

Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society of Tampa Newsletter



www.bromeliadguildoftampabay.org

October 2022

From the President:



Hi all,

I hope that all of our members and friends are safe after Hurricane Ian came our way. Let's help out our neighbors and friends clean up and get back to what we do best: play with our plants.

Thanks to Jason Mellica of Advanced Bromeliads for the presentation on how to hybridize bromeliads; we learned some interesting concepts about dominant traits that we want in our plants.

Thanks to all that came out to USF Fall Festival and helped out at our booth. It's a great opportunity to tell other plant people about bromeliads and our club.

Julie

USF PLANT FESTIVAL OCTOBER 8-9 2022



Steve, Robert, Kenneth and Anthony



Julie, Marcia, Jill, Marilyn and Larissa



Jill, Cheryl and Robert with a Customer





**Bromeliad Meeting
 Monday, October 17, 2022
 Meeting starts at 7:00 p.m.
 American Legion Building
 6918 N Florida Ave., Tampa, FL 33604
 Guest Speaker: Dave Johnston
 “Biogenetics Part 1”**

Dave Johnston will be sharing some of his knowledge at our October meeting. He was asked to tell us about himself: My interest in Bromeliads began in 1985 when I purchased the only 2 Bromeliads that Frank’s nursery had for sale. A Cryptanthus Pink Starlight and a Neoregelia carolinae type. Soon thereafter, I learned there were Bromeliad clubs that shared similar interests which I joined.

By 1990, I had acquired so many Bromeliads – I launched Bromeliads Galore a collector’s nursery. Over the past 36 years, I acquired over 2000 different species and hybrids. As time passed, I became much more sensible and significantly scaled back the number of plants I grow to over 1000 different now.

As for club bio. I have served 5 terms as President of The Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay and 2 terms as President of the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society. I have pretty much served every office there is in these clubs in addition to the Florida Council.

BTPST MEETING SEPTEMBER 19, 2022 SNAPSHOTS



Sales Before the Meeting



Raffle Business



Birthday Plant Ortho. galactic warrior
 Donated by Julie Lessard



Birthday Plant Won by
 Shellie Sweet



Show and Tell - Tom Wolfe
 Wittrockia superba



Speaker - Jason Mellica

**Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society of Tampa
Minutes of Meeting September 19, 2022**

Business Meeting Called to Order by President, Julie Lessard

Program: Presented by Jason Mellica: "Rise of the Tiger Neos". Jason talked about his hybrids and the process of hybridizing. He learned about hybridizing from Chester Skotak, Lisa VanZant, Grant Groves, and Ray Coleman.

Treasurer's report: by Rick Hunter. Will be filed for audit.

Raffle Plants: were introduced by Tom Wolfe

Show and Tell: Tom Wolfe - Wittrockia superba

New Business: Discussion of USF Fall Festival (10/8 and 10/9 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Setup will be Friday, 10/7, at noon. Teardown will be on Sunday at 3:00 p.m. We are buying plants from Marty Baxley wholesale and will sell them retail. Volunteers are needed and will receive free admission to the festival.

Birthday Plant: Orthophytum galactic warrior donated by Julie Lessard, won by Shellie Sweet

Meeting adjourned

Refreshments

Raffle

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Byram

Aechmea pineliana

By Tom Wolfe

Aechmea pineliana is a medium size handsome plant that, when well grown in adequate light, has a rosy silver sheen on the foliage. It can take full sun with adequate air movement. Also it is cold hardy as low as 25°. In the shade the leaves are greenish silver with elongated leaves. The plant usually stands 14" to 16" tall.

This species blooms in Florida during the months of February and March. They are more colorful if grown on lava rocks or driftwood as opposed to being grown in pots.

This species also has a variety called *minuta* which is considerably smaller than the former. *Aechmea pineliana* var. *minuta* was collected by Mulford Foster in open forests in the state of Espirit Santa, Brazil over 70 years ago.

It is a sturdy little species which at all times appears to be in prime condition.

