

**FLORIDA COUNCIL  
of  
BROMELIAD SOCIETIES INC.  
Newsletter**

This Newsletter published by Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. & mailed to all paid up members of those Bromeliad Societies of Florida which make up the Council. Non-members may subscribe for \$2.00 per year.

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Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

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**VOLUME XIV - ISSUE IV**

**NOVEMBER 1994**

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CATCHING UP - STAYING EVEN  
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CONGRATULATIONS to James Boynton for the fine job he is doing with the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society Newsletter. Welcome to the worry club.

CHARLES TAIT, JR. On October 1, Chuck attended the Florida Council meeting at the Ed Hall residence and was in attendance both days of the Seminole Bromeliad Society Show, October 15-16. He also attended the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida regular meeting on October 24. We all thought his troubles were over, then on Wednesday, October 26, he suffered a massive stroke and passed away. It has been a terrible shock to all of us and we will miss him. Chuck was responsible for the inauguration of the State One Day Extravaganza which has been a great success from the very beginning. In regular rotation, as the Senior Rep from Seminole, he was to be the next Chairman of FCBS. I am thankful that he was given special honors at the Extravaganza in Deland in 1993. We should all look around and honor the special people while they are still with us.

JUDGES SYMPOSIUM. Florida-Georgia Master Bromeliad judges attended a refresher symposium at Selby Gardens in Sarasota on Saturday 11/19. The judges must meet judging and exhibiting standards and once every three years attend a symposium to maintain accreditation. General and Judging Chairman of District shows are requested to consult the Judges Registrar for the names of those judges who need to fill their judging commitment. Consult: Mrs. Betty Ann Prevatt, Registrar; 2902 Second St.; Fort Myers, Fl. 33916.

1994 EXTRAVAGANZA has come and gone. It was a great success. Every year gets better. Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society did a great job of hosting the affair, the location was super, the food was good and the company was superior.

## FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY

by

Carol Johnson

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Many of the small creatures considered pests in the greenhouse and which most growers strive to eradicate are really our friends. At a time when many of the pesticides we have considered indispensable are being banned, we ought to try for a live and let live alliance.

I refer to frogs, lizards, snakes and even roaches and mosquitos (they furnish sustenance for the first 3). I draw the line at grasshoppers and moths. They are worthless critters.

It took many years to rid myself of a snake phobia inherited from my Irish mother. To be sure, tolerance depends on their pedigree. Most people still think all snakes should be killed. During the past ten dry years, there have been very few snakes in the greenhouse, but this wet summer has seen quite an increase in the population. They hide in the plants and feed on insects. We rarely see them, but in the early Spring we find their freshly shed skins draped over the spiny leaves of the Aechmeas.

The little frogs park down in the center of the plants and feast on mosquitos, larvae and other insects, and loudly announce a coming rain. Ten years ago the majority of our lizards were the pretty changeable green chameleons, but these have been extensively cross-bred with a larger, more aggressive form from Puerto Rico and the green form is becoming rather rare. Lizards also dispose of a great number of mosquitos and other pests, including snails on Cryptanthus. Forget the handsome prince bit about frogs. Their only metamorphosis is from the tadpole stage, and the only danger they pose to we humans is when one fastens its cold, clammy little feet to the back of your neck while you are driving alone at night.

Let's not forget the ants and spiders. Ants are to be tolerated as they probably do more good than harm. Exceptions are the bull ants which inhabit the heavy

bulbous bases of Tillandsias such as xerographica and streptophylla. Stir them up and they will swarm all over you, and boy, do they bite! At times it is necessary to pry the jaws loose. This type of ant also favors the carcasses of spent plants such as Aechmea bracteata and bromeliifolia. Fire ants bite also, but they do not favor plants as a habitat. There are probably more ants of all types and sizes in a greenhouse full of bromeliads than there are people in a good sized city. They cross-pollinate blooming plants, make unsightly mounds, carry away the carcasses of other dead insects and in general wage a campaign of covert, noiseless pandemonium.

Spiders, like snakes, have gotten a bad rap. They snare as many mosquitos in their webs as the frogs and lizards. Treat them with respect, however. Some spider bites can be extremely toxic. I do not recall ever seeing ants trapped in a spider web. Why? Is it an armed truce or mutual respect? Bromeliad flowers do not seem to attract honey or bumble bees, either. Can it be that the nectar is extra hard to extract? Does anyone have a theory?

