Bromeliaceae

VOLUME XXXIX - No. 2 - March/April 2005

The Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.

P. O. Box 565, Fortitude Valley
Queensland, Australia 4006,
Home Page www.bsq.org.au

OFFICERS	
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Front Cover: *Quesnelia testudo* 'variegata'
Rear Cover: *Guzmania* 'Graf Van Horne' Cover photos Doug Upton

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Bromeliaceae Copy Deadlines

May/June.....April 5th, 2005
Jul/August.....June 5th, 2005
September/October.....August 5th, 2005
November/December.....October 5th, 2005

Please forward all copy and photographs to:

The Editor, 15 Timbarra Crescent, Jindalee, Qld 4075

Phone: 07 3376 5558 Email: rossjanstenhouse@hotmail.com

Electronic copy RTF or MSWord 7.0 or earlier - Times New Roman

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information in their articles.

Society Diary

NEWS REPORTS EVENTS

GENERAL MEETINGS are held on the third Thursday of each month except for December, at the Uniting Hall, 52 Merthyr Road, NewFarm, Brisbane, commencing 8 pm.. Classes for beginners commence at 7.30 pm.

FIELD DAYS are held regularly in the gardens of members as advised.
MEMBERSHIP FEES: Family $20, Single $15 pa
The BSQ web page can be accessed at w.w.w.bsq.org.au

Competition Results:
March Popular Vote

Advanced		
First:	*Tillandsia disticha* 'Maxima'	P. Paroz
Second:	*Billbergia* 'Pink Patches'	D. & J. Upton
Intermediate		
First:	*Tillandsia xerographica*	P. O'Dea
Second:	*Aechmea faciata* 'Evening Star'	B & A Kable
Novice		
First:	*Neoregelia* 'Dream Baby'	J. Green
Second:	*Catopsis morreniana*	L. Grubb

For each year, the society runs an annual competition based on the monthly competition. Two awards are made, one called the Mini *Show* is the yearly total of the points awarded at each competition by the judges (these competitions are held every three months). The other called the *Popular Vote* is the yearly total of the points for the monthly popular vote.

2004 Mini Show

Advanced:	R Paulsen
Intermediate:	Bob Reilly , Greg and Narelle Aizlewood (tied result)
Novice:	Barry Kable

2004 Popular Vote

Advanced:	Yves Daniel
Intermediate:	Barry Kable
Novice:	Viv Duncan

PLANT OF THE MONTH PROGRAMME - 2005

January	Aechmea, Alcanterea, Ananas, Androlepis, Areococcus, Ayensua
February	Billbergia, Brewcaria, Brocchinia, Bromelia
March	Canistropsis, Canistrum, Catopsis, Deinacanthon, Deuterocohnia
April	Edmundoa, Encholirium, Fascicularia, Fernseea, Fosterella, Glomeropitcairnia, Greigia, Guzmania
May	Hechtia, Hohenbergia, Lindmania, Lymania, Mezobromelia
June	Navia, Neoregelia
July	Nidularium, Ochagavia, Orthophytum
August	Pepinia, Pitcairnia, Portea, Psuedaechmea, Psuedananas, Puya
September	Quesnelia, Racinaea, Ronnbergia, Steyerbromelia
October	Tillandsia, Tofieldia
November	Ursulaea, Vriesea, Werauhina, Wittrochia

Competition Schedule for April-July 2005

April: **Mini Show**

Class 1: Bromelioideae not listed anywhere in the schedule - Species and Hybrids

Class 2: Guzmania - Species and Hybrids

Class 3: Pitcairnia and Pepinia - Species and Hybrids

Class 4: Any other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - Species and Hybrids

May: **Popular Vote:** Any Genus or Hybrid

June: **Popular Vote:** Any Genus or Hybrid

July: Mini Show

Class 1: Billbergia - Species and Hybrids

Class 2: Tillandsioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule - Species and Hybrids

Class 3: Neoregelia - Species and Hybrids - up to 200mm diameter when mature

Class 4: Any other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - Species and Hybrids

2005 TILLANDSIA WORKSHOP

The Bromeliad Society of Queensland's 2005 tillandsia workshop will be held from 10am to 3 pm on Saturday 14 May at 66 Agnes St, Auchenflower. The format is the same as in previous years, namely:

· Each participant will give a 10 to 15 minutes' presentation on a tillandsia-related topic of their choice. Topics can range from "introductory" (for example, how do I stop my *T. stricta* from dying) to advanced (for example, the various forms of *T.capitata*). During and after each presentation, there will be observations, questions, comments etc from the workshop's other participants.

· Participation is open to a member of any bromeliad society.

· Each person should bring their own lunch and a "plate" for morning and afternoon tea. Hot water, tea, coffee and cups will be provided.

· Participants can bring tillandsias to sell or swap if they wish. However, this is not the main focus of the day. (A 10% commission will be payable to the Society on all plant sales.)

· It would be appreciated if each prospective participant could register with the workshop convenor, Bob Reilly, by 30 April 2005. This helps with catering, and the scheduling of participants' presentations. Bob's contact details are: phone: (07) 3870 8029, email: bob.reilly@nrm.qld.gov.au

If you have any queries, please contact Bob Reilly.