It always assumes a pleasing rosette shape and even when neglected the leaves never burn or show brown tips.

The inflorescence lasts in good color for many months.



Aechmea pineliana
Grown by Dr. Karl Green
2017 BSSF Show
Photo: Carol Wolfe

Aechmea pineliana var. *minuta*

Grown by Tom Wolfe
Photo: Carol Wolfe



Citation: Padilla, V. 1972 *Journal of the Bromeliad Society* Vol. XXII, No. 4, pg. 104



Alcantarea imperialis

Alcantarea is an impressive, stately looking plant, especially when in bloom. In 1995, a taxonomist removed it from the genus Vriesea to the genus Alcantarea. The genus Alcantarea is endemic to Brazil occurring in the states of Bahia, Minas Gerais, Espirito Santo, Rio de Janeiro, and San Paulo. They grow on the hot slopes of the Organ Mountains.

The first time I saw A. imperialis in bloom was in 1996 while I was judging the bromeliad show at Fairchild Gardens in Miami, Florida. Bullis Bromeliads brought one in full bloom to the show. It was in its full glory and a fantastic sight to see.

Then the next year, Carol and I took a trip to Longwood Gardens, south of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There we saw several in full bloom in the grand greenhouse as well as in the Roberta Burle Marx rain forest greenhouse.

The Plant can be grown in full sun or bright filtered light. When in full sun the leaves, which measure 6 inches wide and up to 5 feet long, turn a rich maroon. It's a terrestrial that can withstand dry conditions making it a good xeriscape plant.

This plant can take up to 30 years to bloom; however, when it does, it's a spectacular sight with a red branched inflorescence reaching six feet or more.

The delicate yellow flowers which are fragrant emerge from the showy red bracts like yellow points to give the plant a most striking appearance. It produces grassy looking pups at the base of the plant which can be easily removed to start new plants.

We had an *A. imperialis* growing in front of our house for many years. We had the 1989 Christmas Eve freeze of 16° F degrees and below freezing for 72 hours. The plant had reached a height of 5 feet and a width of 5 feet. I covered it with frost cloth and placed a 150 watt light bulb under the cloth but the north wind was too strong and blew the frost cloth off. The plant received damage to the caudex (trunk). However, I cut away the damaged part of the trunk and set the top of the plant in a new hole and to my surprise it continued to grow. Then it came into bloom. Although I removed approximately 2 feet of the trunk the inflorescence still reached 10 feet.



We couldn't remember the date that we received the plant but we knew that it was at least 12 years old plus how many more years, we aren't sure.

This plant is definitely a worthwhile plant to grow. However, it does need plenty of space and time.

Below: *Alcantarea imperialis* at Longwood Gardens





October Birthdays: Happy Birthday to Debra Fulkerson and Rick Hunter



Refreshments

Refreshments for the September meeting will be provided by Carol Wolfe and Jill and Guido Zakaroff



Sunshine Greetings

Please notify Verna Dickey of any illness, surgery, birth of a child, death in the family, or other concerns you or another member may have. Call 813-244-3637 or email vernadickey@aol.com

Officers for 2022

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Bromeliads Online

Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay www.bromeliadguildoftampabay.org



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/366210778024864>

Bromeliad Society International— www.bsi.org

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies— www.fcbs.org

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens— www.selby.org

Bromeliads Online - <http://www.bromeliads.co.nz/index.html>



The Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society of Tampa was established in 1963 as the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay. In July, 2022, it expanded its focus to include other tropical plants. BTPST is affiliated with the following: Bromeliad Society International, The Cryptanthus Society, Inc., Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc., and Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota, FL.

When: Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of every month.
Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Where: American Legion Building, 6918 North Florida Avenue, Tampa

Informative programs, workshops, Show & Tell, plant sales, door prizes, raffle & refreshments

**NEWSLETTER OF THE
BROMELIAD &
TROPICAL PLANT
SOCIETY OF TAMPA
21535 Northwood Dr.
Lutz, Florida 33549**