



# Orlandiana

Newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida

Volume No. 31

Issue No. 08

August 2006

Next Meeting: Monday, August 28, 2006

6:30 pm Refreshments, Members H - M

Where: Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Ave. Orlando

6:30 – 6:55 Member Market

7:00 pm Meeting Starts

**This Month's Program: Hybridizing Bromeliads**

**Out & About With Pam Flesher**

**August 19 & 20**

**Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society**

Fall Tropical Plant Sale at The Garden Club of Sanford

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Contact: Sudi Hipsley at 352-728-5002 or Bud Martin at 321-363-7351

The public is invited. Admission is free.

**September 30**

**Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies' Extravaganza**

Hosted by the Bromeliad Society of South Florida

Miccosukee Resort and Convention Center

500 S.W. 177 Ave., Miami, FL 33194

Phone 305-925-2555 or 877-242-6464 <http://www.miccosukeeresort.com/resort.html>

E-mail: [bromsmiami@aol.com](mailto:bromsmiami@aol.com)

Room rates: single or double \$95.00, Suites \$135.00. Rates in effect until August 29.

Sale, Banquet and Rare Plant Auction will be in the same location.

Special: Spend one night and reserve 2 banquet tickets and you will receive a free copy of Elton Leme's Canistropsis: Bromeliads of the Atlantic Rain Forest!

All banquet attendees will receive a select bromeliad from both Deroose Nursery and Deleon Nuresery.

**November 18 & 19, 2006**

**Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Annual Sale**

Terry Park, 3410 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers, FL

Hours: Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Free Admission. For more information contact Larry Giroux, email: [DrLarry@comcast.net](mailto:DrLarry@comcast.net)  
or Betty Ann Prevatt, email: [bprevattpcc@aol.com](mailto:bprevattpcc@aol.com)

**Don't forget to bring a plant Monday night for the Show and Tell table. We also need plants donated for the silent auction, door prize & raffle tables.**

## **Minutes of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida July 24, 2006**

Treasurer Betsy McCrory called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Betsy requested that someone volunteer to take the minutes due to the absence of the Secretary, Karen Andreas. Gary Signs accepted. Guests and new members were welcomed. There were 41 people present.

Betsy asked to change the order of the evening's agenda to where the business session would be conducted first, membership agreed.

Betsy read President Bob Steven's e-mail letter offering his resignation as President. She recommended to the membership to accept Bob's resignation.

Betsy said that she had talked to Butch Force that afternoon and that Butch had reconsidered and will not resign as Vice President.

The Board had recommended that the controversial motions from the May and June meetings be struck from the minutes. A question followed about having the controversial items from the May and June minutes being deleted and new minutes issued. Betsy stated that if that is what the membership wants and votes for it then it would be done. A question was asked of why the May minutes were reprinted in this month's newsletter. Betsy responded that she had received several requests that they be reprinted in the body of the newsletter as opposed to being an insert.

Show and Tell was conducted with Gary Signs and Steven Wagner talking about the plants that they had brought for the meeting.

Betsy made the announcement that Steven Wagner will be staying on as the editor of the newsletter.

Betsy then addressed the issue of a proposal of new Standing Rules. She explained that these were only suggestions that were being brought before the membership. Copies were passed out (see copy included in newsletter) and Elizabeth King read the text. Questions followed concerning different aspects of the rules. It was requested that the rules be published in the newsletter and time be given to the membership to review the Rules. The request was agreed upon and any ideas or suggestions can be given to Betsy ([407-348-2139/betsymccrory@aol.com](mailto:407-348-2139/betsymccrory@aol.com)), Elizabeth King ([321-268-2591/edwardrking@bellsouth.net](mailto:321-268-2591/edwardrking@bellsouth.net)), or Dean Fairchild ([407-880-8525/Dean\\_F@earthlink.net](mailto:407-880-8525/Dean_F@earthlink.net)) who will work together on them for the next meeting.

A question was raised as to why there was not a Members' Market this month and Betsy responded that she did not know why there wasn't one.

