

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Sunday, September 9th

Meet at LaCosta Village - 1275 LaCosta Blvd.

September, 2019

Let's Pot-up Those Pups!

Co-Presidents – Jack Dunlop and Chuck Mamale

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If you're like me, you tend to put off things until the last minute...and those things include separating *Neoregelia* pups from their mothers and giving them their own pots. Well, don't put this task off much longer because once October arrives, the Neos. will no longer be in their active growing season in our area of the state. Those pups that are removed too late in the season will not easily establish themselves during our winter months and it is far better to wait until spring before removing them from their parent plants.

October should also be the end of the season for fertilizing your bromeliads. After October any fertilizer applied will generally be wasted on your plants...and you also run the risk of encouraging those same plants to put on new growth when they should be consolidating what they've already produced in anticipation of colder weather.

Something else to think about as our fall season approaches is that as your plants' growth slows or halts altogether, their ability to tolerate "wet feet" or soggy potting mixes also diminishes. Watch your watering practices! The two times of the year when I am most likely to lose a plant due to it rotting off at the base are in the late Fall (when we can still get some pretty frequent rain storms)

and in early Spring (when the plants are still semi-dormant and unable to utilize water as efficiently as they do in the Summer time).

Of course, as Fall approaches, you should also be thinking about what you intend to do to protect your bromeliads when (not if!) we receive warning that a cold front is on its way and temperatures are expected to plunge to near or below freezing. Unless you plan on treating your plants like annuals and simply discarding them after they're heavily damaged by cold weather, now is the time to develop your plan to "winterize" your collection. Keep in mind that when the temperature drops to the low 30s, those plants that are mounted on wood will be seeing the same temperature as your outdoor thermometer. Those bromeliads that are in pots will retain a bit of warmth in the potting mix from earlier in the day and will probably be seeing temperatures a few degrees higher than those that are mounted. Finally, those that are in the ground will be protected by the warmth retaining properties of the soil around them and are typically the last to suffer damage from cold weather. Keep in mind though that plant damage from frost should also be a concern of yours, particularly since frost can occur at temperatures higher than the freezing point

and while frost damage rarely kills a plant like freezing temperatures, frost damage to leaves can be very severe and result in a plant so ugly that it hurts your feelings each time that you look at it until the next generation of pups comes along.

This Month's Meeting:

We're extremely fortunate to live in a state with so many bromeliad resources. We have at least 11 bromeliad clubs spread across the state so that wherever you live in Florida, a bromeliad society is close by. On top of that, we have several top-notch botanical gardens that have wonderful bromeliad collections to visit and view as well as a number of great commercial bromeliad nurseries. We don't often think about it, but another state that is rich in bromeliad clubs, gardens and nurseries is California. In fact, California is the birthplace of the Bromeliad Society International! One of our former FECBS members moved to Northern California a few years ago and, of course Calandra and I have made a few trips to the Golden State to visit her since that move. This month we'll be sharing some photos of private and public bromeliad collections in Northern California where you will see some plants that we can't easily grow in Florida and some plants that we grow in Florida, but when grown in California can look very different.

Last Month's Meeting:

Last month we became acquainted with the word "vermiculture" and were treated to a very interesting presentation by Bernie Moro of Our Vital Earth, Inc. Bernie talked to us about how she and her husband had started the company and learned how best to raise a very specific type of worm to not only eat household organic kitchen waste (that would take up space in landfills), but that also produces useable products in the form of worm castings and "worm tea" to benefit soil and plants in that soil. Bernie brought examples of these products for sale and we'll be very interested in hearing from

our members as they use these in their bromeliad culture.



Bernie Moro of Our Vital Earth



Home Show at Ocean Center

Once again Ron Tucholski and his loyal band of display engineers have put together an outstanding bromeliad display – this time at the Ocean Center in Daytona Beach for the Fall Home and Garden Show.



Co-presidents Chuck Mamale and Jack Dunlop with Ron Tucholski begin to put together their masterpiece.



Once the table has been placed, Ron places stands to elevate some of the plants that will be placed in the display.



The final product.



The addition of clay pipes and chimney pieces were used to great effect...but, boy were they heavy!

Out and About:

Billbergia have always been known as bromeliads with the most beautiful, but unfortunately short-lived inflorescences. Club member Sherrie Thompson sent us this photo of a Billbergia bloom at its peak in color. Thank you Sherrie!



