

Bromeliaceae



VOLUME XXXVIII - No. 2 - March/April 2004



The Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.

P. O. Box 565, Fortitude Valley
Queensland, Australia, 4006 .

Home Page www.bsq.org.au

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COMPETITION STEWARDS		
HOSTESS		
LIFE MEMBERS		

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The Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.

Society Badges

ARE NOW AVAILABLE \$5.00 EACH

CONTACT MRS. FRAN DAWSON

Copy Deadlines

May / June.....April 10th, 2004

July / AugustJune 10th , 2004

Please forward all copy to The Editor, 3 Derribong St., Boondall, Qld, 4034

Phone 07 3265 1547

Email edbromsocq@ozemail.com.au

Electronic copy in RTF or MS Word 7.0 or earlier- Times New Roman

Photographs to Doug Upton, 101 Jerrang St. Indooroopilly, Qld, 4068

Phone 07 3378 3511

Cover Photographs

Front Cover

Aechmea hybrid unnamed

A spectacular plant, 65 to 70 cm tall and about the same in diameter, with apple green leaves with a narrow deep rose coloured margin. Each leaf tip has a deep rose shading much like the renowned finger nail impression.

The large full inflorescence bears some resemblance to *Aechmea fasciata*, however this inflorescence is soft to the touch. It has none of the spined bracts associated with *Ae. fasciata*.

The numerous primary bracts (to 12 cm long) unfurl to expose the cone shaped floral bracts bearing blue flowers in each axil. The overall colour of the inflorescence is deep rose.

The breeding stock is not known. The photographed plant is a second generation propagation from a tissue culture plant.

Grower *The Olive Branch* Photography *Doug Upton*

Rear Cover

Tillandsia grandis

The photographed plant is one of two forms of *T. grandis*. This plant, the largest form var. *grandis*, has a huge branched inflorescence with greenish white petalled flowers. Over several months, flowers progressively open at night. Like most plants, it is variable in size.

This flowering giant measured 3½ metres tall, with leaves 1 metre in length and 15 cm wide.

In its natural habitat, from Mexico to Honduras, *T. grandis* can be found growing on bare rocks and sheer precipices at elevations of 5,000 feet. This plant was grown in an open bark nugget medium.

Grower *Mike Symmons* Photography *Doug Upton*

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Painting a wall or some other surface in your shadehouse will improve the amount of light reflection onto your plants. Contrary to what you may think, a "flat" paint will achieve better reflection than a "high gloss" paint. However, the high gloss paint may be easier to keep algae-free, and last longer than the flat paint.

Bob Reilly

(The use of a light coloured reflective covering on the ground or on benches seems to be an unexplored means of increasing light availability to the plants. *Ed*)

Society Diary

NEWS

REPORTS

EVENTS

GENERAL MEETINGS are held on the Third Thursday of each month except December, at the Uniting Church Hall, 52 Merthyr Road, New Farm, Brisbane, commencing 8 p.m. Classes for beginners commence at 7.30 p.m.

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 www.bsq.org.au

Judging Panel

The committee has appointed the following members to the BSQ Judging Panel for 2004.

Chief Judge & Convenor Mrs. Olive Trevor

Judges Mr Nev. Ryan, Mr. Bob Paulsen, Mr. Des Anderson

Competition Results

February

Novice:

First *Billbergia 'Windii'* Evelyn Rees

Intermediate:

First *Tillandsia multicaulis* Keith Dawson

Advanced:

First *Tillandsia rothii* Bob Cross

Second *Neoregelia (princeps x concentrica)* Yves Daniel

Program

March

Popular Vote Commentator. Bob Cross

Handling Adventitious Offsets. Bruce Dunstan

Beginners Class Landscaping. Dorothy Cutcliffe

April Mini Show

Class 1: Any Bromelioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule

Class 2: *Guzmania*

Class 3: *Pitcairnia*

Class 4: Any other mature (flowering) bromeliad

All classes include species and hybrids

Plant Commentary by the Judging Panel

Competition Schedule & Show Plant Preparation.

Committee

Beginners Class Beginners Q & A

Peter Paroz

June**Combined Show**

The Combined Show will again be held on the Queen's Birthday weekend in June. Now is the time to prepare plants for the Show Bench competition and for the sales table. New members, please note that plants for sale **must** be established in a pot or securely attached to a mounting. Bare rooted offsets will not be accepted. Only bromeliads, cacti and succulents are permitted on the sales table.

Members intending to sell plants at the Combined Show should obtain a copy of the rules and conditions from the committee.

Bus Trips and Field Days Calender 2004

All enquiries, bookings and deposits where applicable, for the Field Days and Bus Trips should be directed to:-

Nancy Kickbusch, BSQ Field Day Co-Coordinator. Phone 07 3300 1704

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Field Day

The first field day for the year will be held on Saturday, 3rd of April at the home of Jim and Beryl Bachelor, 10 Kevin Street, Capalaba.

9AM -12 PM. Sales of plants from 9.30 to 11.30 only. Cultural talks. Morning tea will be served. Members, please bring a plate.

