

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



July 2007

NEWSLETTER

WE WILL NOT HAVE A MONTHLY MEETING THIS MONTH

July Program

Peninsula Garden Tour

We will **not** be having our regular monthly meeting this month at the Hall of Flowers. Instead, we are visiting 5 gardens on the peninsula followed by a pot luck dinner at the last stop. Thanks in advance to **Tom Vincze** for arranging this popular annual event.

The tour will be on **Sunday, July 15th** and start at 11 AM and run until whenever.

Details about the gardens and directions are inside the newsletter. This information with maps is also on our website: www.sfbromeliad.org.

Marilyn Moyer is coordinating the food items for the potluck, **so please call her** (650-365-5560) to report what you plan to bring.

This is one of our most popular events every year! Bring your friends even if they are not members. You will see hundreds of plants in magnificent condition and maybe even get an idea of what you need in your collection. You will also see how our members have used plants in the landscape. It will be a fun day, **so don't miss it!**



This is *Aechmea bracteata*, one of the bromeliads that has a symbiotic relationship with ants. Habitat photo is by Wally Berg and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

June Meeting

Last month, **Roger Lane** provided a slide show on the *Guzmania* genus. It was interesting to see how variable the species in this genus are and how few of us grow hardly any of the species. Given the diversity of habitat these plants occupy, many of them would do well in our climate if they were available to the collector.

Tour of Peninsula Gardens

It is that time of year again and we will be visiting members' gardens on the peninsula. Our tour is scheduled to start at 11 AM and finish after a potluck dinner at the last stop on **Sunday, July 15**. All gardens will be open for viewing for approximately 45 minutes with 15 minutes travel time between each garden. Please bring a potluck item for the final meeting at Marilyn & Peder's garden and home. **Please RSVP with item to be brought and number of people attending directly to Marilyn 650-365-5560.**

First Stop, 11:00 A.M. to 11:30 A.M.

Keith and Bev Anderson

14002 Skyline Blvd

Woodside

Telephone: 650-529-1278

Keith has a passion for Neoregelias! His greenhouse is located amongst redwood trees and filled with bromeliads. The overflow plants are those that are outdoors and are adapting to cooler temperatures. Keith has recently become a fan of ferns, so you will also see many unusual ferns

Directions

From North of Hwy 92 via 101:

Take Hwy 101 South to the Hwy 92 West exit (towards Half Moon Bay). Stay on Hwy 92 West and go under Hwy 280. Go through two stop lights, one just after you pass under Hwy 280, and one a bit beyond, just before you cross between two lakes.

From North of Highway 92 via Hwy 280:

Take **Hwy 280 South** to the **92 West** exit (towards Half Moon Bay). At the stop sign at the

end of the off ramp, take a **left** onto the frontage road, and stay on the frontage road until you come to the stoplight. Take a **right** at the stoplight—you'll be on Hwy 92, and you'll cross between two lakes.

From East Bay via San Mateo Bridge:

Take the San Mateo Bridge/Hwy 92 West. Stay on Hwy 92 until you cross over Hwy 101 and under Hwy 280. You'll go through two stop lights, one just after you pass under Hwy 280, and one a bit beyond, just before you cross between the two lakes.

Wind your way up the mountain to the crest and get into the left hand turn lane for Skyline Blvd/Hwy 35 and **turn left**. **Be careful of the oncoming traffic from the West coming over the crest.** Continue on Skyline Blvd for 6 miles during which time you will pass

- The Bella Vista Restaurant after about mile 5 ¼ on your left
- The Mountain House Restaurant after about mile 5 ½ on your right

Just after the Mountain House Restaurant the road curves to the left and you need to **start slowing down**. You'll quickly come to County Road on the right. The sign is hard to see for the foliage. Take a very sharp **right turn onto County Road** and go slowly.

The driveway is the first gate/driveway on your **left**, between some large redwood trees, about 100 yards from Skyline. There's a small 14002 address sign on an old wooden fence just outside the driveway/gate. Park on County Road, just past the driveway/gate and walk up the driveway to the greenhouse.

