

FLORIDA WEST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

1954-2019

Celebrating over 65 Years in Bromeliads

fwcbs.org



November 2019 Newsletter

NEXT MEETING

Date & Time: Tuesday, November 5, 2019; 7:30 pm
Location: Good Samaritan Church
6085 Park Boulevard
Pinellas Park, Florida 33781

PROGRAM

Marty Baxley, long-time FWCBS member and owner of Jungle Gems nursery, will talk about his trip to Peru that is home to an abundance of bromeliads that occur in a range of habitats, such as dry desert-like conditions, tree canopies, cliffs, road sides and high altitudes in the Andes Mountains. He will present a travelogue of his trip from Lima to Machu Picchu that will be filled with pictures of bromeliads he saw along the way.

2020 Officers and Trustee Election

At the November meeting members will vote on a slate of nominees for our 2020 officers and trustee, as follows:

President	Barbara Gardner
Vice President	Richard Poole
Secretary	Brian Corey
Treasurer	Gary Lund
Trustee	Phil Monnig (three-year term, 2020 through 2022)

Additional candidates may be added to the slate, with permission of the nominee, any time before the voting takes place. If you want to make a nomination or run for one of these offices yourself, please contact Susan Sousa, Nominating Committee Chairman, at susansousa1@yahoo.com. Nominees elected from the slate presented in November will serve on our 2020 Board of Directors along with four others: Joe Ventimiglia and Karen Mills who are currently serving overlapping three-year terms as Trustees, Dick Dailey as Immediate Past President, and Linda Sheetz, Newsletter Editor.

Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Sale and Show Bus Trip Sign Up

At the November meeting, reserve your seat on the bus for our trip to the CBS show/sale on December 14. The Society is subsidizing the trip so the cost is a reasonable \$20 per person. We need a minimum of 20 people to make the trip happen. The bus trip will be open exclusively to FWCBS members only through November 5, after which we will open

the trip up to non-members, at the same cost, to fill any remaining seats. If you cannot make it to the meeting, you can contact Ashley at adglaw@gmail.com to reserve your seat and then mail a check to her for \$20, payable to FWCBS, at this address:

Ashley Graham
6655 Emerson Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33707

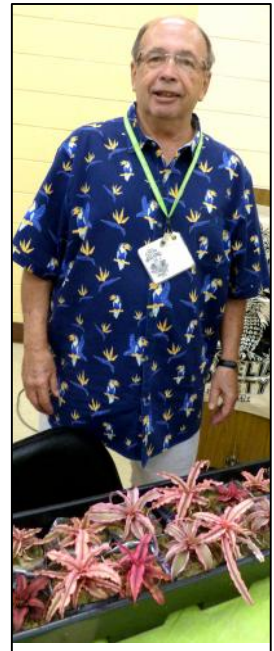
LAST MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

LAST MONTH'S PROGRAM

The October meeting was a workshop presented by three members, Dick Dailey, Franne Matwijczyk, and Richard Poole.

Dick Dailey, Cryptanthus, and Grodan

Dick has accumulated a large collection of Cryptanthus that is plagued by squirrels climbing over them and knocking them about, not to mention being disturbed by the wind. Then he happened upon a commercial growing medium called Grodan as an answer to this problem. Grodan, also called rock wool, is spun from lava rocks and largely used for indoor horticulture and for growing vegetables hydroponically. He found that the Cryptanthus stay well anchored in it and grow faster than in a standard medium. The product is relatively inexpensive, comes in a variety of sizes, and is available from hydroponic supply stores. Locally, he gets his supplies from Avid Brew Company, a brewing and hydroponics gardening supply store located on First Avenue South in St Petersburg.



Examples of various sizes of Grodan blocks

Dick uses 1-inch square blocks for smaller Cryptanthus and 2-inch square blocks for larger Cryptanthus. Each Grodan block has a small puncture hole in the center of one side into which he slides the Cryptanthus roots (such as they are). He then places plant-filled blocks in any container that can hold water. With the compact size of Grodan, he can keep dozens of young plants in a small area. He has various size containers, which make a 'pocket garden' of Cryptanthus when bundled together. See pictures below.



Cryptanthus in Grodan blocks, forming a 'pocket garden' in a long tray



Cryptanthus 'garden' in a rubber pot used to feed animals; from a tractor supply store

Dick keeps the Grodan blocks wet and does not allow them to dry out. He often soaks them in water up to the base of the plant itself and they still thrive. He applies a commercial fertilizer, such as Miracle-Gro, from two to four times a month. He finds the roots develop quickly and the plants tend to pup at a younger age. When transferring the plants to a larger pot, he removes the plastic that is on the sides of the blocks and moves the plant and entire block into the larger pot.

Look for an article by Dick about his experiences using Grodan and growing Cryptanthus in a future edition of the Cryptanthus Society newsletter.

Frane Matwiczkyk, Kokedama Moss Balls

Frane showed us how to make Japanese-inspired kokedama balls. These are essentially plants 'potted' in a ball of soil covered with moss that can be displayed suspended in the air, mounted on a piece of driftwood, or set in a dish. Many bromeliads and common house plants can be grown this way. Frane likes to use Guzmanias because of their colorful, long-lasting spike and because they pup readily. But she also uses Cryptanthus and other small bromeliads, and other plants such as those with trailing leaves like pothos, ivy, and fern. See pictures below for examples of plants used in making kokedama balls.