A Weekend Bus Trip with Nancy*Bromeliads and Surprises* 15 & 16th May

The coach will leave at 6.30 AM from Roma Street opposite the Police Station; with a pickup at the Palm Dale Shopping Centre, Logan Road at 6.45AM

First Stop: The property of Robert and Melissa Dilling, Fedral, N.S.W. Please bring your own lunch.

The rest of the weekend is for the *Surprises*

Only 45 seats are available. Bookings with a \$50 deposit were taken at the January meeting. There is a firm *No deposit No Seat* policy .

Only cancellations now available

If you liked the bus trip in October 2003, you will love this one.

All money to be paid in full by the March Meeting.

The total cost estimated at \$130.

Field Day Bus Trip

Date 28th August 9AM to 12PM

Location :- The home of Yves Daniel and Lindsay Gerchow
7 Orme Road, Buderim.

Sales 10 to 11.30 AM only.

Morning Tea: Members please bring a plate

Lunch 12.30 PM at the Waterfront Hotel, Bli Bli.

After lunch, *for bus patrons only*, a surprise visit to a lovely garden and nursery.

The bus will leave from the Uniting Church Hall, 52 Merthyr Road, New Farm at 7.30 AM with a pickup at the **BIG W**, Gympie & Webster Roads, Chermside at 7.45 AM. Return about 5.30PM

The total cost is expected to be \$25.00.

Field Day

The last field day for the year will be held on the 30th of October at the Olive Branch, the home of Olive and Len Trevor, 232 Canvey Road, Upper Kedron from 9 AM to 2 PM, commencing with morning tea.

Members please bring a plate. Plant sales from 10AM to 12PM only.

Lunch will commence at 12.30PM

There will be talks on various aspects of bromeliad culture with Conducted Tours of the bush houses.

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**The Sunshine Coast
Bromeliad Society Inc.**
Presents

A BROMELIAD SPECTACULAR

Buderim Memorial Hall
Saturday 1st May 9am -4pm
Sunday 2nd May 9am - 2pm
Huge display of Rare Plants
Refreshments
Bromeliad Growing Clinics
Demonstrations of Dividing, Potting etc
Admission \$2 Under 15 free

The Presidents Report 2003

The past year has seen the Society continue its growth and development. Society activities have included, apart from our normal monthly meetings and amongst other things, Garden Visits, Bus trips, The Combined Show, The Tropical Foliage Festival, Pine Rivers Open Day, QCGC Display, RHSQ Display, RNA Display, Study Group Meetings, Trainee Judges Seminars, a Tillandsia Workshop and the Society's first Spring Show at Mt Coot-tha. The Spring show was well organized, was very successful and will be a regular part of our annual calendar of events.

The popularity of bromeliads is currently very high and this is reflected in the numbers of new members who have joined the Society.

The Conference Committee has continued to work towards the Conference to be held in October 2005. The broad aspects have all been planned and some of the fine detail is now underway. The Committee will be releasing new updates in the near future for the information of members

I offer my personal congratulations to Life Member Grace Goode who was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the recent Australia Day Awards. This award is in recognition of Grace's contributions to horticulture in general and to the cultivation and development of bromeliads in particular. The management Committee has forwarded written congratulations to Grace on behalf of the Society and all members.

To those Committee Members, Stewards and Members who have supported me during the past year I thank you all. To those Committee Members and Stewards who are retiring from office, I thank you also. These Officers and members are the foundation of the Society and have made significant contributions in their terms of office.

John Higgins
19th February, 2004

The Editors Desk

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Opinions expressed in this publication are those of individual contributors and may not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. or of the Editor.

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

Email address edbromsocq@ozemail.com.au

Oops

Geoff Lawn has pointed out to me an error in the table on page 19 of the last Issue. The second column should be headed Hours of Daylight (ie sunrise to sunset).

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The extended period of very hot weather (with a top temperature of 41.7 C) in S.E. Queensland, has led to some losses in bromeliad collections. The U V rating (for humans) has been in the Extreme rating for most of January and February. Most growers have a theory as to what causes the 'sunburn'. Since a lot of the damage is on the parts of the leaf at right angles to the midday sun, solar radiation would seem to be a major factor. What part of the radiation spectrum is the culprit. Is it the UV or the thermal energy ?; or both ?.

What other factors are likely to be associated with this problem?. What, if any, are the effects of temperature, humidity, wind speed, height above ground, enclosed or open location, etc? Is pot colour and potting mix temperature a factor ? Are (hybrid x hybrid x hybrid —) crosses more susceptible due to loss of hybrid vigour??

Comments and especially quantitative data, are invited from members for collation and presentation in a later issue.

Ed

Plant Breeder's Rights and Patents

There is an excellent overview of this subject by Geoff Lawn in the January 2004 issue of the Newsletter of the Illawarra Bromeliad Society Inc.; and is available from the library. This is a **must read** for all members who sell bromeliads (and other plants). The article will be serialised in future issues of *Bromeliaceae*. Electronic copies are available via Email from the editor on request.