Photographers Code

I think anyone of you who has tried to produce high quality photographs of plants will realise the process is complex and can be difficult. Having good photographic illustrations to augment an article in the journal is of great value to the reader. It allows them to easily identify the subject matter being described. In recognition of that skill, I will be publishing the initials of the photographer as part of the caption underneath the photograph in cases where I know the photographer..

In this issue, you will only see DU, that being Doug Upton. I can't claim that this is an original idea, I saw it in action in a small publication produced by BSI and purchased from BSQ. A particular photograph in it caught my eye, and low and behold, the initials DU appeared under the photograph, checking revealed the photographer to be Doug Upton.

We are able to use digital images now, I understand that was a problem in the past.

The Editor's Desk

Being very new both to the society and to the world of Bromeliads, I thought I would give you a little of my background . My wife Jan is responsible for my becoming interested in broms and we both are new members of the society. Jan is a registered nurse working in the operating theatre at QEII hospital.We have five children.

My background is in aviation, photography and information technology, I have a Masters Degree in Aviation Management, Masters in Technology Management and in the process of completing the last semester of my Graduate Diploma in Urban and Regional Planning at the University of New England.

I am employed by Sparq Solutions, a IT company owned by Energex and Ergon. My role at Sparq is as a software developer working on developing software mainly for engineering applications concerned with testing electricity poles and plant..

My knowledge of bromeliads is very limited, I am an absolute beginner and that is why I enjoy the beginners class so much. This may also explain why I liked the change in meeting format for the March meeting The discussions on plants took place during the first half and continued on immediately following the break giving the meeting a very definite focus on plants, rather than society business.

My plans concerning this magazine are to continue its bi-monthly publication, however that ambition is heavily influenced by the contributions towards content received from members. I have made a few minor changes in this issue and plan a program of continual improvement on the already excellent format I received from the previous editor.

I would like to acknowledge the great assistance I have received from Peter Paroz, Bob Reilly and DougUpton with this, my first edition of Bromeliaceae. I have produced over 100 magazines very similar in structure to this, however I had a deep knowledge of the subject matter. This time my knowledge is very limited and the learning curve very steep, therefore I ask you to overlook the slight errors you might come across in my first few editions. I don't expect that relaxation of the standards to continue.

Ross Stenhouse - Editor

BROMELIACEAE

Editor	Ross Stenhouse
Photography	Doug Upton
Mail Out	R & B Pugh
Contributors	Bob Reilly
	Peter Paroz
	John Catlan
	P& D Hobbs
	Lyn Hudson

SOME MINIATURE NEOREGELIAS

Author: Bob Reilly

Neoregelias are probably the most popular bromeliads amongst Queensland collectors. In this article, 25 miniature neoregelias are described, although there are over 100 more from which to choose.

The plants are mainly grown for their foliage, as the inflorescence usually consists of a cluster of blue or white petalled flowers, in the middle of the plant's "tank", which is formed by the plant's central leaves. The tank stores water, which helps the plant meet its moisture requirements.

Miniature neoregelias typically have an erect rosette formed by 10 or so leaves, all of which have very small spines on their margins. Many of the ones grown today have attractively – marked and coloured foliage throughout their life.

These neoregelias grow well in small pots. The containers should have a diameter of around 10 cm. Potting mixtures used successfully include:

- Well composted pine bark to which a continuous release, over a period of nine months or more, fertiliser such as Nutricote or Osmocote is added when the plants/pups are potted; and
- A mixture of 2 parts Peatmoss or Cocopeat combined with 1 part coarse sand. Add slow release (over a period of nine months or more) Nutricote or Osmocote to this mixture.

Many people suspend the pots in the air by using plastic hangers. This saves scarce shadehouse space and also enables you to see the sunlight shining through the plant's leaves. This outcome often accentuates the leaves' attractive markings. These plants will, in many cases, also grow well on logs and stumps. They can be glued on, or tied into position using cable ties or old stockings.

Care should be taken in applying liquid fertilizer, as excessive fertilization can result in the plants losing their symmetrical shape and, to some extent, their colouration. If applying liquid fertilizers, a brand such as Phostrogen (N:P:K ratio is 14 : 4.4 : 22.5), which has relatively low amounts of nitrogen in it, may give the best results.

In southern coastal Queensland, these plants grow well under 50% "density" shade cloth in Autumn, Winter, and early Spring and 75% shade cloth for the remainder of the year. Alternatively, they will grow quite well in lightly shaded positions in the garden, but it is important to avoid locations which receive the full afternoon sun (especially in summer).

The only pest which may cause some problems is scale. This can be treated by using an insecticide such as Folimat. Avoid spraying the plants when the temperature exceeds 30 degrees Celsius, otherwise leaf "burning" may occur (although such incidents are

rare).

These plants readily produce pups which will produce flowering plants in 12 to 24 months time. While pups can be removed from their "parent" when they are about one half of its height, a more visually appealing effect can often be obtained by allowing the plants to form a clump.

Pups can be potted straight into any of the potting mixtures described previously. Ensure the mixture holds the pup firmly in position, as this helps promote rapid growth.

The plants should be watered at least twice a week from October to March, and once a week for the balance of the year.

