

# BROMELIACEAE

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*Sandstromia aurantiacum*

## 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. Harold Caulfield

PRESIDENT: Mr. Len Trevor Ph. 351 1203  
SECRETARY: Mrs. Val Urquhart Ph. 824 0627  
VICE-PRESIDENT: Mrs. Phyllis Hobbs Ph. 286 4156  
TREASURER: Mr. Bob Paulsen Ph. 074 933677  
EDITOR: Mr. Len P. Butt Ph. 848 3515  
SHOW ORGANIZER: Mr. Don Hobbs Ph. 286 4156

COMMITTEE: Mr. Neville Ryan, Mr. Bob Paulsen, Mr. Bob Cross, Mr. Michael O'Dea, Mrs. Patricia O'Dea, Mr. Paul Bird, Mr. Barry Genn, Mrs. Olive Trevor.

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PROGRAMMES: May - Naming parts of inflorescence - Paul Bird  
Item - Open Forum Mr. Len Trevor  
Plant Commentary - Mr. Greg Stewart  
June - Beginners' Class - Norm Catlan  
Item - Video  
Plant Commentary - to be determined

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE: - \$7.00 single; \$10.00 Family.  
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EDITORIAL After just viewing a segment of American news, where the real people (conservationists) are being coerced by large sections of farmers and business, that ecological dangers are a fantasy and a myth; also that it is ridiculous to save a species of either flora or fauna at the expense of the economy.

This ridiculous attitude is also alive and well in Australia. No one it seems, will grasp the real truth that to upset the balance of natural things is to undermine our own life style and to just as surely destroy us. Pollution in all its forms on land, sea and air is attributable to the Earth's greatest predator, the genus homo-sapiens! Much of it is brought about by free felling of trees, and chemical poisoning of trees, for short term better crops and grazing! In the long term we get more erosion, more tracts of less arable land, and, yes, a worse economy.

In the Biolinks paper I have just read a gem of wisdom which applies to rainforests everywhere.

There are two major reasons for conserving biological diversity, one moral and the other practical. The practical is that the quality of human life depends on biological diversity. FROM THE WORLD'S SPECIES COME OUR FOODS AND MANY OF OUR MEDICINES AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS. For example drugs extracted from Queensland rainforest species are effective in the treatment of motion sickness and lymphoid leukaemia. Given that only one small portion of Australian species has been investigated, the potential to discover many more useful and vital drugs in the future is great.

The ecosystems in which we live also provide valuable services such as clean water, soil formation, climate regulation, and the breakdown of pollutants. Genetic diversity provides the foundation for agriculture, forestry and livestock breeding programs.

Morally, all species and communities have an inherent right to exist. FINALLY THE ACTIONS OF ALL SPECIES INCLUDING HUMANS MUST BE GUIDED BY ECOLOGICAL LIMITS.

Other letters re bromeliads in this issue also voice my concern.

Editor

MEETING NOTES There were 39 members present at the March meeting. The Lucky Door prize was won by Mavis Paulsen, the Raffle winners were Norm Catlan, Nev Ryan, Morrie Jones, Mavis Paulsen, Len Trevor and Bert Wilson.

Popular Vote - Advanced went to Ruth Wilson for *Tillandsia cyanea*;  
Novice was won by Nev Ryan with *Guz. rubra lutea*

Judges' Choice for the night was *Dyckia Fosteriana* hybrid  
Highly Commended - owned by Bob Paulsen.

Twenty eight members attended the April meeting and the Lucky Door prize was won by Ruth Wilson, while the Raffle winners were R. Higgins, May Pearce (J. Higgins re-donated the prize), J. Kettleaars.

Popular Vote - Advanced was won by Olive Trevor with *Gusurvesia*  
Jeannie  
Novice went to Barry Genn with *Tillandsia Compressa*

Judges' Choice was *Aec. Purpurea 'Rosea'* owned by Nev Ryan.

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#### CONFERENCE '93 UPDATE

Venue A decision has been made in favour of the Carindale Motel. The Conference rooms are first class, as are the restaurant and accommodation facilities. The area is easily accessible and parking is plentiful. Charges are moderate.