BOOK REVIEW

New Tillandsia Handbook by Hideo Shimizu and Hiroyuki Takizawa. Published by Japan Cactus Planning Co. Press in 1998. Available from overseas distributors, it can also be borrowed from the Society's library.

This 134 page book has nearly 450 colour photographs, all of good quality. Both "green-leaved" and "grey-leaved" (or atmospheric) Tillandsias are covered. A few grey-leaved Vrieseas are also illustrated.

The first 24 pages of photographs show a variety of tillandsias in their native habitats. This is followed by 71 pages of tillandsias species' photographs, 41 pages of tillandsia hybrids (many of which are naturally occurring ones), another page of tillandsia species, and two pages of grey-leaved vrieseas' photographs. Over 300 plants, in total, are illustrated.

Every plant is shown in its flowering state, and, in many cases, a "close-up" photograph of the plant's inflorescence is also provided.

A discussion, written in Japanese, on Tillandsias' cultural requirements is included in the book. However, plant names, key (in a summarised form) information concerning each plant's natural habitat and appearance, and a plant index, are presented in English.

There is a very high standard of accuracy throughout the publication.

This book does not provide detailed information on the cultural requirements of individual plants, or a scientific description of them. Further, some of the authors' comments on a few plants' cultural requirements should be interpreted with caution, as their growing conditions are quite different to those experienced by most Queensland growers.

However, the many photographs, and the high standard of accuracy, make the book well worth its purchase price for persons interested in Tillandsias.

If you have internet access there are two reviews of this book on the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies' website: <http://fcbs.org> in the "Book Reviews" section.

Bob Reilly

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Some grey-leaved tillandsias are quite happy growing without any potting mixture around them, but are difficult to attach to a stick because of their size or shape. An example is *Tillandsia xerographica*. Such plants can be grown by sitting them, bare-root, in a plastic pot which can then be hung from a roof support or tree branch. Airflow through the pot can be improved by cutting holes in it, or buying pots which are made this way.

Bob Reilly

Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.
PO Box 565,
Fortitude Valley, Queensland, 4006, Australia



BROMELIADS XIII CONFERENCE
BRISBANE, October 14 – 17, 2005
Newsletter #3

- Costing has now been completed and registration fees have been set for the Conference. Registration forms will be sent out later in the year. Where possible forms will be sent directly to all members of Australian and New Zealand Societies. Additional forms will be available upon request for any persons requiring them.
- The Committee wishes to thank the Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. for the donation of the costs for our two international speakers. This has enabled the fees to be set lower as these costs have been excluded.
- The Conference will be held at The Conference Centre, Simpsons Rd., Bardon, and will feature lectures in the mornings of Friday 14th, Saturday 15th, Sunday 16th and Monday 17th October 2005. Bus trips to major local collections will be conducted in the afternoons of Friday, Saturday and Sunday. After-dinner feature lectures will be held on Friday and Sunday evenings. Plant sales will be held at the Conference venue and at the collections visited by bus. Open plant competitions and open displays will be staged at the Conference venue. Plant competition schedules/entry forms, and applications for sales areas and display areas will be included with the registration forms.

- On-site accommodation is available at The Conference Centre, which is set in bushland gardens and is accessible from the Brisbane CBD by local council buses. Attendees requiring accommodation will be able to contact the Centre directly. There are approximately 70 rooms available at the Centre. Contact information will be mailed out with the registration forms
- Single 'earlybird' registration (up to 30/06/05) will be \$200, which includes all lectures, morning teas and lunches. Double registration (partners/spouses) for 'earlybirds' will be \$380. Late registration for singles will be \$220 and for doubles will be \$420 (after 30/06/05) Bus trips will cost \$50 per attendee for three (3) trips. This includes fares and afternoon teas. Single bus trips will cost \$20 each. A banquet will be staged on Saturday evening and will cost \$50 per attendee. If suitable material is available, a plant / book auction will be conducted following the banquet.
- Some vacancies are still available for local (Australian and New Zealand) speakers. Interested persons should contact the Conference Committee in writing with an outline of their subject(s) for consideration.
- Tickets are now on sale for our second fundraising raffle. Tickets cost \$2 each, and are now available in books of 5 tickets from the Registrar at the address below. First prize in this raffle will be the book *Bromeliads of Ecuador Vol.1* by Jose Manzanares, with second and third prizes \$100 and \$50 worth of bromeliads respectively. This raffle will be drawn at our Combined Show on 13th June this year.
- The Committee wishes to thank Lynn Hudson for her generous donation of the book '*Blooming Bromeliads*' by Baensch. This book will feature in the fundraising raffle set down for the second half of 2004.
(Please note that all amounts referred to in this newsletter are in Australian Dollars (AUD))

Bromeliads XIII Conference Committee
25th February 2004

Enquiries to:

Bromeliads XIII Conference Committee
C/o Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.
PO Box 565
Fortitude Valley, QLD, 4006

PROPAGATING TILLANDSIAS from SEED in the TROPICAL NORTH

*M*y biggest advantage is living in Cairns in beautiful North Queensland where we have humidity and warmth which bromeliads love. This also makes my job easier than the growers in temperate climates.

