

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



October 2006

NEWSLETTER

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, October 19, 2006** at 7:30 PM
Recreation Room, San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park,
San Francisco

October Program

Bromeliad Adventures in Ecuador

This month one of our own members, **Tom Vincze**, will be the speaker. This summer Tom visited Ecuador on a business trip and extended the trip to visit and collect bromeliads and lots of photos. He will provide a digital slide show of some of his explorations and adventures in Ecuador. Because Tom is interested in many plant families, I am sure we will see slides of more than bromeliads. Let's have a great turnout for Tom and his show.

October Refreshments

Roger Lane and **Peter Wan** signed up for refreshments this month.

November Refreshments

Brian Ransom and **Dennis Westler** signed up for refreshments next month.



Here is **Tom Vincze** during the World Bromeliad Conference in San Diego this summer. Possibly, this is at John Arden's house. Photo is courtesy of **Peter Wan**.

September Meeting

Last month **Bruce Holst** showed us wonderful scenes of recent expeditions he has made to Venezuela. Bruce is a superb photographer and storyteller and we treated to photos of Tapuis, carnivorous bromeliads, huge Brochinia, and a picture of a beautiful Navia that has not yet been found in habitat.

In addition to bringing some collector plants from Selby, Bruce brought many plants from Tropiflora for sale. Add to this the generous plant raffle table we had, the tables were flooded with bromeliads and everyone went home with some bromeliads.



Here is a photo of *Billbergia* Afterglow in Leena Dugger's collection. Photo is courtesy of Leena Dugger.

October Bromeliad Show and Sale

Our October Sale in conjunction with the Orchid Society was a great success. Even though we were in a separate room we received lots of traffic from the orchid customers. Much of this traffic into our sale was thanks to **Bruce McCoy** and other of our members directing the people into our sale which was free as compared to the Orchid sale where there was a \$3.00 entry fee.

Bruce also got us publicity in the local newspapers which brought in some people.

We had lots of various types of bromeliads for sale. As in most sales, the customers always ask for something that we do not have, such as *Vriesea hieroglyphica* or some of the sticky Dyckias. Our members supplemented the plants that our society purchased to round out the great selection. Someone even brought a begonia for sale, thinking that we would not know it was not a bromeliad.

The plant display was fantastic. Who knew so many bromeliads are in flower in October? We asked the members to bring in plants for display and they really came through. We had a huge flowering *Tillandsia ponderosa* and *Vriesea olmosana*, group pots of bromeliads arranged with other compatible plants, large neoregelias, tillandsia specimens on various types of mounts, and even a variegated pineapple. **Dan Arcos** did a fantastic job of arranging these plants to show them at their best in a limited space. He also identified each plant and their habitat distribution.

Financially, the sale was better than we had expected since this was a first time for us to have a sale in the Fall. We grossed over \$3800.

Thanks to **George Nauyok** for bringing in hundreds of boxes. Thanks to **Dan Arcos** for the new banners to advertise the sale. Thanks to all of you who participated in the sale and show. It could not have been such a success without you. There were times during the weekend that some members were spread thin, but we all had a great time nonetheless.

What is CITES?

This article is taken from the August 2005 “The Bromeliad Blade”, newsletter of the San Diego Bromeliad Society.

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

Annually, international wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars and to include hundreds of millions of plant and animal specimens. The trade is diverse, ranging from live animals and plants to a vast array of wildlife products derived from them, including food products, exotict leather goods, timber, tourist curios, and medicines. Levels of exploitation of some animal and plant species are high and the trade in them, together with other factors, such as habitat loss, is capable of heavily depleting their populations and even bringing some species close to extinction.

Because the trade in wild animals and plants crosses borders between countries, the effort to regulate it requires international cooperation to safeguard certain species from over-exploitation. Today, CITES accords varying degrees of protection to more than 30,000 species of animals and plants, whether they are traded as live specimens, fur coats, or dried herbs.

HOW CITES WORKS – CITES works by subjecting international trade in specimens of selected species to certain controls. All import, export, re-export and introduction from the species covered by CITES are listed in three Appendices, according to the degree of protection they need:

- Appendix I includes species threatened with extinction. Trade in specimens of these species is permitted only in exceptional circumstances.
- Appendix II includes specimens not necessarily threatened with extinction,

but in which trade must be controlled in order to avoid utilization incompatible with their survival.

- Appendix III contains species that are protected in at least one country, which has asked other CITES Parties for assistance in controlling the trade.

WHAT BROMELIADS ARE ON THE CITES LIST? Today, there are seven bromeliad species on the CITES list – all tillandsias. They are listed in Appendix II, which means the trade or import of these species is controlled. These seven are

Tillandsia harrisii

Tillandsia kammii

Tillandsia kautskyi

Tillandsia mauryana

Tillandsia sprengliana

Tillandsia sucrei

Tillandsia xerographica.

If your collection contains any of these species, it doesn't mean that they are illegal to own, only that they must have been obtained in accordance with the CITES regulations. The species that you possess was most probably reproduced in the United States from legally imported stock.

The Genus Nidularium

This article is by Gerry Stansfield, Cultivar Registrar of the New Zealand Bromeliad Society, from a talk he gave to a local society in Auckland. The article appeared in the October 2005 “Bromeliana”, newsletter of the New York Bromeliad Society. He excerpted and/or modified some text. The article will be published in two installments.

What I thought we would do today for the benefit of some of the newer members, is to talk a little about the history of Nidulariums and of their habitat, for it is knowing their habitat that teaches us how to grow Nidulariums in the right conditions. Then I would like to talk about some of the Nidulariums that so often get confused with others or perhaps are wrongly named. Then we will look at some of my favorite Nidulariums,

some of my new hybrid Nidulariums, and finally some Nidulariums that are perhaps new to some of you who may not have seen them before and are well worth adding to your collections, when they become available.

