

# The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 1:30p.m.

Wm. A. Finney Memorial Garden Center  
837 N. Oleander Ave., Daytona Beach 32118

September, 2010

## Autumn in the Garden!

**President – Jay Thurrott – 386/761-4804**

**Vice President – Jerry O’Keefe – 407/767-2442**

**Secretary – Audrey Hayes – 407/421-4026**

**Treasurer – Eve Krauth – 386/763-2084**

It’s a little difficult to visualize when the thermometer is still hovering close to the three digit area, but my calendar says that Fall (...and just why is it that Fall gets two names while Winter, Spring and Summer each only have one?) is practically upon us. School is back in session, the days clearly are getting shorter, and it won’t be long before Christmas displays appear in the stores. This is the time of year when you need to really get busy with your bromeliad collection.

If you haven’t already, inspect your Neoregelias and, if the pups are large enough, separate them and pot them up now.

Bromeliads are about to exit their active growing time in NE Florida and it seems that Neo. pups separated after October just don’t get as good as start in life as those that are removed in the Summer and early Fall.

Let’s hope we don’t see a repeat of last Winter’s killing cold spell, but it’s better to be safe than sorry so start thinking about what you intend to do to protect your bromeliads when the weather turns cold. We often get very short notice when an Arctic cold front is about to sweep down through Florida, so a little preparation before it happens can prevent the heart-break of dead or damaged plants.

### **Last month’s meeting...**

It’s been many years since Grant Groves has visited our group and I think we’re all in agreement that we would like to see him back often! His photos of visits to Hawaii and visits to gardens brimming with bromeliads in that state were spectacular. He and Kelley brought lots of plants for sale and I think most everyone now, if they didn’t before has some Grant Groves hybrids in their collections!

### **This month’s meeting**

Sometimes we forget that not everyone in the club has been growing bromeliads for years and years. I’ve heard from several members that they would like to have a program tailored toward “*Bromeliads 101*” or the basics in bromeliad culture techniques. I’m sorry that we haven’t scheduled such a program before now, and think we can all use a refresher from time to time. So, this month we’re going to talk about the more common Genera and how you should be growing them (ie: don’t put your Guzmanias in full sun, don’t put your Aechmeas in dense shade, and don’t mount your Cryptanthus on a tree limb) separating offsets (and this is a good time of year to do it), potting those pups so they can get a good start on life, and if time permits:fertilizing.

### Coming Attractions

October's meeting will be one you won't want to miss. Our Vice President has arranged for Dennis Cathcart, owner of Tropiflora to talk to us and, yes, he will be bringing plants for sale so mark that date on your calendar – October 10th and come early so you can get a good seat because I'm expecting that there won't be many empty ones available!



**WOW!**

*By Rick Ryals*

One single word that describes an incredible BSI World Conference in the 'Big Easy', New Orleans, Louisiana! For starters, our very own, Jay Thurrott was elected to lead the BSI as President for a three year term, starting immediately! And Jay will have a full plate, as he hits the ground running, to build the BSI into a world class organization. Additionally Jay will lead a team on planning and executing the next World Conference to be held in Florida. Yes you heard it right, the BSI executive board has approved a motion that the next World Conference will be held in Florida in 2012. The exact location and dates are yet to be determined. But we'll hear much more about that in the coming year.

With nearly 400 attendees from all over the world (India, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and the Caribbean Islands) we had a wonderful week of world class seminars, an incredible sales area, a judged show, a rare plant auction and all the night life and flavor

that only the French Quarter can provide. And the local tours were incredible, a plantation tour, the World War II Museum, River Dinner Cruise, Swamp Cruise and of course the French Quarter.

And when I say 'World Conference', where else can you gather the likes of Author Paul Isley, Artist Penrith Goff, Hawaiian Hybridizer David Shiigi, Explorer Cristy Brenner, Author Francisco Oliva-Esteve, growers, hybridizers and bunches and bunches of folks who love all things, involving bromeliads. I joined fellow student judge, Calandra Thurrott and judge Jay Thurrott for an entire day of judging nearly 200 entries, in a number of categories and divisions; blooming, multiples, horticulture, artistic design, decorative container, miniatures, and various art forms. In fact the Thurrotts took home several awards, including Awards of Merit ribbon for an outstanding hanging Neo. Pauciflora, a "12 headed" pineapple and Calandra won the Best Hybrid Cryptanthus award for a near-perfect Cryptanthus 'Kaleidoscope'.



Cryptanthus 'Kaleidoscope'

Our hats are off to the Louisiana local bromeliad societies for planning and executing an incredible World Conference, under the direction of Bonnie Boutwell. And this is not the first time. New Orleans has hosted the BSI - they were hosts on two previous

conference occasions. Each time, out-doing themselves in true Louisiana fashion!

R.R.



