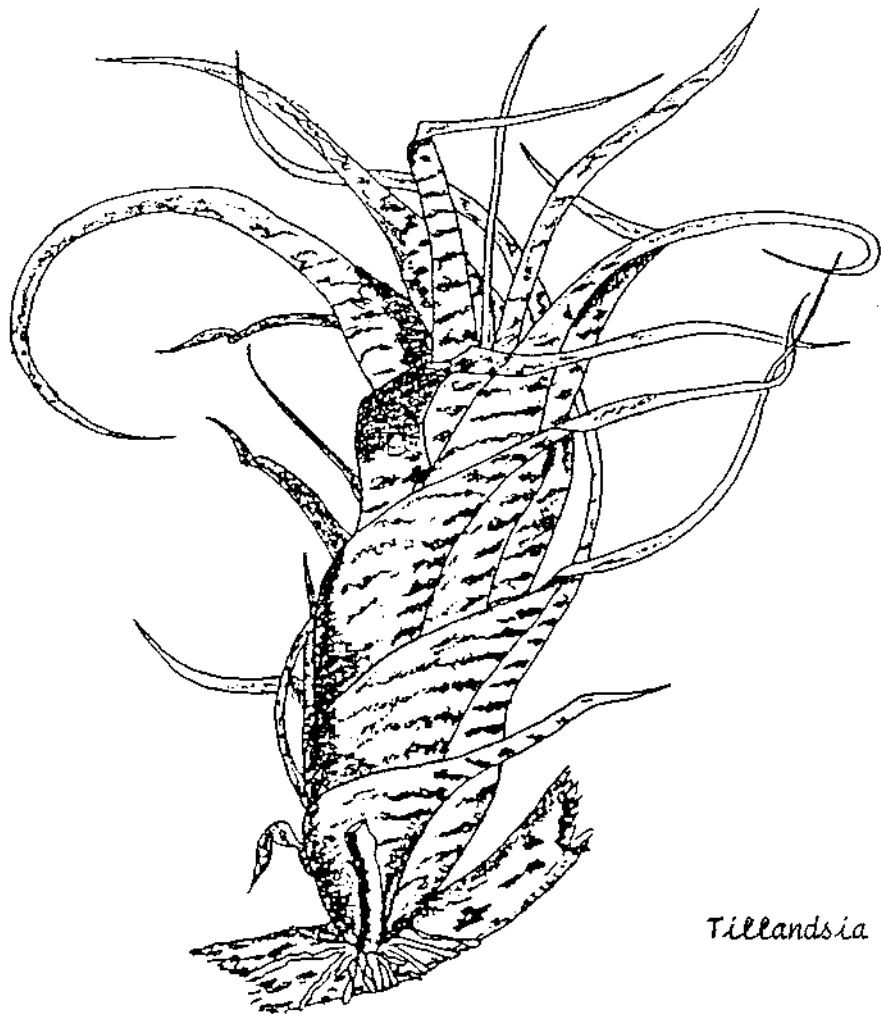


Bromeliaceae

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MAY - JUNE, 1988



Tillandsia flexuosa

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND

Postal Address: P.O. Box 565,
FORTITUDE VALLEY,
AUSTRALIA. 4006

General Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month except December, at the Uniting Church Hall, Warner Street, Fortitude Valley, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

PATRON:	Mr. H. Caulfield	
PRESIDENT:	Mr. R. Paulsen	2970415
SECRETARY:	Mrs. M. Marshall	
TREASURER:	Mr. G. Stewart	2779965
EDITOR:	Mr. L. Butt	8483515

PROGRAMME

MAY:	14th	Field Day: Don & Phyllis Hobbs, 2.00 p.m.
	19th	General Meeting
		Beginners: Potting Mixes in General by Des Anderson
		"Pitcairnioideae" by Patricia O'Dea in preparation for Mini-Show in October
		"How to Prepare Plants for Sending to the Mulford Foster Identification Centre, USA" by Greg Stewart
JUNE:	10th	Set up for Combined Show from 2.00 p.m.
	11th	Combined Show
	12th	Combined Show Pull Down from close of Show
	16th	General Meeting
		Beginners: Len Butt
		"Shade Houses" by Air Gro
		"Recap of Combined Show" by Peter Paroz

EDITORIAL

June is only just around the corner, so let us all make this 200th Anniversary bi-centennial year Combined Show a real winner.