The genus *Nidularium* was established in 1854 by Charles Lemaire the learned French botanist, and the name *Nidularium* was created by him for the type plant we all know so well (*Nidularium fulgens*) as being the most typical of the plants in this group. Prior to that time, the genus was referred to as *Karatas* and *Bromelia*. Lemaire derived the name from the Greek word (*nidulus*) which means small or little nest and is referring to the nest form in which the flowers are arranged in groups known as fascicles along with the floral bracts to form the centre cup.

The genus is not a large one as compared to some others such as *Neoregelia*, etc. as there are only about forty-five species, although new species are still being found even today. I might add that this number does tend to change depending on whose book you are researching, and just how many species of the former sub-genus *Canistropsis* have been included or excluded. They are all endemic to the rain forests of Brazil and the Atlantic Coast area of South America. From Bahia in the north to Santa Catarina in the south, even to the Rio Grande do Sul, and all the States in between, especially Espirito Santo, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, with the largest concentration and richest of the species found in Rio de Janeiro. Most species are epiphytes but are found on the lower parts of the trees and are also happy to grow as terrestrials on the forest floor, denoting that the genus, generally are shade lovers. (Shade in the tropics is stronger light than the average New York window sill provides. Ed.)



Nidularium fulgens
15th World Bromeliad Conference, St. Petersburg, Florida, May 13-19, 2002
Shown by John Anderson

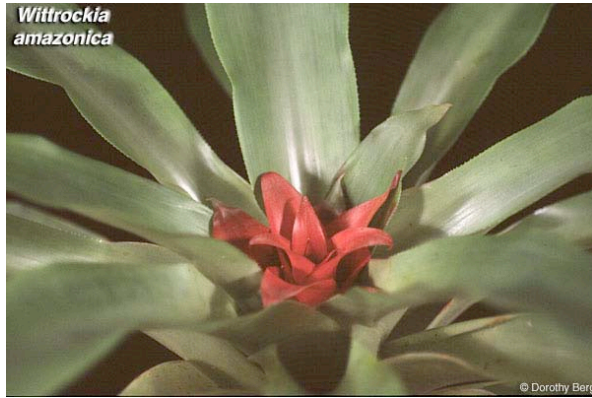
Photo of *Nidularium fulgens* is taken by Michael Andreas and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

They are generally medium to large type plants which form dense, low rosettes with strong, sometimes leathery leaves. Their flowers range from white blue, orange, reddish or pinkish, and in the case of *Nidularium amazonicum* the flowers are white with a greenish tinge. The flowers are dome-shaped and nearly always closed, which is one of the reasons why they are difficult to pollinate, and hence why their seeds are not readily available. There are copious amounts of pollen, so opening up the closed flowers to pollinate them can very easily lead to pollen contamination; like many bromeliads, *Nidularium* pistils generally will not accept pollen from the same flower.

One of the most outstanding features of the *Nidularium* family are their leaf like, colored primary bracts forming the inflorescence in the centre cup. These blushing primary bracts are one of the main characters of *Nidularium* which distinguishes it from the genus *Neoregelia* in which the inner portions of the top leaves can become suffused with color at flowering time, such as red for *Neoregelia carolinae* and purple for the *Neoregelia concentrica* complex. Within the *Nidularium* primary bracts you will find the flower groups or fascicles as they are known. If we compare the raceme type flower head of a *Neoregelia* to that of a *Nidularium*, we can see

that the Neoregelia has a single stem flower head with many separate flowers, whereas the Nidularium has many small groups of fascicles of flowers.

It is the colored primary bracts that the hummingbirds see in their natural habitat that attract them to the plants to find the flowers and the nectar or honey dew at the base of the flower. Naturally going from plant to plant the hummingbird can and does effect pollination.



Here is the soft-leaved *Nidularium amazonicum*. Photo is taken by Dorothy Berg and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

Nidulariums are considered to be among the most graceful and handsome plants of the Bromeliaceae even if not in bloom. The leaves are usually of soft texture, finely toothed and vary in color from all green to dark purple and maroon on their undersides. They can be plain or striped-variegated, or spotted. At flowering time the inflorescence is their crowning glory and can last for up to twelve months or more, making them worthy of a place in our collections. Nidulariums are not difficult to grow if one keeps in mind that they are rain forest dwellers; so that tells us they prefer high shade and moist conditions and will grow well in pots in a very open mixture. Let us look at this wonderful family of plants and see how many we have.

Nidularium amazonicum. This very lovely Nidularium has had somewhat of a confusing history. It was introduced into cultivation by

Linden in 1870. It wasn't until 1873 that it was given the name *N. amazonicum* by Linden and Morren as it was believed that the species originated in the "Valley of the Amazon", however, we now know that this is not the case and that *N. amazonicum* is concentrated geographically in the States of Southern Brazil and in the shadiest parts of the rain forests of Parana, Santa Catrina, and also Rio Grande do Sul. It was later changed to *Wittrockia amazonica* by Lyman B. Smith in 1952 and then finally back to *Nidularium amazonicum* by Elton Leme in 1996.

In its natural habitat it grows mainly in the rain forests on the ground and rocks from sea level to some 900m elevation, but it also grows occasionally as an epiphyte. Here (in New Zealand), it can be a little difficult to grow as it does not like the cold causing browning of tips due to dryness and insufficient air circulation. It is a real shade lover and loves moist conditions. Its long slender leaves of rusty red underside contrast with the matte dark green paper thin top sides. At flowering time the floral bracts are a rusty red with greenish flowers. You may like to know that this is one of the few Nidulariums that is self-pollinating.

TO BE CONTINUED IN THE NOV 2006 ISSUE

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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