

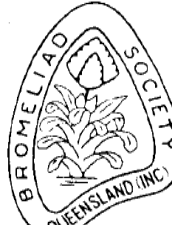
# *Bromeliaceae*



*VOLUME XLIII - No. 4*

-

*July-August 2009*



# The Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.

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Front Cover: *Vr.* 'Robin' Unreg O & L Trevor Photo by Ross Stenhouse

Rear Cover : *Vr.* 'Favoriet' Photo by Ross Stenhouse

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## Note from the Editor’s Desk

Yet another issue ready to go to the printers and as I incorporate the final touches, the thought occurred to me that I ought to explain just what editorial thought processes go through my head as I prepare an issue.

First, I am the editor and as such, I set the editorial policy and layout, I do not have to write the articles. I depend on other people to take the time and effort to compose an article and often to provide illustrations and send it in (via email is my preference, hand written articles usually result in a lot of typographical errors as I transcribe them.)

You will find there are a number of regular authors whose contributions appear in each issue. Often these articles are largely technical in nature and I have deliberately cultivated that situation. These articles are the result of a huge amount of work by the authors. These people should be thanked for both their technical acumen and their enthusiasm in the technical aspects of growing bromeliads and that they are prepared to share that knowledge via the medium of the published word.

This journal is not merely a collection of social pages, it’s a serious publication with a range of articles pitched at different levels of horticultural ability. I try with each issue to have balance in the journal. I want the beginner to enjoy reading an issue, and I also want the advanced reader to have their knowledge extended.

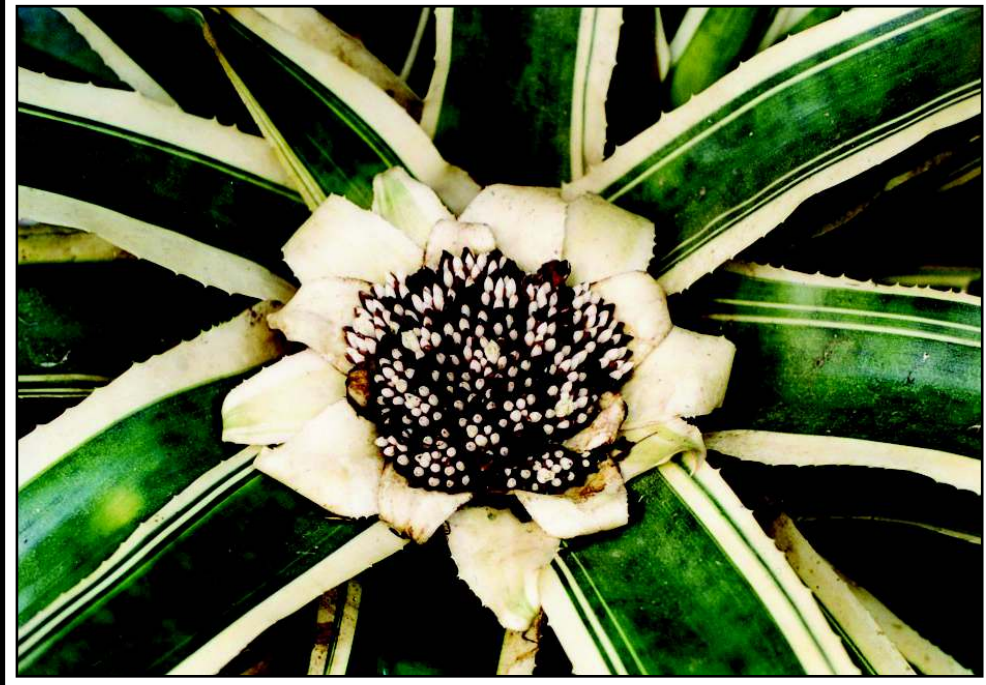
I also aim to have at least one article of general nature (such as Leisa’s article “Scoring a Brom Fix” ). I would like to publish articles that are of a generalised light-hearted and social nature, articles such as a report on a society outing, however these are generally not forthcoming from members.

It’s an easy situation to remedy, someone needs to write one and send it to me!

Finally, I and the contributors must be doing something right. We have a huge readership on the web and the association’s membership numbers is very healthy. Many members live out in the country and their only connection with other members is via this journal.



*Edmundoa* 'Alvim Seidel' Photos by Kerry Booth Tate



*Bromeliaceae*

Jul/Aug 2009

## *Edmundoa* ‘Alvim Seidel’

by Derek Butcher

This is a first in at least two ways: firstly this is the first cultivar name to be allotted to the Genus *Edmundoa*, and secondly it is the first time the name Alvim Seidel has appeared as a Cultivar name.

There are only two species currently in this genus so there does not seem much scope for a dramatic increase. But when *Edmundoa lindenii* var *lindenii* sensu Leme has 16 synonyms and *Edmundoa lindenii* var *rosea* has 11 synonyms you would think there would be scope for some horticulturist to come up with something supposedly unique and give it a cultivar name. Just think of *Aechmea chantinii*, *Guzmania lingulata* etc etc!!

A variegated form of *Canistrum lindenii* cropped up in the 1970's. Little is known of its origins but by this time taxonomists interest in these sorts of plants was beginning to wane – and quite rightly so, because variegation is in the realm of the gardener and thus cultivars. Anyway, this variegated form was never formally described but did appear in Alvim Seidel's catalogue in 1976 as *Canistrum lindenii* var *exiguum variegatum*.

These days we frown greatly on these Latin words used by Nurserymen to hint that by using variegatum it is an official name and not a made up one! Certainly var. *exiguum* was used by Reitz but not any hint of variegation. ‘Exiguum’ means small or puny which can refer to any part of the plant. Alas, this name is one of the current synonyms and if you have ever tried to find details of old synonyms you are in for an adventure! So if anyone has access to Anais. Herb, Barbosa Rodrigues 2:37. 1950 please advise.

So there it was at US\$120 which sug-

gests there could not have been many in existence! The next reference was in Kent's Bromeliad Nursery Catalogue circa 1979 where we find *C. lindenii* forma *exiguum* ‘Albomarginata’ for US\$ 75 and ‘Variegata’ for US\$25 suggesting they too had problems in defining if there is anything that can be called stable within the 5 forms of variegation! But the price was dropping.