The plants described in the balance of this article have mainly been grown in "strong" light and with little fertiliser. Plants grown in more shade, and heavily fertilised, will be larger and have less intense leaf colouration.

'Alley Cat' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette approximately 10 cm high and 15 cm wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red barring of varying widths.

ampullacae About 6, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette around 10 cm high and 15 cm wide. The green leaves have red-purple spotting, which is particularly pronounced towards the plant's centre. This species has been widely used in hybridising.

***ampullacae* 'purple'** About 6, 2cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette around 15 cm high and 10 cm wide. The red-purple leaves have green spotting and "splotching", especially towards their tips.

'Aurora' Around 10, 2cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 15 cm high and 20cm wide. In strong light, the leaves are black, with green spots and markings. In more shade, the black colouration turns to green. This is a particularly striking plant.

'Avalanche' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and 20 cm wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red spotting.

'Black Beauty' About 10, 2cm wide leaves form an erect rosette about 15 cm high and wide. The leaves' green colouration is almost obscured by black-purple spots, barring and markings.

'Cheers' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 15 cm high and wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red spotting, with their tips being brown-red as well.

'Coral Fire' About 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 15 cm high and 20 cm wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red spotting.

'Fireball' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and 15 cm wide. In strong light, the leaves are bright red, while in heavy shade they are green. There are variegated forms of this plant.

This is a very hardy plant, which rapidly forms a clump. As a matter of in-

Neoregelia 'Turmoil' DU

Neoregelia punctatissima DU

Neoregelia 'Red Waif' DU

terest, it may actually be an undescribed species, rather than a hybrid.

'Gold Nugget' About 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 15 cm high and wide. The yellow-green leaves have faint, brown-red barring.

lilliputiana Around 10, 1 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 7 cm high and wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red spotting and faint barring. Quite a few of the newer miniature neoregelia hybrids have this species as one of their parents.

***lilliputiana* x 'Fireball'** About 10, 1 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette approximately 10 cm high and wide. The leaves are yellow/brown-red in colour, with scattered brown-red spotting.

'Night Spot' Around 10, 1 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and wide. The green leaves have brown-red spots.

pauciflora About 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 15 cm high and 20 cm wide. The pale green leaves have a "light" silvery "scurf" on their upper and lower surfaces, as well as brown-red spotting.

This is a distinctive plant, which is often grown to good effect on a log or stump. Over time, the plants cascade down over the log/stump, creating an impressive display. As there may be over 50 plants in such a clump, it can take more than five years to achieve the desired effect.

There is a "large" form of this species. It is about twice the height of the plant described above.

'Pheasant' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette, about 15 cm high and wide. In strong light, the older leaves turn brown-red, while the younger leaves are brown-red with yellow-green barring and splotching.

punctatissima Around 10, 1 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red barring and spotting.

***punctatssima* 'rubra'** Similar to *punctatissima*, with the exception that the leaves are light brown-red, rather than yellow-green.

'Red Nugget' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves an erect rosette about 15 cm high and wide. The leaves are yellow/brown-red, with irregular brown-red barring.

'Red Waif' About 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an initially erect rosette, which "flattens out" in its upper half. The rosette is about 8 cm high and 15 cm wide. Prolific brown-red spotting and markings nearly obscure the "background" yellow-green leaf colouration.

'Ritzy' About 15, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and 15 cm wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red spotting and barring, particularly in the plant's centre.

'Sugar n Spice' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and 15 cm wide. The yellow-green leaves have red spotting and

Neoregelia 'Night Spot' DU

Neoregelia ampullaceae 'Purple' DU

Neoregelia 'Black Beauty' DU

markings, as well as red tips.

'**Tiger Cub'** About 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and wide. The yellow-green leaves have brown-red banding on their lower, and to a lesser extent their upper, surfaces. They also have brown-red spotting.

'Turmoil' Around 15, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and wide. The light green leaves have red tips, and irregular red banding, particularly on the younger leaves.

'Wee Willy' About 15, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and wide. The green leaves have irregular, brown-red bands and splotching.

'Wild Tiger' Around 10, 2 cm wide, leaves form an erect rosette about 10 cm high and wide. The brown-red leaves have irregular green banding and splotches.

Acknowledgements I thank Doug Upton for taking the photographs used to illustrate this article, and Olive Trevor for supplying many of the photographed plants.

Author contact details: Email bob.reilly@nrm.qld.gov.au Phone (07) 3870 8029.

Like reading this magazine, are you one of the people who never make any contributions to help towards its production?
Be brave, write a short article and forward it to the editor.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE VACANCY

The office of President of the Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. is vacant. This position will be filled at the Society's general meeting commencing at 8pm on 16 June 2005 in the Uniting Church Hall at 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm.

Nomination forms are available on request from the Secretary. Nominations close with the Secretary at 5pm on 3 June 2005. Nominees for the position must be financial members of the Society. If no written nominations are received by the Secretary by 5 pm on 3 June 2005, nominations will be sought at the 16 June 2005 general meeting.

Bob Reilly - Vice President
Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.

Is there Value in Reprints of old Bromeliaceae Articles?

As editor, I am charged with producing a magazine that is informative and timely in its news content and that contains a number of articles whose main function is educative.

