

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2022

Celebrating over 68 Years in Bromeliads



August 2022 Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

Date & Time: August 2, 2022; 7:30 pm
Location: Good Samaritan Church
6085 Park Boulevard
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

Meeting Protocol—Masks Required

The church where we meet has renewed their mask policy as a condition for use of the meeting hall and requires people to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status when on their campus.

PROGRAM

Our speaker in August will be **Chip Jones**, a professional landscaper and owner of Jones Landscaping Nursery in Moore Haven, Florida. His topic is *Hybrids of Chester Skotak: Works of a Bromeliad Magician*. After Chip received a degree in Ornamental Horticulture in Alabama, his initial work was with forestry super trees and native plants. After an internship in tropical plants in South Florida he changed his focus and established his own landscaping, landscape maintenance and nursery business where his special interests are bromeliads, cycads, palms, orchids, and Florida native plants. He is a master gardener and a member of the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society.



Chip Jones

LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

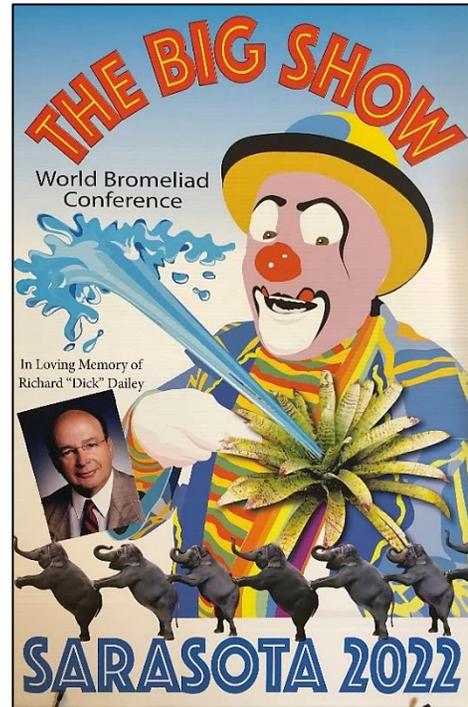
BSI 24th World Bromeliad Conference, *The Big Show*

At our meeting in July, member Richard Poole talked about the 24th Bromeliad Society International (BSI) World Bromeliad Conference held in Sarasota in early June of this year. The conference was hosted by the Sarasota Bromeliad Society with members of other Florida societies making large contributions of donations and volunteers to do the work needed to make it a success. Richard was the conference co-chair and Susan Sousa chaired the Volunteers Committee. Others in our club who attended the conference shared their conference experiences, including but not limited to Barb Gardner and Suzanne Bogacki who served as clerks for the judged bromeliad show, Kathy Risley who along with

Michael Kiehl co-chaired the Rare Plant Auction, and Steve Littlefield who was one of the vendors. About 12 of our members were registered for the conference and another six to eight attended the plant sales and bromeliad show that were open to the public. The general opinion of those who attended the conference was that it was well executed and enjoyed by all.

On the right is a conference poster that our society donated for the conference advertising. The initial design was by the late FWCBS member Dick Dailey, and the final poster was executed by staff at his public relations firm, Dailey Communications.

The theme of the conference was *The Big Show*, a reference to Sarasota's deep historical connection with the circus. In 1926, John and Mable Ringling constructed a Venetian-style winter home called Cà d'Zan on large acreage on the Sarasota waterfront. The next year Ringling established the winter headquarters of his Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus on the mansion grounds. Over the years, the grounds became known as the Ringling Campus as it expanded to include the Ringling Art Museum, the Circus Museum, and the Circus Hall of Fame. Other related facilities located nearby are the Circus Arts Conservatory and the Ringling College of Art and Design.



2022 1WBC Poster



A table in the entrance hall to the conference had displays from the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies affiliated societies, pictured below.



FCBS Affiliates Information Display (FWCBS poster on the left)

Tropiflora Nursery in Sarasota had an outstanding and creative display with a circus theme that was so large—about 15 feet long—that only a portion of it is shown in the picture on the right.

Below are pictures of the display assembled by the conference host society, the SBS.