Overseas Speakers We have a confirmation from Dennis Cathcart and a near definite acceptance from Elton Leme of Brazil. These two speakers represent a very wide experience in exploration, conservation and vast knowledge of the World of Bromeliads. We look forward to the sharing of some of that knowledge.

Local Speakers We will have at least six or seven local and interstate speakers. Their subjects and timetables are still being refined.

Fundraising There are two raffles current with one or two more to come. All assistance with buying and/or selling would be much appreciated.

General If any member has any queries or suggestions to make regarding plans or progress on Conference procedures, please do not hesitate to approach either myself or any member of the Committee to discuss them.

Don Hobbs

AN AUSSIE'S VALÉ AMAZON

Mighty delta, surging stream that splits this land in twain  
What legends could you tell us now of temples lost in time,  
Once the Olmec roamed your shores, before the Maya came  
Toltec and Inca memories still invade your tropic clime.

As placid streams oft turn to raging flood,  
From west to east great scores of isles are born,  
Your waters change from green to yellow mud,  
And swallow up the trees that skirt you night and morn.

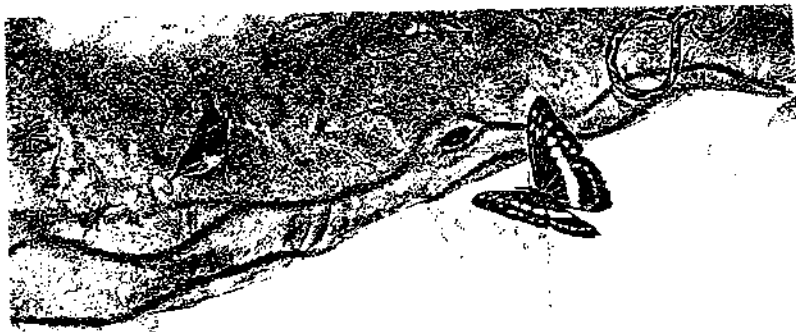
A Quetzal bird flies up on high from leafy boughs above,  
Constricting snakes stalk otters swimming by,  
The spotted cat and Caimen share no kind of lasting love,  
As howling monkeys lift their evening voices high.

Mighty river ever winding onward to the sea,  
You often boil with things that tear and grind,  
Piranha fish are death to man and Manatee,  
Consuming all if roused, and leaving bones behind.

Time was you proudly heard no logging axe,  
And tree borne orchids graced the jungle boughs,  
Air plant abundant trees fall to pay a tax,  
As screaming chain saws kill a land as rich as ours.

Brazilian temples hidden were, among your jungle vines,  
Despoiled at last to fill a nation's needs,  
What wondrous stories could they tell of many long gone times,  
When mighty empires rose, and sank beneath the ocean weeds.

L.P. Butt



AZTEC GOLD Aztec Gold is really the story of trying to produce a desirable plant, by swinging the odds in the grower's favour.

One day in 1991 a friend of mine, Ian Sellars, found a plant in a group of my *Aechmea recurvata* plants, with a good clear yellow stripe on one of its leaves. The variegated leaf appeared on a fully mature plant, that had failed to flower that year.

It was the unanimous lament that many plants of friends as well as our own had shown partial variegation, that had not been passed on to the pups. The low averages were definitely against success, but with this plant we hoped it was possible, as the variegated leaf was low down in the butt of the plant where the pups originate.

After researching the material available, looking for a magic wand, I found that there were none, or more precisely, none that I could find. Now was the time to put into action three lessons learnt while observing our plants.

One day while sitting on an old stump, with a shovel in one hand and a cup of coffee in the other, trying to get inspiration, I noted just how hardy bromeliads really were. There were dozens of discarded plants lying on their sides with their pups happily sitting up ready to grow into new clumps.

LESSON 1. If a plant falls over and a pup forms, nine times out of ten the pup will start on the top side of the plant.

Like most bromeliad growers, being short of room, I would take pups off and sit them in a pot in a very open mix to keep them upright till I had time to tend to them. If you are too long, you would end up with a solid ball of roots. This resulted in tearing them apart and damaging the roots. Gradually it dawned on me that the root system initiated from one side of the pup. The opposite side from the heel piece torn from the mother plant. The rule became face the wound side to the centre of the pot. The roots all grow to the outside of the pot and are easier to separate. This explained to me why in a clump of bromeliads the pups are generally grown on the mother plant furthest from the grandmother. I reasoned that the roots on that side absorbed the nourishment and gave slightly more food to that side of the plant. I foliar fed the plants on one side only and this resulted in a very high percentage of pups from that side.