To that end, I plan to publish a number of reprints of articles first published in Bromeliaceae a number of years ago. To a lot of members these will be a first time read and of course they will be selected because of their quality.

YOUR OWN POTTING MIX

John Catlan

When you buy your bromeliads, your bonus is a variety of potting mixes. It will not take long to realize that there are more potting mixes than bromeliad growers. The reason is that each grower develops his mixes around available ingredients and his conditions both have a tendency to change and so the grower changes his mix. A time comes when you have such a variety of bromeliads growing in different mixes that you will find your plants will grow better in a mix you develop yourself.

'Soil Life' should be the first consideration when planning a bromeliad mix. It must last through the growing cycle from offset, to flowering plant, and until you have harvested the offsets, without the mix breaking down to a point where the air content falls below 15% for terrestrial bromeliads and 20% for epiphytes.

When your mix has satisfactory "soil life" and it comes to repotting your bromeliads it's just a matter of removing the plant from the old pot and "potting on". That is centreing the plant in the new container and filling in around the undisturbed root ball and growth of the plant will proceed undisturbed.

Should inspection of the rootball indicate that the mix has broken down or will not last through the next growth cycle it will be necessary to repot. This means hosing all the old mix from the root system, removing any dead roots or old plant stems, selecting the right size container and working fresh potting mixture through the root system. A lot of extra work, but it is necessary when the potting mix lacks "soil life".

You can make a choice from an assortment of ingredients including peat moss, pine bark (*Pinus elliotii* and *P. radiata*), hoop pine bark, sand, perlite, polystyrene beads, peanut shells, rice hulls, coke ash and others. The selections and combinations you find that are best for you will reflect the conditions you grow under; that is water quality and how often and how long you water, air movement, light, temperature and humidity.

Peat moss is very light but will hold large quantities of water; it has no toxic properties but will hold onto fertilizer which together with its water content is readily available to the bromeliads. I would recommend that a good bromeliad potting mix contains 10% by volume of peat moss. Fluff the peat moss up if your source of peat moss is from compacted bales.

I use 1/7 by volume in my mix which works out to 13.3% by volume but I sieve my other ingredients and remove all particles below 1 mm in diameter and I water often. What I am trying to achieve is a potting mix which has "soil life".

An amateur grower has advantages over

a commercial grower, they do not have to cost their labour and experiments but also they do not need truck loads of potting mix. They can blend into their own mix exotic ingredients such as charcoal, quincan gravel, pumicestone, pine cones, leather dust, ground cork, urea formaldehyde foam, macadamia shells and no doubt there are growers who have come up with other ingredients.

When talking to other growers ask and discuss your own and their problems. You will advance your knowledge and growing technique; in the end your bromeliads will judge your potting mix. You will have to observe their reaction.

Plant Glue

Some years ago, there was a report of members of the Cairns Study Group experimenting with 'Sellys SUPA GLUE' for attaching epiphytes onto their mounts.

Following this news, I experimented with this material and found the results quite favourable. It has a good initial 'tack' so that small seedlings stay in place right away. Once set, the glue seems reasonably water proof and does not have any adverse effect on plant growth; and even appears to promote new root growth.

In spite of favourable results by some growers, I have never been game to commit small seedlings to hot melt glue.

Peter Paroz

LIBRARY BOOK REVIEWS: PART 1

Reviewer: Bob Reilly

The Society has an extensive library of books which are available for borrowing by members who attend the monthly meetings. Some of these books are now "out of print", which means you cannot buy a copy (unless you're fortunate enough to obtain a second-hand one). In this article, three "out of print" books held by the library are reviewed.

BROMELIADS AND THE COLOURFUL BROMELIADS: THEIR INFINITE VARIETY

Bromeliads by Victoria Padilla. Published by Crown Publishers in 1973.

The Colourful Bromeliads: Their Infinite Variety by Victoria Padilla. Published by the Bromeliad Society in 1981.

Miss Padilla was a foundation member of the organisation now called Bromeliad Society International or the BSI. She was an editor of that organisation's journal (The Journal of the Bromeliad Society) for many years until the mid 1980's.

Bromeliads has 134 pages, 63 colour photographs, and over 50 black and white photographs or illustrations. Over 280 plants (species, cultivars and hybrids) are described. All of the common genera, for example, Aechmeas, Billbergias, Guzmanias, and Tilland-

sias are discussed in some detail, with the lesser known genera, for example, Canistrum, Fernseea, being mentioned as well. However, most emphasis is placed on species' descriptions of the common genera. The book has a list of common botanical terms, and a comprehensive index.

As 30 years have passed since *Bromeliads* was published, it is not surprising some species' names are now different from those in that publication. Nor does the publication deal with species described since that date. Further, hybrids are not discussed in any detail. Thus, there are a large number of plants grown today which are not covered in the book.

Having said that, this is still one of the best books to read if you wish to gain an appreciation, from a non-technical perspective, of what many species look like.

THE COLOURFUL BROMELIADS: THEIR INFINITE VARIETY

This book has 112 pages and 42 colour photographs. It describes, in varying amounts of detail, over 120 plants (species, cultivars and hybrids). The emphasis is on describing some of the rarer species in selected genera, namely, Aechmea, Guzmania, Neoregelia, Tillandsia and Vriesea.

