

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



May 2010

NEWSLETTER

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, May 20, 2010** at 7:30 PM
Recreation Room, San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park,
San Francisco

May Program

Landscape and Companion Bromeliads for Succulent and Cactus Growers

Our president, **Carl Carter**, will be our speaker this month. He was raised in San Diego, 'rescued' Dudleyas from developers and built his first greenhouse in his parents' backyard as a teenager. For more than twenty years he has worked as an electrical engineer in the San Francisco Bay area. He has traveled to many tropical areas in Central and South America. Today he has a few succulents, mostly aloes. He also grows orchids and bromeliads. He joined the Bromeliad Society of San Francisco for its 'low drama' and has been president the past six or seven years.

He will spend a little time on Bromeliad biology and commercial pot plants. He'll primarily focus on genera and species appropriate for northern California dry gardens. And add a bit on 'sticky' indoor or greenhouse plants.

Marilyn Moyer is providing the plant table this month, so expect a lot of goodies that you do not have.

May Refreshments

Marilyn Moyer and **Peder Samuelsen** signed up for refreshments this month.



Carl Carter is shy about having his picture taken, so here is **Clyde**, his stand-in. Photo is courtesy of Carl Carter.

April Meeting

Last month **Peter Wan** provided a slide show of the bromeliads of Brazil. This is not completely true because Peter only covered the bromeliads that he saw in the states of Bahia and Minas Gerais; Brazil is a huge country and there are still lots more to discover. Just as the March meeting when Guillermo Rivera showed us bromeliads in Ecuador, many of the bromeliads we saw in the show were new to almost all of our members. Peter did a great job of showing us the countryside and towns that he visited on his trip. It was a great show.

We were all pleasantly surprised to have former member **Dennis Heckart** at our meeting visiting from Hawaii where he now lives. He graciously did our show-and-tell and it was an extravagant table as always. I think **Daryl Ducharme** got the award for the most intensely colored *Aechmea recurvata*. There were lots of these plants in flower at the meeting.

Thanks to all of you members who donated plants for the plant raffle. We had a very interesting selection of new plants to choose from.

Where Bromeliads Are Found

This article by the late Mulford Foster is reprinted from the June 1986 newsletter of the Bromeliad Study Group of Northern California. This was written before the DNA analysis of the Bromeliad family that has shown that the Brocchinia is truly the earliest member of the family. Many of the genera are more widely distributed than was known when this article was written. Photos include some of the lesser-cultivated bromeliads.

Without a doubt the Andean area of South America mothered the family into existence. While the puyas, the earliest members of this interesting group, have devoted their efforts toward survival in their original home area, regardless as to how high they have been pushed up into the clouds, their great line of descendents have migrated all over South America and the southern area of North America.

Whenever we study the migration of birds, men, or animals, we see a similar pattern; we find men following the plants in low swampy land, in the high mountains, in low rolling hills or on the desert.

Brazil, it seems, has been the favorite place of residence for the bromeliads, as the greatest number of different genera and species are to be found there. And yet, one could travel for days within certain areas without seeing hardly one bromeliad.

The Puyas have traveled from Chile to Costa Rica, yet they have not set foot in Brazil.

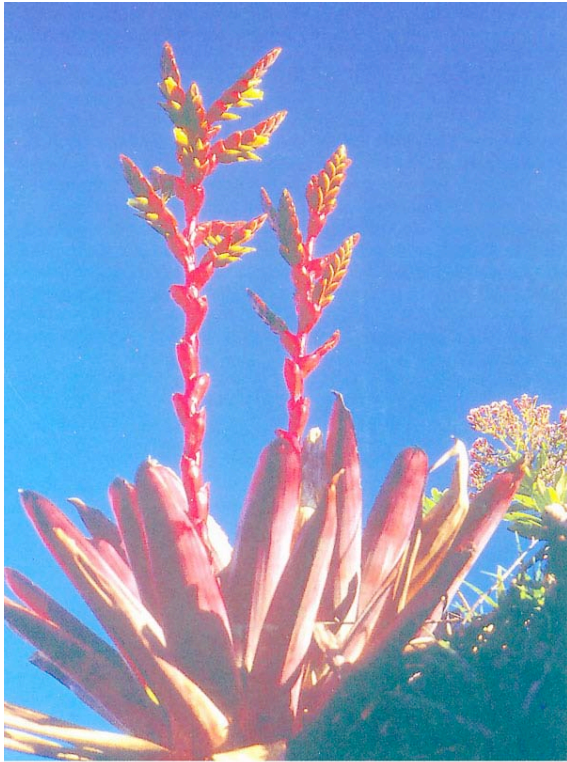
Tillandsia usneoides and *Tillandsia recurvata*, called Spanish Moss and Ball Moss, have been the greatest migrators of all; they now live in every country and state where there are any bromeliads to be found (with the exception of Africa).