In the 1970's its offsets must have got to Gulz in Germany because towards the end of the decade, Ede Schaefer had imported it to Adelaide. By 1983 it was in the hands of Pinegrove Nursery ( see BBK#625) from Schaefer as ‘variegata’

1984 was a busy year because Pinegrove received a *C. lindenii* var. *lindenii* forma *procerum* ‘Albomarginata’ from Bill Morris and Peter Tristram. These could well have got to Australia from Kent but why the subtle name change. Could this have been the influence of Bill Morris?

Interestingly forma *procerum* ( tall scape) has only been linked to var *roseum* officially. They also got a *C. lindenii* forma *exiguum* ‘Variegata’ from an unknown source which tends to link somehow with the Kent's offering. No attempt seems to have been made at Pinegrove as to what subtle differences there may have been when first obtained.

In the intervening 20 + years a variegated and/or albomarginate *Canistrum lindenii* has crisscrossed Australia and is now known as an *Edmundoa*. Some seem to have the fairly dominate and fairly stable albomarginate leaves but others report irregular variegation to almost disappearing. Can they be traced to the original Brazilian find? This will never be known but I have a feeling that because ‘everybody’ wants a variegated plant offsets would have moved around very quickly.

From the plant owned by Kerry Tate I

would suggest strong links to the Bill Morris named clone because it has white primary bracts linking it to var. *lindenii* AND has an elongated scape linking it to the name 'procerum'.

From what I have gleaned, nobody has bothered to look for differences in the various variegated plants – perhaps they thought that variegation was enough to worry about!

So I have decided to honour Alvim Seidel with the name linking to *Edmundoa lindenii* var. *lindenii*. This covers all forms of variegation Donato Seidel was pleased that we are commemorating his father but has been unable to shed any light as to how this variegated plant came into existence.

We have 'solved' the problem of the white primary bracted variety but what about var. *rosea*? Would Aussie growers please be on the look out for a variegated form of this? If it is here then we can name it. I know it is growing in Florida, USA and you never know – the Floridians may beat us to the post!



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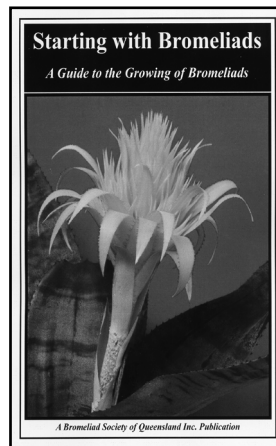
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## Variegated *Alcantareas*

Author: Bruce Dunstan

Over the past 5-6 years I have been growing a lot of *Alcantareas* from seed. The company I work for has been producing large numbers of *Alcantareas* for landscape clients and also people who want something different for their gardens.

When we are growing the seedlings through the varying sizes in our production process occasionally we can select out the striped plants and put them aside. Once we worked out that variegates were occasionally coming up I started to collect way more seed than what we would normally need and began sowing that seed specifically for variegates.

This resulted in trays of green seedlings numbering in the thousands that looked like turf being disposed of. Usually you can see if a plant has variegations by the 5th or 6th leaf, but some don't show their stripes until they are a bit older. Plants that look great at an early stage 3-4 leaves often don't have enough chlorophyll to maintain healthy growth as they mature and succumb.

The more striping they have also slows their growth rates to the point that some of my better seedlings have taken years to get to a decent size even with the high rates of fertiliser I use to push them along.

Visiting other growers and seeing variegates certainly got me interested in these

plants. My first introduction was at Keith Golinski's nursery Bromagic. Keith had a seedling batch of *Alcantarea glaziouana* and one of the individuals was variegated.

Keith was happy to sell me green plants but obviously was going to keep his stripy plant. My first variegated seedlings came as progeny from the green individuals that Keith sold me. At the time I thought the variegation may have been transmitted genetically from the parents, coming from a batch of seedlings that contained a variegated individual, but now I tend to think some species are more prone to variegation and *Alcantarea glaziouana* appears to me at least, to be a species that throws lots of variegated seedlings.

I was able to prove my theory on genetic variegations when I sowed every last seed I collected from a variegated *Alcantarea extensa* that I named for Bobby Powell. Bobby grew an *Alcantarea extensa* to maturity down at the Gold Coast and I was luckily given some of the seed by Arno King, who at this stage was feeding my interest in *Alcantareas* with seed and pups from his collection and seed from New Zealand.

Of the 35 or so seedlings to germinate for me there was one striped seedling. It wasn't until it was 40 mm tall and in its own tube did we notice its stripes. Needless to say this seedling was kept and potted on and grown as fast as we could get it to grow.

It flowered in early 2007 and was self pollinated which produced copious amounts of seed which were all diligently collected, sown and grown on to produce absolutely no variegated seedlings - all green or grey as the case was. So there is no way to rapidly multiply the variegated plants by seed.

The best collection of variegated *Alcantareas* I have seen was in Brazil at the farm of Oscar and Helenice Robeiro. I was lucky to travel to Brazil in 2006 with five plant

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### The BSQ Web Site

Don't forget that the society has a web site. We place urgent and general information and information on the site.

The URL is:

**[www.Bromeliadsqueensland.com](http://www.Bromeliadsqueensland.com)**



*Alc.* 'Gladys' at Bromeliario Imperialis



*Alc.* 'Helenice' at Bromeliario Imperialis



*Alc.* 'John Stoddart'



*Alc.* 'John Stoddart'



*Alc.* 'Gladys' at Bromeliario Imperialis



*Alc. extensa*



buddies and stay with Bruno Rezende Silva. Bruno took us to Oscar and Helenice's farm up in the Organ Mountains and as we drove up we were able to see wild populations of *Alcantarea imperialis* and *geniculata*. Oscar has grown many thousands of *Alcantarea imperialis* seedlings from a wild collected seed batch and the variation within this seedling progeny is impressive.

Colours range from grey greens right through to dark reds or purples. There are also variations in the amount of waxy coating the top surfaces of the leaves also have. We were there during winter and this is when you see this characteristic and the plants colours displayed best.

Oscar had more than 20 variegated *Alcantarea imperialis* plants that we saw on that day. There were green plants with white stripes, red plants with golden bands, albo marginates, and true variegates. I was blown away by them, having never seen anything like it before, plus I'm quite partial to variegated plants.