This publication can be used as a companion book for *Bromeliads*

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BROMELIADS FOR HOME, GARDEN AND GREENHOUSE

Bromeliads: For Home, Garden and Greenshouse by Werner Rauh. English edition edited by Peter Temple, and published in 1979 by Blandford Press, England. (The original German edition was published in two volumes in 1970 and 1973).

The book has 431 pages of text, 134 colour photographs, 315 black and white photographs, and 90 line drawings (illustrations). It is presented in two Parts.

The first Part commences with a brief description of several South American trips undertaken by Dr. Rauh, and his companions, while collecting bromeliads. While interesting as a travelogue, it also highlights the great diversity of habitats occupied by bromeliads.

Bromeliads', particularly tillandsias, growth habits are then described. The description is presented in largely non-technical terms and is one of the clearest, published presentations on this topic. A section on growing bromeliads, basically under European conditions, concludes Part 1. However, while containing some useful insights, the applicability of this section to Queensland is limited, given the climatic differences between Queensland and Europe.

In the book's second Part, information is presented, in a summarised form, on the appearance (including inflorescence), natural habitat, and other rel-

evant comments (for example, specialised cultural requirements) of nearly 450 bromeliads. There are 176 Tillandsia species' descriptions, 22 Guzmania, 39 Vriesea, 15 Billbergia, 19 Neoregelia, 13 Pitcairnia, 14 Puya and about 150 species from other bromeliad genera.

Some species, and genera, names have changed since the book was published. However, it would not be a difficult task to ascertain current names by asking some of the Society's experienced growers

Botanical terms are used to describe the plants' appearance. However, the terms are used in a manner which is relatively easy to follow, if you have access to a dictionary of botanical terms.

The first Part of this book is likely to be of interest to most readers. The second Part is probably of most interest to Tillandsia and grey-leaved Vriesea growers who are interested in gaining a good knowledge of the appearance, and natural habitat, of many of the species available in Queensland.

Let me know how you like the new format *Bromeliaceae*

In order to improve or simply to encourage me, how about dropping me an email. Maybe you would like to send something in the 'Emails to the Editor' section.

It can be emailed to:

rossjanstenhouse@hotmail.com

Streptocalyx biflorus and Light

Author: John Catlan

In June '88 we acquired a flowered plant of *S. biflorus*. It was well past its prime but the bract was still bright yellow gold, the size of a tennis ball. Being in the process of shifting Phyl and Don (Hobbs) were good enough to babysit our pride and joy.

We collected *S. biflorus* that spring and it had two offsets and we parted with one of them. The remaining offset was potted in our normal mix and put with our *Aechmeas* under 50% shade cloth.

During Spring '89 Phyl and Don flowered their plant, but we missed out. They parted with an offset to Grace and as our plant was looking a little yellow it received a dose of Nutricote and we removed a large offset.

During Spring '90 Phyl and Don flowered another plant and Grace Goode flowered her plant, and we missed out. Our plant was still looking a little yellow so we took off two large offsets and shifted it to a darker location.

During Spring '91 we actually flowered our *S. biflorus.* The plant was a deep green 80 cm across, the centre turned orange/red to about one third the length of the leaf, the colour lasted two to three weeks. The yellow gold ball shaped bract was 13 cm across and 13 cm high. The flowers were dark blue, receiving its name from the fact that it

has two flowers to each bract leaf. The bract holds its yellow gold colour for at least six months, the seed pods are bright blue. In autumn '92 (April) another *S. biflorus* flowered.

Conclusions about *S. biflorus*

1. Flowering time is normally spring, except in autumn '92 when everyone with a mature plant seemed to have flowered it.
2. It is a dependable flowerer. An offset should normally flower within two years.
3. It needs 70% shade cloth cover to promote flowering, if anything I would err just a fraction towards more shade.
4. It is cold tolerant.

S. pallidus is definitely a *S. biflorus* companion, similar growing conditions, size and shape. The flush of colour to the leaves could be described as red, the bract a more egg-shaped than round, is white and flowers blue and light blue. It flowers in autumn. When we flowered *S. pallidus* it was in a heavily shaded area and the colour lasted. Phyl and Don have found from experience that too bright conditions cause the colour to fade before flowering has finished.

Bob Reilly informs me that S. biflorus has had a botanical name change to Aechmea biflora recently, similarly Streptocalyx pallidus is now Aechmea napoensis. A bit of a giveaway about the age of this article - I chose this article from a number Peter Paroz gave me to help get the my first edition to bed Ed.

POTTERING AROUND

With Phyl & Don Hobbs

I have just had it brought home to me in the strongest possible *way* that it is never the fault of the plant if it doesn't come up to your expectations, you are growing it incorrectly.

We bought a *Streptocalyx pallidus* from Peter Tristram and it grew into a lovely big plant. Great excitement when it started to colour and go a brilliant red on the first five or six inches of the leaves staying a lovely green on the outside area. Then the inflorescence rose out of the middle deep blue touches at the base, then we kept watch for the flowers, but I must have blinked because suddenly it was gone. All colour completely stripped.

