

The Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

Next meeting Sunday, September 11th, 1:30p.m.

Colony in the Wood – club house

4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd., Port Orange 32129

September, 2011

Yes, It's Hurricane Season!

President – Bradley Rauch – 386/767-8937

Vice President – Rick Ryals – 386/679-8700

Secretary – Eretta Morris – 386/677-9557

Treasurer – Eve Krauth – 386/763-2084

and September is the peak month of the season.

If you haven't already made a hurricane plan for you and your family, it would be wise to do so now! By the time this goes to print and is mailed out, we've already had at least one near miss (nothing personal Irene, but I'm glad that hurricane didn't stay around for a visit!) Hopefully, no direct hits by named storms will happen this year. The Daytona Beach area only rarely is struck as they spin their way up the coastline. That's not saying that we're safe from these storms (that's what New Orleans thought before Katrina crashed the party) and that's why it's so important that we stay aware of tropical weather systems and their likely tracks.

With respect to your bromeliad collection, what precautions should you be taking when a storm threatens this area? Before a hurricane strikes be mindful that mounted bromeliads and even those in pots may look terrific in your yard, but they can become un-guided missiles when winds build to hurricane strength - with the result that your outside plants are liable to become inside plants. If you don't want them sailing through your windows, move them to a safe location when the warning is first given of an approaching storm! Also, after a hurricane has blown through an area and moved away,

you may be faced with sun damage to your plants from the hot Summer sun – now shining through leafless (or even treeless) landscapes that previously provided shade.

September is also a month when you need to begin paying closer attention to your watering practices. The days are noticeably shorter now, the sun's angle is changing (providing less direct light) and your plants will be less tolerant of staying wet than they were just a month ago. If we are visited by a storm this month that deposits large amounts of rain you may even want to consider repotting some of your bromeliads in fresh mix rather than leaving them with "wet feet" for a prolonged period of time.

Last month's meeting

...if you missed it was a lot of fun. Tom Wolfe showed us some beautiful pictures of Neoregelias and then he and his wife Carol looked over the many, many beautiful Neos. that were brought in by club members for this meeting and selected several to be judged by all present in the competition devised by our Vice President Rick and noted in the last newsletter. There were several categories and a winner was ultimately chosen for each with a prize for each winner! Thanks Rick for organizing this – good idea and I think everyone enjoyed the contest.



Mary McBride looking over Christoph's winning creation



Sudi Hipsley, winner in a different category with her prize – a nice bottle of wine...but she doesn't drink!

This month's meeting

Use the word “bromeliad” in a conversation with the *uninitiated* (those who haven't been bitten by the bromeliad bug) and you often get a blank stare in return, but mention “air plant” and those same people immediately know what you are talking about. Well, this month we will be discussing “air plants”- *Tillandsias* to those better educated in the ways of bromeliads. The Genus *Tillandsia* belongs to that sub-family of the Bromeliaceae known as the Tillandsioideae. Bromeliads in this group share the much-appreciated feature of being spineless. Their smooth-edged and soft-tipped leaves are often heavily coated in trichomes, giving them a dusted or silvery appearance. Tillandsias encompass both epiphytic and terrestrial plants. When plants representing this family were first discovered growing epiphytically, it was thought that all

they needed to grow was air (hence, the name “air plants”) and that they should avoid being watered – which made Carolus Linnaeus-who was in charge of handing out plant names in the 1700s (what a great job!) think of the unfortunate professor Elias Tillands (1640-1693), an early Swedish/Finnish botanist known chiefly for his irrational fear of water. How fearful was he? Dr. Tillands was reputed to go many miles out of his way just to avoid crossing a body of water! Eventually, after the demise of many collected Tillandsias, botanists learned that these plants could not survive without an occasional drink of water and required a certain amount of care to thrive, but by then it was too late - the name “Tillandsia” was kept, forever honoring Dr. Tillands.

Although this group is often seen and sold commercially in artistic arrangements involving driftwood, seashells, and dish gardens, they also turn up glued to refrigerator magnets and sold in ‘big box’ stores. Despite being very hardy and generally easy to grow, few *Tillandsia* survive for long on refrigerator doors and, therefore, this Genus has acquired a stigma among many unfamiliar with bromeliads of being difficult to keep alive.