One of my travel companions, Mark Paul is not quite as enamoured by variegated plants calling them 'diseased', but over time he is slowly changing his opinion and even has one of my variegates in his garden, though over the years he has given me lots of 'diseased' individuals to put in my 'shrine to variegates' AKA my tunnel for special babies, at work.

On the same trip we also saw collections of variegated *Alcantareas* at Tropiflora in Sarasota, at Morriera's collection at Isla Grande south of Rio de Janeiro. Bruno also had a variegated *glaziouana* in his garden, which he cut most of its leaves off to use them in one of his sculptures. Variegated *Alcantarea glaziouana* are visible growing up on inselbergs along the coast in and around Rio de Janeiro, they become more noticeable in rainy or darker conditions when the stripes

show up from the grey background of the surrounding foliage.

As I have begun to produce more of these plants we have found better ways to produce and indeed multiply their numbers. Most *Alcantareas* can be encouraged to produce adventitious pups when they are young. Planting them very high to expose the plants bases where the pups can emerge, along with high fertiliser rates are the best ways to start, as well as with removing lower leaves to expose the dormant buds or developing pups.

The variegated plants tend to produce three types of pups, green white or yellow solidly variegated or plants with no chlorophyll and if you are lucky variegated little replicas of the parent plant. These are treated in the same way as other adventitious offsets and removed and potted on. I take the view it's better to remove them as soon as you can in the hope that the next leaf axil will produce another.

As some of my seedlings grew they began to lose their stripes and became fully green again. These unstable plants obviously needed some work to maintain a good variegated leaf pattern. These were treated with a screwdriver in the growing point to encourage the lateral buds to initiate. This propagation method has been very successful, as most pups that emerge from leaves with a stripe tend to produce a more regularly variegated plant, either Albo marginated or Variegated.

You will also tend to end up with plenty of green pups as well. It requires a strong constitution and fortitude to attack your valuable plants with a screwdriver but attempts on green individuals can provide good practice. I also know of some people who just couldn't bring themselves to mutilating a healthy plant just for financial gain.

My excuse is I am a horticulturist and it's my job to produce what people crave



*Alc. imperialis* with Helenice and Oscar Ribeiro at Bromeliario Imperialis, Organ Mountains, Rio de Janeiro, State Brazil



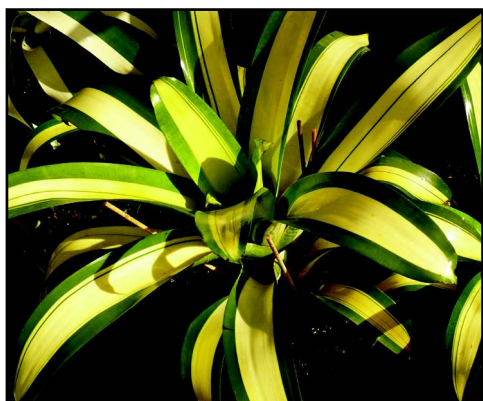
*Alc. extensa* 'Bobby Powell.



*Alc.* 'John Stoddart'



*Alcantarea glaziouana* after screwdriver treatment and removal of most pups



*Alc. extensa* select from Bobby Powell



Mixed variegates at Greenstock Nursery

in plants. This method of propagation also shows me just how tough and resilient Bromeliads are with some plants producing more than 50 pups.

Once we have a stable plant we are trying to get them to a flowering size as quickly as possible. This is best achieved by regular watering to both the top of the plant as well as the potting mix the plant is growing in. *Alcantaraeas* in containers can tend to shed water with the leaves directing water away from the media below them. I tend to water my bigger specimens once a week in and around the root zone.

Regular applications of slow release fertiliser are also applied to ensure rapid growth. Come spring and once the emerging flower spike is up above the foliage it is then removed, as any future development is wasted reproduction potential.

Pups appear as both adventitious and larger pups inside the mature plants rosette

of leaves. It can take more than 12 months to successfully remove all of these pups without damaging them in the process.

Patience is a virtue but it's something I have little of and many a time I have destroyed pups by not waiting. Taking them early can result in them not producing roots from their basal tissue and just sitting in pots and slowly declining until death. It's best to wait and ensure you give them every chance of success.

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## What is "Quilling"

Author: Ross Stenhouse

Quilling is the cementing together of the inner leaves, causing the plant to be very tubular in shape. The plants look odd and you soon start to wonder what is the cause.

The most commonly accepted reason is that it is due to a lack of sufficient moisture while the plant is in an active growing period. The problem can be the result of both dryness in the potting mix and low humidity in the atmosphere.

The dryness allows the leaves to cement together. If it is caught earlier enough, it may be possible to pry apart the leaves and normal growth may happen.

Certain genera are more prone to "Quilling" than others. These genera include *Vriesea* and *Guzmania*, less commonly it may occur in *neoregelia* and *aechmea*.

I found quilling had occurred in an *Aechmea* 'Purple Gem' that I had around the side of the house and had neglected. See image on page 21 showing example of extreme quilling.

