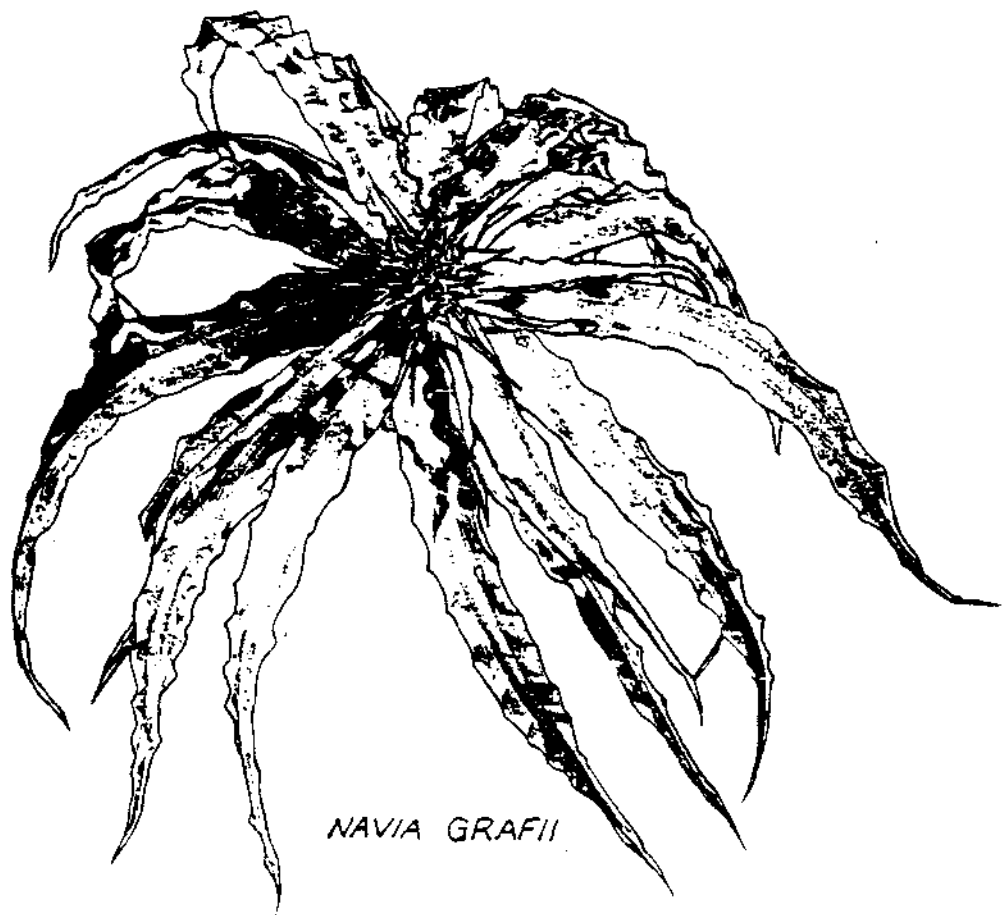


BROMELIACEAE

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NAVIA GRAFII

THE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND INC.

General Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month except December at the Uniting Church Hall, 52 Merthyr Road, New Farm, commencing at 7.30 pm.

POSTAL ADDRESS: P.O. Box 565,
Fortitude Valley,
AUSTRALIA Q 4006

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PATRON: Mr. H. Caulfield
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 SECRETARY: Mr. Paul Hunter ASST. SECRETARY: K. Masters
 TREASURER: Ms. Lorraine Wilton
 EDITOR: Mr. Len Butt
 SHOW ORGANIZER: Mr. Don Hobbs
 COMMITTEE: Mrs. Olive Trevor; Mr. Neville Ryan;
 Mr. Paul Bird; Mrs. Phyllis Hobbs;
 Mr. Michael O'Dea; Mrs. Patricia O'Dea;
 Mr. Bob Paulsen

-oOo-

PROGRAMME

MAY 16th: "Centre Rot in Bromeliads & Relevant Subjects"
by Peter Paroz
Plant Commentary - Len Butt

JUNE 20th: The very important Combined Bromeliad, Cacti & other Succulents Show on the Queen's Birthday Weekend - 8 & 9 June, 1991.
(More entries are needed this year, and especially in the new Mary Grasselli Memorial award).