Tropiflora Nursery 2022 WBC Display



Sarasota Bromeliad Society 2022 WBC Display

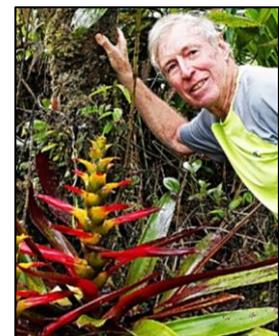
One of the joys of a WBC is meeting old friends and making new friends, both domestic and foreign. This year, the number of attendees from countries outside the US was diminished compared to past conferences primarily due to complications that have arisen because of the Covid-19 pandemic that has gripped the world for over two years now. Nonetheless, there were still a few attendees from Australia, Belgium, Colombia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Conference Speakers

A significant feature of a world conference is the series of educational seminars that are presentations made by knowledgeable speakers from both the US and other countries. Below is a summary of eight 2022 conference speakers and their presentations.

1. Jerry Raack, Ohio

Jerry is on the BSI Board Directors and a past BSI president. He has been on bromeliad collecting/studying trips in Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Peru, where he discovered several new bromeliad species. He is currently working with Eric Gouda and José Manzanares in naming, describing, and publishing some of them. Although he lives in Ohio (cold winters, hot summers) he maintains an extensive collection of bromeliads with an emphasis on *Guzmania* and soft-leaved *Tillandsia*, many of which grow at higher elevations.



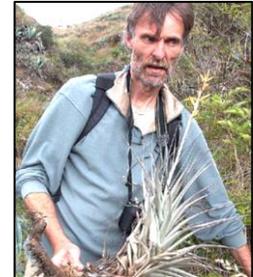
Jerry Raack

Presentation: *Colorful Higher Elevation Bromeliads of Southern Ecuador*

- Jerry talked about moderately high altitude (5,000 to 10,000 feet) bromeliads that are found in southern Ecuador.
- He showed pictures of bromeliads he discovered there that are rarely, if ever, seen in collections, some of which might be new, undescribed species.
- He described the various bromeliad environments and habitats in the region, the variety of species that grow there, and the effects the environments have on their size, color, and form.
- His pictures demonstrated how blooming habits of some species varied when they were observed over a period of several years.

2. **Eric Gouda**, The Netherlands

Eric started a *Tillandsia* collection more than 50 years ago and joined BSI around 1978. While a student at the Utrecht University, he studied the subfamily *Tillandsioideae* for the 1987 publication *Flora of the Guianas*. He is currently the curator of the University Utrecht Botanic Gardens.



Eric Gouda

Presentation: *The Encyclopedia of Bromeliads Project [EoB]*

- Eric outlined three principal goals of the EoB project. The first goal is to produce a fully up-to-date illustrated resource of all species in the family *Bromeliaceae* with correct descriptions, identification keys, good pictures, and how they are distributed.
- The second goal is to produce a collection of as much information about *Bromeliaceae* as possible, including relevant literature, herbarium specimen information, and images.
- The third goal is to make this information available to the public. The permanent URL (online link) to the EoB is <http://bromeliad.nl/encyclopedia>.
- All *Bromeliaceae* names have a permanent URL in the EoB. For example, the one for *Aechmea nallyi* is <http://bromeliad.nl/species/Aechmea/nallyi>.
- The EoB includes all known species and their synonyms and is the basis for *A List of Accepted Bromeliaceae Names* and *The New Bromeliad Taxon List*, both available from the BSI website, bsi.org, by selecting 'Taxonomy' on the 'Bromeliads' menu on the home page.

3. **Cristy Brenner**, California

Cristy is president of the Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society, a member of the BSI board, and a BSI judge. She has travelled throughout the Americas to see and photograph bromeliads in their habitats, visiting countries that include Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela.



Cristy Brenner

Presentation: *Bromeliad Adventures in Peru*

- Christy's talk was about her experiences on four different trips to Peru, covering more than 10 degrees of latitude (about 700 miles north to south) at elevations ranging from sea level to over 14,000 feet.

- Her pictures demonstrated how bromeliads have adapted to the range of habitats visited during her trips, such as the extremely dry coastal dunes, the steamy Amazon rainforests, and the high Andes mountains.
- She emphasized that the bromeliad enthusiast can find a wide variety of environments in Peru to explore and search for their favorite plants.

4. **Dr. Julián Aguirre-Santoro**, Colombia

Julián is a botanist and evolutionary biologist dedicated to studying the evolution and taxonomy of bromeliads. He is currently an Assistant Professor at the National University of Colombia and curator of bromeliads at the National Herbarium of Colombia, where he is conducting projects on bromeliad conservation, diversity, and evolution in Colombia.