When I first decided I would like to grow seed I asked a few avid Tillandsia growers how to go about it -

Some people said not to touch the seed with your fingers as the sweat, dirt etc. would harm the seed. They advised me to place the seed on the growing medium with tweezers. This was a very tedious task and I soon abandoned that idea as fingers were made before tweezers. I chose to place the seed on my growing medium with my fingers and water them down with a spray bottle as I go, to stop them blowing away.

I have been growing Tillandsia from seed for over 20 years and in that time have used many methods i.e. coconut fibre, cork bark, cork floor tiles, rope, tree fern slabs, polystyrene pieces and the list goes on...

After many experiments on different growing mediums I now use fly mesh screens, 200mm. x 300mm., hung by pot hanging chain. I am spoiled as a Study Group member has a flyscreen business and she makes trays for me from the scraps. I put the seed onto the trays (with my fingers), water them down and take them to my "Tillandsia House" where they are hung from the mesh roofing. As well as the name of the seed, I also write the date of seed sowing, and its origin.

The mesh roof is covered with a white solar weave and misted every 40 minutes for 10 seconds until the seed germinates and leaves appear. They are then shifted to the front of the Tillandsia house where they get less water. This method has proven very successful. I have also grown Vrieseas and Guzmanias the same way.

Once the seed has germinated, I leave them on the screen mesh for about 6 to 12 months and then transfer them to a slab of flooring cork or shadecloth backed with polystyrene. These hold about 50 seedlings. After a further 12 months, they are then glued onto their mounting - a piece of hard timber 75mm. x 50mm. with wire hanger, or onto a special piece of seasoned timber. Green timber should not be used.

I use a hot glue gun to affix the seedlings to their slabs and host. The glue is very hot (300*) but does not harm the little tillandsias. Once you buy a hot glue gun you will wonder how you did without it. I find the clear glue sticks are best. "Liquid Nails" is successful too - any glue which does

not have silicone as a component is OK.

I fertilize the seedlings with 1/3rd strength 'Wuxal' foliar fertilizer every six weeks. I did catch Lynn giving them a feed with Manutec brand "Bloom Booster" which she uses for her bromeliads as the nitrogen ratio is low. She then told me she had been feeding all my tillandsias each time and they are thriving.

Someone has to keep growing the tillandsia species. I have tried for years to get others interested but they told me they would come and buy mine and save themselves the work! With the growth of our Study Group, we have members who are really interested in tillandsias, so we now have an enthusiastic band of growers. They prefer to use coconut husk with some fibre and drainage holes and are excited by their successes. We also place the fresh seed onto tree trunks and it germinates if regularly watered.

To obtain seed, I pollinate the plants in my own collection (some do it themselves) and other growers have kindly donated me seed. I also grow seed for other people; sometimes on a 'share the results' basis.

I do grow other bromeliad seed, ie. Billbergia, Vriesea, Guzmania, and Aechmea, but space in my propagation area is very limited so I mostly grow my first love, Tillandsias.

Bob Hudson

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(An old nurseryman's trick when handling seed was to wash and dry the hands and then dust them with talcum powder.

Its great to hear of someone propagating species in any genus. Ultimately, this is where hybrids come from; and where breeding programs will have to go back to when hybrid vigour wanes !! *Ed)*

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Hanging bromeliads in plastic pots is a popular way to grow many species, especially tillandsias and grey-leaved vrieseas. However, the plastic hangers often used to suspend such pots, can restrict the plant's development once it becomes fairly large.

One way of dealing with the issue is to use specially-made wire "supports". These have a wire circle which slides up the pot from its base, and a length of wire which is attached to one side of the wire circle. The length of wire has a hook at its other end which can be attached to a roof support. This arrangement results in the plant's growth not being constrained. It is desirable to cover the wire with plastic tubing wherever it is likely to come into contact with a plant's foliage. The wire supports can be obtained from some orchid nurseries.

Bob Reilly



Grace Goode OAM



A Neoregelia Bed in the Garden of Grace

BROMELIAD GROWER EXTRAORDINARY HONOURED

Grace Margaret Goode, 86, was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia by Her Majesty the Queen in the Australia Day 2004 Honours List. The citation reads that she is "officially recognised for service to horticulture through the cultivation and hybridisation of bromeliads."

The award marks the culmination of thirty years of devotion to this remarkable family of plants and climaxes a list of other honours received along the pathway to producing some 800 cultivars. Grace Goode is a Life Member of several Australian Bromeliad Societies, a Charter Member of the Cryptanthus Society (USA), and an Honorary Trustee of the Bromeliad Society Inc. (USA). She has visited the USA as a bromeliad expert on several occasions.

Grace recalls the beginnings. "If a sixteenth century Czechoslovakian monk can produce beautifully coloured sweet peas, surely I can do it with bromeliads." People like Olwen Ferris, another bromeliad pioneer in Queensland, encouraged and helped her. She read a small book by Joan White, then a member of the Bromeliad Society of Australia, in which she depicted a few neoregelias. She commented "They were nothing like the lovely coloured neoregelias of today"; but she fell in love with them. They were enough to spur her on; and the long journey of hybridisation began at "Bromania", her home at Alexandra Headlands where she has lived for fifty years.

