



# THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY'S

## MERISTEM

*Mar-Apr 2025*



*Pitcairnia* Stephen Hoppin Hybridizer Jim Irvin Photo by Larry Giroux

# CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OFFICERS

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**PRESIDENT— Julie Stein 919-522-1182 FLAGIRL56@aol.com**

**Past— PRESIDENT— Vicky Chirnside 941 928-3111 (dampearth@me.com)**

**Vice-PRESIDENT— Dale Kammerlohr 863-558-0647  
(dzdaze@embarqmail.com)**

**SECRETARY— Alison Ackerman 239-851-3176 (Alison@spikowski.com)**

**TREASURER—Betty Ann Prevatt 239-229-7781 (bprevattpcc@aol.com)**

## STANDING COMMITTEES CHAIRPERSONS

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR—Larry Giroux 239-850-4048 (DrLarry7@gmail.com)**

**FALL SALES CHAIR—Brian Weber 941-256-4405 (brianweber1b@hotmail.com)**

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**WORKSHOP CHAIRPERSON—Acting Chair: Julie Stein**

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**Larry Giroux 239-850-4048 Drlarry7@gmail.com**

## OTHER COMMITTEES

**DOOR PRIZE—Debbie McPhail 239-332-4607 or 239-910-3836 ;**

**email- deb.mcphail@yahoo.com**

**HOSPITALITY (Monthly Refreshments)—Diane Cornelison 239-233-7037**

**Party Chair—Vacant**

**RAFFLE TICKETS—Greeter/Membership table volunteers—Dolly Dalton, Luli Westra**

**RAFFLE COMMENTARY—Larry Giroux**

**GREETERS/ATTENDANCE—Betty Ann Prevatt; Dolly Dalton (dollyd@comcast.net), Luli Westra**

**SHOW & TELL—Dale Kammerlohr 863-558-0647**

**FM-LEE GARDEN COUNCIL—Alison Ackerman 239-851-3176 Alison@spikowski.com**

**LIBRARIAN—Vacant**

**MARCH AUCTION CHAIR—Larry Giroux 239-850-4048 DrLarry7@gmail.com**

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# THE CALOOSAHATCHEE BROMELIAD SOCIETY

**March Auction: Sunday, Mar 16th, 2025**  
**Due to Easter Sunday falling on the 3rd Sunday our**  
**April Party will be: Sunday, Apr 27th, 2025**

Our March and April Meetings will be at the  
Ft. Myers- Lee County Garden Council Building  
2166 Virginia Ave. Fort Myers.

The facility is north of the Edison Gardens parking lot and about 1/2 miles north of our previous meeting location— Covenant Presbyterian Church. Virginia Ave is approximately 3 miles north of the intersection of Colonial Blvd. and McGregor Blvd. and is the 2nd Street north of the Edison Gardens

For the March Meeting Please bring food and donations for our Annual Auction.

Our Birthday Party will be held in April at the Garden Council Building

There will be NO membership sales allowed at the March or April meetings.

Please Note that the CBS Board has changed the SCHEDULE of our meetings to accommodate our out of town speakers.

12:30 – 1:15 Doors open, check-in, membership, door prize tickets, raffle ticket sales, members donate refreshments & raffle plants, Show & Tell area set-up, speaker or member plant sales

1:15 – 2:15 Call to order, announcements, and featured Program

2:15 – 2:45 Door Prize followed by Refreshments. Plant sales continue

2:45 – 3:15 Business meeting followed by Workshop

3:15 – 4:00 Show & Tell & Raffle drawing followed by Adjournment and Clean-Up

Surprisingly, a number of members did not pay their 2024 dues. Please catch up for 2025. MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2025 ARE DUE in January Please contact Betty Ann Prevatt and RENEW. Membership renewal fees are \$15/20 single/dual; New member dues: \$20/25, single/dual payable by check or cash at the meeting or by mail to Betty Ann Prevatt, CBS Treasurer 2902 Second Ave. Fort Myers, FL 33916

The Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society is an active Affiliate of:



Cryptanthus Society



BSI



FCBS



FM/LC GC

**Annual March “Evil Weevil Auction**  
**Date: March 16th 2025 Place: Garden Council Building**

It is March and the CBS will be hosting our annual Fund raising Auction at the Garden Council Building on Virginia Ave. , Fort Myers. The money made benefits our Society and the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

We split the money made after expenses with the CBS and the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, who uses it to help to continue research and the eradication of the Mexican Weevil, also known as the “Evil Weevil”. For over 2 1/2 decades the CBS has been a major contributor to the fight against this weevil, which is decimating native bromeliads in habitat in our State and the bromeliads in our collections. The weevil is in our environment, our gardens and if you experienced screen damage from Hurricane Ian, Helene or Milton most likely it has sneaked into your collections. For the latest information and updates on how to combat this pest, go to [www.FCBS.org](http://www.FCBS.org).