Julián Aguirre-Santoro

Presentation: *Bromeliads of Colombia: Diversity, Conservation and Evolution*

- Julián presented an overview of the bromeliad diversity in these six natural Colombian regions: the Caribbean, the Andean mountains, the Orinoco basin, the Chocó rainforest, the Amazon rainforest, and the Guyana shield.
- Colombia has the highest concentration of bromeliads per square kilometer of any country in the world, nearly 650 species, an astonishing diversity that is the result of the strategic location of Colombia at the equator and its highly heterogeneous landscapes.
- He also spoke about the scientific research he is conducting related to bromeliad evolution and conservation.

5. **Graeme Barclay**, New Zealand

Graeme is the current BSI Director for New Zealand, Assistant Editor of the BSI Journal, and builder, designer, and manager of the newly established BSI Bromeliad Species Database (BSD), a new bromeliad species information resource. He has grown bromeliads for over 20 years, recently focusing on a large species collection at his native bush-clad property in Auckland. His passion is growing species as they would grow in habitat and experimenting with different growing methods to achieve optimum results. He is also an active species seed grower, hybridizer of *Neoregelia*, and a regular contributor of articles for the BSNZ monthly 'Bromeliad' Journal.



Graeme Barclay

Presentation: *Broms in the Bush...in New Zealand (and the BSI Bromeliad Species Database)*

- When Graeme moved to his current half-acre property around 2013, it was essentially a blank canvas with about 25% native 'bush' vegetation before he began planting the many bromeliad species he wanted to cultivate.
- He focused a great deal on the numerous Brazilian species in his collection, especially those growing as epiphytes. He explained the various methods he uses to attach them to trees.

- He showed pictures of both his successes and failures. Cold weather and a common insect, the indigenous weta that loves to eat bromeliad leaves, contribute to the failures.
- He then segued into the topic of the BSD, a database that lists all bromeliad species and includes information that was previously hard to find for some species.
- The goals of the BSD are to provide up-to-date, complete bromeliad species information in a central archive location (i.e., the BSI website), and to meet the BSI objective to promote and maintain public and scientific interest in the research, development, preservation, and distribution of bromeliads. In addition, because the BSD is only available to members of BSI, it is offered as another benefit of a BSI membership.
- The BSD project will expand in the future to include phone and tablet-friendly use, general and genus files, and links to the Marie Selby Botanical herbarium and the Bromeliad Research Center at the gardens.

6. Ivón Ramirez, Mexico

Ivón's interests in bromeliads are taxonomy, floristics (the branch of botany that deals with the geographical distribution of plants), and evolutionary biology. Since 1996, she has collaborated with national and international colleagues studying Mexican bromeliads and in the publication of various books on *Bromeliaceae* in Mexico, including *Flora of the Yucatan Peninsula*.



Presentation: *No More Little Pieces but the Whole Kit and Caboodle: Plastomes in Hechtioideae*

- Ivón talked about her work on the evolutionary history of the subfamily *Hechtioideae*, work that established two new genera in the subfamily-- *Bakerantha* (with four species) and *Mesoamerantha* (with three species)—in addition to the third genus in the subfamily, *Hechtia* (91 species). Each of these genera is characterized by distinct morphological features (form and structure) and restricted geographical distributions.
- She used evidence from several sources, including DNA sequencing and morphological characteristics, to support the proposal of the two new genera.
- The DNA sequencing results were used to reconstruct the evolutionary relationships among the three genera and determine how closely or distantly related they are.

7. Pamela Koide Hyatt, California

Pamela is on the BSI Board of Directors and the Editorial Advisory Board for the BSI Journal. In 1982 she founded Birdrock Tropicals Nursery and since then has traveled extensively throughout Mexico, Central America, and South America in search of Tillandsias. In her travels, she has discovered more than a dozen bromeliad species and natural hybrids. She is well known for her hybridization of *Tillandsia*, and one of them, *Tillandsia* 'Samantha' (in the picture on the right), won the prestigious FloraHolland 'Glass Tulip' award in 2013. In 2017 she began collaborating with Jeff Chemnick,



Pamela Koide Hyatt

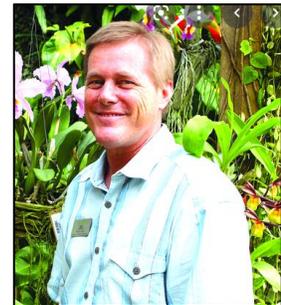
owner of Mexico Nature Tours, to co-lead with him Eco Tours to Mexico to see bromeliads, especially *Tillandsia*, in habitat.