In marked contrast to these *Tillandsia* species that use the most modern way of travel, via air, their relative *Vriesea itaiaiae* has been so self-satisfied that it lives on Mt. Itatiaia, one of Brazil's highest mountains and nowhere else on earth. There are other endemics in the family, but few with a range so limited.

The genera *Navia* and *Brocchinia* are found north of the Amazon in the Guyana, Venezuela, Brazil and Columbia. They are rare and isolated in habitat. *Cottendorfia* is limited to a small area of southwestern Bahia in Brazil. *Encholirium* is coastal from below the mouth of the Amazon to Espirito Santo and inland as far as Minas Gerais and Bahia.

Ochagavias are isolated on Juan Fernandez Island off the coast of Chile. *Abromeliatiella* [genus now absorbed into *Deuterocohnia* and also found in Argentina – Ed.] and *Fascicularia* choose high Andean ranges of Chile to be near their ancestors. *Greigia* has not left the home ground of the Puyas and is to be found from Costa Rica to Chile. *Ronbergia*, a rare genus, seems to prefer the western part of Columbia. *Deuterocohnia* with its few known species is found in the central and southern part of the Puya range but has gone over into the Matto Grosso of Brazil. They have shared some of the territory with *Dyckias*, but the *Dyckias* have taken in parts of Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Uruguay and a great area of Brazil as far north as the Bahia area.

Hechtias, though closely related to the Puyas, have apparently never trespassed into the Puya domain. They have chosen their territory to be in Central America from north of Costa Rica with a northern boundary line in lower Texas, Arizona and Baha California.



Vriesea itatiaiae photo in J Brom Soc 35(5): 241. 1985

Here is the rare *Vriesea itatiaiae* from Brazil. Photo is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

Pitcairnia, on the other hand, has spread from the central part of Mexico, including the West Indies and a greater part of South America with its southern limit in the Argentine America on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. I have found it growing wild in many American tropical countries where almost universally it has been used by the natives as a property line marker where conditions are primitive.

The beautiful *Portea* species are few in number with a range along the Atlantic Coastal region in Brazil from Rio north to Bahia. The range of the delightful *Quesnelia* species is from Guyana to southern Brazil and they do not go inland for any great distance. Most of the *Billbergia* species found their home in Brazil, but they are lightly sprinkled from Mexico south and well down the Atlantic coast to Argentina with a few on the Pacific to Peru. The *Aechmea* species are greater in numbers and greater in range than almost any of the other berry fruit bearing bromeliads; they are native from Mexico south, including the West Indies and throughout South America. Brazil, of course, has by far the greatest number of species.

They are an intriguing family, the bromeliads. They may be found perfectly at home on the side of a house or a perpendicular rock, attached to a giant cactus or a telephone wire, overhanging a waterfall or a rainless

desert. With or without roots the species will be found, each one finding much of its food in the air carried to it by favorable air currents or rainfall dropped into its water-filled cups far up in the trees and under the trees. The bromeliads have explored the American tropics for centuries and have settled down in so many out of the way places that inquisitive plantmen are still seeking their whereabouts in order to know more about them.

U. C. Berkeley Spring Plant Sale

Carl Carter submitted this recap of the Berkeley Spring Plant Sale.

The Bromeliad Society of San Francisco had a display table again this year at the Berkeley Spring Sale. **Tom Koerber** and **Casper Curto** put together a nice display of beautiful plants. We had postcards out, advertising our club and the June Sale. We donated two specimen plants for their auction!

Strybing 44th Annual Spring Plant Sale

Dan Arcos submitted this recap of the Strybing Sale.

Our contribution to the Strybing Sale in selling bromeliads was a great success. We do not know how much money we made for Strybing but attendance on Friday, April 30th was great as it always is. There were a large number of bromeliads donated by David Feix and others. The bromeliads grown by the Strybing Volunteer were well grown and attractive as usual and sold well. People are more and more familiar with bromeliads and I recognized buyers from previous sales. We sold a large number of *Aechmea recurvatas* and their hybrids. A beautiful large blooming *Hohenbergia correia-araujo* we had priced at \$50 was donated to the silent auction and sold for well over \$100.