Each year we ask the membership to donate nice plants and plant related items to be auctioned. These can include bromeliads, orchids, other tropical plants, tools, art work and collectibles. The items are split between a “silence auction” and a regular auction. This makes it possible for our members to bring in desirable, less expensive items as well as the possibly higher ticket items. All donations are appreciated. The more the better. There are always bargains to be had and we always have fun.

We do the auction in lieu of our March meeting. We still have refreshments, but no Sales, Program, Workshop, Show and Tell or Raffle. Please still bring food for the Break. Of course any and all items are appreciated and will help. The Society business is kept to a minimum. The following is the schedule we will try to keep to leave at a decent time.

**11:30AM-12:00 Noon:** The location will be the same as last year and the procedure will be similar. Volunteers should arrive at the LCFMGC building to begin setup of tables and chairs about 11:30 AM. Starting about then we need bodies to help in a variety of areas- Setup, record keepers, runners, people to fill out donation tags, holding area keepers and people to show the items and pass out the winners’ successful winning stubs.

**12:15-1:45PM:** We will be accepting donations such as bromeliads, other tropical plants, bromeliad and gardening related items, books and art. Bromeliads should be clean and healthy and appropriately labeled. If you are unsure about the name ask other members for an ID. Certain items will be selected from donations for the SILENT AUCTION. All items will be numbered and labeled and will be displayed until the Auction begins. Please register for

your bidding number at this time. You can not bid in either Auction without a number.

**1:15 PM- 2:15 PM:** Refreshment Break This is the time for review of auction items and submission of bids for Silent Auction items, which will be set up on side tables. Each item will have a bidding sheet for you to write your bidding number and an offer. Bidders can continuously up the bid as they wish. Bidding will continue until the Silent Auction items are randomly selected and sold to the bidder who has bid the highest. Please bear with us, we will still be receiving donations and labeling them until about 1:45PM, so things may look like a mad house!

**2:15 PM:** We take our seats and the Auction will begin following a brief business meeting and/or announcements from our President. During the Auction, Silent Auction items will be randomly removed and the winner will be announced. Until an item is taken to the auctioneer who will announce the winner, you may continue to raise your written offer. The auctioneer will with the assistance of those who brought the item or other commentators, describe the item and auction off the items to the highest bidder during the regular Auction. After an item has been won it will be returned to a holding area or may be given directly to the winner. You will be given a claim stub with the price you bid and the item's number, immediately after you have won an item.

**Conclusion of Auctions:** At the completion of the auction you take your claim stubs to the cashiers and pay for your items with cash or check. After you have paid for your items, the claim stubs will need to be shown to the workers in the holding area...so hold on to them. Your items will be handed over to you if they haven't already been given to you when you won it. We ask that you help us avoid any confusion. We want everybody to get exactly what they have won as quickly as possible without mistakes. Please note that this year we will again be using a two part ticket; one part stays with the plant and the winning bidder receives one part immediately after winning the item, which they will need to claim their winnings. This makes it possible for bidders to check out early since you will know exactly what you owe by adding up your stubs; however, we encourage members to stay until the completion of the Auction when we will have several people available to check you out.