In the meantime a large offset had been removed and potted, so we started again. Either by good luck or good management, we put it in a position that didn't get such strong light through the northern side of the bushhouse. The plant was showing just the first few spots of red when we left for the Conference. We came home and there it was in all its glory, so incredibly lovely that I had to go and look at it often in case I missed something. This time we were able to see the flower which was a very delicate pale blue and surprisingly large. So we had green, red, white, a deep grey blue and soft blue. No wonder Peter was surprised when we said

we were disappointed in it.
Taking a careful look at where it was growing, it is a plant that appreciates good reflected light but not too much direct light, even through 70%. knitted shade cloth. It has been our experience that woven shade cloth gives more protection from strong sun than knitted.
The potting mix we used is the same as for Aechmeas and Vriesias with Nutricote added at potting time and with no further feeding. The plant was grown in a seven inch squat plastic pot.
I only have one criticism to make, it didn't last long enough for the Combined Show.

AIR & POTTED BROMELIADS

Author: John Catlan

The plants we love to grow love air. Epiphytic bromeliads have both their roots and foliage exposed to air movement. Tillandsias, growing in wave-like clumps on the desert sands, receive moisture laden in-shore breezes.
The terrestrial bromelia, ananas, dyckia and hectia are exposed to the elements. The puya of the mountains have their share of strong winds. Bromeliads growing on cliff faces and steep mountains are subject to updraughts. The catchy phrase "air plants" does not seem far from the truth.
The emphasis of this article will be on the air content of the soil mix used in pot culture. But remember that it should not be considered in isolation as all the physical properties interact to produce an optimum mix. A potting medium must supply air, water, and nutrients and these are referred to as physical properties. Once a plant has been potted, the physical properties are stable, except for decomposition and settling of the mix ; both reduce the air content in the mix.
The following summary of different nursery soils encountered when purchasing plants will give you a rough understanding of the air content in the pot.
Potting mix which has 0-5% air Suitable for plants that like water logged conditions; is very heavy especially when wet, and has a tendency for water to pool on top of the mix when watering. Rarely encountered now from production nurseries, but regularly observed in flea market "amateur potted" plants.
Potting mix which has 5-15% air This is the minimum aimed for in nursery mixes, and is used for trees and shrubs destined to be planted in the garden.
Potting mix which has 15 — 20% air An ideal indoor plant mix but leads to difficulties for trees and shrubs which when planted in the garden need more watering than most people realise. This level of air is the minimum required for terrestrial bromeliads.
Potting mix which has more than 20% This is a mix that requires frequent watering and is suitable for indoor

plants, cymbidium orchids, and is the minimum required for epiphytic bromeliads. After watering a plant container and the water has finished draining, the residual water content is described as "container capacity" i.e. the amount of water that the soil in that container will hold.

The medium at the bottom of the pot remains saturated even after the excess water has drained away. This saturation level remains constant for each of the soil types shown above, and is not altered by pot size or shape. (fig 1)

Brom growers like to use squat pots for stability of the plants but this results in a decrease in the air content %, as the height of the pot is reduced. Placing drainage in the bottom of pots eliminates this problem, but has gone out of vogue with increased labour costs and the use of potting machines. For amateurs interested in the quality and survival of irreplaceable plants, the extra time taken is worth the effort.

Broken clay pots are now at a premium for use as a drainage medium, and the only real choices freely available are gravel and chopped up styrene foam. For more stable pots use more gravel than styrene foam. River washed stones (round ones) are preferred to crushed gravel, as the latter has a tendency to pack down. The drainage method used has the disadvantage that it provides an excellent home for slugs and snails.

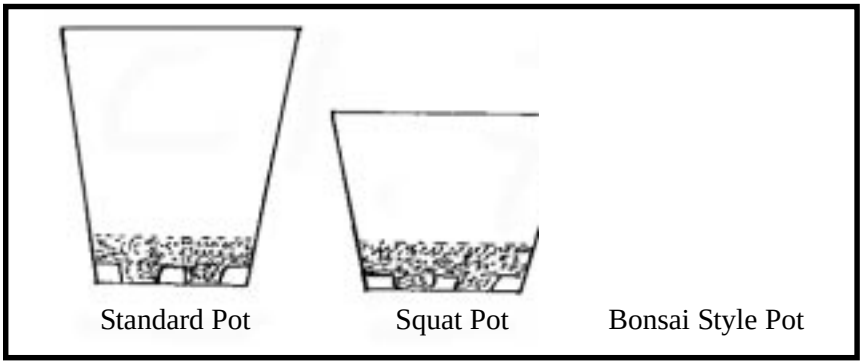

Fig. 1

AUSTRALIAN OPEN GARDENS SCHEME

(submitted by Bob Reilly)

Some Society members open their gardens to members of the public through this scheme (and other arrangements). Many of the Society's members like to see gardens with bromeliads growing in them. So, if you would like to have your "open garden" publicised at the Society's meetings, and in *Bromeliaceae*, please provide the details to the Society's Secretary at least three months prior to the event. Please include the name of a contact person and telephone number for use by members.

Neoregelia 'Wild Tiger' DU

Neoregelia 'Pheasant' DU

OBITUARY

Bea (Trix) Hanson,
October 1910 – February 2005

As we were about to go to print with this month's Journal we received the sad news of the passing of our Patron and Life Member, Bea Hanson, aged 94.