The field trip to DeRoose Nursery in Apopka on Aug. 12<sup>th</sup> was brought up. Postcards and e-mail will be sent out to notify members of the event.

On July 8<sup>th</sup> the Central Florida Bromeliad Society sponsored the Florida Council meeting at a Parks & Recreation facility in Mount Dora. They had a good turn out, BBQ, and the main discussion was on the upcoming Extravaganza. Members need to get reservations in soon before the deadline and need to let the Extravaganza people know as soon as possible if they are planning on selling plants. Information is available on the FCBS website ([www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org)).

Betsy announced the passing of Connie Johnson of South Florida.

Break was called at 7:50; the meeting reconvened at 8:10.

Betsy apologized for not having taken a vote earlier on the issues of striking the controversial motions from the May and June newsletters and the acceptance of Bob's resignation. The motion to strike the motions from the

May and June newsletters was made by Carroll Holland and seconded by John Boardman. The motion passed with one dissenting vote being cast.

Motion was made by Carroll Holland to accept Bob Stevens resignation as President and seconded by Phyllis Baumer. A vote was taken and the motion passed.

Betsy presented the Treasurer's report. Total Assets of the society as of June 2006 is \$14219.35. A question was raised as to how the present balance compared to last year's balance at this time. Betsy stated that she couldn't answer the question because she did not know. A revised report of the Mother's Day sale was given due to the receipt of an additional bill. Total profit from the show was \$2580.49. Betsy made the announcement that the Mother's Day sale at the Fashion Square Mall is set for next year.

A date was not confirmed at Leu Garden for the Society's Christmas/Holiday party in December and nothing is available. Options were discussed as to where the party might be held: restaurant, Dean Fairchild's home, facilities at Langford Park, or the Winter Park Garden Club. Members were encouraged to think of possibilities and the issue will be addressed at the next meeting.

The evening's program was given by Betsy on "Bromeliad Basics". She demonstrated how to remove the top of a pineapple and prep it for planting and covered the basics of: mounting materials, light level, cold protection, watering, fertilization, potting mix, separating pups, and pests. She provided a society handout on general care of bromeliads and answered a number of questions during and at the end of the presentation.

The door prizes were drawn.

There being no further business, the meeting as adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Gary Signs

## **Charcoal, the Forgotten Ingredient**

**by Rex Hardy**

When I was a young man, one of my memories of helping my late father, Stan Hardy, with his cacti in his large glasshouse, was the way he always included charcoal in his potting mixes. Up until quite recently, I always thought the idea of this was to help in the drainage of the potting mix, but finding a small article in one of his cactus books has told me otherwise.

In the days of wood fires, charcoal was plentiful, and the benefit to potting mixes was well recognized. It appears as our wood fires have disappeared from the scene, so has the use of charcoal, yet its benefits are still there.

It should be noted that charcoal has no food value in itself. However, it does have several important uses to plants, and potting mixes. One of the most important is that it acts like a magnet and a sponge collecting and conserving ammonia. This remarkable function is one of the marvels of science, and nobody has been able to explain it. If pieces of charcoal are in the soil, it will be found that roots will cling to them to absorb the collected ammonia. When organic fertilizer decomposes, one of the first products given by the bacteria is ammonia gas. This gas is extremely volatile and easily escapes, but if a grain of charcoal lies next to a grain of fertilizer, it will absorb 80 times its own bulk in ammonia and will hold it – for use of the plant roots. It is the ammonia-forming capacity of bone meal, fishmeal, natural manure, compost and organic fertilizers that we pay for, and the gas should not be allowed to escape.

Charcoal has other equally valuable properties. It is the world's most perfect purifier. It acts as a continuous factory for the destruction of injurious acids. Whenever evil organic gases are given off, charcoal will absorb the odor. A sprinkling of charcoal over the compost heap will not prevent odors but will preserve ammonia.

After purchasing the charcoal, break it into half-inch pieces by placing it on a large piece of plastic and breaking it with a hammer.