EDITORIAL During my preamble on beginnings at the March Meeting I regret I made no mention of the two physical inaugural builders of the newly formed Bromeliad Society of Queensland in those early days.

To correct this I now mention Barclay Binnie and Morrie Jones. The former has left our ranks and the latter has re-joined with his wife Margaret. Both these chaps were in the same trade and all our wire hangers and all of our show stands were made by them.

With that off my mind I must remind you all to concentrate on entering plants for the approaching June Combined Show, and to commend Mrs. Phyll Hobbs and Lorraine Wilton for their banter about what is recommended to prepare a plant for exhibition. The informative talk was well done.

Bob Paulson had certainly done his homework in our March meeting commentary. It was well presented, and very informative, especially to newcomers.

The Trade Table was well filled and well patronised, the meeting went like clockwork, mainly due to the professional approach of our new President, Len Trevor.

When this goes to print the very important event on our back page will be only a few weeks away. Let us, everyone make it the best ever!! Keep the dates 8th and 9th of June fresh in your minds and as well as preparing your sale plants put double the effort into a few choice plants for the Show bench! Remember also if you are a Novice to enter for the Mary Grasselli Memorial Trophy.

L.P. Butt

-oOo-

PRESIDENTIAL TALK

It has been great to move into a warm President's chair and start to run a strong vibrant group of plant people.

I have already said at our last general meeting that I see 1991 as a year of change. Firstly let's consider what draws us together as a group, what holds us together as a group. Surely the answer to the first question is plants or love of plants. The answer to the second question could also be plants, but at this point, I think it should

also be people. People in the form of friends.

What a beaut basis to work from, Plants and Friends. After these two we have to have essentials like money, meetings, business, competitions etc., etc.. These things don't give me the same warm feeling I get when talking about plants and friends. I think the vast majority of members think and feel as I do. If this is so, we have the basis of the change I talk about. More plants and friends and less business.

If you agree please write a small note to me saying so and give any suggestion you might have about how this can be achieved. I would like to publish your notes if you agree. Please put for publication or not for publication on the bottom of your notes.

If you are like me and would rather talk than write please do just that.

Yours in service,

Len Trevor

-oOo-

EDITORIAL - MAY The Meeting this month was one to remember, a well furnished display table with excellent commentary by John Higgins.

There is not enough space to emphasise the plants discussed, but a new plant *Aechmea contracta*, a lovely huge flowering *Tillandsia T. duratii* var. *Saxicolus* and a symmetrical rosette of *Neo. meyendorffii* Inferno held pride of place.

Mainly the topic of discussion was the three N.S.W. Societies Combined Bromeliads 6.

Len Trevor with his usual enthusiasm spoke of the atmosphere of infectious friendliness and goodwill that was there! That opening on the Friday night, the huge trade table that ran the whole time of the Conference supplied by all sections. The joyous good banter by all, and when the lectures started the talk in particular by Robert Reidl on the serious way we must go about saving rain forest bromeliads. How our Bob Paulsen rose to the occasion and it looks like it will be on our future agenda!

Further to this Mrs. Hobbs spoke on the clear diction and knowledge of Harry Luther appreciated by all and the highlight of Marj McNamara's Argentinian trip among bromeliads. Nev Ryan also expressed his delight and gave highlights of places he visited. All agreed we will have to really come up with something to beat this in 1993!

A very good showing of Conference slides followed rounded off by a talk and slide showing of Olive Trevor's Vriesias.

Our Society decided to go ahead with the proposed classes in Floral Art.

L.P. Butt

-oOo-

REPORT ON LAST MEETING Members were reminded of Membership fees: Single \$7.00, Family \$10.00.