Presentation: *Tillandsia Super Bloom, 2018 Eco Tour--Oaxaca and Chiapas, Mexico*

- This 2018 eco tour covered three environmental regions in Oaxaca and Chiapas: 1) the tropical dry forest, primarily along Mexico's west coast, where the highest portion of Mexico's biotic diversity is found; 2) the cold and humid temperate forest east of the dry forest, at elevations of about 8,000 to 10,000 feet; and 3) the cloud forests, which are found at 6,000 to 10,000 feet and cover only 1 per cent of Mexico.
- Of the 18 bromeliad genera in Mexico, the tour's emphasis was on *Tillandsia*, which has 103 species in Mexico. Pamela showed pictures of these and other genera they spotted, including *Hechtia*, *Catopsis*, *Bromelia*, and *Viridantha* (formerly *Tillandsia*).

8. **Bruce Holst**, Florida

Bruce has studied plants for over 40 years and participated in more than 25 international plant research and collecting expeditions. He is interested in plant diversity and distribution in the American Tropics, particularly that of the *Bromeliaceae* and *Myrtaceae* families. He was a BSI Director for the Southeastern Region and former editor of the *Journal of the Bromeliad Society*. He is currently working on projects related to the floras of Belize, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Florida, and the conservation of bromeliads in Florida.



Bruce Holst

Presentation: *Ecosystem Services Provided by Bromeliads*

- Bruce's presentation focused on the role bromeliads play in the ecosystem, including nutrient cycling, maintenance of biodiversity, and providing a source of water and rewards (such as nectar) for canopy dwellers.
- He emphasized that habitat loss, climate change, and forest fragmentation pose high risks to the maintenance of diversity among bromeliads, with negative impacts across the biological spectrum.

Banquet Keynote Speaker - Graeme Barclay, New Zealand, *Building the All-New BSD*

As noted above in his seminar presentation, Graeme built, designed, and now manages the new BSI Bromeliad Species Database (BSD). This is a much-needed bromeliad species resource and includes information for some species that was previously hard to find. During his keynote speech, he showed examples of the species information available in the database and walked through the steps to access it on the BSI website.

It should be noted, though, that the BSD is accessible ONLY to BSI members. If one is not a member of the BSI, there are two other on-line resources for pictures of species but without the additional information available on the BSD. The first is the BSI FloraPix Gallery managed by Eric Gouda; it is accessible at <https://florapix.nl/tropical/?gal=bsi>. The second is the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies Photo Index managed by Michael Andreas; it is accessible at <https://www.fcbs.org/pictures.htm>.

Plant Sales and Rare Plant Auction

The plant sale revenues for the 17 vendors garnered a large profit for them and for the BSI, which was allotted a portion of the sales. The Rare Plant Auction was a lively event, with Ray LeMieux (Sarasota Bromeliad Society) as the entertaining auctioneer for the many donated bromeliads and bromeliad-related items. Auction proceeds went to the Harry E. Luther-Victoria Padilla Research, Conservation, and Education Fund at Marie Selby Gardens with the exception of the money made on *Cryptanthus* specimens auctioned. These latter funds went to the Cryptanthus Society.

Plant Show

The conference plant show did not disappoint, as there were superb specimens across a range of genera, most of which achieved the second highest award of a blue ribbon, with a select few specimens garnering a purple ribbon for the highest award, the Award of Merit.



Some of the Bromeliads in the WBC Judged Show

Pictured below (on the left) is a cluster of *Aechmea* 'Yang' for which member Susan Sousa was awarded Best in Novice Division. Also, below (on the right) is Steve Littlefield's acrylic painting that won a blue ribbon in the Artistic Division.



Aechmea 'Yang', Best in Novice Division



'Looking in a Red Eye', Award of Merit, Artistic Division

Conference Field Trips

There were three bus tours offered at the conference: Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, Michael Kiehl's Nursery in Venice, and Dennis Cathcart's Tropiflora Nursery in Sarasota. Those who joined these tours were in full praise of the experiences.