**Please come to the Auction and have some fun while supporting the CBS and the FCBS with donations and the purchase of items. As in past years, 1/2 of the proceeds after expenses will be donated to the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies. We have been generous donors for as long as I can remember. We are acknowledged by the FCBS as their number one Affiliate contributor to the Council's projects including the "Evil Weevil Eradication Program". We all can take much pride in this accomplishment.**

**45th Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society's Anniversary Party**  
**Ft. Myers– Lee County Garden Council Building**  
**2166 Virginia Ave. Fort Myers.**  
**Sunday, April 27th 2025**

The 45th Anniversary of the founding of the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society by a small dedicated group of people headed by Gene McKenzie will be celebrated this year at the location we have our



A large clump of *Aechmeas* growing at the Edison/ Ford Winter Estates. Photo by Larry Giroux

general meetings...the Ft. Myers– Lee County Garden Council Building

2166 Virginia Ave. Fort Myers. The reason for having it here rather than at a private home is because the Edison/ Ford Winter Estates has invited us to tour the Bromeliad Gardens

located across the street from the Garden Council Building. For many years Tom Cowell, Debbie Hughes

and the staff of the Edison/ Ford Winter Estates with donations from so many generous bromeliad growers and sellers have created a large colorful area devoted to bromeliads. This will be a great opportunity for our members to explore this beautiful asset to our area.

Members are asked to bring a favorite pot luck dish to share, such as casseroles, vegetables with dip, little sandwiches, cakes, cookies and about anything else that is edible. CBS supplies the paper and plastic goods, iced tea, punch and a meat entree. If you prefer other cold drinks, bring your own, there will be plenty of ice. Please bring small tables and chairs.

Try to arrive around noon with your goodies so that the tables can be arranged buffet style. For those of you that cannot get there early, don't worry it is always closer to 1PM or later that we start to eat and the festivities begin.

After lunch there will be a raffle of bromeliad plants and items brought by members as gifts (no, you don't have to wrap and ribbon them). But, they should be nice, clean bromeliads or bromeliad related items that anyone would want to win. We have opened donations to other plant families such as orchids, ferns, fruit trees, native plants, etc. We are a diverse group of growers, who enjoy many different plants, so if you have extras of other types of plants donate them to our special

holiday raffle. Tickets are still 3/\$1, so buy a lot. Friendship Plants are also welcome... these are those extra plants from your garden that might be of value to other members. These freebies are always appreciated. But please, please...make sure you spray your plants or wash them very well...we don't want any members to bring diseases back to their collection.

New members or anyone that needs more information, contact your Editor Larry Giroux at 239-850-4048 or Julie Stein at 919-522-1182. Bring your significant other, friends and relatives and expose them to our hobby, while enjoying the hospitality of our society. If there is any additional information we will pass it on as the date draws near.

## RESERVE SUNDAY, APRIL 6th 2025

### Garden Tour of Lyle & Robyn Bowen's Home

For those of you who have been visiting the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society's Facebook page, you are aware of the renovations that Lyle Bowen, a major contributor to our Facebook page, has made since Hurricane Ian, to his beautifully landscaped yard. Prior to the Hurricane, Lyle has hosted tours of his yard and bromeliad sales. On April 6th, he is opening his gardens to members of the garden clubs of Lee County again. In addition he may have some plants for sale during the our visit. Don't forget your camera! Go to Groups at Facebook and check out the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Facebook page.

Location: EAGLE RIDGE (Off of Daniel's Parkway) 7460 Twin Eagle Lane Fort Myers

Date: APRIL 6th 2025

Time: 10:00 AM to 3 PM

Photos of the restoration of Lyle's gardens since Ian. Photos by Lyle Bowen.



## Minutes of the CBS General Meeting

LC/FM Garden Council Building     January 19th, 2025

**Call to Order:** 1:19 by President Julie Stein

**Guests:** Cris Bornemann, Chris Tommey, Reggie Wilson

**New Members:** 0; **In Attendance:** 31

**General Meeting:**

**Announcements:** Betty Ann Prevatt presented the report from our annual sale held in December 2024. Our total profit was \$1,970.00. We were able to continue our annual donation of \$1,000.00 to The Edison Ford Estates as a thank you for hosting us each year. We have a good relationship with Debbie Hughes, the horticulturist there. She was in attendance as a member of CBS but also to receive the funds we donated to the Edison.

We discussed and got general opinion from members about the April Birthday party. The regular meeting date falls on Easter Sunday so we moved the party to April 27<sup>th</sup> and it will be held at The Fort Myers Lee County Garden Council Building, the site of our regular meetings. We will be taking a tour of the Edison Ford Estates Bromeliad Gardens during the party. Debbie will be retiring in 2025 and will be working for the Edison a couple of days each week solely to focus on the bromeliad gardens. We look forward to seeing them in April and as they continue to evolve under her care.