Bea has often been called 'The Mother of the Society' because she was the one who spent so much time organising the foundation of the Bromeliad Society of New Zealand.

The inaugural meeting of the bromeliad fanciers was held at 57 Symonds Street, Auckland on July 24th 1962 and Bea became the first Secretary. For the next 22 years she served as Secretary, President and Vice President, and worked incessantly for the progress of the Society.

During 1963 the editor of the newsletter, which was sent to country members only, resigned and Bea took the job on, on a temporary basis. If 'temporary' lasts 25 years, what is a permanent job? The early 'News and Views' newsletter later turned into our present Journal format in 1972.

Bea was always very active in promoting and organising shows and displays and speaking on bromeliads at Garden Clubs. She was one of two members who organised the display at the Auckland Museum in November 1971 when our Society won the Auckland City Council Centennial Cup.

She often imported bromeliads from friends and growers overseas to help to keep us up to date with newer varieties.

In addition to the above work, she posted plants out to country members for some years, yet still found time to write a beginners' booklet called 'Bromeliads for Everyone', in 1970. This very popular book was reprinted several times.

Bea became a Life Member of our Society in 1983.

In recent years frail health has restricted Bea's active involvement with the Society but she has still remained interested in all our activities.

Bea has been a true bromeliad lover and she has given pleasure to literally hundreds and hundreds of people. We are so grateful for all her work for the Society and we will miss her greatly.

-oOo-

The above article is a reprint from the Bromeliad Society of New Zealand journal, the references to life membership should be interpreted as being to the Bromeliad Society of New Zealand. See the photo of a Neoregelia 'Hanson' on the opposite page. Ed.

NEWS

Have you got some news, that others should know or might enjoy?
Let me know!! Ed.
email rossjanstenhouse@hotmail.com

Neoregelia ‘Bea Hanson’

Neoregelia ‘Tiger Cub’ DU

Neoregelia ‘Cheers’ DU

BROMELIAD CONFERENCES
Wot are they???

Author: Lynn Hudson, Cairns

My dictionary describes a conference as "a meeting for discussion" but a bromeliad conference is a whole lot more than just discussion!

Biennially there is a World Bromeliad Conference and biennially there is an Australian Bromeliad Conference and as they are held on opposite years, there is a conference every year! The conference held in Chicago in 2004 was the 16th World Conference and 2005 will be the 13th Australian Conference. The World Conference held in USA sounds very exotic but attending an Australian Conference has just as much worth. At either one you will gain knowledge and see plants you have not seen before. You have the chance to meet other humans, some of whom you have heard of or read about, those who have also been bitten by the bromeliad bug.

However there are some differences - The Bromeliad Society International has a Board of Directors and they meet just before the conference whereas Australia does not have a ruling/ oversighting body – maybe we should have one. In USA the next day is allocated for scientific seminars on various aspects of bromeliaceae – ecology and evolution; botany and plant availability in habitat etc. Experts in their field present these seminars and registrants may attend. In another meeting room BSI accredited judges donate their time and knowledge for the Judges School.

Each conference has the same busy atmosphere, as rooms are prepared for the Seminars, Plant Show and Sales. Meanwhile there are busy beavers erecting displays of bromeliads to elicit the wonder and drooling of each registrant and visitor, others are proudly and carefully bringing in plants for the Show and still more are carting in boxes of plants for the Sales area.

Over the weekend the seminars are held now the largest difference occurs - Australians go to learn and usually attend every conference session then enjoy the sight seeing and garden trips that are planned for outside the seminars. Some of the Americans attend because their spouse/partner is going, or only for the plant sales, or the trips (they are on when the seminars are on!). I guess they are all good reasons and it explains why overseas speakers are amazed at the large attendance for their seminar.

Each delegate at an Australian conference receives a Proceedings Book containing the names and addresses of all delegates and each Speaker's notes. This is a big advantage as we do not have to keep notes – I could not decipher what I wrote in Chicago! The Rare Plant Auction is always fun at each conference, plus there are usually all

sorts of goodies in the raffles.
The days fly by because delegates are having fun and suddenly it is "See you in two year's time" and we are supposed to go back to our normal lives! We take our newly acquired knowledge and our precious memories to keep us company in quiet moments when we can relive those happy days.

-oOo-

Hosted by The Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. we are heading towards

BROMELIADS XIII,
14th – 17th October 2005,
Are YOU going?

Readers who have attended just one Australian Conference will not really be concentrating at the moment - their minds have just flashed to great memories that they will own forever and quietly peruse to warm their hearts. Faces of old friends, new friends, beautiful bromeliads and lots of other good stuff.

I want to talk to those who have never been and those who are hesitating. What happens at Conference?