LESSON 2. If you liquid feed a plant, by foliar feeding it on one side, you increase your chances of getting a pup from that side.

I remembersd one year, there being not enough bench space for all the plants, so some were placed under a bench. Being winter, the sun was low in the sky and light penetrated very well in under the bench as it faced north. Spring arrived and busy- busy - busy then well into summer, lo and behold there were the plants with all their pups, like soldiers - facing the path. At the time I thought it was rather convenient for the removal of the pups.

LESSON 3. If the plant is denied light on one side, it will throw its pups on the side facing the light source.

The time had come to bite the bullet. We lay the plant at an angle of 45 degrees facing away from the sun with our yellow stripe being on top, facing to the sun. A few weeks later at an angle of 90 degrees to the yellow stripe appeared a green pup. This was removed with a sharpened screwdriver. Our theory was that the pup had started its growth cycle prior to our meddling with nature. Be patient and wait. Success immediately followed by disaster. The pup was there but it was pure yellow. We only had the one variegated leaf and the pup was right under it. So all we could do was leave it as an interesting experiment.

A few months later and the pup had grown and we looked and wondered, for there on the upper side of the leaves was a solid green stripe. A phenomena of this plant is all pups appear as plain yellow, but as the leaves develop the green stripe improves and it turns into a sturdy vigorous grower for a variegate.

To promote the growth of 'Aztec Gold' we left it attached to its parent, this promoted vigorous growth which resulted in a mature plant which produced 10 pups over 3 years. Any pups appearing on the green side were cut off so the 'Aztec Gold' received all the energy.

Over the years 'Aztec Gold' has never produced a pup for me that has reverted to green. In the first couple of years we only had to destroy about 6 plants that did not grow strong enough for me.

Our climate is described as sub-tropical but 'Aztec Gold' has not been adversely affected by our heat. In 1985 our winter produced 16 frosts in a row and that year the flowering was the most spectacular we have ever witnessed.

'Aztec Gold' was grown in 7" hanging baskets potted in a very open mix and hung 18 cm from the roof. They had plenty of light and 9 month Osmocote as a fertilizer. They were watered regularly, but

they were very well drained and had plenty of air movement. They grow in full sun on a wire bench 1 ft. from the ground now and they are doing fine.

Some people who have had trouble growing 'Aztec Gold' are probably giving too much water and not enough light and air movement to keep up with the watering.

AECHMEA ORLANDIA ENSIGN After our success with 'Aztec Gold' I acquired a plant of *Aechmea orlandia* Ensign. This plant had a good variegation on one side. The other side was only slightly variegated. We faced the slight variegated side against a fibro wall - the strong variegation facing the light source. Pups came out all over the place, but we did eventually get a good Ensign which we left on the parent plant till we got a good sturdy plant.

We wondered whether as *Aechmea orlandia* was a climbing bromeliad more than a clumper, maybe our rules for this type were not as applicable.

I hope the preceding information will help along your collection of bromeliads. Don't forget to let us hear of your results.

Johnno

Mango Mansion 4208

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Epiphytic air plants  
on jungle branch



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND - 1992 COMBINED SHOW

COMPETITION SCHEDULE

NOTES:

1. Classes 1 to 15 inclusive may consist of multiple plants in one container or on one mounting, but should be connected by an intact rhizome.
2. Class 13 - theme may be display or educational. Other plants, natural or artificial adjuncts are allowed, but judging will be on the basis of plant quality and effective presentation of bromeliads.
3. Classes 4 and 12 - must have flowers (i.e. petals) or unopened buds evident. Plants in other classes may show bud, bract or berry, or capsule.
4. The Nez Misso Memorial Trophy will be awarded to the best Tillandsioideae on the competition table.
5. The Hudson Perpetual Trophy will be awarded to the best Bromelioideae on the competition table.
6. The Grace Goode Perpetual Trophy will be awarded to the best Cryptanthus on the competition table.
7. The Tom Schofield Memorial Award will be made at the discretion of the Chairman of the Combined Show Committee.
8. Plants eligible for Classes 26 and 27 will be the first and second winners from Classes 22, 23 and 25.