**Workshop:** Larry Giroux presented a beautiful slide show he put together called Bromeliads in Every Direction! In addition to featuring bromeliads in Guatemala, he focused on bromeliad collectors and hybridizers from Sam and Hattie Smith, Michael Kiehl and . He had photos from Grant Groves nursery from several years ago and from Lyle Bowen's beautiful gardens in Fort Myers. Buddy Singleton and Dean Fairchild were noted for their contributions as well.

**Program:** Jase Mellica presented his program about his new Neoregelia hybrids. He continues his work to create very sun tolerant, colorful neos for our Florida home gardens. He also featured his Bi-generic creation-a huge *Sincoregelia* that is currently about 5' across and has beautiful color. He starts the pups in a clear plastic cup (with drain holes in the bottom) so he can see the root development and will know when it's time to put it into a 5"-6" pot. He recommends Dynamite fertilizer for bromeliads and he fertilizes them every time he up-pots one. He doesn't fertilize his in ground plants.

**Door Prizes:** We had a couple of nice plants from Jase for our door prize.

**Show and Tell:** Dale spoke about several billbergias that Dave Denholm brought. He also brought a few of his own hybrids that are colorful stoloniferous neos that will create a very nice mass planting and donated a couple to the raffle.

**Raffle:** We had about 10 very nice plants for the raffle. Larry was assisted by Betty Ann.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 4:00 PM

Respectfully submitted by Julie Stein



## Minutes of the CBS General Meeting LC/FM Garden Council Building February 16th, 2025

**Call to order:** 1:12 by President Julie Stein

**In Attendance:** 27; **New Member:** Meyer Berg.

**General Meeting:**

**Announcements:** Julie thanked all the folks who contributed Friendship Plants today, especially from Dale Kammerlohr. There are a huge number this month, which is great.

Dr. Larry Giroux announced that at our next month's meeting, we will hold our annual Auction when we raise money for the FCBS And their Mexican weevil eradication projects and our Society. He encouraged the members to donate some plants for this very important and fun event. Larry also asked if some members could arrive at 11:30 to help set up the tables and chairs and help organize the pre-auction arrangements.

The April Birthday Party will be held this year on April 27, because the regular meeting date falls on Easter. We will host this event right here at the Garden Center. More on this in the next newsletter.

Our new Library Chair, Vicky Chirnside, introduced our well-stocked library to the members and encouraged everyone to take advantage of it by checking out a book or two. Also anyone who has forgotten to return borrowed books, please return them so others can enjoy them.

This year's Extravaganza will be sponsored by the Seminole Bromeliad Society to take place in Kissimmee from September 26-27. Members can visit [www.bromeliadx.com](http://www.bromeliadx.com), to get the details and even sign up on-line.

Alex Bello shared that his society is hosting a huge Bromeliad Show and Sale the weekend of April 12<sup>th</sup> in Miami. He expects between 200-400 entries, some being student art work, something unique to this show.

**Program:** Alex Bello gave an illuminating presentation on *Billbergias*, showing many gorgeous slides. He is the President of the Miami Bromeliad Society, a long-time member of our group as well, and owns a large nursery with thousands of plants he sells all over the world, specializing in Skotak hybrids. Alex shared that he loves how *Billbergias* grow tall and elegant, with interesting banded and spotted leaves. While the flowers may be striking and unique, they only last a few days, but the leaves remain beautiful.

He advised us to grow *Billbergias* in a very an airy mix, and to "never, ever under no circumstances" fertilizer them, as they will become green and leggy. If this happens, however, you can remove the leafy leaves and wait for new pups to emerge. Once they are big enough, you can remove them and throw away the mother. The new pups should be properly colored.

According to Alex, the harder and tougher you grow *Billbergias*, the more colorful they become. They don't want to be too wet or too dry, grown in too much shade or too much sun. Apparently, the less pampering the better. Alex's preferred planting mix, should only be 10% soil, the rest made up of a typical orchid mix including "LECO balls or hydroponic balls" (a Light-

weight Expanded Clay Aggregate).