Do not miss Registration Night; the air is filled with excitement, the anticipation of seeing old friends and meeting new ones. It is noisy, very happy, even shrieks of happiness and hugs - it is just MAGIC. In 1998 Bruce Purdie of New Zealand wrote me "Once you get them together you cannot stop them from having a good time", so true.
There are bromeliads on display and for sale, speakers who usually discuss subjects in language even the novice can understand and usually wrapped in a lot of humour. There are question times during the proceedings and a chance to pick the "gurus" brains even when not in sessions. There are optional Trips (outside seminar times), Raffles, Show, and an Auction (often with a rare plant or two).
The Brisbane Society has secured Dr. Bruno da Silva from Brazil and David Shiigi from Hawaii as their main speakers (wow) and there will be other speakers both from Queensland and other states – maybe even more from overseas!
As the former Australian Conference Co-ordinator I urge you to decide to go. Cairns had many first time attendees and now those bromeliophiles look forward to the next gathering. You will not be disappointed, you will learn lots, see and make some very special friends and take away wonderful memories.
If you do not have a good time at the conference it will be because you did not go! The organizing is a huge job and Brisbane members have been working hard. Do not be one of those who 'wish' after it is over. Commit to go, complete your Registration Form as soon as it arrives and post it, make all your bookings (cancel the paperboy and milkman, or bring them too) and look forward to a wonderful time.
See you there!

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS: APRIL – JUNE 2005

(compiled by Bob Reilly)

21 April Society general meeting. Venue: Uniting Church Hall, 52 Merthyr Rd New Farm.

- Beginners class topic: Growing grey-leafed tillandsias. Discussion led by Nev Ryan. Commences 7.30pm.
- Main meeting topic: Growing billbergias. Discussion led by Greg Aizlewood. Please bring along any billbergias you may have.
- Mini – show Class 1: Bromelioideae not listed elsewhere in the competition schedule for 2005, Class 2: Guzmania, Class 3: Pitcairnia and Pepinia, Class 4: Any other mature (flowering) bromeliad. Note: Species and hybrids are eligible for entry in all classes.
- Plant of the month: Species and hybrids from the following genera – Edmundoa, Encholirium, Fasicularia, Fernseea, Fosterella, Glomeropitcairnia, Greigia, and Guzmania.

30 April – 1 May Queensland Council of Garden Clubs Inc. annual plant show and sale Over 15 clubs will be mounting displays. Venue: Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens auditorium. The Society will be mounting a display. It will be set up on 29 April. If you would like to help with display, phone Bob Cross (07) 3265 4364. To sell plants, please phone Nancy Kickbusch (07) 3300 1704.

30 April -1 May Bromeliad show and sale presented by the Sunshine Coast Bromeliad Society Inc. Venue: Buderim Memorial Hall (cnr Gloucester & King streets) Buderim. Timings: 30 April 9am – 4pm, 1 May 9am - 3pm. More details: phone (07) 5493 3677 Ah (07) 5445 3172 Mob 0407 120 954.

14 May Tillandsia workshop. Venue: 66 Agnes St, Auchenflower. Timings: 10am – 3pm. More details: see Page 6, or phone Bob Reilly (07) 3870 8029.

19 May Society general meeting. Venue: Uniting Church Hall, 52 Merthyr Rd New Farm.

- Beginners class topic: Bromeliad clinic – Your questions on growing bromeliads answered by Jenny Cakurs. Commences 7.30pm.
- Main meeting topic: Growing pitcairnias and pepinias. Discussion led by Bob Reilly. Please bring along any pitcairnias or pepinias you may have.

- Popular vote: Species or hybrid from any genus.
- Plant of the month: Species and hybrids from the following genera – Hechtia, Hohenbergia, Hohenbergiopsis, Lindmania, Lymania, and Mezobromelia.

28 May Society field day at Nancy Kickbusch's residence at 3 Jerrima St, The Gap. Timings: 9am – 1pm. Plant sales and talks on bromeliads. **Please bring along a "plate" for morning tea and a chair.** Phone Nancy Kickbusch for more details on (07) 3330 1704.

11/12 June Combined show and sale of bromeliads, cacti, and other succulents. Over 1,000 varieties/hybrids of these plants could be on sale. Presented by The Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. and The Cactus & Succulent Society of Queensland Inc. Venue: Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens auditorium. Timings: 11 June 8am – 4.30pm, 12 June 9am – 3pm. **More details are on p.26.**

This is a major fund-raising activity and source of new members for the Society. We will need plenty of helpers to assist with plant sales, raffle ticket sales, security, plant information, and many other activities. Set up for the event will occur on 10 June. Please telephone the following people if you have any queries: Display – Bob Cross (07) 3265 4364, Bromeliad competition – Olive Trevor (07) 3351 1203 or Bob Reilly (07) 3870 8029, Bromeliad sales – Nancy Kickbusch (07) 3300 1704. **Note: As plant sales' space is quite limited, it is essential you contact Nancy by 20 May if you wish to sell bromeliads at the show**.

16 June Society general meeting. Venue: Uniting Church Hall, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm.

- Beginners class topic: What is a bromeliad, where to buy them, books about them, and related matters. Discussion led by Greg Aizlewood. Commences 7.30pm.
- Main meeting topic: Bromeliads in the Landscape. Presentation by Arno King.
- Popular vote: Species and hybrids from any genus.
- Plant of the month: Species and hybrids from the following genera: Navia, and Neoregelia.

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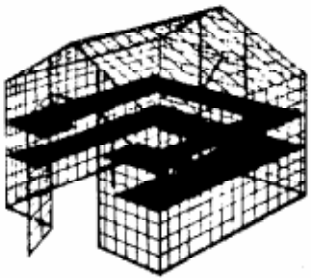

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