**29th August - Bus Trip to the gardens of Cheryl Basic & Nigel Thompson**

For more information see "Calendar of Events" Page 26

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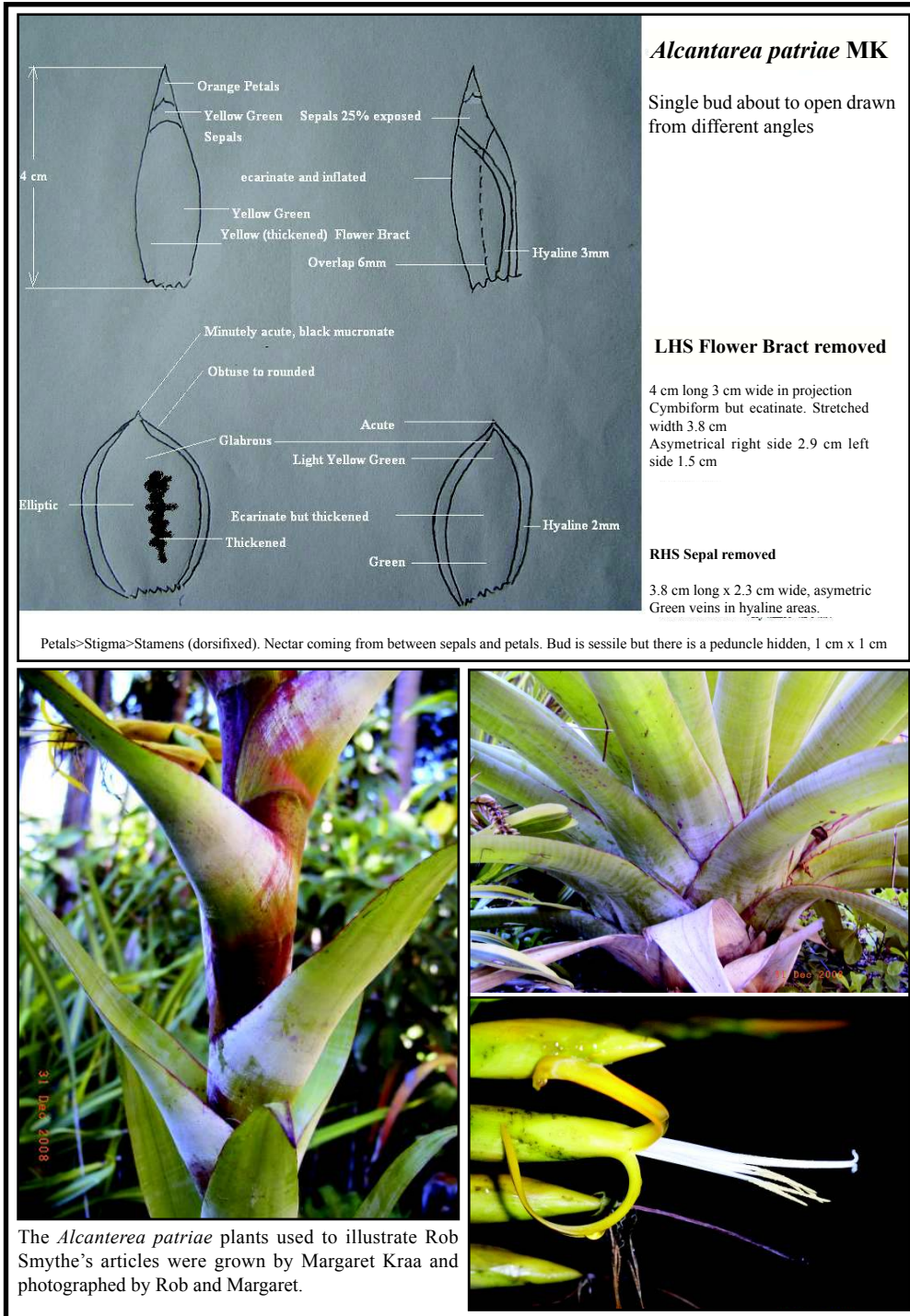
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The *Alcantarea patriae* plants used to illustrate Rob Smythe's articles were grown by Margaret Kraa and photographed by Rob and Margaret.

## Exciting Rare Alcantareas Found Growing in Brisbane.

Author: Rob Smythe MSc

So far I have found two rare species of Alcantareas in Brisbane and possibly a third in Far North Queensland. The first that I discovered was a large night flowering plant. I did a lot of taxonomic work on this and sent my work sheets to prominent botanists in Brazil. The reply was that it was a known, as yet undescribed, species. So that we can communicate on this I have given it a temporary name of *Al. nova aff. patriae* RSS. One of the two Brazilian botanists suggested it had an affinity with *Alc. patriae*.

The third one will probably be a new species from inland Minas Gerais where a new population on *Alc. extensa* and related species have been found in recent times. The original clones were found in Espirito Santos so there might be a lot of reclassification and new species described when this is all linked up. Only *Alc. turgida* (2007) has been published so far. How this third, possibly yet to be described, species got into the country is any body's guess. If you read Arno King's paper in Bromeliaceae 2002, we could make a good stab at how the other two got in.

Back to the second one. This all started after I requested in Brom Watch - a monthly rag that I write - that I would like photos of flowering Alcantareas sent to me as their naming is in such a mess and I hoped to sort some out. Margaret Kraa sent me a photo and subsequent material to study. By this time I had a good size data bank as a result of my previous study. Firstly I compared data with ones I had heard were around. Each time I found a major difference so excluded these plants. I worked through the remaining spe-

cies and at the end I was left with only one species. I think I had eliminated 26 species. A lot of time needed. This meant it was *Alc. patriae* or some hybrid. I sent work sheets and photos to the botanist who described *Alc. patriae* in 2007. Below I have prepared an easy to read version for non-botanists.

It was great a joy for me when Leonardo wrote back and confirmed that Margaret's plant was *Alcantarea patriae*. Could you believe this? — Arnold James invited me to his farm and there was another one in flower. Both Arnold's and Margaret's plants carried different labels of course. Understandable when it would not have even been described when they got it.

Similarities between the Brisbane *Alcantarea* and *Alc. patriae*. This was drawn up before I knew they were the same species.

Reference to pictures of *Alc. patriae* (below) are not here, but in the literature.

Both are large plants flowering above two metres. Both appear to have short trunks covered by dead leaves. They carry a large number of green leaves and the rosettes assume much the same shape. Leaves are rather narrow sub-erect and nearly straight and are covered with cross bands of white epiculate wax.

**Leaves** are same, concolour green, leathery and linear with transverse chalky striping. Leaf tips are acute.

**Scape** is erect and appears to be green in both cases. First branch is a similar distance above the plants leaves.

Photographs show primary bracts to be similar in shape and colourations.

**Branches:** Both plants have a large number (20-30 combined range) of erect to semi erect branches with between 11 and 35 well spaced flowers per branch.

**Flowers:** both have lax, distichous and not secund flowers (important for separation from another group of large Alcantareas)

**Petals:** both fit within 8.5 to 10 cm in length, 8 to 10 mm wide.

**Floral Bracts** have no keels but are both thickened towards the centre and towards the apex. Both have nerved membranous margins. Both are yellow to golden yellow and smooth. Both have the same dimensions

**Sepals** both obovate with graded yellow to green yellow markings. Both with same dimensions.

**Petals,** yellow anchor shaped at anthesis becoming recurved and flaccid with time.

**Stamens** of similar size and both are not spreading.

**Scent :** Both plants are scented.

#### **Differences**

**Scape** bracts of Brisbane plants could be more foliaceous than those shown with *patriae* (very distant photo). Look equally divergent.

