



**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.

Make checks payable to:

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

Mail to:

Geoff Johnson, Editor at cover address

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CATCHING UP - STAYING EVEN

Carol Johnson, editor of this publication passed away on 12/10/98 after a 33 year battle with breast cancer. Her spirit kept her alive through two mastectomies and various bouts of metastatic disease which were beaten by modern medicine. She finally lost her life to a metastasis to her liver which finally caused failure and ultimately her death.

Carol was a tireless woman who produced the last three quarterly publications of 1998 despite fatigue and ill health precipitated by her treatment regimen.

Her dedication to the FCBS and her love of bromeliads should to any of us, particularly to those challenged by life's experiences, an inspiration. This organization has lost a great asset. We can only hope that we thanked her enough for her contribution while she was with us.

Now, for better or worse, I'll be assuming the mantle of editor of this publication and only hope to be able to live up to the standards set by my mother.

Carol produced this publication the old fashioned way. She cut and pasted by hand. Before the USPS demanded bar coding on bulk mailings she sorted and bagged the publication for mailing.

I will be bringing us into the electronic age after this magazine. Please give me some consideration, if only for this issue, as I learn the nuances of this task.

The FCBS is an organization that was formed 21 years ago to bring a statewide collection of societies to provide a cooperative organization that would promote both individual society activities and common goals. Today we are the driving force behind the attempt to save our native bromeliads from an insect pest. We need to remain a cohesive organization in order to see a positive outcome in this endeavor and any others that may present themselves.

EDITORIAL POLICIES

To end this segment I'll briefly outline my editorial policies.

All submissions will be subject to editing for length if it does not affect the content of the submission.

Submissions will be made available to the Web site unless prohibited by the author.

This publication or parts may be reprinted if credit is given as to source.

All suggestions, constructive please, to improve the quality of the publication are welcomed at the cover address.

DIGEST OF MINUTES FBBS MEETING 1/9/99

Quarterly meeting of FCBS held in plant City hosted by Imperial Polk B.S. at the home of Whit Merrin. After a delicious lunch the meeting was called to order at 1:10 PM by incoming chairman Nat DeLeon. The meeting was preceded by a moment of silence for Carol Johnson.

OLD BUSINESS

Karen Andreas submitted a comprehensive Web site report.

Motion by Geoff Johnson: All items in the FCBS web page should be public domain. Credit to be given to sources of information extracted from the page. Motion carried.

All reps are to mention at their next society meetings that we need volunteers to collect seed from wild populations of Florida native bromeliads and either propagate them or pass them on to a volunteer willing to propagate them. Seed from Tillandsia fasciculata, utriculata and paucifolia are in the greatest need. Exact location of collection should be noted using a plat book or other published map detailing location.

All reps are encouraged to urge society members to loan their bromeliad slides to FCBS to reproduce for future programs. Slides are to be sent to Ed Hall.

Dr. Howard Frank made an extensive report on the progress of the Weevil research. The Forestry Division of the Florida Dept. of Agriculture has promised \$8,000 in support funds for our weevil research in year 1999.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion Vicky Chirnside: To appoint Geoff Johnson to assume the Treasurers position left vacant by Carol Johnson's death. Motion carried.

Motion Al Muzzell: To appoint Geoff Johnson to assume the position of newsletter editor. Motion carried. Geoff accepted the position on the condition that he could spend up to \$800 on the purchase of new computer equipment to upgrade the present system in use. Actual cost to be reported at next meeting.

All societies or individuals who wish to honor Carol Johnson are urged to donate to the Weevil Fund in her name.

The next meeting will be hosted by the Jacksonville B.S. and will be held on the campus of the University of Florida. Projected date 4/10/99.

Adjournment approximately 4:00 PM

Respectfully submitted Tom Wolfe, Secretary

OH WHAT A TANGLED WEB...

Judging from excerpts from Karen Andreas that follow our Web site is anything but tangled.

The Florida Council Web site continues to grow in content. Since the Council page was moved to its current site at <http://fcbs.org> there have been 3,208 visitors (as of 1/8/99). People continue to stay and move around the site as evidenced by the actual number of "hits" which is 107,052, with the "Bromeliad Photo Index" being the most popular.

The menu selection offers the following:

What's New

Member Societies information on meetings as well as links to those societies that have web pages

Bylaws (of the Florida Council)

Upcoming events

Articles

Information & Culture

Classification

Links

Photo Index

Book Reviews

Uncle Derek Says

Auntie Margaret Queries

Guestbook. Anyone who leaves a question in the guestbook gets an answer back.

