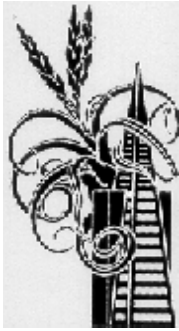


BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



March 2005

NEWSLETTER

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, March 17, 2005** at 7:30 PM
Recreation Room, San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park,
San Francisco

March Program

World Bromeliad Conference 2004

This month, **Roger Lane** will present a slide show on WBC 2004 that was held last year in Chicago. We had a good representation from our membership at the conference, but most of you were unable to attend. It was really a good conference, although many of the people attending from Florida had to cut their attendance short and return home because of the hurricane. Visit Chicago vicariously by attending this month's meeting.

March Refreshments

Lupe Cota and **Roger Lane** will provide refreshments this month.



Francine Hendersen, Marilyn Moyer, and Stacy Michaels are checking out some of the gift plants at our December meeting.



Leena Dugger and Bruce McCoy are checking out the drinks and appetizers at our December meeting.

Plant of the Month

This article by Dale Williams is reprinted from the April 1979 newsletter of the Bromeliads Study Group of Northern California.

Tillandsia bulbosa (bulb-like)

This wonderful *Tillandsia* was originally discovered by Hooker in Brazil in 1826. Between 1826 and 1864 *Tillandsia bulbosa* underwent ten name changes before the original was restored. This highly variable plant grows epiphytically from sea level to 5500 feet. The distribution is Mexico and the West Indies to Ecuador and Brazil. In Mexico, *T. bulbosa* can be found in the states of Tabasco, Campeche, Quintana-Roo, and Chiapas. I collected this plant on the Rio Dulce in Guatemala by boat from a mangrove isle. I have seen *T. bulbosa* growing quite unprotected in the open in hot dry areas, as well as in areas where it is quite cool. It is always in clumps. The leaves, wide at the base and covered with grey scales, begin to taper and twist about one inch up, changing to a bright green with red margins. The flower spike is erect with floral bracts being bright red, the flowers blue or violet, and the stamens and pistil yellow. The seed capsule is cylindrical. My plant has wintered outside in San Francisco, receiving a light frost once while producing four healthy offshoots. I've found that *T. bulbosa* requires constant air movement to do well. My plant was about 10 inches tall when it bloomed with leaves about 8 inches long. There are many references to a variety of *T. bulbosa* from Jamaica which reaches a height of 20 inches and 11 inches in circumference – truly a giant form.

Ageotropic

This article is by Ken Quinn and is reprinted from the January 2003 Potpourri, newsletter of the Greater New Orleans Bromeliad Society.

At the November meeting, I showed how I mounted some *Tillandsias* such as *Tillandsia pseudoballeyi* upside down and used the above word to describe how they grow in nature – a

word that means they grow without regards to the direction of gravity. Paul Isley, in his book on this genus, describes several species growing in this manner – in particular *T. bulbosa* and *T. magnusiana*, and remarks that in cultivation growing them in a horizontal or upside down fashion can be beneficial by preventing rot. Certainly I have found this to be the case; previously I had trouble getting *T. bulbosa* to survive even a year, but now I have a clump of second generation plants coming into bloom. I suspect any of the pseudo bulb or dry-growing species would like this treatment.

When in Florida, I noticed something related. Nearly all the *T. bartramii*, *T. simulata*, and *T. fasciculata* plants growing on horizontal tree limbs were rooted on the bottom half of the limb, although the mature rosette faced upward. This indicates to me that something discourages seedlings from becoming established on the upper half of the limb. I have thought quite a bit on this and suspect that the drying effect of direct sunlight may be the problem. I have also seen an article in a botanical journal on *T. recurvata* on oak limbs in Florida; about 87% of all colonies on horizontal limbs were on the side or bottom. So, being upside down is no problem for many *Tillandsias*.



This colorful photo of a flowering clump of *Tillandsia bulbosa* is by Frank Sherman and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

Only in America...

This article is reprinted from the January 2003 Potpourri, newsletter of the Greater New Orleans Bromeliad Society.

...do drugstores make the sick walk all the way to the back of the store to get their prescriptions while healthy people can buy cigarettes at the front.

...do people order double cheeseburgers, extra fries, and a diet coke.

...do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars in the driveway and fill our garages with worthless junk.

...do we use answering machines to screen calls and then we have call waiting so we won't miss a call from someone we didn't want to talk to in the first place.

...do we have drive-up ATM machines with Braille lettering.

...do we buy hotdogs in packages of ten and buns in packages of eight.

...do banks leave both doors open and chain their pens to the counters.