Sepals and Floral Bracts more rounded and slightly more symmetrical with *patriae*. I have noticed with the Brisbane plant that with older flowers the subacuminate tip does fall off which rounds off the tip in the case of the floral bract. The sepal is far more rounded in *patriae* and I never observed tip drop.

The ligulate petal appendages are some 40% longer in *patriae*. *Patriae*'s petals bend back more tightly as shown in the pictures.

Sterile bract numbers do overlap but the Brisbane plant is at the very lower end of the *patriae* scale.

#### **Questions I can't answer.**

Have I not recorded something significant? I have done my best with one visit and many e-mails.

The branches of the Brisbane plant have become very drooped with age. Does *patriae* do the same? I would assume so.

Could the ligulate appendages data be a mistype? My data is 24 x 2 mm where as

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*patriae* is recorded as 34 x 2 mm. I have a pressed sample and mine is right for me.

#### Conclusion

I will let this data sit in the web site for six months. If nothing evolves from the taxonomists I will label my plant *Alc. patriae* (RSS). If it is debunked I will register it as *Alc.* 'Brisbane Beudy'

**Acknowledgement:** Thank you Margaret Kraa for staying with me on this project and thanks to Arnold James for his enthusiastic but late involvement.

**Note:** Groupings like (20 -30) mentioned above only indicate that the two plants both fit and overlap somewhere in this range not over the whole of the range.

Response from the botanist who actually described this species. I sent him all my work sheets including drawings. His response is below.

Dear Robert,

You've done a great job and did find *Alc. patriae* in Australia. I have not seen the end of blooming at the type locality, all the plants I depicted in my paper are at the beginning of anthesis, but a friend of mine went to the same place later and he noticed that branches would bend downwardly at the end of flowering period.

Good job and it is good to know that *Alc. patriae* is cultivated far away from its homeland.

Best

Leonardo M. Versieux  
Instituto de Botânica  
Seção de Curadoria do Herbário  
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## Exciting Rare Alcantareas Found Growing in Brisbane. Part 2

Author: Rob Smythe MSc

This time I intend writing about the first unidentifiable *Alcantarea* that I found in Brisbane. This one has turned out to be a known but as yet undescribed species. Until it is properly described I am giving it the unofficial name of *Alc. nova aff. patriae* RSS. I could just as well have called it *aff. extensa* as it fits somewhere between the two.

I can't give the history of the plant as I purchased more than one plant on the same week end. Arno King has visited my garden and he is convinced that there is a lot of it in Brisbane.

I purchased two plants that looked the same. One was labelled *Alc. edmundoi* and the other *Alc. imperialis Green Form*. Neither of these names were correct as both these plants, if correctly named, would have had flowers pointing skyward (*secund* upward) whereas my plant had flowers on opposite sides of the flower spike just like common vrieseas (*distichous* and not *secund*).

The experts were trying to tell me it was *Alc. extensa* but it definitely was not this plant though the individual flower spikes alone do a good impersonation of a rather long *extensa* spike, whereas the whole inflorescence is more like *patriae*.

I was even told that many years back a Brazilian botanist, visiting Australia, had said that it was *Alc. edmundoi*. More on this later. I wrote to Elton Leme who with JR Grant described *Alc edmundoi* in 1993/1995. I sent him details of my work sheets showing that

I was failing to fit this plant into any known species description.

This naturally was leading to its being a hybrid or a new species. He wrote back saying that it was in fact the same as a plant that he had seen in the wild. My plant could therefore be an undescribed species and he even gave me the location where it might be found. I then sent all my data collected over twelve months to Leonardo Versieux who is currently doing his Doctorate of Philosophy reviewing the whole *Alcantarea* genera.

As an aside, I have been told that if you drive around some areas of Brazil you could find an undescribed species, growing in a garden, in every town. I think there are now twenty eight described species. Twenty six if you remove *alata* and *edmundoi*. I agree to removing *alata* but I am not sure *edmundoi* should be removed. What a task Leonardo has taken on!

E-mails from the botanists relating to my plant.

**From: Elton Leme**

Dear Rob,

Your *Alcantarea* sp looks to me to be a plant that grows in the northern part of Rio de Janeiro State. It is neither *Alc. edmundoi* nor *A. extensa*. Its closest relative is *Alc. patriae*, which is a recently published species from the south region of Espírito Santo and close to the north of Rio de Janeiro.

The best name I can provide for now is *Alc. patriae*, but I will continue studying this taxon. I hope to take part on a field trip to its habitat in order to have enough material to make a final taxonomical decision.

Please, find enclosed the original publication of *Alc. patriae*.

Best Regards,

Elton





The *Alcanterea patriae* plants used to illustrate Rob Smythe's articles were grown by Margaret Kraa and photographed by Rob and Margaret.

**From: Leonardo Versieux**

Sent: Thursday, 21 August 2008 7:03 AM

To: Robert Smythe

Subject: Re: Emailing: 1 December 2007 004, 8 June 2008 004, All edmundoi RS21 November 2007 007, inflorescence

Dear Rob

Well done! Your sheet is excellent. You are right this plant is definitively not *edmundoi*, which actually is a new synonym of *Alc. regina* (but this is different story) and has green lustrous leaves. However your plant does have an inflorescence the shape as in *patriae* but with different colors for the bracts/sep/petals, it is more related to the true *Alc. extensa*, but I need to better examine the details in order to consider this as a new taxon. I am collecting several materials of the *Alcantarea extensa* complex. When you get flowers again and you want to prepare a specimen you can send me the same (address below) but I hope by this time I will have already finished my thesis. Do you have any information about the origin of this plant?

Regards

Leo

Rob

Thanks Rob for your photos and comments on the provenance of your plant, I know the plant from the north of Rio, and I also have specimens of this, but still I am not sure if they are all the same.