Kokedama moss balls planted with Guzmania, Cryptanthus and Anthurium

Supplies suggested by Franne

Plastic gloves, to protect hands

A bowl or other container in which to make the balls

Miracle-Gro potting soil

Perlite

A suitable plant

S-hook, for hanging the finished ball

Cheese cloth or netting

Long fiber sphagnum moss, soaked in water overnight

10-pound test fishing line, dental floss, or nylon twine with color for decorative look

Scissors

Instructions

- Mix soil and perlite (and peat moss if desired) in a bowl and then slowly add water to give the soil mix a consistency that can be shaped.
- Remove the desired plant from its pot, retaining some of the soil about the roots.
- Pack the wet soil around the roots and an S-hook, forming a ball around the two.
- Cover the completed wet soil ball with cheese cloth to retain the ball's shape. Secure the cheese cloth in place with fishing line.
- Squeeze out excess water from the soaked sphagnum moss and start adding it around the outside of the soil ball in a crisscross pattern, to form an outer ball.
- Wrap the moss with the fishing line or twine as you add more moss, until the moss covering is secure.
- Hang and enjoy.



Other tips

- Use metal flora clips to hold Cryptanthus in place, if needed.
- The moss ball should be soaked in a sink or bucket weekly to keep the moss wet. Do not allow it to dry out. Mist the moss ball daily, if needed, especially if you use live moss.
- It takes about 25 to 30 minutes to construct one moss ball.
- Franne uses Miracle-Gro potting mixes, which contain nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium as fertilizer.
- If the plant roots grow through the moss on the outside, just add more moss and secure it with additional line or twine.
- Instead of an S-hook to suspend the moss ball, hang the moss ball with twine wrapped around it that is attached to three supporting strings or lines that serve as the hangers.

Richard Poole, Mounting Bromeliads

Richard showed us equipment and materials needed and techniques for mounting and hanging bromeliads. His mounting materials were driftwood, burl wood, cork, and cut tree branches, and his hanging materials were coconut shells, ceramic hangers, and a stainless steel container (from IKEA).



For mounting on wood, he used an electric drill to make holes through the wood, and to attach the plant to the wood, he used cable ties, wire (not copper), monofilament line, panty hose, or hot or low-temperature glue (applied with a hot glue gun). Note: When using hot glue, allow it to cool for at least 30 seconds or it will be too hot and damage the plant. He also makes use of existing natural cavities in wood pieces by lining the cavity with sphagnum moss and then setting the plant in the moss. Below are pictures of Richard's handiwork.



Bromeliads mounted on wood



Ceramic pieces for hanging bromeliads



Coconut shells for potting and hanging bromeliads



Stainless steel cylinder for potting and hanging bromeliads

SHOW AND TELL

Franne Matwijczyk

Tillandsia xerographica

Susan Sousa

Ananas 'Lava Burst'

Barbara Stayer

Plastic venetian blind slats to use to make plant labels, which she donated to the raffle table

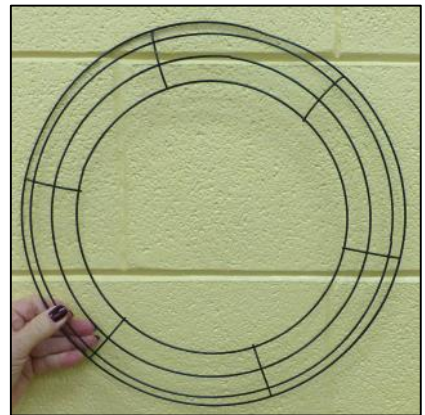
Karen Mills

Two bromeliad wreaths with *Tillandsias* and *Neoregelia 'Fireball'*, one made with woven reed material and one made with a round wire frame. See pictures below. She used hot glue, panty hose and florist wire to attach the plants and bought the wire frame at a dollar store.

SHOW AND TELL PLANTS



Tillandsias on a woven reed wreath



Neoregelia 'Fireball' and Tillandsias on a wire wreath

New Members

Daniel Steiner (picture on right) joined our society at the last meeting. Welcome, Daniel. Former member Mike Gimeno rejoined after a hiatus of about nine years. Welcome back, Mike.



THIS AND THAT

Home Garden Tour and Social--Rescheduled for November

As you know, the Home Garden Tour scheduled for October 20 at Susan and Larry Sousa's home had to be postponed because torrential rains had flooded their yard. The tour is now planned for Sunday, November 3rd at their home, from 1pm to 4pm. Refreshments will be provided.

The Sousas' address is 5400 Bates Street, Seminole, 33722. Please park on the 54th Avenue dirt road extension on the south side of their property. You may contact Susan at susansousa1@yahoo.com or 727-420-4269 for additional information.

University of South Florida Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Sale

We thank members Marty Baxley, Franne Matwijczyk, Nicole Matwijczyk, Phil Monnig, and José Rosado for their efforts and sales at our Society's booth at the recent USF fall plant sale. Thanks, also, to Mike Gimeno, now a returning member, who volunteered his services to help at the sale.

UPCOMING EVENTS, 2019

November 13, Sarasota Bromeliad Society Annual Bromeliad Auction, 7 pm

Marie Selby Gardens Great Room, Sarasota, (Marian Kennel: mmkennell@verizon.net)

December 14-15, Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Sale and Show

Araba Shrine Temple, 2010 Hanson Street, Fort Myers (bprevattpcc@aol.com; Larry Giroux, 239-850-4048)

2019 FWCBS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Barb Gardner, oolayz06@gmail.com
Vice President	Richard Poole, rapoole4469@yahoo.com
Secretary	Brian Corey, bcorey2@tampabay.rr.com
Treasurer	Gary Lund, garybrom@yahoo.com
Immediate-Past President	Dick Dailey, richard@daileyadv.com
Newsletter Editor	Linda Sheetz, lsheetz@tampabay.rr.com
Trustees (3)	Judy Lund (2017-2019), glund@tampabay.rr.com Joe Ventimiglia (2018-2020), ventimij@gmail.com Karen Mills (2019-2021), karen4photo@aol.com

Website: *FWCBS.org*