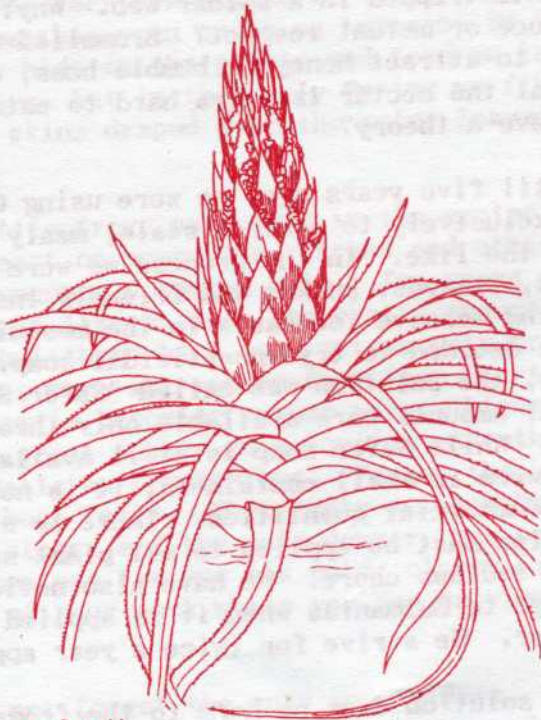
Until five years ago, we were using Cygon 2E almost exclusively to control scale, mealy bugs, pillbugs and the like. In the process we were destroying our frogs, lizards, snakes and friendly insects and encouraging massive increases in the mosquito population. We decided to try insecticidal soap. In the beginning, the solution was called "Safer Soap" and commercial amounts were available only through a distributor. While Safer Soap is still available for hobby growers in small containers, it is now sold as MPede in commercial quantities. There is a drawback. The solution must be applied to all plant surfaces and that is a tedious chore. We have also noticed some leaf damage to Guzmanias when it is applied during hot weather. We strive for twice a year application.

The solution does no harm to the frogs, lizards and snakes. The frogs come out of the plants rubbing their eyes, but it does no long-term damage. Many of the largest roaches survive, but not so their eggs.

It probably does damage to ants and spiders, and certainly to the eggs. MPede is not toxic to humans. If some were swallowed accidentally it would do no harm, and the pleasant odor can be inhaled without damage to the respiratory system. We have much less scale, especially the soft scale, than before. The idea is to smother the scale and chewing insects, and the feel of the solution on the hands makes the process understandable. The cost of application is no more and probably about the same as Cygon 2E. Also, we keep a bucket of the solution handy and dip our offsets before planting. Mosquitos are no longer a big problem, except right at dusk.

If you find you are being over-run with friendly varmints, install a couple of house cats in the greenhouse.

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*Aechmea fuerstenbergii*  
formerly *Streptocalyx*  
*fuerstenbergia*



**Melhor espécie:**

*Aechmea recurvata*  
Expositor: João Marcio de Mello

**Melhor híbrido:**

*Guzmania "Grand Prix"*  
Expositores: Menescal & Bello

**Melhor planta em grupo:**

*Tillandsia ionantha*  
Expositor: Gustavo Coimbra

**Divisão I: Planta individual folhagem**

**Espécie:**

1º Lugar: *Aechmea correia-araujei*  
Expositor: Fábio Oliveira

2º Lugar: *Neoregelia concentrica*  
Expositor: Gustavo Coimbra

3º Lugar: *Tillandsia tectorum*  
Expositores: Vera e Luiz Felipe Carvalho

**Híbrido:**

1º Lugar: *Neoregelia "Lulu"*  
Expositor: Gustavo Coimbra

2º Lugar: *Neoregelia "Orange Glow"*  
Expositor: Gustavo Coimbra

3º Lugar: *Neoregelia "Aztec"*  
Expositor: Gustavo Coimbra

**Divisão II: Planta individual em floração**

**Espécie:**

1º Lugar: *Aechmea bromeliifolia*  
Expositor: Ricardo Navares de Carvalho

2º Lugar: *Vriesea brassicoides*  
Expositor: João Marcio de Mello

3º Lugar: *Vriesea Sp.*  
Expositor: Menescal & Bello

**Híbrido:**

1º Lugar: *Neoregelia "Bacana"*  
Expositor: João Marcio de Mello

2º Lugar: *Neoregelia "Royal Burgundy"*  
Expositor: João Marcio de Mello

3º Lugar: *Guzmania "Denise"*  
Expositores: Vera e Luiz Felipe Carvalho

**Divisões III e IV: Melhor planta em grupo**

1º Lugar: *OrthoPHYTUM vagans*  
Expositores: Menescal & Bello

2º Lugar: *Vriesea fosteriana*  
Expositor: João Marcio de Mello

3º Lugar: *Neoregelia fireball X compacta*  
Expositor: Gustavo Coimbra

*Language barrier? What language barrier?  
Bromeliads are an international language.*

## A Big Surprise

by Martin Wittbold

At our next meeting I hope to introduce Dr. Ed Simmons from Mt. Dora, who recently donated \$10,000 as a memorial to his wife, Glenna Sherman Simmons. She was a bromeliad collector and hybridizer and a writer for Bromeliad Society newsletters. These are friends whom we always looked forward to seeing at Bromeliad and Palm Society meetings, world conferences, and tours of Central and South America.