There are now approximately 2000 pictures of bromeliads in the species and cultivar index. Links to parents of cultivars are now provided with the name of the cultivar so that people can see the parents. Derek Butcher continues to share his personal photograph collection. Pictures also are provided by Len Colgan and Jason R. Grant. Patsy Worley who published twenty-five issues of "Backyard Bromeliads" has given permission for the pictures from her journal to be placed on the site. So far, pictures from the first five issues have been posted. Jason is providing pictures of bromeliad habitats in Panama and Costa Rica. Michael is planning to create a section of habitat pictures and more pictures have promised by Betty Girko.

Derek continues to add (almost daily) to the "Uncle Derek Says" feature, in which problems with misidentified plants are discussed. A new feature has been added with Margaret Butcher as the contributor. It is called "Auntie Margaret Queries" and is an ongoing discussion of bromeliads grown from seed turning out to be different than what they were labelled.

At this point the FCBS Web Site is one of the most viable, active web sites for bromeliads on the internet. Storage is unlimited and it can be the home for your society web page at no cost to your society.

Karen Andreas



WEEVIL REPORT

Between mid-August and the end of September 1998, I spent 7 weeks in Honduras, and my colleague Jorge Salas spent 2. We stayed at the visitor center of Escuela Agrícola Panamericana at El Zamorano where Ronald Cave kindly arranged for facilities of his department (Plant Protection) to be available to us. These facilities included laboratory space, microscopes, insect cages, and frequent use of a 4-WD departmental vehicle (with driver) for fieldwork. All that I was asked to do in return was to give a couple of lectures in classes that he teaches, to grade some student papers, and otherwise to interact with his students.

I was able to make frequent visits to the 3 montane field sites (Cerro Apalagua, Cerro Monserrato, and Cerro Uyuca) where FCBS-supported student Diego Alvarez had worked in 1996-1997. Bromeliads at these sites included *Catopsis hahnii*, *C. morreniana*, *Tillandsia lampropoda*, *T. guatemalensis*, *T. ponderosa*, *T. standleyi*, and *Werauhia nephrolepis*. Plants of all these species proved to be susceptible at the field sites to attack by the weevil *Metamasius quadrilineatus*. Large populations of these bromeliads adorned stems and branches of pine trees at lower elevations, and smaller populations on hardwood trees at higher elevations, at the 3 field sites. Few of the bromeliads growing on the trees could be reached from the ground. The method used was therefore to search the ground in the forest for broken branches and occasional fallen trees with bromeliads. Stems of weevil-mined bromeliads were placed in large plastic bags and carried to the laboratory. There, weevil adults, pupae and larvae were extracted.

Pineapple crowns (tops) were obtained from the vegetable market in Tegucigalpa, potted, and placed into insect cages. Adult weevils were added to these cages to establish a weevil colony. Weevil larvae extracted from the plants were placed into petri dishes, each with a small piece of bromeliad stem or pineapple fruit. Daily examination of these petri dishes (up to slightly over 200 of them) enabled observation of the weevil larvae. These larvae either developed successfully to the pupal stage, or died. Apparent causes of death of the weevil larvae included (a) fungal infection, (b) bacterial infection, and (c) larvae of the parasitoid fly *Admontia*.

Admontia larvae, emerging from dead weevil larvae, were placed onto small pieces of paper towel in clean petri dishes. Most of these fly larvae pupated successfully. We had problems with water-balance. Diego's thesis states that the fly pupae must be kept moist. Our first attempts to keep the pupae on moist paper towel in closed petri dishes inside plastic bags led to fungal infection and death of the pupae. Our next attempts to keep the pupae on dry paper towel in closed petri dishes inside plastic bags (with moist paper towel in the bag) also led to fungal infection and death of the pupae - although fungal infection took longer to develop. Eventually we resorted to treating the pupae with very dilute benlate and are hoping that the pupae that we are holding in the insect quarantine facility in Gainesville, Florida, will soon produce healthy adult flies. Ron Cave, in Honduras, is continuing the work that we started, so that additional shipments of flies can be made.

Respectfully

Howard Frank

October 1998

The Weevil Fund NEEDS...

Well It's time to do something or get off the pot.

We've been talking about it for more than nine years. And, we've (FCBS) raised some serious money (over \$30,000) in that period of time. VERY COMMENDABLE. But not enough. Now the peddle gets to the metal.