There never seems to be a lack of plants for displays, so I guess the pattern will follow as usual. However, the thought of placing plants on the Show Bench area seems to scare off many people. Remember, if your plant is free of pests and disease, and is reasonably symmetrical, it just could be a winner. Why not try this year, and fill those competition benches!

Nambour Q.N.I.A. Expo has come and gone, leaving many happy memories this year. Inclement weather leading up to the date could have been one reason our organisers could not fill the bus we hired to take members there on the Saturday, 9th April. I am told that 26 finally went, but this is only half capacity. The fare of \$5.00 was very generous for such a journey. Rain did stay away on that Saturday, and I sincerely hope all who availed themselves of the opportunity thoroughly enjoyed their day.

As I was one of the guests of the occasion, I met a few of the bus people. Our President and Secretary were doing a good job wandering through the stands. The new bromeliad nursery of Palmwoods had a small but well furnished stand with plenty of colourful bromeliads. Further down the nursery aisles, Tony Lea had a formidable collection of Tillandsias in his tent stand, as well as hundreds of cacti and other succulents. I noticed a very interesting *Vriesea* in flower on the Palmwoods display labelled *Vriesea erotica*.

Len Butt

FIELD DAY: 14th May, 1988

Don & Phyllis Hobbs,
2 Blake St.,
CLEVELAND

Peter Paroz will speak on Preparation of Plants for the Show Table

All members are invited to attend, and judging on last year's, it will be a very interesting afternoon.

Members attending are requested to bring their own chairs.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF AN EARLY BROMELIAN

My first interest in growing bromeliads came just about 1950, when, as a collector of cacti and other succulents, and a steward with the Horticultural Society of Queensland, I came across the flowering head of *Billbergia thysoides*, which is, of course, *B. pyramidalis* var. *Concolor*. A.W.F. Kurth and Professor Herbert had very early collections, and Jack Bailey, Gardens Curator, grew large clumps in the Botanical Gardens along with *Neoregelia spectabilis* and *B. nutans*. From Jack Bailey I got the address of Charlie Hodgson of Victoria who sold me many of my first bromeliads.

When Jack passed away, Harold Caulfield became Curator, and brought with him a wealth of early cultural knowledge on the genus. Keith's main information was to grow them all in very small pots, so Caulfield's new culture of epiphytic and log growing seems much more sensible.

Bob and Catherine Wilson, authors of the first bromeliad colour book in English came out to Australia and visited the Gardens in the late 1950's. Many new species were added to the Gardens collection then.

Using Walter Richters German book "Bromeliaceen", I added the rare *Neoregelia marmorata* and *Quesnelia marmorata* to my collection, and also obtained one of the first spotted leaf batches of the first Australian registered *Billbergia* from Win Reid, *B. Kahibah*.

The Bromeliad Society of Australia formed in 1963, and I joined about 1964. Nick Kemp was their Associate Vice President at that time.

In 1959, the Queensland owned magazine "Queensland Garden" came into publication, and I joined the writing staff along with S.B. Watkins and P.K. Searle. My assignments were with native orchids and with bromeliads, and my monthly series on these ran for three years.

By 1960, we had done our share in introducing bromeliad species in the State. That year and the following years until 1967, my visits to Hart's nursery and Jackson's nursery were enriched by friendships with Mrs. Grasselli, Barclay Binnie, Peter Paroz, Maizie Jones, Nez Misso, Nick Kemp and Jim Hyde. The interest in bromeliad collecting finally peaked in the formation of the Bromeliad Society of Queensland in January, 1967.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY (cont)

As the first appointed Secretary, I also edited the Bromeliaceae which came out monthly from the second meeting. My design for a badge was also accepted, and we were on our way!