Ed describes himself as something of a miser because of growing up during the great depression; so it took him a while to make this decision. Finally, his love of botanical gardens and his admiration of Sugar Mill's progress overcame his frugality.

Ed's visit alone on July 28th would have made our day, but he handed me an envelope and told me to sit down before opening it. I found his nice letter complimenting our progress and emphasizing the importance of botanical gardens and a check for \$10,000.

A nice plaque will be installed, dedicating the bromeliad collection to Glenna's memory. Some new bromeliad plantings, including Glenna's hybrid *Aechmea x Patriot*, will be added. Bromeliads mounted on cedar and others planted in large raised containers have already been started. As cash expenditures will be minimal,

this donation should give us a good start on our eco-expansion project.

We are looking forward to seeing Dr. Simmons at the October meeting. Some of our correspondence and a picture of Glenna's "Patriot" will be on display.

The following is a transcript of my written response to Dr. Simmons' generous gift:

*Dear Ed:*

*Thursday, July 28 will always be remembered for our enjoyable day with you and Madie, the encouraging words, the fine meal, and the sparkle in Sara's eyes when she saw you come into her room. All of that would have been enough, but you really put the icing on the cake with your BIG surprise. Your*

*check for \$10,000 will go a long way toward realizing our dream for an outstanding garden which will be a credit to all who are participating.*

*Relying as much as possible on volunteer labor and donated materials, we hope to complete the tool dome and the parking area in the near future.*

*I am already getting ideas for special bromeliad planting around the plaque honoring Glenna, possibly with the help of the newly formed East Coast Bromeliad Society.*

*Sara really enjoyed your visit, probably the best part of the whole day. Thanks from the bottom of my heart.*

*Sincerely,*

*Martin J. Wittbold*

*The Botanical  
Gardens of Volusia  
will forever be grateful to  
Dr. Ed Simmons  
for his very generous gift  
in loving memory of his  
wife Glenna*

FLORIDA COUNCIL OF BROMELIAD SOCIETIES, INC.  
Minutes of Business meeting held October 1, 1994  
Hosted by Bromeliad Society of Central Florida  
at the home of Ed and Nancy Hall

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Present: Reps from Broward (Polly Pascal), Caloosahatchee (Vicky Chirnside), Central Fla. (Ed Hall & Geoff Johnson), Fla. East Coast (Art Hyland & Ted Nuse), Fla. West Coast (Lois Duffey & Fay O'Rourke), Imperial Polk (Mary Jane Albright & Whit Merrin), Jacksonville (Al Muzzell & Caroline Schoenau), Seminole (Bud Martin & Chuck Tait), Sou. Florida (Nat DeLeon & Virginia Schrenker), Tampa Bay (Pat Paterson & Tom Wolfe), West Pasco, (Gwen Carnegie & Bob Steiger) & Carol Johnson, Treas.

Absent: Sarasota Bromeliad Society.

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 1:10 pm. by President Bob Steiger.

2. Secretarial Report: The secretary's report had been distributed previously with the meeting agenda. It was moved and seconded that the minutes stand approved as distributed.

3. Treasurer's Report: Carol Johnson distributed the Treasurer's report for period ending Sept. 30, 1994. A copy is appended to the minutes. Carol pointed out that there was a difference in the assessed amount (\$84) and the paid amount (\$57) by Broward and explained about duplicate memberships. The difference will be reconciled prior to the next meeting.

4. Weevil Report. Al Muzzell reported that a natural enemy specific to *Matamasius callizona* has not been found. An ex-graduate student of Dr. Frank's is going to Guatemala with the Peace Corps and will be on the lookout for weevils and/or natural enemies and will pass this information along to him. Ron Cave in Honduras has offered one technician and one assistant for 12 months to work on the weevil project for at least 20 hrs. per week. The cost is \$3185. A motion was made by Tom Wolfe & seconded by Polly Pascal that the Treasurer should advance 1/2 the cost as soon as possible to Dr. Frank. The balance would be paid at a later date. The weevil likes pineapple tops & Publix provides an easy source, hence no demand at present for other bro-