Display at the New Orleans World Conference

Yes, the World Conference was a lot of fun. New Orleans is a great place to visit and as you can tell from Rick's article, there was a broad range of activities for attendees to take part in. What he didn't mention was the role that he played at the conference to ensure its success. Whether it was helping out at the Registration desk or moving properties for the next event, Rick was always there, volunteering to help...and here he is, volunteering to provide an article for this month's newsletter! It's that kind of effort that makes events like this run smoothly and it's that kind of volunteer spirit that makes it such a pleasure to be involved in FECBS. Thanks Rick for all of your help – it's greatly appreciated!

#### **Found Stratas for Bromeliads**

**By Bill McBride**

I was asked to write a piece for our Newsletter and since I'm still rather new to the Bromeliad family, I'm going to write an article on mounting and displaying them as my artistic skills far out-weigh my knowledge on Bromeliads. There are a few things one must remember when looking for sources to use as a mounting medium. They must be made of a substance non-toxic to Bromeliads. Avoid items such as copper, zinc, treated

woods and galvanized metals. Driftwoods have to be from fresh waters or soaked in fresh water many times to remove the sea salts. Driftwood isn't readily available where I am so I had to look for other strata. Most of the dried older woods I'd found were treated woods that when cut, still smelled of creosote. Natural woods I found were all soft and falling apart.

What I finally found were that dead plant roots worked great when dried. The small roots provided strata for the bromeliad roots to mesh with and they looked nice and gnarly. To date, I have used Hibiscus, Crape Myrtle and Schefflera roots successfully. The trick is to drill the holes for the hanging wires before you try mounting them. I use a varieties of materials to affix the Bromeliads to the stratas: steel wire with a heavy iron content (usually a dull black), Liquid Nails as long as it doesn't bind the roots, wood glue (again, mind the roots), thin floral wire, and both staples and nails all depending on the size of the Bromeliad and the strata.

I also found a small lumber mill west of DeLand that is setting aside exotic woods which I will shortly be using to mount Bromeliads. I have used scraps of aged lumber, store bought cork and Pecky Cyprus. Recently, I attempted to use dried gourds which were less than satisfactory. I will continue to keep looking for new and inventive structures to mount these plants on.

The medium has to be water tolerant, non toxic, rough enough to allow roots to bind to it, and something mobile enough to allow it to be moved to a descent light exposure. Most mounted Bromeliads do not require soil or moss though a few prefer it, but all should receive ample spays or mists of water especially the first few weeks to help them acclimate. Remember most will require a diluted fertilizer about once a week. Guzmanias and Nidulariums at least every other application. I use a ½ tsp per gallon of water and spray the plants ... every few months I fill a 6 gallon bucket with water and

the same dilution of fertilizer and allow the plants in their mountings to soak for a few minutes and then allow them to drip dry on a rigged line or pole.

The next two mediums I plan to use are ceramic and Stone and I will report on those shortly.

B.M.

### **Artistic Challenge!**

Last year we had a “bromeliad photography” contest that was a lot fun. We learned that we have some pretty darn good photographers among us and offered a prize for the best photo – and who better to judge it than our own club members! This year we’re going to have a similar event and we’re calling it an “artistic challenge”. What do we mean by that? This can be **original art** featuring bromeliads of course, but using whatever media you prefer (always wanted to make a cheesecake in the shape of a Cryptanthus? This is your category!), **photography** (a photo of an inflorescence of *Ae. fasciata* taken by a former club member took a blue ribbon at the New Orleans show), **decorative containers** (in this category you should give some thought to the selection of the container so that there is harmony, pleasing proportion and color balance between the plant and container. Originality and uniqueness are very important. This also includes decorative baskets and decorative dish gardens. Plants may be arranged or placed in the container just prior to entry into the contest), or **artistic arrangements** (there must be a theme for the arrangement and this should be listed on a 3 X 5 file card placed where the arrangement would be viewed. You can use entire plants, portions of bromeliads, and other non-bromeliad items in the arrangement, but bromeliads should predominate. List the bromeliads used in the artistic arrangement on the back of the card). Don’t quite know how to go about this? We’ll discuss it further at this month’s meeting and you can ask questions, but don’t wait too long to get your ideas together – we want everyone to bring

their ‘challenge’ entries to the November meeting for judging!

### **Upcoming Events:**

#### **September 18-19, 2010**

International Aroid Society Show and Sale at Fairchild Tropical Botanical Gardens, 10901 Old Cutler Rd., Coral Gables

#### **October 2, 3, 2010**

Orchid show and Fall plant sale at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, 4700 SW 58<sup>th</sup> Dr., Gainesville.

#### **October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies quarterly meeting. Hosted by the Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society at the Garden Center in Sanford.

#### **October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

First meeting of the year of the Council of Garden Clubs of the Halifax District at the garden center. 9:30am social, business meeting at 10:00am.

#### **October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010**

Judges school in Ft. Myers

#### **October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

Judges symposium in Ft. Myers

#### **April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

South Florida Bromeliad Society show and sale at Fairchild Gardens in Miami

#### **April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011**

Sarasota Bromeliad Society show and sale at Selby Gardens in Sarasota