From the South Bay:

Take **Hwy 101 or Hwy 280** to the **Highway 84, Woodside Road** exit. (If you're coming from Hwy 101, you'll travel a several miles on Woodside Road before you pass under Hwy 280.) Go **west** on Woodside Road. Pass through the town of Woodside, and take a **right onto Kings Mountain Road**. Stay on Kings Mountain Road, past Huddart Park, and keep winding your way up the mountain (which will seem like forever). At the stop sign at the top of Kings Mountain Road take a

very sharp right onto **Skyline Boulevard/Hwy 35**. Take the first **left** (1 mile ahead) onto **County Road** and go slowly.

The driveway is the first gate/driveway on your **left**, between some large redwood trees, about 100 yards from Skyline. There's a small 14002 address sign on an old wooden fence just to outside the driveway/gate. Park on County Road, just past the driveway/gate, and walk up the driveway to the greenhouse.

Second Stop, 12:00 A.M. to 12:45 P.M.

Tom Vincze

1544 Plateau Avenue
Los Altos
Telephone: 650-941-3395

When Tom ran out of room for plants at his town home, he soon took over his parents' garden in Los Altos. He has taken on the challenge of landscaping this hillside garden with its extremes in climate. You'll see a number of interesting and unusual botanical plantings along with his growing collection of bromeliads and succulents. **If you have food items that are perishable, leave them at Tom's.** Allow a half-hour for the drive to Tom's.

Directions:

1. Head Southeast on **Skyline Blvd** (0.9 miles)
2. **Sharp left** at **King's Mountain Road** (3.9 miles)
3. Turn left to stay on King's Mountain Road (0.9 miles)
4. Turn left at **Woodside Road** (1.5 miles)
5. Merge onto I-280 South towards San Jose (9.5 miles)
6. Take the **Magdalena Avenue** exit (0.4 miles)
7. Turn left at **Magdalena Ave/Magdalena Road** (0.3 miles)
8. Turn right at **Hillview Drive** (0.2 miles)
9. Turn right at **Fairway Drive** (243 feet)
10. Turn right at **Plateau Avenue** (440 feet)

Third Stop 1:00 P.M.-1:45 P.M.

Roger Lane and Peter Wan

551 Hawthorne Ct

Los Altos

Telephone: 650-949-4831

Roger has an impressive collection of bromeliads, succulents, and caudiciforms. Along the fence under a shade structure, you'll find both Roger's and Peter Wan's bromeliads. In the greenhouse and sunroom, you'll find a collection of rare and unusual bromeliads. At the far side of the garden, a room houses many fine succulent and caudex specimen plants.

Directions:

1. Leave Plateau Ave. and turn left on **Fairway Drive**
2. Turn next left onto **Hillview Drive**.
3. Turn right onto **Magdalena Avenue**
4. Turn left onto **Foothill Expressway** (at the second light)
5. Turn right onto **South El Monte Avenue**
6. Turn right onto **Hawthorne Ave.**
7. Turn left on **South Clark Avenue**
8. Turn left on **Hawthorne Court** (first house on the right corner).

Fourth Stop, 2:00 P.M. -2:45P.M.

Arizona Garden at Stanford University

The Arizona Garden is a historical garden in the process of renovation and preservation. The garden, also known as the Cactus Garden, was designed for Jane and Leland Stanford by landscape architect Rudolf Ulrich between 1881 and 1883. There are many unusual cacti and succulents within the garden, as well as a few hardier bromeliads.

Directions:

1. From Roger's, turn left onto **S. Clark Ave.**
2. Turn right on **El Monte Ave** (STOP sign)
3. Turn left on **El Monte Ave** (STOP sign)
4. Turn left onto **El Camino Real** (CA-82 North) and drive 5 miles.
5. Turn left on **Quarry Rd.** (After you drive under the overpass)
6. Turn left into the **North Quarry** parking lot at the **Welch Road** intersection. Continue ahead and park your car near the fence (Permits are not required on weekends).

Walk the path through the grove and find the Arizona Garden on the right side.

Fifth Stop, 3 PM + (Potluck)

Marilyn Moyer and Peder Samuelson

43 Adam Way

Atherton

Telephone: 650-365-5560

Interspersed over a one-acre garden, you'll find a multitude of large showy specimen cacti and aloes. Take a stroll along the path in the back, where you'll find a pond full of koi. Pick some apricots from the orchard, and then head over to the greenhouses which house a vast and diverse collection of rare bromeliads, orchids, cacti and succulents. Afterwards, join us for the barbecue and potluck.