**Continued on page 7,**

From the time when I was a young boy, I can remember being fascinated by the process of growing things from seed. Plant a carrot seed or zinnia seed; and given sun, water... and patience... you were rewarded with something tasty to eat or a feast for the eyes. When I got the bromeliad bug as a young college student, it seemed natural to take advantage of the Bromeliad Society seed fund as an inexpensive way to increase my collection. A few years of experience growing bromeliads taught me that only a relatively small percentage would self-pollinate and produce plants that would grow "true" from seed. As my interest evolved, I began to see the possibilities in cross-pollinating different bromeliad flowers and creating hybrids.

What is involved in creating a hybrid? Well, first you have to have two compatible plants to produce pollen and seed. Most bromeliads are quite promiscuous, and if you are certain in your knowledge that a plant is not self-pollinating, then any seed produced by that plant should be of hybrid origin.

Perhaps, a more important aspect of creating a hybrid involves having a vision of what you are trying to create. I would imagine that most of us have been to an arcade where a couple can be photographed, and computer software morphs their images into a single image to project what any progeny would look like. Take two attractive parents, and the offspring usually turn out to be pretty interesting. Ah... well,



plant genetics aren't always so predictable. In some cases, that's where things can get very interesting! Now, when two species are hybridized, the offspring are typically uniform in appearance. Characters of both species can be recognized as an intergrade between the two. But when hybrids are used as the parents, then anyone who is familiar with *Mendel's Laws* will appreciate that the possibility for variation can be very high!

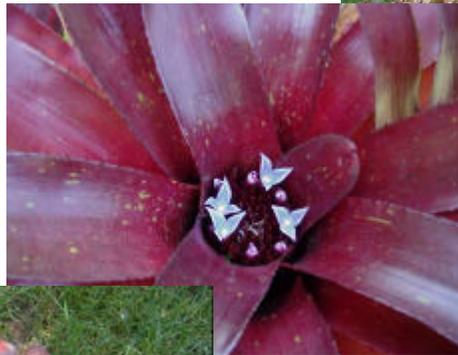
Several years ago, I made a number of hybrid crosses involving variegated bromeliads. My primary objective was to obtain new variegated offspring. I hoped that a relatively high percentage would turn out with variegation, (perhaps growers with more experience would describe my percentage as quite high). Out of approximately a thousand seeds sown, only 4 developed with any sign of variegation. Three of them had very poor contrast though, on what were otherwise unremarkable plants. One plant turned out to be truly spectacular. A hybrid of *Neoregelia* 'Pimiento' (seed parent) and *Neo. carolinae* x 'Painted Lady' x 'Takemura Princeps' x *meyendorffii* (pollen parent) is both variegated and albomarginate to a pleasing degree on a plant which is about 15" in diameter. The somewhat random nature of variegation may or may not prove to be stable. It may still bloom this summer, although next year is more likely. Even without a bloom, this plant commands attention. If the next generation of pups maintain the same appearance, that would help guide me in choosing a name and registering it with the BSI Cultivar registrar.



While I didn't achieve my primary objective with a number of my other crosses, I wasn't entirely without success. Hybridizing Neoregelia 'Fosperior' cv. 'Perfection' (seed parent) with Neo. 'Carousel' produced a number of colorful, dark red progeny approximately 22" in diameter, which held their color very nicely after blooming. Another cross, using Neoregelia 'Fosperior' cv. 'Perfection' (this time as pollen parent) with Neo. 'Dartanian' produced a similarly dark red plant in a more compact 12" diameter, (previous page bottom right corner).

Several crosses (not involving variegated parents) have achieved some very interesting results. One of my favorites used Neo. 'Royal Burgundy' as the seed parent and a previous hybrid I had done using Neo. 'Carousel' x sib. as the pollen parent. A single berry developed with only 3 seeds. A single seed germinated, and developed into the plant pictured below. It is more compact than 'Royal Burgundy' or 'Carousel' (only about 15" across), and holds its color well after blooming.

Another cross, using Neo. 'Royal Burgundy' as seed parent and Neo. cyanea as pollen parent has produced offspring that varied considerably in size, color, intensity of color, and flower color. Most plants mature at 7-10" across, thanks to the influence of Neo. cyanea. (A good size for many northern growers!) The picture below (left) demonstrates some of those differences. The plant pictured in the center shows the finest selection which features the beautiful blue flowers contributed by Neo. cyanea!