In the early 1970's, there were only about twenty species of bromeliads available in Australia; not many to begin with. Untrained as she was apart from some basic plant knowledge gained at school and with a little help from her friends, she began to play the part of the birds, bees, and bats initially with *Billbergia* and *Cryptanthus*. *Billbergia* 'Doreen Johnson', 'Red Glory', 'First Love', 'Yayee' are but some of her *billbergia* hybrids. Some of her better known *Cryptanthus* hybrids are :- 'Black Magic', 'Black Power', 'Dark Zone' and 'Cloud Cover'.

Grace succeeded with a most unusual cross between *Cryptanthus* 'It' and the intergeneric *xCryptbergia* 'Rubra' (now 'Red Burst') which is named *xCryptbergia* 'Goodale'. She also dabbled with other intergenerics ie *xNeolarium* 'Something Special' and *xNeolarium* 'Thor' both of which came from a (*Nidularium fulgens* x *Neoregelia* 'Vulcan') cross. *Nidularium* and a few *aechmeas* also received some attention. Another intergeneric was *xNidumea* 'Beacon' (*Aechmea weilbachii* x *Nidularium billbergioides* (now *Canistropsis*)).

While Grace has always said that her favourite plants were Cryptanthus, most who know her associate her name with Neoregelias. Space limitations prevent a listing of all her well known cultivars in this genus, but some of the more notable ones deserve mention. From the *Neoregelia* 'Sheer Joy' grex have come 'Amazing Grace' (after the song), 'Blackie', 'Red Plate'..... Other cultivars that come to mind are :- *Neo*. 'Break of Day', 'Mandella', 'Small Wonder', 'Claret', 'Charm', 'One and Only', and 'Hal Ellis'. Her hybrids are well documented in articles in Bromeliad magazines and, of course, in the Bromeliad Cultivar Register.

Many visitors to 'Bromania' have been awestruck by the brilliant carpet of vibrantly coloured Neoregelias which are always on display in her garden. Always the obliging hostess, all her visitors have been invited to share in the joy of these plants as she describes them and points out the latest cultivars.

Another ever present feature was the rows of trays and saucers along the veranda; all full of healthy seedlings at various stages of growth. There was always evidence of the patient disciplined care and attention; necessary qualities in the long process to bring the plants to maturity. Recently, to a reporter, she said "You can't rush the creation of bromeliads, you know". Grace has what it takes. She has received and given much by growing so many intriguing and colourful bromeliads.

The members of the Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc, warmly add their congratulations to the many she has already received; including those from the Premier of Queensland, The Minister assisting the Minister for the Status of Women, The Lady Mayoress of the Maroochy Shire Council, and the Sunshine Coast Bromeliad Society Inc. where she is a valued Life Member.

The bromeliad world has not seen the last of Grace's cultivars. She is still cultivating the offspring of some of the more interesting and spectacular parents !

May this generous, hospitable lady, with the sometimes wicked sense of humour, Grace Margaret Goode OAM, enjoy many more years of health and happiness; and of course bromeliad growing.

Last thing, when next you meet her, don't forget to bow !

Bob Paulsen

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 (More of the character of Grace Goode was documented in *Bromeliaceae*, Vol.XXX, Number 1, Jan/Feb. 1997.)

Put Your Hand Up

When we speak of our Society's success, we invariably reflect upon our financial stability, great field days, bus trips, informative meetings and our ability to amaze the general public with astonishingly beautiful bromeliad displays.

We are indeed fortunate to freely exploit this wonderful family of plants, furthering our reputation as a successful society. However, bromeliads alone have not given our Society this status. Bromeliads are the common interest, the mode or kind of connection between one person and another. Our Society exists today only by relation to something else; and that something else is an enthusiastic membership.

Any investigation or analysis into the satisfactory condition of the Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. would ultimately lead to the exposure of willing consenting members, ready to participate, and offering their time and assistance. Some time ago, a group of members (referred to as the same old crew) were responsible for most if not all society activities. They were responsible, only because other members were not available.

Thankfully the days of the 'same old crew' are gone; today more and more members are 'putting their hand up'. Also, newer members are responding readily, continually becoming involved with all facets of society management and activities.

Some time ago, a working group was needed at the Mt. Coot-tha Botanic Gardens to tidy a bromeliad area. The area had been somewhat neglected; older bromeliads had to be removed and replaced with fresh new plants, and a fair amount of cleaning was required. Offers of help were overwhelming. More than half who offered to help were newer members and on the day of clean up, half of the helpers were newer members. Needless to say, 'the same old crew' were delighted.

One of the working group was a little perturbed having to work under the watchful gaze of two large carpet snakes. It was noted the lady member's colour returned when she moved to the lower end of the area, some distance away. Hopefully this encounter will not influence her decision when further help is required at the Botanic Gardens.

Extra bromeliads were donated by the helpers and after a few hours work, the area was restored to a quality display.