Directions:

1. Turn right onto **Quarry Rd.** from the parking lot.
2. Turn left at **El Camino Real** (CA-82 N) and drive for 2.5 miles.
3. Turn left on **Almendral Ave.** (The second left past the Atherton Ave. traffic light.)
4. Turn first right onto **Nora Way.**
5. Turn first left onto **Adam Way.**
6. Arrive at 43 Adam Way on the left

June Sale

Our sale last month was a fantastic success. You could tell on Saturday that it was going to be a great weekend when the customers waiting in line for the cash registers wound around the bromeliad tables and the lines did not let up until about 2 PM.

The overall weekend gross sales for all vendors (we are considered a vendor) was \$45,000. Our share of that overall amount was about \$7200. Looks like the economy is really getting better! This may have been our best sale ever! Keith has the register totals for each day and will be able to calculate how each of you vendors did. We need

to wait until the weekend expenses are calculated to determine how well our club did.

Much of the success for this sale has to be the publicity our club received thanks to **Bruce McCoy**. We got TV coverage and newspaper coverage. The write-up on *Tillandsia cyanea* and the great potting that **Marilyn Moyer** did caused these plants to jump off the table. I don't know whether there were any left for the Sunday customers.

Many of you really helped getting ready for the sale by ordering plants for the society from nurseries, potting them, and pricing them, or putting bar codes on the hundreds of tillandsias that our society purchased. We also had excellent participation from our membership helping to sell the plants and educate the public. Our society wishes to thank each of you for your participation in helping on this sale. **We could not have had such a success without you!**

Aechmea: The Most Confused Genus

This article by Karen Andreas was originally printed in the December 2003 issue of ORLANDIANA, newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida.

Dr. Terrie Bert of the Sarasota and Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Societies was our guest speaker at the November meeting. Terrie's presentation was on the genus *Aechmea* and its subgenera.

The genus *Aechmea* is so diverse that it seems that it has been used as a catchall genus for those bromeliads no one else knows where to place. While petal ornamentation is a defining feature in classifying bromeliads, Terrie told us that the differences among the flowers of the members of this genus are so minute that a microscope is needed to identify them. The inflorescences of *Aechmea* are also quite diverse, from loosely branched to tight cone-like structures. The range of habitat is also broad – from hot, dry environments to treetops to ocean-side to forest floor and everything in between.

On the subject of taxonomic styles, Terrie offered the conventional characterization of those taxonomists who are "splitters" and those who are "lumpers." Lumpers tend to throw many plants

into the same category and work out the details from there. Splitters seek to further refine taxonomic differences and categorize bromeliads into other or new genera.

A look at some of our best-known Aechmeas illustrates the differences within the genus. *Aechmea blanchetiana*, a good sized plant in the landscape, has a dramatically branched inflorescence with brilliant orange and red color. *A. chlorophylla*, *A. maculata*, and *A. bromelifolia* are members of the same subgenus and their inflorescences are quite different from the aforementioned *A. blanchetiana*. *A. nudicaulis* tends to be a smaller Aechmea and within that species there are currently thirty different forms recorded, differing in the length of the leaf, the color of the inflorescence, leaf color (spotted, red, purple, green, etc.) and leaf shape (long, narrow, broad, short). *A. nudicaulis* grows from the forest floor to tree tops, from the ocean to rain forest. An *A. williamsii* was on the show-and-tell table, illustrating yet another type of inflorescence radically different from the previous ones discussed. *A. williamsii* formerly was in the genus *Streptocalyx*. *Streptocalyx* has been lumped into the genus Aechmea and no longer exists as a genus.

Terrie also talked about the fascinating symbiotic relationship some Aechmeas enjoy in habitat. *A. bracteata*, for example, is perfectly structured to house ants. In fact, Terrie referred to it as an “apartment house” for its insect inhabitants. This bromeliad provides a stable environment as well as protection (those thorns!) for the ants. Relatively benign ants live in the outer leaves; a different kind of ant farms the fungus on the dead leaves; the most aggressive ants live in the heart of the plant. In return, the plant reaps the benefits of the nutrients that are broken down by the ants. It is quite a sophisticated habitat and relationship.

Terrie will be back in February to give an illustrated presentation on the subgenera of this diverse genus.



This photo of *Aechmea williamsii* by Michael Andreas is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies. This Aechmea used to be a *Streptocalyx*.

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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OF
SAN FRANCISCO

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Let's Get Together for a Great Day on the Peninsula!