In seperate articles (ed.note see centerfold) you have learned that Dr. Howard Frank has brought back live specimens of the parasitoid fly from Honduras.

From here larger sums of money must be devoted to the weevil control project. The isolation and introduction protocol must be completed first. Next, the techniques for rapid production of the fly must be developed along with study and data on the survivability of the fly in nature in Florida. Then finally, distribution and followup effectiveness studies.

To effectively and efficiently accomplish this in the near future (two year frame) will cost at least 40,000.(See the DPI Environmental Grant application submitted by FCBS.) Otherwise the project can dawdle for another nine years. Keep in mind that the weevil has not yet been found in the Big Cypress, Corkscrew, or Facahatchee Strand where the State's most prolific and diverse populations of native bromeliads exist.

Also keep in mind that the free "Post Doc" labor of Dr. Jorge Sales from Venezuela ends in June 1999.(And that amounts to the matching funds required to qualify for the Sate (DPI) grant we have applied for and will reapply.) Presently, however, the major grant requests for funding submitted by the FCBS have been turned down. Dr. Frank has secured a small grant through the Florida Forestry Service (that's another story) that has been seriously depleted by the Honduras expedition.

I don't know exactly what the Weevil fund balance is currently but it can't be much.(ed:see financial report for Weevil fund balance).Remember the greenhouse used for weevil rearing has quarterly maintainence costs of \$1300. Think of this: if every society member under the umbrella of FCBS sent a check for \$20 to the Weevil Fund today, we would have over \$14,000 toward permanent control of the problem. And, some breathing room when the newly formed Grants Committee cranks out some more requests. If we snooze we lose.

Al Muzzell GJBS Jr.Rep to FCBS

THANK YOU

The FCBS would like to thank all of you who have donated to the Weevil Fund in memory of Carol Johnson and will try to acknowledge all of you with individual replies in the near future. In addition my personal thanks as well.

FCBS Treasurer's Report
4th Quarter 10/01-12/31/98

General Fund Beginning Balance \$4,751.33

EXPENSE:

USPS Oct mailing	27.80	
BIC	300.00	
USPS stamps	32.00	
USPS 1999 bulk permit *	<u>85.00</u>	
	444.80	-444.80

INCOME:

Assessment Sarasota	204.00	<u>204.00</u>
General Fund Balance 1/01/99		4510.53

Weevil Fund Beginning Balance 4538.06

EXPENSE:

-0-

INCOME:

10/08 misc societies**	524.00	
11/01 FWC	200.00	
11/27 3 societies	<u>1425.00</u>	
	2149.00	<u>2149.00</u>

Weevil Fund Balance 1/01/99 6687.06

Total, reconciled with bank: 11,197.59

2 deposits in transit Weevil:1230.00

*1999 bulk permit paid early to save additional 30.00

**in transit last report

Geoffrey Johnson acting as Treasurer.

CULTURAL NOTE:

Since this has been a relatively warm winter due to "La Nina" or Heather Locklear or whoever you believe about these weather phenomena. Check your plants closely for signs of scale infestation because the scale were never slowed down by cooler weather.



UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS

March 13-14 BSSF Show and Sale
Fairchild Tropical Gardens, Miami

March 20-21 Bromeliad Society of Broward County
The Historic Davie School
6650 Griffin Rd. Davie, FL. 33314
Sat. 9am-5pm Sun. 11am-4pm
Contact: Ann Schandelmeier (954) 583-1124

March 26-29 Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay
Tampa Garden Club
Contact: Tom Wolfe (813) 961-1475

April 17-18 Sarasota Bromeliad Society Show and Sale
Marie Selby Botanical Gardens
Sarasota FL.

May 7-9 Bromeliad Society of Central Florida
Florida Mall US 441 and Sand Lake Rd. Orlando
Contact: Geoff Johnson (407) 333-0445
Betsy McCrory (407) 348-2139

June 18-20 Seminole Bromeliad Society
Seminole Towne Center
I-4 and SR46 Sanford FL.
Contact: Ed Hall (407) 647-2039
Geoff Johnson (407) 333-0445

ENDING NOTE

This issue may be a bit small for some of you to read but you have my assurance that the next one will be crafted with a state of the art desktop publishing system and may even be legible.

Please bear with me as I learn the tricks to preparing a publication that is informative and user friendly.

After putting this together I have a newfound respect for all of the local newsletter editors who work so hard for their respective societies.

Berate me for my mistakes but don't be reluctant to say job well done if it's appropriate.

Here's my first issue I hope the FCBS and I last another 21 years.