A cross that produced some of the most varied results involved Neo. 'Dartanian' as seed parent, and Neo. punctatissima as the pollen parent. The resulting progeny have been uniformly small, and stoloniferous. But the coloring has been remarkably different. Pictured below (left) are 2 plants together out of the same grex, and then a close up of my favorite selection. Both probably deserve to be named and registered.



There WILL BE a Member Market this month

## **Minutes of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida**

**May 22, 2006**

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by vice president Gary Signs. Visitors Shirley Followell and Emma Losh were introduced as were new members Susan and Bob Humeniyk and Roy Laughlin. Jane Russo is also joined as a new member. There were 48 people in attendance.

Sudi Hipsley conducted Show and Tell with the three bromeliads she brought.

The guest speaker was Teresa Watkins, with the Florida Yards and Neighborhoods programs from the University of Florida/IFAS. She spoke on how to integrate bromeliads in the landscape.

A break was called at 8:05 and the meeting was reconvened at 8:15.

Dorothy Mahler is giving up her greenhouse. She will be selling bromeliads on June 10, from 10:00-2:00. Gary said he would send out email with the information and directions.

Betsy McCrory gave the treasurer's report: \$1237.06 in checking; \$11,227.72 in money market; \$35.00 cash on hand; total assets are \$12,499.78. The report was accepted and filed for audit.

Because the newsletter deadline fell in the middle of the Mothers Day Show and Sale, postcards were used as meeting notices for this month. Consequently the minutes for the April meeting were not distributed; they will be included in the June newsletter.

Betsy reported that all the money collected during the Mothers Day Show and Sale has been deposited. She does not have the final tally yet, but it appears that sales were close to last year's sales, which set a record for the society. No one anticipated the amount of sales this year in the new location inside the mall, and by Sunday, there was little stock left. Betsy thanked the committee chairs for their work on behalf of the society; she especially thanked Betty Salvias and Darden restaurants for once again sponsoring the judges' luncheon.

Vice president Gary Signs then announced that, due to differences with members of the board, he was resigning the vice presidency immediately. Because he resigned before the end of the meeting which he was chairing, member Neal Ekengren handled the results of the silent auction, door prize and raffles.

There was no one to formally close the meeting, and it ended at 9:10.

**AS AMENDED July 24, 2006**

Respectfully submitted, Karen Andreas

## **Minutes of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida**

**June 26, 2006**

The meeting was called to order by president Bob Stevens at 7:00 PM. There were 48 people in attendance. Visitors were introduced.

Bob announced that the board of directors has appointed Butch Force vice president. Butch will fill out the remainder of this year's term.

Butch conducted show and tell.

Philip Hamilton from Deleon's orchids was the guest speaker. Mr. Hamilton gave an overview of orchids and their care and demonstrated how to repot. He answered several questions from the audience at the end of his program.

A break was called at 7:50; the meeting reconvened at 8:10.

There being no business the door prizes and raffle plants were distributed.

Meeting adjourned. **AS AMENDED July 24, 2006**

**We need a President and a Secretary, if you are interested in holding one of these positions, please contact Betsy McCrory or Butch Force. Their phone numbers are listed on page 8.**

**Proposed Standing Rules  
BSCF General Meeting  
July 24, 2006**

The following proposed Standing Rules are new and do not replace any existing rules or language.

5. The following principles shall govern plant sales at exhibitions:

e. Members may not sell plants or conduct private sales before the sale opens or before the conclusion of the sales event. This includes during set-up and each day before the sale opens. Members may conduct such private sales only after the event has ended completely, when the BSCF cash register has been closed for the last time. Violation of this Standing Rule will result in the immediate suspension of the member from all sales and the removal of that member's sales items until reviewed by the board of directors with a recommendation to the membership. In a case where the member's plants cannot be removed during the course of the sale, those sales items will be either covered or placed under the tables until the member can return to remove them. In no way will those items continue to be offered for sale; removal of the plants at the appropriate time, are entirely the responsibility of the member.