Book Sales - A list of all books for sale shall be made (stock take) and published in the Bromeliaceae.

Fridge Magnets - The fridge magnets for the 1993 Conference promotion were presented and members were all given one. The remaining shall be distributed at the Conference in Sydney (Easter 1991).

Bromeliaceae - All members were asked to assist by putting together a small item for publishing.

Vice President - Len Trevor advised all members that the position of Vice President shall be filled by Mr. Doug Upton.

Lucky Door Prize winner was Aileen and the Raffles winners were J. Henwood, D. Upton, M. McGregor Lowndes, E. Marsh and R. Wilson (donated for redraw by R. Reilly).

The Commentary for tabled plants was carried out by B. Paulsen, thanked by L. Trevor and the Judges' Choice -

Advanced - *Til Complanata* (R. Reilly)
Novice - *Dyckia Fosteriana* (B. Paulsen)

Preparation of show plants - P. Hobbs and L. Wilton gave a very interesting and helpful talk on the procedures to be followed when preparing show plants. Thanked by L. Trevor.

How I started in Bromeliads - L. Butt explained to the members how he became interested in Bromeliads and the happenings that followed. Thanked by L. Trevor.

Conference - J. Higgins moved that L. Trevor speak on behalf of the Society at the 1991 Conference for the promotion of Qld. Conference in Brisbane 1993. Seconded L. Butt, all in favour.

Meeting closed by L. Trevor (President) at 9.58 pm.

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Bromeliad Display at previous Combined Show

THE SIXTH NATIONAL BROMELIAD CONFERENCE - by Olwen Ferris

Bromeliads VI was held at The Shore Inn, Artarmon, Sydney, over Easter 1991 and was an outstanding success. I have attended all the Conferences held in Australia and each one has had its own brand of magic, to carry us on for the two years until the next Conference.

The keynote speaker was Harry Luther, Director of the Mulford B. Foster Bromeliad Identification Centre, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Florida U.S.A. His first lecture was on Bromeliads of Equador - Five Years Later.

Derek Butcher (S.A.) spoke on Naming Problems - Species and Hybrids and had his third print-out of all his hard work in sorting out our problems, on sale for delegates to the Conference.

David Sheumac (N.S.W.) talked on Tillandsia Culture in the Southern Hemisphere, Problems and Solutions.

Ruby Ryde took us via colour slides to The Many and Varied Genera of South East Brazil.

Harry Luther's second illustrated lecture was on New Bromeliad Species of Horticultural Merit.

Maurie Kellett (Vic.) spoke on the Relationship of the Bromeliad Bottom Leaves to the Potting Mix.

Len Coglan (S.A.) took us through Kew Gardens, Palmengarten and the Ehler's Collection.

Robert Riedl (N.S.W.) gave a very well prepared talk on Bromeliad Conservation. Well done Robert.

Harry Luther's third lecture was A Synopsis of the Bromeliaceae.

Olive Trevor (Qld.) illustrated her talk on Vriesea Hybrids with some very lovely colour slides. Many of these hybrids came to us through the chain stores in the early sixties.

Harry Luther's fourth lecture was on the subgenera of Tillandsia and gave warning of a lot of work being done to reclassify many of the

plants we know as Tillandsias.

Gordon Slack (N.S.W.) had everyone's attention with Growing Tillandsia Seeds using Artificial Media and Sterile Techniques.

Marjory McNamara (N.S.W.) took us on an illustrated tour - Don't Cry for Me Argentina - I'm Happy.

For his fifth lecture, Harry Luther gave How to Prepare a Bromeliad Specimen.

Peter Tristram took us Collecting in Costa Rica.

The proceedings ended with a Panel Discussion of Questions and Answers.

It was a great time, of meeting old friends and to see in person, others who up to now had only been names on paper. On Monday night, as we broke up and headed for home, all promised to meet again in Brisbane, in two years time.

