Lake Mary Blvd.

April 22-23, 2017(confirmed date)
Bromeliad Society of South Florida annual show and sale.
Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden
10901 Old Cutler Rd., Coral Gables 33156

August 4, 5, 6 2017
Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies' Extravaganza – hosted by the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay
Clarion Hotel

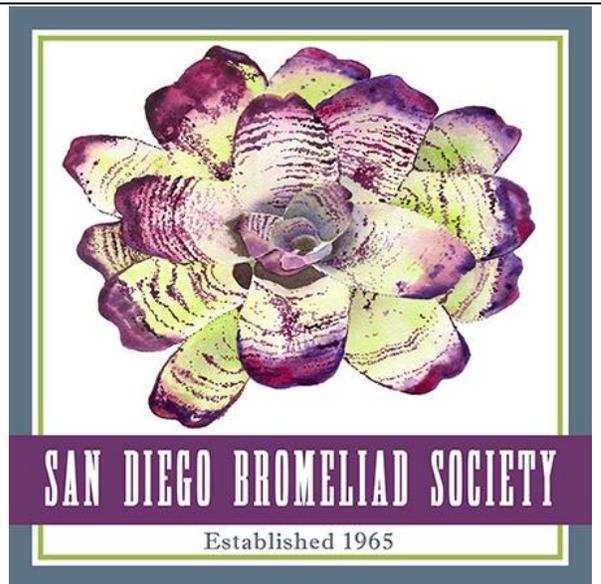
2701 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33612
www.clariontampa.com 813-971-4710

Make your Reservation
Ask for Bromeliad Extravaganza Rate
\$75.00 for single or double.
\$85.00 for triple/quad.
Complimentary hot breakfast included.
Rate guaranteed by hotel until July 13, 2017

[Registration Form](#)

Room rate \$75 with free parking Registration fee is \$125, includes a barbecue on Friday night and banquet on Saturday night.
You won't want to miss this one!

May 29 – June 3, 2018
BSI World Bromeliad Conference in San Diego, California
Plan now for what is sure to be an exciting event!



Register early : download the registration form and flyer from the website:
www.bsi/new.org.