...and Bill Hazard sent us this one – a close-up of the flowers on the inflorescence of a Puya mirabilis. This is a Genus not often seen around here (you will see more Puyas in bloom in this month's program!), but for those wishing to grow a Puya this is a good choice as it is quite small (for a Puya) and manageable and is occasionally available from bromeliad sources.



Flowers of *Puya mirabilis* are quite large and arranged step-wise on the bloom spike.

You just never know where or when you are going to find bromeliads. They seem to pop up in the most unlikely places and here's a case-in-point. Like most of us, I tend to take the same route over and over again to get to a familiar destination. When I go to the grocery store I always go down the same street, turn at the same stop sign and continue until I'm at the store. Recently, my usual route was a bit congested due to school being back in session, so I decided to run onto a different road.

I was just a few blocks away from my home when I noticed the front yard of this house looked somehow different from the front yards of the neighbors on either side:



This homeowner decided to avoid the usual grass lawn in his front yard.

I just had to look a little closer and saw this:



Dozens of pineapple plants completely cover the front yard of this house in Port Orange.

The entire front yard of this house was planted with pineapples - dozens and dozens of pineapple plants. Sometimes the "road less travelled" can provide a few surprises! Now I have to remember to drive by this house more often - if all of those pineapple plants develop pineapples at the same time, it should be quite a sight. I hope that the homeowner is aware that as those pineapples develop fruit there will likely be many pairs of eyes also watching for the best time to harvest a tasty snack - raccoons are a common sight in the neighborhood and often are the first in line to pick a ripe pineapple!

This photo was sent in by Judy Rodriguez of Palm Coast and is a bromeliad growing in the yard of club member Merrill Stass-Isern. They don't know the name of the plant and are interested to hear if anyone out there can identify it.



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

Looking ahead:

September 20 – 21, 2019

2019 Bromeliad Extravaganza

Sponsored by the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies and hosted by the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida. Registration is \$100/person which Saturday night Italian buffet, raffle and silent auction, seminars and rare plant auction. Location: [SpringHill Suites](#) & [TownePlace Suites](#), 8040 Palm Parkway, Orlando Lake Buena Vista (near Disney Springs). This is a Marriott property with the two hotels being connected. The rate will be \$85 per night (taxes are additional).



The rare plant auction at a recent Extravaganza – they're not all plants that are auctioned off!

When you make your reservations you must mention The Bromeliad Extravaganza for this special rate. You can call today. The hotels will also have a limited number of rooms 5 days

before and 5 days after at the same rate for those that might wish to make a vacation at Walt Disney World or the other area attractions. This rate also includes a complimentary hot breakfast. The rooms at Towneplace Suites include a kitchenette. The rooms at SpringHill Suites include a mini fridge and microwave and a pull out (trundle) sofa bed. **Make sure that you indicate which hotel you prefer when you call to make your reservations - either SpringHill or Towneplace.** You can call and make your reservations and mention The Bromeliad Extravaganza for your special rate. You can call today. No Extravaganza registration is required. Either 407-635-8500 or 407-239-4005. The hotels have provided a link for online registration for this event.

The \$85 rate is good from Tuesday, September 17th to Tuesday, September 24th. The taxes are an additional 12.5% which comes out to \$21.25, so your confirmation should show \$191.25 for two nights. Last day to book is Saturday August 17th.



One of many beautiful bromeliads available at the plant sale.

Oct. 11, 12, 2019

Southwest Bromeliad Guild Show --
International Cryptanthus Society
Show. Emerald Beach Hotel directly on the
Bay 1102 South Shoreline Blvd. Corpus
Christi, Texas.

October 25-27, 2019

Tropiflora Fall Festival
3530 Tallevast Rd, Sarasota
941/351-2267

Nov. 8-10, 2019

Fairchild Gardens Ramble
10901 Old Cutler Rd.
Coral Gables Fl. 33156
Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Show and
Sale, Araba Shrine Temple in Fort Myers.

March 2020

Bromeliad Society of South Florida annual
show and sale. Date to be determined.

June 9 -13, 2020 I know – that’s a long
way ahead, but it will be here before you
realize, so you should start your plans today
for the BSI World Conference (WBC2020)
in Sarasota, Fl. It’s not often that a World
Conference is held right here in our own
backyard (well, across the state from us
anyway), so this will be an excellent
opportunity for our members to see what
these events are all about! Watch future
newsletters for details!

Happy Birthday!

George Aldrich
Donald Irvin
Mary McBride
Rick Ryals
Merrill Stass-Isern
Sherrie Thompson
Ron Tucholski