Leo

Leonardo M. Versieux  
Instituto de Botânica  
Seção de Curadoria do Herbário  
Av. Miguel Stéfano 3687, São Paulo-SP,  
Brasil 04301-902

So according to two Brazilian botanists we are looking at the possibility that we may have a new species related both to *patriae* and *extensa*. I started into this work with my first

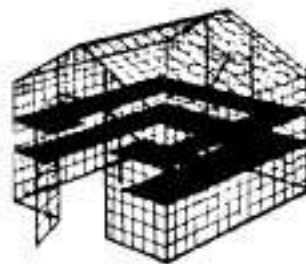
picture taken on 5 May 2006 when the spike started to lift above the plant. You might ask why was I bothering with plants like *extensa* and *edmundoi*, both giving me problems. Why not *patriae* straight off? So easy to explain as *patriae* had not even been described. It was one year and four months later before *patriae* even existed in the literature. It was described on 3rd of September 2007. No wonder naming is in such a mess in Brisbane. Now you understand why visiting botanists were giving it a wrong name. I have found two plants so far that actually did not exist as described species when these big wigs were in Brisbane naming *alcantareas*.

Let me tell you a few things about this plant. It is a large statuesque plant 2.7 metres in flower. It has a long trunk 40cm (this is age dependent with my plant being 8 years old). It also had a very large numbers of hair

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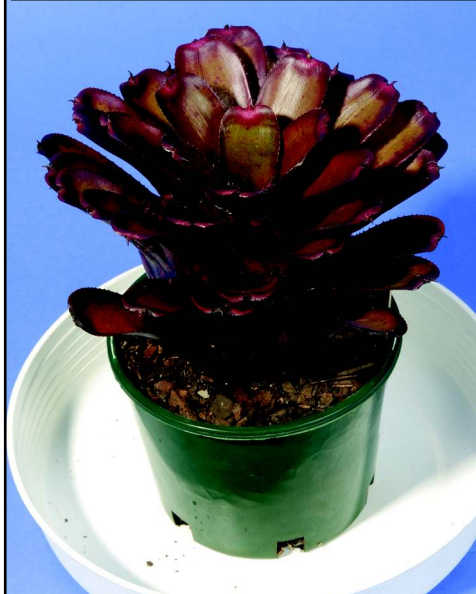
In the last edition we accidentally captioned the plant below *Neoregelia* 'Little Jewel' of course it is a young example of *Neoregelia* 'Blushing Tiger'



An example *Neoregelia* 'Little Jewel' is shown in the image below



In the last edition we accidentally captioned the plant above *Neoregelia* 'Little Faith' however it is a nice example of *Neoregelia* 'Small World' The correct image for 'Little Faith' is shown below



pups. There were 50+ of these on my plant so there should be plenty of the true form of this plant in the Brisbane area.

Arno King is therefore probably correct as stated earlier. The fact that it self pollinates readily, and at night may also have helped this plant remain a species in Brisbane. Bright yellow flower, opens at night and fertile a couple of hours after sunset. Flower goes white and flaccid next day. Self pollinating and wind pollinated. Just tap the raceme and pollen falls down in a shower. Flower has no scent. Plenty of nectar but none within the petals, so it does not attract insect pollinators. Long flowering period—mine flowered for eleven months. Strongly silver wax cross banded leaves. Scape bracts very much like the leaves and they maintain their foliaceous nature a long way up the scape (probably 50% and this is a very noticeable feature). Scape bracts are very dusty white on the outside. Leaves and scape can look a shiny glossy green when wet. I could go on for infinitum here.

For those with a technical interest—I have a very large data set which I can send you. Unfortunately my pressed flower specimens are lost. I have details on mostly everything except accurate petal sizes and ovary characteristics.

*Ed. Pictures for this article will be in the next edition.*

**Want to get a forthcoming event  
listed in the  
“Calendar of Events”**

Contact the sub-editor:  
Liesa Driesener

**Email : leisamidcon@hotmail.com**

**Aechmea ‘Polyantha’  
(*nudicaulis* x  
‘Maginali’)**

according to Cultivar Register 1998 but  
(‘*maginali*’ x *nudicaulis*) according to  
Richter’s writings.

By D Butcher July 2009

This all started when a member brought in an unnamed plant in the last stage of flowering at the June 2009 meeting of the Bromeliad Society of South Australia and most of us said, *Aechmea* ‘Polyantha’.

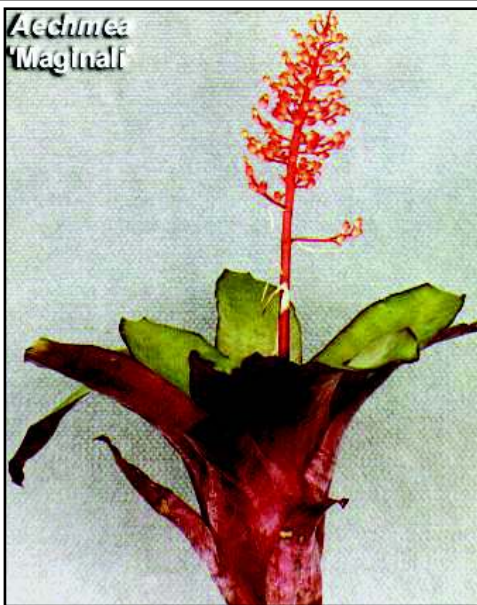
As is usual with these sorts of happenings I see a chance to write something for our local Gazette. I found some interesting information way back 28 years ago when I wrote on *Aechmea fulgens/miniata* in Bromeleter 18(1): 6-7. 1981. I quote:

‘I would say that all make good specimen plants, with the flowers and resultant berries being persistent for months. I do have another plant in this complex called *Ae.* ‘Polyantha’ which is a hybrid between *Ae.* ‘Maginali’ and *Ae. nudicaulis*. Although I have not yet flowered it, the shape is similar and the leaves “discolor” (The confusion over the name ‘Polyantha’ started back in 1964 when a Sydney nurseryman released plants grown from German seed of *Aechmea fulgens* var. *discolor* X *Ae. miniata* var. *discolor* and said the cross was called *Aechmea* ‘Polyantha’. There were hundreds of these plants in both the green form and discolor sold through the chain stores. Comment by Editor – Olwen Ferris.)’

**Notes by Butcher 6/2009**

Let us remember that *Aechmea fulgens* var. *discolor* X *Ae. miniata* var. *discolor* are also the parents for *Aechmea* ‘Maginalii’!!!