Doug Upton

Genetically-modified Pineapple Crop Trials 1999-2008

The University of Queensland (UQ) and the Queensland Department of Primary Industries (QDPI) are both involved in the genetic modification of pineapples. Field trials of GM pineapples (*Ananas comosus* cv 'Smooth Cayenne') were previously approved under the Genetic Manipulation Advisory Committee (GMAC) system and recently, licences have been granted for the continuation of the trials.

The UQ pineapple plants have been modified to control flowering. The organization was granted its original licence to conduct field trials in 1999. With the current licence granted under the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator (OGTR), the proposed field trials will continue until 2007.

The QDPI have modified the pineapple plants for blackheart reduction (browning of the flesh) and to delay flowering. The approval of this application enables continuation of the trials, which commenced in 2000 under the GMAC system, until 2008.

For further details on the UQ's application, visit:
www.ogtr.gov.au/ir/dir027.htm

For the QDPI application, visit: www.ogtr.gov.au/ir/dir028.htm

Geoff Lawn

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Bromeliad seedlings usually appreciate being given their nutrients on a "little but often" basis. Ideally, nutrients should be supplied on a daily basis. One way to help achieve this outcome is to include liquid fertiliser every time the seedlings are watered or misted. However, most liquid fertilisers are designed to be used only once every 10 to 14 days. Hence, it is necessary to dilute the liquid fertiliser to one tenth or less of the normal recommended concentration, if you intend to use it on a daily basis.

Some bromeliads, for example many of the large aechmeas and portreas, produce their offsets at the end of "woody" stolons which exceed 2 cm in diameter. These stolons can be quite difficult to cut with secateurs. However, they are easily cut with small, hand-held pruning saws. These implements have curved blades about 20cm long, and can be purchased from many hardware stores and garden centres.

Bob Reilly

Neoregelia 'Princess Caroline'

With notes on *Neo. carolinae*, *princeps*, and *carolinae* 'Princeps'

These last three names have been around for many many years be it in Australia, New Zealand or the USA; but have they been linked to the proper plants? We can ascertain the identity of the first two names because they are recognised species with formal descriptions and herbarium specimens. The third name is a made-up one that nobody has tried to properly identify or to give a cultivar name. We hope to rectify this with this article.

Neoregelia carolinae has been in cultivation for over 100 years and most plants grown are of horticultural origin without a pedigree where the plant can be traced to a habitat environment. As Harry Luther pointed out in an article in J. Brom. Soc. 1983 pages 191-4 223-4, this is well represented in herbaria and cultivation; quite variable in size and coloration. Many cultivated forms are highly selected and may be hybrids. My own experience is that the only ones I have which have a pedigree are those grown from seed actually from plants in the wild in SE Brazil and NOT Brazilian nurseries!

Neoregelia princeps forma *princeps*. This is what Harry had to say in 1983. "This is the most misapplied name in the genus; all material so named I have examined is *Neo. carolinae*. The true *Neo. princeps* is represented by two very similar clones that are only now beginning to spread in horticulture." Remember, this was Harry's experience in the USA but we had had direct importation of several species to Australia from Brazil. This had me searching for the elusive *Neo. princeps*.

All the plants I have acquired with this name were more closely linked to *Neo. carolinae* after I had done my dissecting. But I do have several aff *princeps* !!(Note that aff. is used by taxonomists for those plants that nearly fit the description BUT). These include a plant I got as *Neo. farinosa* (Bill Morris helped me with this one!) another as *Neo. macrosepala* from Queensland and another as *Neo. pineliana* from Sydney. All were what I would consider reliable sources but so far no luck. Remember, one of the key factors to look for is red sepals. A plant exhibited at the 14th World Conference as *Neoregelia princeps* by Keith Smith is not this species either!

Do not despair if your label has *Neo. princeps* on the label unless you are like me, and love to dissect or you want to send pieces to the Identification centre at Marie Selby Gardens in Florida. However, if

someone from Brazil feels sure they have the true species it would be good to get a good photograph of it.

Neoregelia carolinae (var *princeps*) or 'Princeps'. Plants with this name have been grown in Australia and New Zealand (and the USA?) since probably the 1960's but the name has never been officially queried. If you bought this plant, you could have been advised "It is not really a *carolinae* or a *princeps*!"

There is no reference to this name in any cultivar listing or taxonomical listing or in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society International although there is a photograph of a *Neoregelia carolinae* 'Princeps' in *Blooming Bromeliads* by Baensch (1994) on page 119. Baensch said it was a trade name but I have been unable to trace this name in any of the old catalogues I have. Dennis Cathcart of Tropiflora has advised me that he does have this plant but in two forms, one with a thinner leaf than the other. The plot thickens! Is it a *Neo. carolinae* or a *Neo. princeps*? Growers assure me this plant is different to both! I have never grown it and have tried for years to get a photograph of it so we could resolve the matter.