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CONDITIONS OF ENTRY:

1. Plants must be correctly labelled, free of disease, established in the pot or on the mounting, and in show bench condition.
2. All water must be emptied from the plants and the pots dried off before placing on the show bench.
3. Plants must be the property of the Exhibitor and have been in his/her custody for the previous three months.
4. A limit of three (3) plants per class per financial member of the B.S.Q. or Q.S.S. will apply.
5. The eligibility of plants in the various classes will be determined by the Chief Bromeliad Competition Steward, whose decision is final.

6. The Judging Panel's decision as to the quality of the plants is final.
7. Specimen plants (Class 16) must be connected by an intact rhizome.
8. Entries will be received up to 7.15 pm. on the Friday evening of the Show. Judging will commence at 7.30 pm. sharp.

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- |    |                 |     |       |
|----|-----------------|-----|-------|
| 1. | TILLANDSIA      | (a) | _____ |
|    |                 | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |
| 2. | VRIESEA         | (a) | _____ |
|    |                 | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |
| 3. | OTHER           | (a) | _____ |
|    | TILLANDSIOIDEAE | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |
| 4. | TILLANDSIOIDEAE | (a) | _____ |
|    | IN FLOWER       | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |
| 5. | CRYPTANTHUS     | (a) | _____ |
|    |                 | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |
| 6. | BILLBERGIA      | (a) | _____ |
|    |                 | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |
| 7. | AECHMEA         | (a) | _____ |
|    |                 | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |
| 8. | NEOREGELIA      | (a) | _____ |
|    |                 | (b) | _____ |
|    |                 | (c) | _____ |

9. NIDULARIUM (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
10. INTERGENERIC (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
11. OTHER (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 BROMELIOIDEAE (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
12. BROMELIOIDEAE (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 IN FLOWER (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
13. HECTIA/DYCKIA (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
14. PITCAIRNIA (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
15. OTHER (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 PITCAIRNIOIDEAE (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (c) \_\_\_\_\_
16. SPECIMEN - ANY (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 GENUS 3 OR MORE (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 CONNECTED MATURE (c) \_\_\_\_\_  
 PLANTS
17. NOVICE- ANY (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 GENERA - MARY (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 GRASSELI MEM. (c) \_\_\_\_\_

MEDALLION (Entrant never won a First prize in any class in the Combined Show).

- 18. MINIATURE DISPLAY (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (not to exceed (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 1 metre in any (c) \_\_\_\_\_  
 dimension - incl. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Terrariums).
- 19. NOVELTY DISPLAY (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Not to exceed (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 1 metre in any (c) \_\_\_\_\_  
 dimension).
- 20. FLORAL DISPLAY (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Cut bromeliad (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 flowers and/or (c) \_\_\_\_\_  
 berries and \_\_\_\_\_  
 bracts - Accessories \_\_\_\_\_  
 permitted).
- 21. FLORAL DISPLAY (a) \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Making the most (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
 of one inflores- (c) \_\_\_\_\_  
 cence).

- 22. BEST TILLANDSIOIDEAE Nez Misso Memorial Trophy
- 23. BEST BROMELIOIDEAE Hudson Perpetual Trophy
- 24. BEST CRYPTANTHUS Grace Goode Perpetual Trophy
- 25. BEST PITCAIRNIOIDEAE
- 26. RESERVE CHAMPION BROMELIAD OF THE SHOW
- 27. CHAMPION BROMELIAD OF THE SHOW

TOM SCHOFIELD MEMORIAL AWARD - CHAIRMAN'S AWARD  
 (Awarded at the discretion of the Chairman of the Combined  
 Show Committee).

ENTRANT'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Please print)

TO THE EDITOR - CONSERVATION OF THE RARER KIND

CITES is now with us whether we like it or not and it will bring changes in attitude.

Those who look at Bromeliads solely as a source of revenue will decide that rare plants mean higher prices.