-oOo-

BROMELIAD JOTTINGS - by Mary Grasselli of Brisbane

We find some of the descriptions in the reference books hard to apply to our plants, for instance how small is "not very large"? or how big is "a fair sized plant"? I use Lyman B. Smith's *Phytologia* mainly for getting the correct spelling of the plant names.

Before the days of quarantine restrictions, a lot of Bromeliads were imported, name tags came loose in the journey and were probably put back onto the wrong plants. Added to this, people sprinkled pollen around in an un-controlled fashion - the result is a mass of plants with odd names, many of which are just fancy rubbish.

I planted some seed of *Aechmea mexicana* and some of *Canistrum lindenii* and the seedlings are doing well. My method was to place a layer of newspaper at the bottom to conserve moisture, then some coconut fibre, charcoal and peanut shells, then fill up with my usual mix. This comprises 1 part German moss peat, 1 part coarse river sand (from a small creek bed that is almost dry, the cattle come down to drink from the remaining puddles and leave some 'goodies' churned up

in the sand), 1 part charcoal pieces and dust, 1 part Vermiculite and 1 part commercial soil-less compost. I add to this Osmocote - slow release fertilizing granules.

We have had a good winter with not enough cold to cause any die-back of the leaves and with plenty of rain, which the plants prefer to tap water. Now that the warmer weather has set in, the Broms are pupping out all over.

I bought a plant of *Aechmea nudicaulis* var. *striata* called 'Mary Hyde'. It was about 20 cms high with good strong leaves. I decided to put it into a larger pot and imagine my surprise when I discovered that it had no roots at all - not even the little white bumps to announce that the roots were on the way.

I have just heard of an American book called *Flora Neotropica*. It is rather expensive, but what I have seen from a glance through it, it would be a useful book to have.

At the moment we are having a spot of trouble with the difference between *Billbergia decora* and *Billbergia venezuelana*. *Aechmea gamosepala* seems to have varieties with enough differences to cause arguments, some have stolons coming from the base, while some appear to come from the first leaf axil. A difference is also evident in the ends of the leaves, some being more rounded than others.

I really do think that Bromeliads give thought for more discussion. Of course, out here, we have some problems connected with growing conditions. The climatic range is so wide, virtually from the Sahara to the North of Scotland.

-oOo-

BROMELIAD CONSERVATION - A PRIORITY WE CANNOT AFFORD TO IGNORE

All of us like to grow those bizarre but fascinating plants of the family Bromelioideae, how many stop to think that it is entirely possible that in a few short decades, their habitat will be gone or so badly devastated that all the rehabilitation in this world is not going to bring it back! How often are we told that even now the virgin rain forest is cleared every day at a size of several football fields!

Some, there are who would say, So what! We have enough varieties now in collections to offset this! This however is looking at the problem through rose coloured glasses. With the habitat of species destroyed, the vast reserve of material for crosses and hybrids also will go! Even if our world leaders have a complete turn around change of heart, stop useless logging just for supplying the wood chip industry, and concentrate massive replant programs, you can bet your last dollar that epiphytic flora will be a very low priority!

The answer is for America, South America and all parts where these endangered plants grow to form study groups and active associations to put species back into their natural habitat when or if it is replanted!

Of course, National Parks are a good start, and it would be a topical question for our Society to ask such people as Harry Luther as to what extent National Park development has reached in southern America? Seeing that America is a long way out of many people's travelling range here in Australia, a fund could be set up to organise the start of creating such plant sanctuaries in areas still regarded as safe from the commercial drive of so called progress.

What needs to be done at all societies' level is for letters to be sent to the right American government places, emphasising that not only replacement trees are needed but also a vast diversity of rain forest understorey plants and epiphytes as well!

Len P. Butt (Editor)

-oOo-

BROMELIAD SEED RAISING - by Barclay Binnie

Without doubt, the most difficult Bromeliad seed to raise is from the genera belonging to the sub family Tillandsioideae. These genera have a plumose seed most of which have a resemblance to thistle-down. These plumes serve several purposes. When the seed ripens, the capsule bursts and the seed is scattered to the wind. These plumes act as parachutes so that the seed may be dispersed by air currents. Next, when the seed comes in contact with a rough surface, the plumes act as anchors, and finally, once anchored, they act as wicks, absorbing moisture from the atmosphere and channelling it to the embryo.