Still writing in "Queensland Garden", my interest now took in many of the other plant genera, so my garden societies also grew.

First as Head Gardener of Q.U.F. Industries, then manager of Picardy Landscape Nursery, I finally became Nursery Ganger at Salisbury Dept. of Forestry. Augmenting this with teaching classes in Horticulture two nights per week at T.A.F.E., it was a very full and busy time.

The interest in the bromeliad genus has never waned, but it has had several ups & downs, because the genus is not the favourite plant of my gardening family. However, good enthusiastic Bromelians like Grace Goode of Alexandra Headlands, the late Nick Kemp of Coopers Plains, Clyde Wasley of Coopers Plains, and Graham Cowan of Wellington Point kept my interest ever fresh.

Today, my enthusiasm dwells around the miniature of the species, Neoregelia, Aechmea and Billbergia being in the forefront. I also cherish all letters sent to me by Victoria Padilla and Bert Foster, two of the pioneer American greats.

Len Butt

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY - JUDGES OPEN FIELD DAY

The second Judges Open Field Day for 1988 will be held as follows:

COST : No Charge
 DAY : Saturday
 DATE : 25th June, 1988
 TIME : 10.00 a.m.
 PLACE : Bardon Community Assoc. Hall (behind Bardon K'garten)
 Simpsons Road,
 Bowman Park, BARDON

All recognised judges are welcome. Please telephone Michael O'Dea on 3992669 to book in, or to obtain further details.

JUDGES TRAINING COURSE

Subject to sufficient interest, the Committee has decided to initiate a Judges Training Programme, so that there will be a larger panel available for our shows.

The programme consists of a series of lectures and practical sessions, covering all aspects of Show Judging, spread over approximately twelve (12) months. These will generally be held on Saturday afternoon, but with some flexibility to allow for availability of lecturers and participants.

Minimum requirements for Trainee Judges are:-

- (1) Minimum of two (2) years growing experience
- (2) Active participation as a Show Bench Exhibitor
- (3) Willingness to accept judging assignments once qualified
- (4) Personal copy of the B.S.I. Judges Handbook (available from B.S.Q. Bookshop)

Members with the above qualifications interested in Show Bench Judging are invited to lodge their name with Greg Stewart.

Subject to sufficient interest, the programme will start in about two months.

Peter Paroz, Co-ordinator



Aechmea fasciata

"TILLS ON POLES"

My secret is out!! Blue Poles? No!! Melaleuca Poles? Yes!!

Not as costly as the former, but to the Tillandsia grower, a far better use can be made of them as a medium to set your plants on.

Not only as a kindergarten for Tillandsia seedlings (as I do), but as a show piece for a patio setting, suitable for small to medium plants such as *Tillandsia stricta*, *T. meridionalis*, *T. ionantha*, *T. tenuifolia*, and many others.

On the outskirts of Brisbane there are many lowland areas that are Melaleuca jungles. Requests to cut a few are invariably granted by land owners.

An easy method is to stand a 2 metre long by 75 mm diameter pole in an 8 litre plant pot or sectioned hollowed wood, filled with gravel, a good anchor and also catches the drips. To proceed from there is best left to your own expertise and availability of plants.

Just imagine a 2 metre pole covered from top to base in flowering Tills.

Just imagine!!!! Take it from here -

Rolly Reilly

AN USUAL BROMELIAD

About 15 years ago, I visited a lady at Wellington Point who was well known as a fern collector. Whilst walking around her very old and very crowded ferneries, I was amazed at the great variety of rare species of the Filicies she had in her collection, and I queried one large, and very strange, plant sitting back behind the ferns. This, I was told, was a bromeliad that grew very well in fern mixture.