Gerry Stansfield in New Zealand has come to the rescue by taking the inflorescence to pieces and we can find no link to either species which makes the origin of its name all the more mysterious. It must be of hybrid origin! He has also supplied me with a photograph of this plant which we must treat as a cultivar. Clearly the name '*carolinae princeps*' is misleading and we do not know who coined the name many years ago, so a replacement name should be similar. We decided that 'Princess Caroline' would solve the problem. So if you are growing this plant please change the name. A photo will be linked to the Bromeliad Cultivar Register on the BSI website.

This matter of naming has taken a certain urgency because Gerry has stabilised an albomarginate sport of 'Princess Caroline' which he will be calling 'Princess Caroline Superb'

Derek Butcher

.....

Several factors determine how long a bromeliad's inflorescence retains its colouration. Hot weather, for example, daily temperatures exceeding 35 ° Celsius for several days at a time, can significantly shorten the period of time during which the inflorescence of species as diverse as *Tillandsia stricta* and *Aechmea marie-reginae*, retain their colouration. However, the next generation of plants will not be adversely affected unless they also experience hot weather.

Bob Reilly

CLAVEL DEL AIRE**Lyrics by Fernan Silva Valdez Music by Juan de Dios Filiberto****Composed in 1930**

Como el clavel del aire
 Asi era ella
 Igual que la flor
 Prendida en mi Corazon

Like the carnation of the air
 That was her
 Like the flower
 Caught in my heart

Oh cuanto llore
 Porque me dejo
 Como el clavel del aire
 Asi era ella
 Igual que la flor

Oh how I wept
 Because she left me
 Like the carnation of the air
 That was her
 Like the flower

En esta region
 Igual que un ombu
 Solito y sin flor
 Asi era yo
 Y presa del dolor
 Los anos vivi
 Igual que un ombu
 En esta region

In this region
 Like the ombu
 Alone and without flowers
 That was I
 And filled with pain
 For years I lived
 like an ombu
 In this region

Y mi ramazon
 Secandose iba
 Cuando ella una tarde
 Mi sombre busco
 Un are canto
 En mi ramazon
 Y el arbol sin flores
 Tuvo su flor

And my branches
 Softened
 When one afternoon she
 sought my shadow
 A bird sang
 In my branches
 And the tree without flowers
 Had her flower

Mas un feliz viajero
 Viajero matildo
 El pago cruzo.....
 En brazos de el se me fue
 Y yo me quede
 De Nuevo sin flor
 El que cruzo fue el viento
 El viento pampero
 Que se la llevo

But then a happy traveller
 A traveller
 Passing thru the neighbourhood...
 In her embrace I was
 And I found myself
 Once again without flower
 The one that passed through was the wind
 The pampas wind
 The one who took her away

.....

Following Arno King's novel presentation last year, there has been a lot of interest in the lyrics of the tango. Many thanks to Arno for these original lyrics and the translation.

Those Early Days Pt 1

Some time ago, an evening of talks about our Society's 'Early Days' was well received. So much so, it has given rise to the belief that most new members including those unable to attend meetings might be interested in having some knowledge of the small group of enthusiasts who organised and formed the Bromeliad Society of Queensland. This and a future edition will feature several articles which will depict a factual but light hearted insight into the character of these early day enthusiasts.

Researching material has been time consuming but intriguing. Literally dozens of past Newsletters and Journals divulged the majority of the information. Thanks must go to several long standing members for help and advice.

Years before our Society was formed, at a time when bromeliads were not plentiful and collectors were cultivating a limited selection of species, they visited local nurseries searching for additional genera. Popular haunts were Hart's at Mt. Gravatt and Jackson's at Coopers Plains. Eventually, friendships developed between these collectors and this was further enriched after visiting each others home collections. Among collectors, exchange rather than sale was common practice. A 'tradeable' plant was a small pot of plant gold.

Following a progression of ideas and suggestions, at the invitation of Mary Grasselli on Australia Day, January 1967, the 'nursery group' along with other bromeliad collectors, were invited to her home to form a specialist society to promote and cultivate bromeliads. Over the ensuing 36 years the (now) Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. has prospered owing much to dedicated members who continually uphold the objects of the first Constitution, namely "To promote good fellowship among all people interested in bromeliad culture and in horticulture generally".

Articles will feature Mary Grasselli and Len Butt, followed by Nezzie (Nez) Misso, Jim Hyde, Barclay Binnie, Maurice Jones, and Nick Kemp all of whom were present at the inaugural meeting on Australia Day, 1967.

Mary Grasselli was born in England in 1915, a beautiful daughter to gladden the heart of her dad, an English Army Major. After WW1, the family moved across the channel to France. Their life style was pleasant. However, after four years of the good life, Mary's father accepted a British Army posting in India in early 1923.

Mary remembered India as very hot and dry; but when it rained, their home outside the Army barracks was awash with flooding dirty coloured water. The country was never as nice as France, although the people were

very friendly and the soldiers were always noisy. Her schooling was conducted at home until she was 14.

The family's next home was Grenada, a British Colony in the West Indies. It was the most southerly of the Windward Islands and close to South America.

