

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

April 2013



NEXT MEETING

Date: Tuesday, April 2, 2013
Location: Hope Presbyterian Church
1698 South Belcher Road
Clearwater, Florida 33764
Time: Doors open at 7 pm; meeting starts at 7:30

Program

FWCBS member **Alton Lee** will tell us about *Nidulariums: An Undervalued Bromeliad Genus*. He asks people who have *Nidulariums* to bring one or more to the meeting so that he can use them to demonstrate the wide variety of this genus.

Plant Sales

All members are welcome to sell bromeliads at the meeting.

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Program

Dr. Terrie Bert's presentation, *The Outstandingly Ostentatious and Particularly Picturesque O & P Bromeliad Genera*, was the second part of a talk she gave to our group in March 2012. This time she told us about the three genera beginning with the letter P that her first talk did not cover, *Pitcairnia*, *Portea*, and *Puya*. As usual, she was off and running, giving us a compact, informative, fast-paced, and well thought out talk. The following are some points from her talk.

Genus *Pitcairnia*

- There are 336 species, and this is the second largest group of bromeliads in a single genus.
- Most are terrestrial while some are saxicolous or epiphytic.
- They have primitive genes and are the oldest group of bromeliads.
- Many bloom around December.
- They colonize depressions and cracks in rocks and are found along roads and streams.
- Some are pollinated by hummingbirds and occasionally bees, and some are self pollinating.
- Native habitats are widespread, in Central America, the Caribbean region, and South America including Patagonia.
- While most are green and grassy in appearance, they have a surprising variety of leaf design and inflorescences. Leaf forms can be veined or broad, and inflorescences can be stalked-leaf or branched.
- While most have a red inflorescence, some have yellow, orange with white, or white ones.
- While flowers are typically red, some can be white, blue/purple, or multicolored.
- They are voracious growers and can require large pots.
- While they like moisture, they prefer a well-drained soil.
- They prefer shade or filtered sun.
- One can give them abundant fertilizer and they will respond well.
- They can tolerate cold but not prolonged episodes.
- They can be grown in Florida.

Genus *Portea*

- There are nine species.
- They are among the more recently evolved bromeliads.
- They are terrestrial and adaptable to diverse habitats.
- Native habitats are limited to Mata Atlantica, the tropical forest along the east coast of Brazil.

- They have two inflorescence forms—1) compact, condensed, unbranched with flowers protected by braches, and 2) large, elongated, branches with extended flowers. Inflorescences can last for months.
- They prefer a well-drained potting soil.
- They love the sun.
- They do well with fertilizer.
- They are cold toleratant.
- They grow well in cultivation in Florida.

Genus *Puya*

- There are 219 species.
- They are terrestrial.
- Almost all are high-altitude plants, growing in an alpine tundra environment and at altitudes up to 12,000 feet above sea level.
- They are considered to be the evolutionary ancestor to the subfamily *Bromelioideae*.
- They are pollinated by long-tongued creatures like hummingbirds, bees, bats, and moths. Some have a single co-adaptive pollinator, i.e., are pollinated by only one organism.
- They cannot compete with most other plants and tend to grow where other plants will not grow.
- Native habitats include Chile, Ecuador, and Costa Rica.
- They have a range of growth forms —spiny, delicate, soft, twisted and tangled.
- They have a variety of inflorescence forms—single cone heads (both branched and unbranched), club heads, and spike heads.
- They grow in a wide range of sizes, from 0.1 meters (about 4 inches; *Puya pygmaea*) to 30 meters (about 100 feet; *Puya raimondii*) in height. *Puya raimondii* is the largest bromeliad and can be 80 to 100 years old before they bloom.
- They are semi-mesic, i.e., need only a moderate amount of water, and should be grown in coarse, well-drained soil (e.g., volcanic rocks mixed with soil and perlite).
- They are sun loving.
- They do well with moderate amounts of fertilizer.
- They can tolerate prolonged cold episodes but not freezes.
- Because they are very high altitude-growing plants, only a few species can be grown in Florida and even those are not easily grown.