If we look at *Aechmea* ‘Rakete’ by Richter this has similar parents ( *nudicaulis*



Lower Right: *OrthoPHYTUM* 'Copper Penny' grown Ann and Barry Kable and exhibited at the Society's 2009 Autumn Show at Mt Cootha Gardens.



*Aechmea* 'Polyantha' by Richter in Zimmerpflanzen Brom 278, 194B



Above: Example of extreme quilling



*x fulgens* var. *discolor*) to *Ae.* 'Polyantha' and yet retains some influence of the *Ae.* nudicaulis. In fact all other hybrids involving *Ae. nudicaulis* show traits of this species. Why is it that 'Polyantha' does not and could well be a selfing of *Ae.* 'Maginali'. The original photo in Zimmerpflanzen: Brom. 278. 194B and Padilla's description seem to confirm this. See also the BSI's 1977 English-translated publication "Bromeliads" by Walter Richter (page23).

From Padilla 1973

*Aechmea* 'Polyantha' Richter (*Ae.* 'Maginali' x *Ae. nudicaulis*). A graceful rosette with soft, glossy leaves, green above, purplish red underneath. The tall, erect inflorescence is an open spike, bearing blue violet petaled flowers.

*Aechmea* 'Rakete' Richter (*Ae. nudicaulis* x *Ae. fulgens* var. *discolor*). A medium-to-large plant with foliage similar to that of *Ae. fulgens* var. *discolor* and an elongated red and yellow inflorescence similar to that of *Ae. nudicaulis*.

Note that even with similar parentage Padilla makes no reference to the influence of *Ae. nudicaulis* in 'Polyantha'!

No wonder we can't tell the difference between 'Polyantha' and 'Maginali'

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## Books For Sale

The Society has the following books for sale:

- |   |      |
|---|------|
| • Starting with Bromeliads                                | \$18 |
| • Pitcher Plants of the Americas                          | \$60 |
| • Bromeliads: A Cultural Manual                           | \$5  |
| • Back Copies of Bromeliaceae (2005, 2006 Editions)       | \$4  |
| • Bromeliads for the Contemporary Garden by Andrew Steens | \$36 |
| • Bromeliads: Next Generation by Shane Zaghini            | \$33 |
| • Bromeliads: The Connoisseurs Guide by Andrew Steens     | \$36 |

Postage and package extra. Unfortunately we cannot supply overseas orders. Please phone the Librarian, Mrs Evelyn Rees (07) 3355 0432 to order books.

## Scoring a Brom Fix

by Leisa D

Like any bromeliad addict I enjoy a regular fix, i.e. acquiring a new plant for my little collection.

So where can a novice go for such a fix?

Garden shops sell nice bromeliads from time to time, but my local shop usually only has generic “Bromeliad” tags on their plants, and I personally balk at paying top price when they’re not named.

The cheapest source is to (discreetly?) check out the gardens of friends and family. It’s worthwhile keeping your eyes peeled! My first ever bromeliad *Ae. gamosepala*, came from my aunt’s garden, I spied *Billergeria pyramidalis* growing happily at a friend’s place, and I found a nice clump of *Till. ionantha* in my mother’s orchid house. Even neighbour’s front garden can be a source – but be polite and ask before you snatch a piece!

Local flea markets often have cheap, but typically un-named broms for sale, so you either need to know what you’re looking at, or take a lucky dip. As the prices are usually low, I like taking a chance. Investigating a mystery plant (bought at the right price) all adds to the fun. I bought what the seller said was a “turtle-head” bromeliad at a local market. Googling with that clue led me to the name: *Quesnelia testudo*. What did we do before the internet?

Speaking of which, there’s always eBay - handy for anyone in remote areas with little access to shops or markets. It’s well worth just watching (and not buying) plants you’re interested in initially, to get a feel for prices. Only bidding in the last few minutes is a common practice, and for the keen there’s always bid sniping programs like Gixen. But

you never can tell what will happen.

I bought an unnamed Neo. for \$17, and then saw the same plant sell for over \$50 a few weeks later – very strange! And remember for cheaper items, the postage can seriously increase the overall cost. Buying several plants from one seller at the same time usually reduces the postage cost per plant. But you can get caught out, if you don’t win all the items you’re bidding on. I missed out on not one, but two items by 50c, and had to pay \$7 postage for a \$8 plant! A number of nurseries also sell over the internet – just google for them!

If you live in Brisbane, the BSQ meetings are a great way to source plants at reasonable prices. And winning one in the raffle is fun too! I scored *Neo.* ‘First Prize’ at my very first meeting – very appropriate I thought! Local garden clubs are worth checking out to get in contact with people who might have plants for sale or swap.

Online garden sites are also a good way to contact other enthusiasts, who might be happy to sell or swap. Some sites, like Daves Garden or Garden Web, are based in the US, but have either Australian gardening or bromeliad forums frequented by Aussies. You might even see me there.

Creating your own new plants from seed is obviously the ideal, but some of us just aren’t that patient or ready for that time commitment.

Anyway I’m off for a fix.

### 26th September – Open Day to Greenstock Nurseries

9am – 12pm 70 Wades Rd, Bellmere  
A large range of Alcantarea species, giant Neoregelias and tank Tillandsias.  
EFTPOS and credit card facilities available.

## **Intercalary Foliar Meristem Research Update.**

Something I have been trying to do for many years and I finally have achieved my objective. Nearly achieved that is. Once I purchased a rare, at that time, plant from a nursery and the base was cut off too high. The result was that you could see through it like a telescope. The nursery in Brisbane said they would replace it and they did. I said I had the leaves in sand to get pups. They laughed ( thinking ‘novice’, which I was) so I threw them away.

Since then I have had several cases of *Vrieseas* and *Guzmanias* in similar states which I have left and sure enough a new plant appear on each apparently from nowhere. Now that I know what could be going on I have been watching out so as to capture this process. I have just found a leaf of a *Neoregelia* sprouting root hairs (*see image opposite*). Unfortunately this leaf was eaten and I need to start again. This is exactly how African Violets strike.

## **Save an Argument**

Many times people are found arguing as to which ‘B’ type pencil is the best for labels. I did a simple experiment. I bought a pack of 1B to 6B pencils wrote their codes on six labels and then tried to rub the writing off with a wet cloth. Photos speak for themselves. They are all equally as good. It is the labels that determine their effectiveness not the pencils. Labels have to be minutely rough enough to catch the lead from the pencil and put it out of reach of the cloth.