MEETING SHOW AND TELL

- Barb Gardner *Aechmea miniata*
- Steve Littlefield 'Alcantarea Bloom' (picture below), an acrylic painting by Steve that won a blue ribbon in the Artistic Expression Division at the WBC show
- Kathy Risley *Quesnelia* 'Tim Plowman' (picture below), which won the Morris Henry Hobbs Best in Show award at the WBC
- Linda Sheetz *Tillandsia* 'Nellie Rose'
Vriesea 'Eva' x *Vriesea rodigasiana* (picture below), an unregistered hybrid by Grant Groves

SHOW AND TELL PLANTS



'Alcantarea Bloom',
acrylic painting



Quesnelia 'Tim Plowman'
Morris Henry Hobbs Best in Show



Vriesea 'Eva' x *Vriesea rodigasiana*

THIS AND THAT

Dick Dailey Bromeliad Collection Sale

On Saturday, July 9, we held a sale of bromeliads from the collection of our late member Dick Dailey. Larry and Susan hosted the sale in their garden and were aided by Gary and Judy Lund, Richard Poole, and Phil Monnig. We had about 80 pots of Dick's plants, many with multiple plants in them. We had a good turnout for the sale and sold a little more than half of the plants. The ones that did not sell were set aside to be added to our monthly meeting raffle table in the coming months, starting with the August meeting. Below are pictures of some of the helpers, the buyers, and the plants.



Membership Service Recognition Award Nominations

In 2007, our society began a program to honor members, past or present, who have through word and/or deed made long and significant contributions in advancing the goals our society. Each recipient's name is inscribed on a bronze plaque (shown in the picture on the right) located at the Florida Botanical Gardens. They are also awarded a free, lifetime membership in the society.



FWCBS Membership Service Recognition Award Plaque, Florida Botanical Gardens

This is the time of the year when we ask members to consider nominating someone whom they feel meets the standards for the award. The attributes of the nominee must be documented in writing and submitted to our Board of Directors for review before the Board's October quarterly meeting. If someone is chosen for the award, their name will be announced at the December holiday party.

IN THE GARDEN

The bloom stalk of the *Aechmea* 'Star of Linda' currently in bloom in the garden (pictured on the right) is displaying a relatively rare condition called 'fasciation'. (Gary Lund showed his 'Star of Linda' at the September 2018 meeting that was also exhibiting the same aberration.) Also known as cresting, it is an abnormal growth in a plant's growing tip (the meristem) that produces a flattened, ribbon-like, crested ('cristate') or elaborately contorted stalk. Possible causes include hormone imbalance in the meristem, random genetic mutation, bacterial, fungal, or viral infection, and/or environmental factors such as mite or insect attack or cold and frost.



Aechmea 'Star of Linda'

Another bromeliad that exhibits an odd feature is *Neoregelia* 'King's Ransom', as it often displays furled center leaves. The first picture on the right is Karen Mill's plant from last month's Show and Tell that shows the typical flattened centered leaves. The second picture on the right shows the same hybrid but with furled leaves rising from the center. Karen Andreas reminded me that when this hybrid was first introduced and it produced furled leaves, many quickly paid a "king's ransom" for it only to learn later that the furling did not grow true and was not a predictable feature in offsets.



Neoregelia "King's Ransom", normal leaf pattern (on the left); furled leaves (on the right)

BROMELIAD AND OTHER PLANT EVENTS, 2022

August 20, Florida West Coast Orchid Society Annual Orchid Auction

Florida Botanical Gardens, 12520 Ulmerton Rd., Largo, FL, opens at 9 am, auction at 9:45 (<https://www.fwcoss.org/event-info/fwcoss-annual-orchid-auction>)

August 20-21, Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society Annual Fall Plant Sale

Sanford Garden Club, 200 Fairmont Dr., Sanford, FL, 9am-4pm each day (<https://www.sanfordgardenclub.com/sbtpps>)

September 10, USF Botanical Gardens Bromeliad Bash

USF Botanical Gardens, Tampa, FL, 9am-2pm (<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/botanical-gardens/>)

October 9-10, USF Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Festival

USF Botanical Gardens, Tampa, FL 10 am to 3 pm (<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/botanical-gardens/>)

November 4-5, Mead Botanical Garden Plant Sale and Fall Fest

Mead Botanical Garden, 1300 South Denning Drive, Winter Park (<https://www.bromeliadorslando.com/activities>)

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