Those who are interested in Bromeliads because of their very nature will decide that here is something worth preserving.

Whatever the reason we all must bite-the-bullet and some have done so already. One such person is Rolly Reilly of 13 Kyogle Street, Marsden 4132, who wants to set up a form of register of Australian owners of *Tillandsia sprengeliana*. This plant rarely self sets seed but needs 'foreign' pollen. So if you have *T. sprengeliana* and want to be involved at flowering time please let Rolly know you are interested. Rolly's plant is authenticated by Harry Luther so we know its source.

Regrettably there are wrongly named *T. sprengelianas* out there so when you do contact Rolly can you also mention details of your pedigree (and your plant's!).

Others may want to get involved in similar projects and whilst I do not mind being the link-man, I believe this would be best co-ordinated at 'Federal' level by the Australian Society.

Yours sincerely,

Derek Butcher

The following letters are reprinted with permission from Bromeleetter, and reflect the growing concern for the fate of bromeliads.

BROMELIAD CONSERVATION AND HABITAT DESTRUCTION One of the papers presented at the Sixth National Bromeliad Conference held last Easter was Robert Riedl's "Bromeliad Conservation". Following this, quite a deal of discussion ensued. During such discussion there emerged concern at the rapid rate of habitat depletion which had been, and still was, occurring in Central & South America. Further to this we print below some abstracts dealing with the subject, with acknowledgement to the BSI Journal Jul/Aug. 1989, Mar/April 1991.

Endangered Species, My View Last month I went to Bolas, in the southern zone of Costa Rica, looking for a special form of *Aechmea magdalenae*. Climbing higher and higher, the native vegetation of the world around me as far as I could see was stripped away for

cattle and pineapples. There were no seed to collect, no offsets, no bromeliads at all. It was Costa Rica three million years ago. Did some unscrupulous collector pass through and load up uncountable trailerloads of plants for export to another country?

Travelling to El Cope, Panama, years ago proved to be a rewarding experience. It is the home of *Anthurium amnicola*, *Zamia pseudo-parasitica*, and epiphytes of every description imaginable. It was a botanical wind tunnel with year round rainfall and extremely lush growth. On a recent visit there, I found that the loggers had come and now this rich ecosystem has vanished. Not overcollection, sheer devastation.

After reading the Bromeliad Society "Conservation Goals and Code of Conduct for Growers and Collectors", my first reaction was one of surprise. This code of conduct is the beginning of an attempt to put some, if not all, bromeliads on the endangered species list, I am completely opposed. Some species of bromeliads are endangered not from overcollection but from lack of it.

The Conservation Committee basically did a good job and, in theory, it should work. In practice it won't. If we assume that mankind is at the last minute of the last hour of the last day of the cosmic calendar, any conservation taking place now or 100 years from now is just nanoseconds since the Big Bang. Look around at the destruction we have caused in such a short moment.

Elton Leme has described the continuing massive destruction of habitat in Brazil. Sam Smith, in reporting his recent collecting trip to Paraguay, said that the orchid *Miltonia flavescens* is not being destroyed by the hundreds or thousands, but by the ton. In a recent article in *The American Orchid Society Bulletin* Ted Green stated that he has seen blocks of 100 to 1000 field-collected orchid species offered for sale. He says, "These, of course, are CITES-certified, which makes a joke of the whole program."

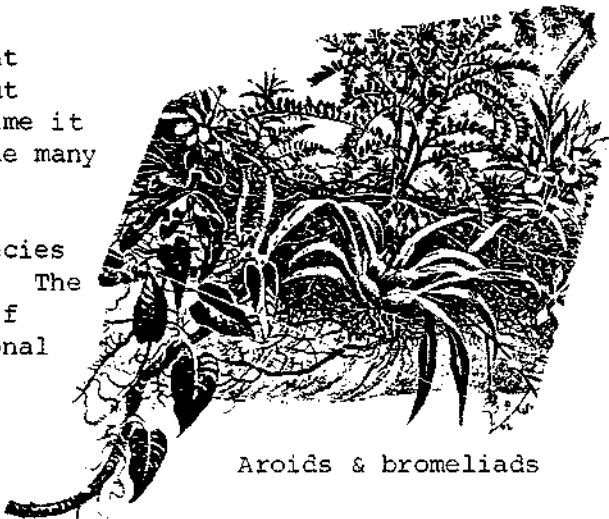
It is wrong to put any bromeliads on the endangered species list. I have no easy answers. Many third-world countries are forced to cut rain forests and destroy habitats for the timber and the cattle they will export just to meet interest payments on loans from the International Monetary Fund.

