

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, October 8th, 2017 1:30pm.

Colony in the Wood – club house

4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

October, 2017

Clean-up Duty!

President – Rick Ryals 386/679-8700

**Co-Vice Presidents – Hedy Quirk and Jane Villa-Lobos
386/847-4513 and 386/446-0341**

Secretary – Rose Vincel 386/453-3229

Treasurer – Eve Krauth 386/871-1041

Last month's meeting – Hurricane Irma!

Our September meeting was cancelled due to the approaching hurricane and I hope that all of you made it through that storm without serious incident. Between the email notice that was sent out informing you of this and the phone calls to those who don't have email (thank you Harriet for helping with those phone contacts) I hope that we reached everyone concerning the cancellation. I know – you had your hearts set on “**bromeliad bingo**” and that's why it is rescheduled this for this month!



It didn't matter where you were in Florida – this storm was big enough to cover the whole state!

Many of our members have reported that they survived just fine, but now are looking at a monumental clean-up. Some of our folks had their electricity interrupted for periods of time ranging from a few minutes to several days and many of you had trees down as a result of the high winds.

If you were among those who evacuated before the storm made landfall, you may have faced countless hours of creeping along with traffic on the interstates as large numbers of Floridians headed north. And then there were countless hours in traffic again as you returned after the hurricane left the state. Whether you stayed at home or evacuated, the chore facing you now is to clean up the debris left behind by Irma and let's all hope that no more hurricanes threaten us this season!



This pine tree proved no match for hurricane Irma as it tore its way through Florida - leaving many of us without power and a huge mess in its wake.



Alcantarea extensa in the Thurrott's yard was 5 feet across and 3 feet high. Now it's only 2 feet high after a piece of the pine tree in the above photo landed on it!



Twig from a tree split this leaf when it landed – one of many thousands of twigs to clean up and one of many plants damaged by the storm.

Fall has arrived!

...and I know for many of us, it's a relief to know that with the days growing shorter, the temperatures are dropping and it's not quite as steamy outside as it was just a few weeks ago. After comparing last year's electric bills with this year's, I've got to think that this has been an especially hot summer, so I'm looking forward to not only relief from the heat, but also relief from my energy bills!

Fall is also the time to finish up those garden chores before Winter arrives. For those of us in east central Florida, October marks that last month that we should be separating and potting up Neoregelia offsets. I had noticed many years ago that Neo.

offsets removed after October didn't seem to do as well as those potted up both earlier than now and in the Springtime. To confirm that I even tried a little experiment using offsets from Neoregelia 'Charm' – a plant that is usually pretty generous with pups and very easy to grow. I removed and potted up 3 pups in late October and left 3 more on the parent plant to be removed and potted in the Spring. Sure enough, those that were removed and started in the Spring (even though they were the same size as those removed and potted in October) established themselves better, matured quicker and overall, looked much healthier than those that were potted in October. Since then, I've made it a practice to only remove Neoregelia pups from March to early October. Maybe it's just me, but my plants look much better for this.

Fall is also the time to check your watering practices – your plants will be responding to the shorter days by not utilizing as much water as they had been during the long hot days of Summer and you don't want them to be sitting in a wet potting mix in cooler temperatures. Fungus and rot organisms are very quick to respond to such things and are much easier to prevent than control.

Regarding fertilizers – your bromeliads will not be taking up nutrients like they were just weeks ago, so you can stop fertilizing through the upcoming months until Spring returns to our area. I was advised by a commercial bromeliad nursery grower many years ago that if you fertilize your bromeliads during Fall and Winter months, you are just wasting your fertilizer. I see now what she meant and besides wasting that fertilizer you also run the risk of spurring your plants into making new, tender growth right at a time when they may be the most susceptible to damage from sudden cold spells

Finally, it's not too early to begin thinking about what you are going to do when the weather man on the 11 o'clock

news says “better bring in those pets and cover the plants...” (or is it the other way around?) It’s not unusual to have one or more nights in November when the temperature plummets to near freezing or lower. When you awake to lawns covered with a light frost in the morning, the damage may have already been done to your plants. As you know, very few bromeliads tolerate temperatures around the freezing point and some of them are downright sissies when it comes to cold weather. You’ve worked hard to build a collection of nice bromeliads - don’t lose them by not having a freeze-protection plan in mind when we have our first “arctic clipper”!

This month’s meeting –

Dr. Terrie Bert was planning on entertaining and educating us with her latest program, but unfortunately has to stay closer to home to work on cleaning up from the storm and providing shelter for her bromeliads before they burn up in the hot sun. She sends her regrets at cancelling her program and hopes that we will invite her to again address our group next year. That’s the bad new – the good news is that Bromeliad Bingo is going to happen this month!



Out and about...

Our younger daughter (and former member of FECBS) moved from Ormond

Beach to California and, in so doing, gave us an excuse to visit some of the California bromeliad clubs while visiting her and her husband in the Bay area. Growing conditions in California are quite different from those in east central Florida (dry, dry, dry!) and, as a result, some of the plants that we routinely grow in our yards don’t do so well there...and some bromeliads that they easily cultivate are rarely seen in our area. One example of this is the soft-leaved *Tillandsia somnians*.



Tillandsia somnians winding through a fence in downtown San Francisco. Notice the bloom from a plant outside of this picture but extending into the center of the photo.

Something of a rarity in Florida bromeliad collections, I first saw this plant in Gainesville in Ron Schoenau’s collection. His plant is healthy enough, but never takes on that rich, dark red hue that characterizes the California plants.



Tillandsia somnians in the collection of the San Francisco society’s treasurer Harold Charns.

I am told that *T. somnians* is native to NW Peru, where it can be found at elevations up to 2,400m (although the first collected

example was found outside of Lima at an elevation of just 600m) and maybe that's why it seems to be happier with California's cooler nights and higher altitudes than with what we can typically provide in Florida. The growth habit of this plant is somewhat unusual in that it produces an inflorescence with floral bracts and flowers at the terminal end of a very long spike, followed by the development of more plants along that same spike in a "daisy chain" fashion. Each of these plants then matures, produces its own long inflorescence and more plants develop along that spike, and so on...until there is a tangled thicket of many plants!

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. 3212

Birthdays for October:

Wow! There are lots of October babies in our group! Happy Birthday to the following FECBS members:

Susan Amon	Frankie Breslin
Wini Irvin	Stanley Marye
John Quirk	Brad Rauch
Pamela Reisen	Lynn Rounseville
Ray Trzeciak	

Looking ahead:

October 6-8 and 13 – 15
Searle Brothers Nursery 19th annual
Extravaganza plant sale
6640 SW Ranches, Fl. 33331
954/658-4317

www.rainforestcollection.com
October 20, 21, 22 – EFG Orchid's
Orchtoberfest
EFG Orchids / Power Plant
4265 Marsh Road
DeLand, FL. 32724

386-490-6924
Open: Tuesday - Sunday 10-5 p.m.
efg.orchids@gmail.com

October 21, 22 – SW Guild meeting and judged show in Dallas, TX.

October 28th – Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies meeting, hosted by the Bromeliad Society of South Florida

December 2, 3 – Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society show and sale. 9 – 4 on Saturday; 10 – 4 on Sunday.

Location: ARABA SHRINE TEMPLE 2010
Hanson Street Fort Myers, FL 33901



Florida East Coast
BROMELIAD SOCIETY
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