Priding myself that I knew my bromels, and this was more like an Aspidistra, I declined to comment, but was promptly given a small plant from it. On examination later, I found it had a swollen type of pseudobulb, not unlike an oncidium orchid, with a short

cont:

tough narrow petiole ending in a large wide spoon-shaped leaf. The plant was put amongst my ferns in a very shady spot near my front pond, and almost forgotten. It continued to grow and about six years ago, I noticed a thin, branched, and very tall flower spike rising from the midst of its eight suckers. The inflorescence and stems were very red, as also were the resulting blooms. The tubular formation of the blooms announced it immediately as a *Pitcairnia* - but what a strange one.

Delving into bromeliad books, I came up with a similar plant with serrated petioles, but mine were entire! Further investigation through old Bromelletters, and the name *Pitcairnia undulata* came to light, and was confirmed. My plant now branch spikes every year, and seems to enjoy the shady place, with new leaves rising nearly a metre from the base.

Len Butt

(reproduced from Ipswich Bromeliad Society Bulletin)

ACROSS THE TASMAN

Easter 1988 saw three Queenslanders, Grace Goode, Bev Collins and myself visit New Zealand to share with the Bromeliad Society of New Zealand in their Silver Anniversary celebrations.

We arrived at midnight, and it was lovely to be met and taken to our motel and during our stay, someone was always on hand to offer us transport to the various activities being held.

The two-day show held at Eden Gardens was ample evidence of how the Society has advanced since it was started by a small group in July, 1962. The show benches were filled with beautiful plants, making the job of judging no easy task for Dick Phillips and myself. We both congratulate all competitors on the quality of the plants shown. The sales tables were also well stocked, and did a roaring trade over the two days.

Eden Park is a lovely garden right in the heart of Auckland. Paths take one down into the old crater that has been well planted with shrubs and trees. There is a waterfall on one side, and one

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section has been planted with bromeliads and these are maintained by members of the Society. The quality of the plants and their maintenance is a credit to all concerned.

On the Saturday night we all met at the home of President Len Trotman and his wife Pearl, for dinner and 'getting to know you evening', and all had a grand time.

Sunday was the second day of the show, but the visitors, and some of the locals, were taken on a bus outing to some of the beauty spots that abound around Auckland. We got back in time to get ready to celebrate the Silver Anniversary Dinner. It was a bright affair, with some of the original group present who started it all 25 years ago. The winners of the various trophies were presented with their prizes and all wished the Society a bright and happy future.

Monday was spent in viewing members collections and we were taken around in a fleet of cars. All growers had some sort of housing to protect the more tender plants during winter, but a number of the more hardy plants were doing well in some of the terraced gardens, protected by shrubs and trees.

Over Easter, Grace, Bev and I shared at a motel, but Tuesday saw them off by bus for Rotorua, while the Dephoffs took Dick Phillips and myself on a day tour as far south as Thames. We took in several bromeliad collections on the way, and enjoyed seeing something of the farming communities along the way. You are so close to the sea that the vista was ever changing and we thoroughly enjoyed the day. Next day, Margaret Dephoff took me on a bus-abouttour of the northern environs of Auckland. The views of the ocean inlets, islands out to sea and the green headlands were breathtaking. On one ticket, we were able to change buses, and with Margaret knowing the area, it was an experience to be long remembered.

As I was flying home the next afternoon, the morning was taken up visiting the two gardens I had so far missed. First it was to Bea Hansen's to see her very comprehensive collection. The glass-houses were filled with very colourful specimens of mouthwatering goodies, and Tillandsias took up most of the hanging space. Then

cont:

it was off to the Dephoffs for a better look at their glasshouses and the plants growing in the garden. Laurie also quarantines the plants imported for Society members who ballot for first choice when the plants are ready to be sold at the meetings.

All in all, a very full and entertaining seven days, thanks to our New Zealand friends.

Olwen Ferris

FOR STARTERS

People who have been growing bromeliads for some years are inclined to forget the problems they had in the early days of their experiences with bromeliads.