Where Bromeliads are Found

This article is by Mulford Foster and is reprinted from the February 1987 Inflorescence, newsletter of the South Bay Bromeliad Associates. Probably, this article originally appeared in the BSI Journal.

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 the 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 *T. 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 tillandsias species that use the most modern way of travel, via air, their relative *Vriesea itatiaiae* 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 Guianas, Venezuela, Brazil and Columbia. They are rare and isolated in habitat. **Cottendorfia** is limited to a small area of southwestern Bahia in Brazil. **Encholorium** 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** [this genus has been merged into the Deuterocohnia genus – 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 Puyas 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.

Hechtia, though closely related to the Puyas, has 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 Baja California.

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 the Guianas 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 plants men are still seeking their whereabouts in order to know more about them.

What is a GREX or what are GREGES?

This article is reprinted from the March 2000 Caloosahatchee Meristem, newsletter of the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society. It is a summary of a Question and Answer session at their February meeting.

After the pollen (the male genetic material) contacts the pistil (the female portion of the flower) the pollen migrates down a tube to the base of the flower where it fertilizes the ova (the female genetic material). A single seed is produced from the fertilization of one pollen grain and one ovum. When plant A is crossed with plant B, a nearly infinite number of genetic combinations can be produced. As long as you use the same plant A and the same plant B, regardless if someone is making the cross in the United States or Australia, the resultant crosses will have the same genetic material in common. A GREX consists of every plant from the cross of plant A and plant B, regardless of who made the cross or where it was made. GREGES refer only to crosses of a species and a hybrid (species X hybrid) or a hybrid and a hybrid (hybrid X hybrid); they do not refer to the crosses of two identical species. A cross of two identical species will produce plants from seeds identical to the parents. Since each plant of the GREX is physically different from each other, it has become standard practice to identify each plant from the GREX with a cultivar name. This honor is usually given to the hybridizer for his efforts of growing the hybrids.

Since there will always be similar appearing plants within the same GREX, a responsible hybridizer will often wean less desirable appearing plants and dispose of them without giving them a name. Hattie Lou and Sam Smith demonstrated at the meeting 4 plants which they have selected from a

GREX; they feel that these 4 plants are distinctively different from each other to warrant unique names. This weaning resulted in many plants being thrown into the trash pile. It has taken nearly nine years since the cross was made to reach this point in the evolution of these new hybrids.

The Bromeliad Cultivar Registry is the official listing of registered Bromeliad hybrids and sports (pups which are significantly different from the mother plant to warrant their own distinct name). Bromeliads can be entered in a standard BSI show if they have been registered in the Cultivar Registry or if it is an identical species. An older rule still permits a plant to be entered by its parentage formula.

Dues for Membership Have Gone Up

After at least 25 years, our club has voted to raise the annual dues from \$12 to \$15 (single) and \$20 (dual). **Dues for next year are now due.** Please pay at the meeting or by mail to Harold Charns.

Slate of Officers and Directors for 2005

At last month's meeting we voted in the same slate as we had for 2004.

President	Carl Carter
Vice President	Bruce McCoy
Secretary	Dorothy Dewing
Treasurer	Harold Charns
DIRECTORS	
	Keith Anderson
	Roger Lane
	Marilyn Moyer
	Peder Samuelson
	Peter Wan

Bromeliad Judging School

The second of five BSI sanctioned Bromeliad Judging Schools will be held on Saturday, April 30th at Balboa Park in San Diego. If you are a hobbyist, a grower, or just want to know more about what makes prize winning plants, you should attend this school. The class will cost \$20 plus \$22.50 for the Judges Handbook. Please contact **Roger Lane** for any more information. If you are interested in attending, Roger Lane is going to the school and we can share expenses.



Ben Franklin and Dorothy Dewing are examining the appetizers and drinks at our December meeting.

February Meeting

Last month, our president, **Carl Carter** provided a wonderful show on the plants and scenery in northern Argentina. He had one carousel devoted to scenes of his trip last November and another carousel on the plants that he saw. Your editor was on the same trip, and somehow Carl managed to capture lots of views that I did not even see – of course Carl is a lot more mobile than I am. If you missed his slide show, you missed a good one.

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, 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

The Journal is published bimonthly at Orlando, Florida by the Bromeliad Society International. Subscription price (in U.S. \$) is included in the 12-month membership dues: single (\$28.), dual (2 members at one address receiving one Journal -\$30). Address all membership and subscription correspondence to: Membership Secretary John Atlee, 1608 Cardenas Drive NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110-6628

BROMELIAD SOCIETY
OF
SAN FRANCISCO

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