A few of these plant merchants who are most outspoken in favour of conservation are building up large stocks of tillandsias both in Europe and in the United States with the expectation that CITES

will be enacted and they will then be able to raise their prices as a result. On the other hand, there are people who believe sincerely that by placing plants on endangered lists they will help to conserve them while they seem to ignore the fact of world deforestation.

Collecting is a minor element when the total problem is put into perspective. In the time it took you to read this article many thousands of epiphytes have been destroyed, as well as animals, trees, and many species of life we shall never know. The problem will be aggravated if the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species is enacted for bromeliads.

Chester G. Skitak,  
Alajuela, Costa Rica



Aroids & bromeliads

Endangered Species, Another View I agree nearly 100% with Mr. Skotak's analysis; that habitat destruction is orders of magnitude more detrimental to bromeliads (and almost all other life on the planet) than is commercial or private collecting. The only thing I disagree with is his interpretation of the intent of the Code of Conduct. The Conservation Committee did not intend to say or imply that bromeliads are in need of legal protection and, in fact, we are opposed to listing the family as a unit under CITES or any other protective law.

I presume that his misinterpretation arises from the Code's admonition to observe and respect all laws and local customs. Whether or not we agree with certain protective laws, a conscientious person abides by them right down to the sentiments of local people.

The reports received by the Conservation Committee from our correspondents so far are all nearly the same in content and tone as Mr. Skotak's letter. Many bromeliads are disappearing, and the cause is almost always habitat destruction caused by war, timber cutting, agriculture, urban expansion, and other human activities. We should not, as a bromeliad society, overlook the fact that most

of the world's tropical plants face the same grim future. When confronted by destruction on so massive a scale, the thought of blanket restrictions on the collection of whole families of plants is, of course, ludicrous. Collecting and introducing into cultivation is the only hope for survival for many of these species.

On the other hand, there are a few areas in Tropical America which are protected, at least in theory, by park or other biological preserve status. Laws are needed to protect the resources in the preserves. Even though enforcement is often a farce, concerned citizens should still support these laws on principle.

To date, the Conservation Committee has identified only a single species that is threatened by collection. *Tillandsia xerographica* of southern Mexico and northern Guatemala is highly desired by collectors and extremely slow growing. Several people report that it is now rare in most of the areas where it was once common. Elton Leme, in a letter, told me that he knows of two species in Brazil that were extirpated by collectors; I am waiting for more concrete information on these. There are undoubtedly more examples, but they seem to be the exceptions to the general rule that most bromeliads are abundant within their habitats. Many conservationists compare bromeliads to orchids and cacti, and this is totally erroneous. Bromeliads are typically much more common. While it is unusual to find more than a dozen or so orchids of a given species in one tree, the same tree often supports hundreds or even thousands of bromeliads of each of five or six species. Most bromeliads are not in danger from collection at the present time, and the Code reflects this: it is somewhat less stringent than the Code of Conduct of the Orchid and Cactus and Succulent Societies.

Lastly, I disagree strongly with Mr. Skotak's assertion that some dealers are promoting CITES listing in order to stop imports and thus secure a monopoly for their businesses. I have known one commercial collector-grower personally for nearly 20 years, and several others well enough to discern their philosophical attitudes. All of them possess a deep and intense, often mystical, love of these plants, which transcends their desire for a profitable business. Not one of these people would collect in such a way as to threaten a wild population. And above all, they realize that an embargo in international trade would eliminate opportunity to introduce new species to horticulture, possibly saving them from



extinction in the process. Yes, there are scoundrels as in any field, but they are exceptions and do not justify the censure of the whole group.

One has only to survey the world's botanical gardens to see the need for more help in preserving endangered species. Very few gardens have the funds to maintain viable populations of more than a handful of species, and there are thousands on the verge of extinction. True, commercial enterprises are likely to carry only the attractive species, but every bit of help is urgently needed.