**Workshop:** Dr. Larry Giroux presented an informative slide show on insects and related pests of bromeliads. Julie and Dale also contributed several observations on the subject. To start, aphids can be troublesome, attaching themselves to stems and flowers. They are so tiny they might not be noticed, but if your plant is smaller than expected, and not thriving, you may want to check for them. Another problem could be thrips which feed on the flowers and foliage, leaving them deformed and blotched. Spider mites are a more common problem; they will leave egg casings which will give you a clue they are present. Insecticidal soap is the best way to eliminate mites.

The most common insect to invade our bromeliads is scale, another sucking pest. You may see a black dot which is actually the insect encased and stuck to the leaf. Then they leave a yellow ring behind, which is another clue. You can scrap them off and then rinse the plant thoroughly to get rid of the eggs. Insecticides usually do not kill the adult scales, so apply only when the crawlers are present. Insecticidal soaps usually require 2-4 applications at 3-7 day intervals.

Mealybugs are a big problem for *Cryptanthus*, because they are terrestrials. It's another sucking insect that leaves a mark on the leaves. They are mostly in the roots, so you have to pay attention to how your plants look.

A systemic insecticide is the only sure cure. Sevin a topical agent is a safer choice than some others and although not as thorough if used every 3 months or so can keep pests at bay. Imidacloprid is the active agent in some systemic insecticides and is commonly used and is more affective in general against most pests. No matter what you may use, do not apply any product if your plants are flowering, as pollinators will be harmed.

Mexican weevils, native to southern Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize, were first detected in Florida in 1989 in Fort Lauderdale. They have since spread all the way up to Orlando. The insect will bore a hole in the body of the plant and the larvae will basically feed off the plant until it dies. Since they are so ubiquitous in our region the only way to control them is to grow your plants in an enclosed area such as a screen enclosure and isolate any new plants for two to three weeks prior to exposing them to your collection. Currently, the preferred systemic insecticide- Imidacloprid, seems effective in killing the larvae. Larry uses a combination of liquid Sevin and Imidacloprid about 3 times a year. Use protection, spray on windless days and not on flowering plants.

**Door Prizes:** Our door prizes this month were 3 large and gorgeous *Aechmea* "Forest Fire" plants donated by Debbie McPhail. She said these plants will take full sun and the inflorescences will last for months.

**Show & Tell:** Dale Kammerlohr presented about 20 plants for discussion.

**Raffle:** Larry Giroux assisted by Julie Stein and Dolly Dalton, gave away about 15 donated plants to the happy winners.

Meeting adjourned 3:50

Respectfully submitted by Alison Ackerman

EXPLORING DIVERSITY & BEAUTY  
2025  
AUSSIE BROMS

4<sup>TH</sup> - 7<sup>TH</sup> November 2025

Eatons Hill Hotel, Brisbane, QLD

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New Releases!  
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Cultivation  
Rare plant auction  
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INTERNATIONAL & LOCAL  
EXPERT SPEAKERS DISCUSS  
ALL THINGS BROMELIADS

Full details at [www.aussiebroms2025.bromsqueensland.com.au/wp](http://www.aussiebroms2025.bromsqueensland.com.au/wp)

Register at Trybooking <https://www.trybooking.com/CXJKS>

✉ [AussieBroms2025@bromsqueensland.com.au](mailto:AussieBroms2025@bromsqueensland.com.au)



THE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND



## 2025 Bromeliad Extravaganza

September 26th to 27th, 2025

Kissimmee, Florida (near Disney)

Conference Registration Fee: \$125

[\(Online Registration\)](#) or [Mail-In](#)

Sponsored by the [Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies](#) and hosted by the [Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society](#), this will be Florida's biggest Bromeliad event of the year!

The **2025 Bromeliad Extravaganza** will include a Friday night dinner (BBQ buffet), three Saturday afternoon seminars (including [Leonardo Versieux](#) from Brazil), a Saturday night banquet (Italian buffet) with a rare plant auction, and last (but not least), the biggest Bromeliad sale of the year in Florida. The Bromeliad sale (an area of almost 6,000 square feet) is open to the public on Saturday from 9 to 4.

The hotel is the **Ramada Gateway**, 7470 W Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy 192, Kissimmee, FL 34747.

Register online today at:

<https://sbtps.square.site/>



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**Pitcairnia Coral Horizon ?  
Hybridizer- Jim Irvin  
Photo by Larry Giroux**

**This is your Marsh-April 2025 CBS Newsletter**