It was in Grenada that Mary first saw strange hanging whiskery plants swaying from tree branches. A park gardener told her, "The locals called it 'Spanish Moss'; sometimes 'old man's beard'; but my wife reads books and said that it's a bromeliad". Mary was fascinated by the islands small wild monkeys; they would peer at her through holes in the hanging moss. She did seek the name of the hanging 'moss'; it was a bromeliad *Tillandsia usneoides*.

Mary was 17 when the family left Grenada and returned to England. During WW2, she served as a transport driver in The Transport Corps, a difficult and hazardous job during the London blitz. After the war her interests turned to farming, cattle breeding and dog training. In January 1951, she migrated to Australia and worked on a cattle station in NW New South Wales where the nearest town was Goondiwindi. It was some distance to travel but a great place to discard work clothes for a new dress and cool sandals. Mary spent her holidays in Goondiwindi. There were dances at the church hall, social evenings and garden visits. She made many friends including Carlo Grasselli. They married and moved to Brisbane.

Mary first met Len Butt when he was judging at a Southern Districts Horticultural Society show, probably 1964-66.

Len Butt was born in Sydney, served in WW2 and was medically discharged in 1945. Towards the end of the following year, he moved to Brisbane where he married and took up the study of cacti and succulents. He later deserted this study when the Queensland Government declared all cacti banned in Queensland.

Len joined the Royal Horticultural Society in 1948, and while working as a steward at one of their Shows was bitten by the bromeliad bug. There were only a few bromeliads on display, but enough to captivate Len.

At that time Jack Bailey, the Curator of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens grew magnificent large clumps of *Billbergia pyramidalis* v *concolor*. Len bitten by the bromeliad bug and in the 'must have' mode, and because they were friends approached Jack. Of course, plants were not available from the Gardens; even a close friendship could never be deemed an exception. However, it was permissible to inform Len that a Charles Hodson of Melbourne supplied the gardens with a number of bromeliads. Len

contacted Charles and purchased the plants on offer – four unidentified neoregelias, *Aechmea fulgens*, *Nidularium innocentii*, and two billbergias, one of which was *Bill. pyramidalis* v *concolor*.

(After Jack Bailey passed away, Harold Caulfield became the next curator. In the years to follow, Harold became our first –and only- Patron of the Society.)

On a 42 perch allotment in the Brisbane suburb of Fairfield, Len and his wife Daphne managed to grow ferns, cycads, orchids, succulents, palms, trees large and small; in fact almost everything within the plant kingdom. Bromeliads are not listed; THEY did not grow bromeliads. Only Len grew bromeliads: Daphne disliked them; and always had colourful words to describe them.

In 1959, The Queensland owned 'Queensland Garden' came into being and Len joined the writing staff; his assignments were orchids and bromeliads. Writing first of the genus *Billbergia*, he referred to the magnificent clumps in the Botanic Gardens. Many letters from readers confirmed he would have a good following. However not all readers considered bromeliads were –or would ever be – the exotic plant of future. The magazine's policy to publish all signed letters to the Editor bought about some argumentative copy. I quote "Articles on *Billbergia* are usually prefaced by apologetic references to the genera's commonness. With a disappointing short bloom span plus its exaggerated prolific reproduction habits, thus, and to that end, few orchid growers are willing to risk the distain of their fellow members by daring to publicly grow *Billbergias*".

(To be continued)

Doug Upton

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A variety of chemicals are used to control insects such as fly speck scale on bromeliads. These chemicals are usually sprayed onto the plant. Some people have noticed adverse impacts on their bromeliads' growth if the chemicals are left in the plants' "vases" for a long period of time during hot weather. One way of avoiding this problem is to only spray when temperatures are less than 30° Celsius, and to "flush" the plants' vases out with water 12 hours after the chemical is applied.

Once continuous release fertiliser pellets become moist, they commence releasing nutrients. As a plant needs these nutrients, keep the pellets in a sealed container until they are used.

Bob Reilly

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Tillandsia Handbook by Hideo Shimizu and Hirouli Takizawa	\$58.00
Bromeliads for Everyone 2 by Bea Hansen	\$11.50
Growing Bromeliads by The Bromeliad Society of Australia	\$21.50
Genus Tillandsia by Paul Isley III	\$3.00
International Check List of Bromeliad Hybrids by B.S.I	\$1.50
A Bromeliad Glossary, 1977 Edition, by B.S.I	\$3.50
A Bromeliad Glossary, 1998 Edition, by B.S.I	\$18.50
Bromeliads -- A Cultural Manual by B.S.I	\$5.00
Distributional Checklist of the Genus Tillandsia by Lloyd Kiff	\$20.00
A Guide to Beautiful Neoregelias by S. Zaghini	\$20.00
1985 Bromeliads III Conference	\$10.00
1993 Bromeliads VII Conference	\$18.00

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Hot weather, for example, daily temperatures exceeding 35 degrees Celsius for several days at a time, can cause malformation of developing inflorescences. However, the next generation of plants will not be adversely affected unless they also experience hot weather.

Bob Reilly

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the Journal of the **BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF QUEENSLAND** Inc.

Published bi-monthly by

ULTRA PRINT Phone 07 3865 5700

Print Post Number: P.P. 434327/0002