The Conservation Committee members concur with these statements. It is our opinion that the vast majority of bromeliads are not in need of protection from collecting at the present time. Many are or soon will be endangered, however, by the global habitat destruction taking place in the tropics. We are actively seeking more information, from quantitative to anecdotal, on the status of any and all wild bromeliad populations. We encourage anyone with such knowledge to share it with the Committee and the Society.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Dimmitt,

The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum,  
2021 Kinney Road, Tuscan, AZ 85743  
Chairman, Conservation Committee  
The Bromeliad Society Inc.

-oOo-

#### THE TEA LADY

When you are in a plant club wherever you be  
Comes the end of the meeting they all look for tea.  
So we come in early and set up the cups  
Get out the teapots, fill sugar bowls up.  
Put out the cake and butter the scones,  
Then just before meeting the urn goes on.  
They go through all the Minutes just to keep us in touch  
And make for the sales table with a mighty big rush.  
Then it's back to the meeting for lectures and such,  
That's when they get technical and I don't follow much.  
I like when they put pretty slides on the screen  
And I think of my plants at home all serene.  
Then I say I've got that one and that one for sure  
But when I get home can't remember no more.

Now I grow all these Broms quite a lot I have got  
And their names I have placed on each blinking pot.  
They grow fine in my garden and bush houses shady  
But I trot off to the meetings where I'm just the Tea Lady.

Now I don't go for seed raising, that's not for me,  
Time's running out I need something to see.  
I like a plant that's about half grown  
So in just a few months its beauty is shown.

Someone gave me a plant twelve months ago  
And although it looked healthy its growing seemed slow.  
So I looked up a book to see what it said  
Thirty five years to flowering, Gee wiz I'll be dead.

So I said to my friend why give it to me  
She said so my daughter could have it for my grandkids to see.

Now we have a plant commentary where they call each one by name  
And I try to recall if mine are the same.  
But try as I will my memory's hazy  
That's when I'm glad I'm just the Tea Lady.

So when they get going on the technical side  
I sneak off to my kitchen and there with pride  
I look over the eats the teapots and cups,  
And wait for the finish and then the tea rush.  
That's when I feel I've come into my own  
When they enjoy a good cuppa and go on home.  
And next day when working in my bush houses shady  
I feel quite happy I'm just the Tea Lady.

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PICNIC IN THE PARK Having received a letter from the Botanic Gardens enquiring if the members of the Qld. Bromeliad Society would be willing to landscape an area of the gardens with broms and donate the plants for this purpose. It was discussed at the Committee meeting and subsequently taken to general meeting, at which members were invited to participate and/or donate plants.

Olive and Nev inspected the site and a working bee was organised. After lots of rain we were blessed with a fine cool morning. Nev was first on the job with his little car bristling with plants. Don and I came next with a van load. By this time the staff at the gardens was out to see what was happening. They were amazed at the

number of plants and hopped in to help unload. When Olive arrived with a van load the foreman thought he had really scooped the pool.

Like all good workers we had a morning tea break immediately. Then we started; arms waving, everyone talking at once. We were supplied with trowels, forks, gloves and lots of encouragement. Then a couple of men arrived with a small tractor with a shovel on the front and asked what we needed. We wanted logs, rocks and the middle built up to give height. The logs arrived, all shapes and sizes, some with holes!! three small rocks with the promise of better ones on our next trip.

There were plants suitable for all the different areas of light and the work was quickly finished. A bit of excitement when someone found a huge carpet snake hanging in the branches of a tree on the river bank. There was a very healthy lump in its middle, I would like to think it was a large rat but someone said more likely a possum. We had a tour of the area and put our marker on two other spots. One perfect for *Nidulariums* and stoloniferous plants like *compacta* and some of the *meyendorffii* hybrids that have stolons. With promises from the garden staff that everything we needed would be there for our next working morning we left for home.

Yes there will be many more working bees and next time we will bring a basket lunch and stay to enjoy the fellowship that is the best part of work shared. It will be an ongoing project as it could be one of the loveliest areas in the gardens. Come on members, don't miss out on the fun. Meet you in the park! Phyl & Don Hobbs

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