For the seed to be light enough to be carried by air currents, there cannot be very much nutriment for the germinating embryo; a fact which naturally slows the rate of growth in the early stages. This is not carried to the extremes as in orchids, but a comparison with the seed of other sub-families will show the contrast. This lack of nutriment possibly explains why a germination of almost 100% may result in only 10% alive after only a short period.

Another factor which creates difficulties for the cultivation is the fact that most of these plants are extremely specialised. In the case of many of the Tillandsias they have evolved to take the advantage of atmospheric moisture, rather than that of rain, and must have good ventilation.

These points should be borne in mind when attempting to raise these plants.

It is not possible to give one a lot of information which will cover the whole sub-family. Requirements differ amongst the genera, in some cases different species in the same genus need different handling. Another point to consider is that different growers have had success using different ideas. What is suitable for the conditions in one person's house is not necessarily useful to another.

For general purpose it may be well to divide these plants into two groups. Those with soft green leaves, irrespective of genera, in one group and those with the harder leaves, with grey to silver or plumose scales, in the other. The former require less light and more humidity and the latter more light and almost constant air movement.

The growing media (a better description than compost) vary from grower to grower and are extremely variable. For the amateur with limited facilities, it would possibly be better to raise the softer leaved types in shallow punnets, using an open fern fibre as the medium. Osmunda, Todea and Cyathea fibre have proven quite successful, but it would seem that any good, open fibre of this nature would suit. Some have had success raising seed on straight German peat moss, others on a mix of fine pine bark, peanut shell, peat moss and sand. These more dense media require more attention as regards moisture and with many growers, damping off is the result. Another method is a layer of small granuled charcoal covered with

Sphagnum moss. In all cases the medium is placed in the punnet and (except in the case of the Sphagnum) is sterilized by pouring boiling water through it. When this has cooled, the seed is sown thinly on the surface. If too much seed is used, the result is the growth of algae on the plumes which causes the loss of the freshly germinated seed. The seed is then sprayed with a fine mist of water to bring it into close contact with the medium. The whole is then put into a clean plastic bag, with the case of the Bromelioideae and placed in a warm, bright position, but not in direct sun.

The Editor is sorry to note the passing away of Mr. Mulford B. Foster, of Orlando, Florida.

Mr. Foster was foremost in the popularising of the cultivation of the Bromeliaceae, collecting the plants as far back as 1935.

He was a founder member of the Bromeliad Society Inc. of America and there are numerous bromeliads named for him.

-oOo-

BROMELIAD V CONFERENCE, MELBOURNE 1989 The Bromeliad Society of Victoria has limited copies available of the 1989 Conference Notes. These Notes are great reference material for new members, for Meeting prizes, and for those members unable to attend the Conference.

Please forward your order for copies @ \$5.00 each, Postage paid, to:-
Bromeliad Society of Victoria,
P O Box 115
HURSTBRIDGE VIC. 3099

Also please note that our study group has commenced a *Vriesea* identification project in conjunction with South Australia. If any other Society wishes to appoint a representative to work with us, we would welcome them. The sooner we start the sooner we can achieve something.

Maurice J. Kellett

-oOo-



Bed of Bromeliads at Mr. & Mrs. Patterson's home

COLLECTING THE MINIATURE FORMS OF THE EPIPHYTIC BROMELIADS

Since I started gathering around me the various genera of the bromeliaceae it has become apparent that at least in my case, it has become like a drug.

Drugs should not be allowed to be habit forming, so the answer is to specialise, that is if your hobby is a hobby and not a commercial venture.

The miniature forms of many of the genera have long been a fascination, so I no longer collect the normal sized *Neoregelia* and now concentrate on the many very miniature forms available.