9. Code of Conduct

The Bromeliad Society of Central Florida expects its members to be respectful of each other and of the public, to behave in an appropriate manner and to resolve any problems in a calm, rational matter. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, verbal abuse, using obscenities or other vulgarity, verbally or physically threatening or harassing other members, fighting or challenging to fight, pushing, shoving, throwing things or other threatening behaviors, violence, sexual misconduct, or any other behavior that threatens the safety and security of others.

Members who violate this code of conduct should be reported immediately to a member of the board of directors or, in the case of a show, sale or other BSCF event, to the event chairman. Members acting in an inappropriate manner will have to leave the event; in the case of a sale, the member's sale items will be removed and the sale of that member's materials will be stopped. In a case where the member's plants cannot be removed during the course of the sale, those sales items will be either covered or placed under the tables until the member can return to remove them. In no way will those items continue to be offered for sale; removal of the plants at the appropriate time, are entirely the responsibility of the member. The matter will be referred to the board of directors which will make a recommendation to the general membership if further action is required.

This code of conduct is to be included in all BSCF show and sales rules, including but not limited to the annual Mothers Day Show Schedule and the BSCF rules for the annual Harry P. Leu Gardens Sales.

**Charcoal, the Forgotten Ingredient, continued from page 7**

Further benefits that plants receive by incorporating some charcoal in your potting mix:

1. It helps to stop damping off of seedlings.
2. When cuttings are started in water, it encourages root growth as well as keeping the water fresh.
3. Charcoal in potting mixes also sweetens the soil and saves fertilizer.
4. Last, but not least, it helps to open up the potting mix as well as helping in the drainage.

**Do not use charcoal from the grocery store that is for grilling.** This article last appeared in the January 2003 Caloosahatchee Meristem, newsletter of The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society.

**The Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, Inc. was formed in 1972 to encourage the exchange of information concerning the culture, identification and hybridization of the plant family *Bromeliaceae*; to promote & maintain public interest in bromeliads and to assist in the preservation of all bromeliads for future generations.**



Meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of every month from 7-9 PM at Harry P. Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Avenue in Orlando. For directions: 407.246.2620 or [www.leugardens.org](http://www.leugardens.org). You'll enjoy informative programs, Show & Tell, plant sales, refreshments & door prizes. Members also receive a monthly newsletter — all for only \$10 per member, plus \$2 per additional family member (no charge for full-time students). Visitors are always welcome.



BSCF is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International, Inc. and a member of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. and the Cryptanthus Society.

BSCF is a nonprofit Florida corporation recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to this society are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.



<b>President</b>			
<b>Vice President</b>	<b>Butch Force</b>	<a href="mailto:LForce6766@aol.com">LForce6766@aol.com</a>	407.539.4814
<b>Secretary</b>			
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Betsy McCrory</b>	<a href="mailto:betsymccrory@aol.com">betsymccrory@aol.com</a>	407.348.2139
<b>Librarians</b>	<b>Phyllis Baumer</b>	<a href="mailto:Phylbau@aol.com">Phylbau@aol.com</a>	407.851.1635
	<b>Sudi Hipsley</b>	<a href="mailto:sudii@earthlink.net">sudii@earthlink.net</a>	352.728.5002
<b>Editor</b>	<b>Steven Wagner</b>	<a href="mailto:TDWAMMER@cfl.rr.com">TDWAMMER@cfl.rr.com</a>	407.766.7875
<b>Mailing</b>	<b>Betsy McCrory</b>		
<b>FCBS Rep</b>	<b>Betsy McCrory</b>		

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Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, Inc.  
 PO Box 536961  
 Orlando, FL 32853-6961  
*Address Correction Requested*

## August 2006

**Next Meeting: Monday, August 28, 2006**

**Time:** 6:30pm Refreshments  
 6:30pm Member Market  
 7:00pm Meeting begins

**Refreshments: H - M**

**Program: Hybridizing Bromeliads**