The Genus *Tillandsia* includes more species than any other in the bromeliad family. Plants in this group range in size from the diminutive Peruvian species *T. bryoides*(a fraction of an inch across) to some cliff-dwelling giants measuring several meters from leaf tip to leaf tip. Tillandsias also have the widest range of any bromeliads and are found from Argentina to Virginia. Finally, if you are looking for variety in bromeliads, this is the Genus for you – from the ubiquitous Spanish Moss (*Tillandsia usneoides*) to the soft leaved, multiple inflorescence *Tillandsia multicaulis*, to the always popular *Tillandsia cyanea* – this group of plants has it all!



Tillandsia multicaulis
photo by A. Staelens

Multiple blooms on one plant! *Tillandsia multicaulis* – courtesy of FCBS



Tillandsia grandis

photo by
Rolly Reilly

One of the giants of the Genus – *Tillandsia grandis*
Courtesy FCBS

Should I Join Another Club?

By Rick Ryals

With the advent of iPhone, iPad, Blackberry and all other personal electronic devices it's no wonder that the United States Postal Service is carrying much less first class mail than in the past. In fact, I don't expect my residential mail box to fill up until the political season heats up next summer for elections. They appear to have plenty of money to spend on mailers. Go figure? But I'm not going to talk about the mail, I'm going to tell you about a little club I joined on the computer, The Home Depot Garden Club, at www.homedepotgardenclub.com. This information comes to your email box, not your home mail box. So it's much easier to delete. I've been a member for several years and I've really enjoyed it. I can not lie, I mostly enjoy it for the coupons! Just this past week, I received via email a coupon for \$4 off 64qt. Miracle-Gro Moisture Control Potting Mix. They send a little monthly newsletter, which you can customize for your specific region, with lots of plant/landscape information. Plus there's a video library, plant library, identify this plant, ask an expert, and plant care guides. And usually there's a couple of coupons on the bottom of the newsletter that you click on and print from home. It's a sales driver, they want you in the store to spend some money on something you had no intention of buying. But I've trained myself to walk right to what I came for, pick it up and proceed to the register with my coupon. I've never had a coupon refused, sometimes it takes a supervisor to come out and fix the register, especially on buy one get one offers, but it works every time.

I've purchased potting mix, plants, vegetables, pesticides, fertilizers, hand tools and more potting mix all on coupons. It's stuff I need, I should use a coupon. A dollar saved is a dollar earned! Isn't that the old saying? And with this economy I need all the dollars I can get! Plus it gives me more dollars to spend on beautiful bromeliads!

A reminder to save your boxes! –

With the Extravaganza just around the corner, it's not too soon to ask everyone to begin saving boxes to donate that can be used by

those purchasing plants in the sales area. There's probably no *best* size, but anything around 12" by 24" that can hold several purchases should work well...and by the way, if you haven't already – check out the webpage that Mary McBride has put together with information on the Extravaganza. The address is:

<http://theartofbromeliads.wordpress.com/>

This is everything you wanted to know about the Extravaganza, but were afraid to ask!

Thanks Mary!

Upcoming Events:

Did you have the opportunity to visit the Seminole Bromeliad and Tropical Plant Society's sale last month? Great selection of bromeliads and non-bromeliads at great prices!

September 10-11

'Everything Orchids' at Mounts Botanical Garden, 559 Military Trail, West Palm Beach Don't let the title fool you – there will be begonias, bromeliads, ferns, hoyas and aroids for sale too! 10am to 4pm

September 30 – Oct. 2nd

35th Annual Southwest Bromeliad Guild Show and Sale at the Crown Plaza hotel in Austin, Texas. For information, contact Annette Dominguez at 512/619-2750

October 8th

Quarterly meeting of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies – 1pm Hosted by the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida

November 4th, 5th, 2011

Bromeliad Extravaganza "The Art of Bromeliads" hosted by FECBS! The Plaza hotel in Daytona Beach.

December 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 2011

Caloosahatchee Show and Sale

Terry Park, Fort Myers

For information, contact Dr. Larry Giroux at DrLarry@comcast.net

...and, looking even farther ahead – make plans now for the 2012 Bromeliad Society International World Bromeliad Conference September 24th-30th

hosted by Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

The Caribe Royal, 8101 World Center, Orlando, FL 32821

Betsy McCrory - Chairman

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Watch for details in the future!