Finding suitable receptacles is a challenge in itself, as these plants are either in tubular form or in small rosettes. For example the forms of *Ampullaceae* (tubular) and *N. Fireball* types are (Rosette).

Basically the average collector utilises the fibre-lined wire basket, and as this is an ideal medium, it would seem to be the obvious answer. There will come a time, however when hanging space looms as a problem. One solution was to hang them in my many trees, but as my wife did not fancy having row on row of such hangers, at least in my case alternatives were a necessity!

Hardwood log troughs and hollow stumps became one solution, and also the quest took me to the sea shore. Here at extreme low tide can be found loose red sandstone rocks, often pitted and tunnelled with cavities.

If collecting a few, make sure all tiny crabs and small shellfish are carefully extracted and put back into the sea.

Starting with the hollow stumps, seal off the base end with a wire gauze and drop in a few drainage crocks, such as crushed clay brick. Select your miniature carefully choosing the type that suits this receptacle best. In log culture the offset or plant should be already established, and gently shape the root ball and lower into the log cavity, filling in as you go with small cut up wedges of staghorn or elk horn peat fibre. Small white (bean bag) balls can be used also to allow aeration of the mixture. If the hole is too wide

or large for the plant initially here is where you remember not to overpot, by using small rosettes in large holes and mini-tubular in small holes.

Wash and scour the tidal rocks and wedge appropriate sized offsets with or without roots into the cavities, using the fibre wedges as before making sure they are wedged tightly. After a year or two, these small bromeliads will become very eye-catching and soon cover the top of their receptacle.

Len.P. Butt

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The following is a letter received from The Royal Horticultural Society Of Queensland:-

13th November, 1990

The President,
Mr. J. Higgins,
Bromeliad Society of Qld. Inc.
P O Box 565 Fortitude Valley

Dear John,

On behalf of the Royal Horticultural Society of Queensland Inc., I would like to thank you for the beautiful display which your members staged for this year's Garden Spectacular.

More than 1,000 people viewed the Show this year, and from the many comments passed on to me, it would seem that we had a great many regulars who look forward to this annual event.

Please find enclosed a photograph of your display, sent with our compliments.

The Committee and Members of the R.H.S.Q. Inc. send you and your members the Joy and Peace of Christmas, and look forward to the pleasure of your company at the 1991 Garden Spectacular.

Your sincerely,

M.F. O'Dea
Hon. President & Convenor

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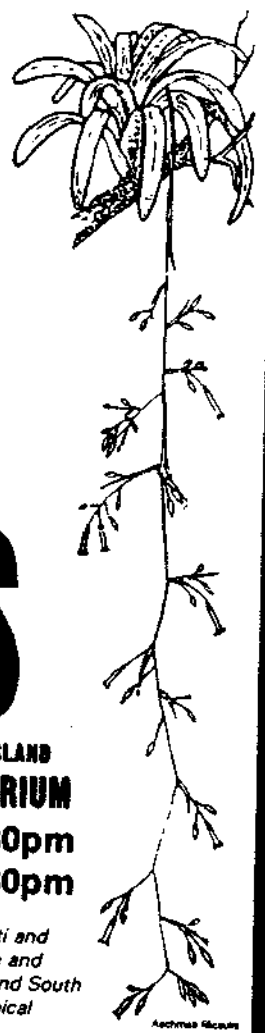
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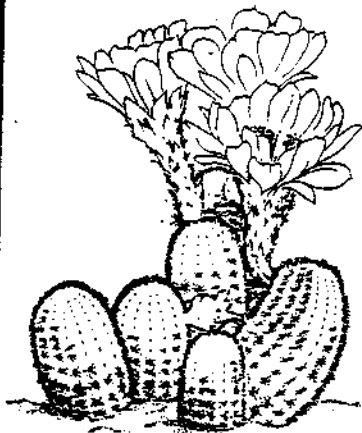
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Sunday 9th June, 1991: 9.00am - 4.30pm



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