Rob Smythe MSc

*Bromeliaceae*

## **The Best Time to Remove Pups**

*Editorial comment (Bob Reilly, Ross Stenhouse). This is an extract from the the original article by Odean Head, a well known bromeliad grower in the United States of America, in which he shared his views on pup removal and potting them. Odean’s advice is as valid today as it was then. Reprinted, with permission, from the Journal of The Bromeliad Society, 1996, v 46 (4), pp 178 – 180.*

### **So, when is the best time to remove pups?**

Pups are large enough to be removed when they have root development or when they become one-third to one-half the size of the mother plant. If the goal is to mature the pup as fast as possible, leave it on. Just be sure that it has enough room to form its

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Leaf showing root growth

Til. 'Anita'

A very interesting and colourful plant, *Neoregelia* 'Magnolia'

normal shape and enough light to prevent leggy growth. When propagation is the main objective, take the pups off as soon as they are of adequate size. The pups will not mature as fast but the mother will produce many more pups. I prefer to let pup removal slide during the winter because it creates more pots to find space for. We also experience some dormancy in our winters so by waiting until spring it gives our newly potted pups a faster start in their root development and growth. It also helps our survival rate of pups of marginal size since they will receive more protection from extreme cold while still attached to their mother.

There are a few guzmanias and vrieseas that will only put on one or two pups which come up through the middle of the mother plant. With the small number of pups and the

fact that the mother is pretty much destroyed when you harvest them, you should allow pups to be almost full sized before removing this type.

## Decisions Not To Remove Pups

If we are not particularly interested in getting as many pups as we can from a mother plant we may want to consider the possibility of leaving the pups and allowing them to form a clump. Stoloniferous plants that have stolons long enough to allow the pups to form their normal shape can create a pleasing display. Most tillandsias form pleasing clumps even when the pups are not stoloniferous. I will usually wait to split mounted tillandsias until they get very crowded.

## Calendar of Events

### **29th August - Bus Trip to the gardens of Cheryl Basic & Nigel Thompson**

Departing Uniting Church Hall, 52 Methyr Rd New Farm at 8am, or pick up at Gympie Rd Aspley at 8:30am. Cost \$20. Plant sales. Morning tea and lunch provided. For more information contact Ruth (after 4pm) on 32080546 or Bev on 32087417.

### **26th September – Open Day to Greenstock Nurseries**

9am – 12pm 70 Wades Rd, Bellmere

A large range of Alcantarea species, giant Neoregelias and tank Tillandsias. EFTPOS and credit card facilities available.

### **3rd October - Field Day to Greg & Narelle Aizlewood's Garden**

15 Royal Palm Drive Woongoolba. Plant sales 9am-1pm. Guest speakers. Morning tea provided. Please bring your own chair. For more information contact Ruth (after 4pm) on 32080546 or Bev on 32087417.

### **7-8th Nov 8am - BSQ Spring Bromeliad Bonanza at Mt Cootha Botanic Gardens Auditorium**

Sat 8am-4pm Sun 9am-3pm. Spectacular bromeliad displays. Over 700 varieties/hybrids of bromeliads on sale. Monster bromeliad raffle. Wide range of bromeliad books on sale. Refreshments available. Admission: Adults \$3.00 Children under 14 years free.

### **Date Claimer: 3rd Dec - BSQ's Christmas Party**

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**GENERAL MEETINGS** of the Society are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month except for December, at the Uniting Hall, 52 Merthyr Rd., New Farm, Brisbane, commencing 7.30 pm. Classes for beginners commence at 7.00 pm.

## Plant of the Month Programme for 2009

FEBRUARY:	Ananus, Intergeneric Plants, Tillandsias and Full-sun Neoregelias.
MARCH:	Cryptanthus, Tillandsias, Full-sun Aechmeas and Canistrums
APRIL:	Cryptanthus, Tillandsias
MAY:	Spotted Neoregelias, Orthophytums, Tillandsias and Variegated Bromeliads
JUNE:	Alcantareas, Foliage Vrieseas, Dyckias, Hechtias
JULY:	Billbergias, Pitcairnia, Nidulariums
AUGUST:	Billbergias, Foliage Vrieseas, Catopsis and Miniature Neoregelias.
SEPTEMBER:	Billbergias and Guzmanias.
OCTOBER:	Vrieseas, Neoregelias, Nidulariums, Guzmanias
NOVEMBER:	Not often seen Bromeliads and Succulents

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## Competition Schedule for 2009

Novice, Intermediate and Advanced in each Class of the Mini-Shows and in the Popular Vote.

**January: MINI-SHOW**

Class 1: Aechmea - species and hybrids

Class 2: Vriesea - species and hybrids

Class 3: Dyckia - species and hybrids

Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

**February :** **POPULAR VOTE:** Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

**March:** **POPULAR VOTE:** Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

**April: MINI-SHOW**

Class 1: Bromelioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule – species and hybrids.

Class 2: Guzmania - species and hybrids

Class 3: Pitcairnia and Peperomia - species and hybrids

Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

**May:** **POPULAR VOTE:** Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

**June: POPULAR VOTE:** Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

**July: MINI-SHOW**

Class 1: Billbergia - species and hybrids

Class 2: Tillandsioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule – species and hybrids.

Class 3: Neoregelia - species and hybrids – up to 200mm diameter when mature.

Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

**August:** **POPULAR VOTE:** Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

**September:** **POPULAR VOTE:** Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

**October: MINI-SHOW**

Class 1: Neoregelia - species and hybrids – over 200mm diameter when mature.

Class 2: Tillandsia - species and hybrids.

Class 3: Pitcairnioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule – species and hybrids.

Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

**November:** **POPULAR VOTE:** Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

**Note 1:** *Class 4 in each Mini Show schedule provides for any flowering bromeliad that would not be in its prime for the appropriate Mini Show.*

**Note 2:** Class 1 (April), Class 2 (July) and Class 3 (October) provide for plants from these subfamilies not elsewhere included in the Mini Show schedule.



*Vr. 'Favoriet'*

*Bromeliaceae*

28

Jul/Aug 2009