Show and Tell

Reported by Helga Tarver

JC Campbell	<i>Neoregelia</i> ‘Midnight’
Tom Crocker	<i>Aechmea fosteriana</i>
Robert Lindstrom	<i>Aec.</i> ‘Burgundy’; <i>Neo. Compacta</i> (small form); <i>Neo.</i> ‘Marcon’; <i>Aec. fasciata</i>
Franne Matwijczyk	<i>Aec. lueddemanniana</i> ; <i>Tillandsia utriculata</i> (pup-size)
Nicole Matwijczyk	<i>Ursulaea tuitensis</i> ; <i>Neo.</i> “Sun Red” (with double inflorescence)
Fred Reid	<i>Til. ionantha</i> ‘Druid’; <i>Neo.</i> ‘Lou Wilson’
Kathy Risley	<i>Neo.</i> ‘Red Eye’ (two different offsets from same mother)
Larry Sousa	<i>Vriesea</i> hybrid

Below are pictures of Show and Tell plants.



←← *Neo.* ‘Red Eye’ (two different clones from same mother)

Til. ionantha ‘Druid’ →→





Aec. lueddemanniana



Ursulaea tuitensis



Vriesea hybrid



Neo. "Sun Red" (double inflorescence)



Neo. 'Lou Wilson'

FWCBS Annual Auction, May 2013

Members were asked to participate in and donate to our next annual bromeliad auction this coming May. While you are doing your spring cleaning in your garden -- removing dead mother bromeliads, potting new pups, cleaning leaf litter and oak pollen out of their tanks, and such -- consider which ones would be good candidates for the auction and set them aside. More auction information will be in the May newsletter.

GreenFest Plant Sale

Dave Johnston, who is organizing our group's sale of plants at the GreenFest Plant Sale (see dates below), asked members to help out in our sales booth. The primary need is help with cashiering and bagging purchased plants, which will free up our vendors to talk with people about the plants for sale. You, too, will have a good time talking with shoppers and browsers, if you care to do that. Contact Dave at johnston28@tampabay.rr.com for more information or to let him know you are interested in volunteering. Your help at this fundraising event is greatly appreciated and you will enjoy yourself.

THIS AND THAT

Bromeliad Extravaganza Theme Contest

Three members have submitted suggestions for a theme for our Bromeliad Extravaganza 2013. The Board will review these, chose one, and announce the winner at the April meeting. If any among you would like to submit additional theme suggestions, check with Susan Sousa (susansousa1@yahoo.com) to see if there is

still time to do that before votes are cast. The winning name will earn the author a free banquet meal at the Extravaganza.

UPCOMING EVENTS, 2013

March 16-17, Leu Gardens Annual Plant Sale

Leu Gardens, Orlando, FL (leugardens.org)

March 23-24 GreenFest Plant Sale

University of Tampa, Tampa, FL (tampagreenfest.com)

April 5-7, Tropiflora Spring Festival

Tropiflora Nursery, 3530 Tallavast Road, Sarasota, 941-351-2267 (tropiflora.com)

April 13-14, USF Botanical Gardens Spring Plant Sale

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL (cas.usf.edu/garden)

April 20-21, Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society Sale

Sanford Garden Club, Sanford, FL (407-539-4314)

April 27-28, Green Thumb Festival

Walter Fuller Park, St. Petersburg, FL

May 11-12, Bromeliad Society of Central Florida Mother's Day Sale

Fashion Square Mall, Orlando, FL (mybscf.org)

August 10, Bromeliad Sale

University of South Florida, Tampa, FL (cas.usf.edu/garden)

September 21, Bromeliad Extravaganza® 2013

The Holiday Inn Harborside, Indian Rocks Beach, hosted by the FWCBS and sponsored by the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies (contact Judy Lund at glund@tampabay.rr.com)

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