We want to thank all of our members who contributed their plants and time for this sale in which our society makes no money – everything goes to Strybing. This sale does provide us the opportunity to promote our society, our June sale, and other activities that we have planned. The volunteers from the BSSF were

Dan Arcos
Casper Curto
Jon Dixon
David Feix
Ford Greene
Bruce McCoy
Nick Soumie

Dennis Westler and Brian Ransom..



Hohenbergia correia-araujoi is certainly one of the most colorful of all the Hohenbergias. Photo is by Shirley Grills-Konefal and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

June Plant Sale

Our combined plant sale with the San Francisco Succulent and Cactus Society will be on June 12th and 13th this year at the County Fair Building. Setup will be on Friday, June 11th from 2 PM to 8 PM. **We must be out of the building at 8 PM on Friday evening.** Sale schedule is

- Saturday - Setup: 8 AM to 9 AM, Sale: 9 AM to 5 PM
- Sunday - Setup: 8 AM to 9 AM, Sale: 9 AM to 4:30 PM, Clean-up: 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM

This is our **main annual event that brings in money to support** the society. Start setting aside your plants for the sale and save these dates to help on the sale.

Since this is such an important event for our society, we really need as much support as you can provide. You can help in three ways:

- Entering some of your premium plants in our Bromeliad display area
- Selling your own plants

- Working at the show/sale.

Remember if you plan to sell your plants, **25%** of the sales will be kept by the club.

If you are selling plants at this sale **Roger Lane** will be the collector of your bar code requests. There will be a form to request your price codes at this month's meeting. If you can not provide you request at this month's meeting you have until **Saturday May 30th** to give them to Roger. **No bar code requests will be accepted after this date.** The bar code sheets have 100 bar code items per sheet and they are more impervious to water than our old tags. You can not mix prices per sheet (all 100 items per sheet must be same price). **There is a \$2.00 charge per sheet.** If you can not make our May meeting, call Roger at 650-949-4831 or e-mail at rdodger@pacbell.net.

One of the conditions of selling your plants is helping out at the sale for a minimum of 4 hours during Saturday or Sunday. Let's try not to have everyone sign up only for the last 4 hours on Sunday.

We always have a three-table display of show-quality plants from our personal collections. Last year our display was found to be rather skimpy and we must do better this year. There will be a signup sheet for display plants at this month's meeting. We are usually short of tillandsias for the background screen.

Please start saving your boxes and paper bags. We never seem to have enough on the second day of the sale.



Ochagavia elegans

Ochagavia elegans is not found in most bromeliad collections, but it grows happily in Golden Gate Park. Photo is by Paul Wilkin and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.



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Greigia sphacelata

photo by
Dr. Peter Sack

Greigia sphacelata is a large plant for such a small inflorescence. Photo is by Peter Sack and courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.



Pitcairnia echinata var. *vallensis*
photo by Ignacio Moreno

Pitcairnias are beginning to become more popular among collectors. Kelley Griffin sold this plant from Ecuador last year when he spoke to our society. Photo is by Ignacio Moreno and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.



Encholirium luxur
near Conselheiro Mata, Minas Gerais
June 23, 2008
photo by Nels Christianson

Encholirium luxur is one of those plants that is found in a very small area. Those of us who were on Guillermo Rivera's trip to Brazil last year saw this plant and it was also included in Peter Wan's slide show last month. Photo is by Nels Christianson and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO (BSSF)

The BSSF is a non-profit educational organization promoting the study and cultivation of bromeliads. The BSSF meets monthly on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 PM in the Recreation room of the San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Meetings feature educational lectures and displays of plants. Go to the affiliate section of the BSI webpage for information about our meetings.

The BSSF publishes a monthly newsletter that comes with the membership. Annual dues are single (\$15), dual (\$20). To join the BSSF, mail your name(s), address, telephone number, e-mail address, and check made payable to the BSSF to:

Harold Charns, BSSF Treasurer, 255 States Street, San Francisco, CA 94114-1405.

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BROMELIAD SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

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BROMELIAD SOCIETY
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Learn about bromeliads for your landscape this month!