One of the main hurdles is that we do not know what it is that we do not know, so cannot ask the right questions of more experienced growers. When having had a mistake in horticultural techniques pointed out, I have heard people say 'How stupid, I just never thought about it like that'.

So the thing to do is to think about the growth habits of bromeliads in their native habitats. Having thought about it, then read whatever you can get hold of that is written by experienced bromeliad growers. Experience is essential when writing or giving advice. There are a number of books printed with very attractive colour pictures showing bromeliads in artistic settings. Many of these books have plants incorrectly named, and some of the plants depicted bear very little resemblance to their proper appearance, so make sure the books are accurate. (when this was written, the last statement was very much the case, but now there are far more reliable text books available. Ed.)

For better growth, make sure you give them plenty of fresh air, free from draughts and cold winds. Make sure they have the correct amount of moisture around their roots, that the pot they are in is suitable for further growth, and the mixture has ample drainage and warmth retention. Roots like to be warm in the mix, and not soggy or cold, or for that matter, dry and cooked.

cont:

Most bromels like dappled sunlight, but this varies with species. Consider the climate in your area, and try to adjust conditions so that your plants are able to acclimatise and settle down to do their own thing. When your plant decides to put out a new offset shoot, resist the temptation to take it off. Leave it be and let it put out roots to firm and establish itself. When the new arrival is well anchored, the parent receives encouragement from the offset it may make big strides in growth, even burst into flower. After this burst of energy, generally more offsets appear. These may be removed when they are about half the size of the parent, and have some good strong leaves and roots, or you can leave them there and create a really nice specimen plant.

When you repot on, use a larger pot that will allow greater root room, and also help keep the pot from falling over every time you water it.

Many species of bromeliad change colour as they mature. I remember a plant I bought as *Neoregelia carolinae*. I was told it would become bright red when it was ready to flower. It was small, about half its mature size, was green, and in a small 3 or 4 inch (10cm) pot. I put it in a sem-shaded corner, gave it lashings of water and waited to see what would happen. To my surprise, it turned a brownish red all over and started to grow. The more it grew, the more bronzy red it became, and I waited for the flowers to shoot up. Unfortunately, I had neglected to inquire just how the flowers grew. Flowers grew on stalks as far as I was concerned, and as the plant was at eye-level, I never did see flowers on that plant! It grew pups that also turned red and grew and grew, it was a very fine sight.! One day, Mr. Len Butt saw it, and told me a few basic facts about the flowering habits of *Neoregelias*. I was very surprised, and we all mended our ways.

Soon after this, we started the Bromeliad Society of Queensland, and I had plenty of people to ask questions, and slowly I became more able to handle my unpredictable bromeliads.

From notes by Mary Grasselli, 1978

COMBINED SHOW, 1988

The Combined Show for 1988 will be held on the Queen's Birthday weekend, 11th and 12th June.

Show Set-Up will be on Friday, 10th June, from approx. 2.00 p.m. A light supper will be provided for those members involved in the set-up.

Plants are required for 3 main areas -

COMPETITION: All members are requested to try and have plants available for competition. Patricia O'Dea is our Competition Steward & will have Schedules available at the next meeting.

DISPLAY: Neville Ryan is our Display Organiser, so please see him at the next meeting to ascertain his requirements. We are calling on ALL members to provide some plants for the display. Please don't leave it to the faithful few.

SALES: Plants must be in good condition, free of pests and disease, established in their pots, etc. Sales Stickers, which MUST be used, are available from Greg Stewart.

Members selling plants are reminded that this is a service offered by the Society, and your co-operation in providing plants for display and competition also is sought.

Stewards are required for the weekend, and if you can spare any time at all to man stands, provide security, etc, please see our Roster Stewards, D. & J. Upton, at the next meeting, to arrange times, etc.

REMEMBER, THIS IS YOUR SHOW, AND NEEDS YOUR INPUT TO BE SUCCESSFUL

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