

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



December 2007 NEWSLETTER

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, December 20, 2007** at 7:00 PM
Recreation Room, San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park,
San Francisco

December Program

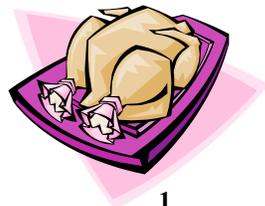
Holiday Potluck and Gift Exchange

This month culminates another year for our society. Our membership grew this year, probably as a result of our participation in the Flower and Garden Show at the Cow Palace and our presentation on Bromeliads at a California Horticultural Society meeting. We do not get to see most new members at our meetings. Why don't you new members try to join us for the holiday potluck? Our annual trip to the member's gardens was a wonderful opportunity to see diverse collections and beautiful landscaping – culminating in a great potluck. This year our plant sale was perhaps the most successful one we have ever had.

Note that our meeting time this month is 7 PM instead of 7:30 PM.

This month's meeting will be an opportunity for us to socialize and partake of great food. The society is providing a turkey and honey baked ham. We are asking you to bring a dish to share with the group – drinks, vegetable dish, rolls, desserts, etc. Please try to remember to bring serving silverware for the dish that you bring. We will provide plates, cups, silverware, and napkins. **Leena Dugger** is coordinating the food items. For those of you who have e-mail, she has sent you an invitation that shows the food items that have been selected. If you are not computer literate, **call Leena (650-558-6893) to see where you can fill in some of our gaps.**

Our club will provide a plant for each member. You may also bring a special plant/book, etc. for exchange with the other members. : If you want to partake in the exchange bring an "OPEN" gift. Something nice that does not have to be a plant, in an open container of some sort. The one whose gift is the most desirable will be picked first and then you, the donor.



2007 Programs

We enjoyed a wide variety of programs this year and gained several new members into the world of bromeliads. Because of the television and newspaper coverage of our society and our exhibit at the Cow Palace, many new people are learning about bromeliads. Thanks again to **Bruce McCoy** for getting this publicity for our society and thanks to the very small group of members who worked many long hours to assemble such an impressive garden of bromeliads: **Dan Arcos, Casper Curto, David Feix,** and **Tom Vincze**. Here are some highlights of our activities this year.

January

Our January meeting was Part 1 of a trip that **Carl Carter** and **Peter Wan** made to Bolivia last November. Peter provided the show that concentrated on the tillandsias and cultural aspects of the areas they visited. Peter's photography was superb and we were treated to these photos using the ProGold software.

February

Tom Vincze provided a slide show on various plant nurseries he has visited in Florida. These included Tropiflora, Selby Botanical Gardens, and Michael Kiehl's nursery. For the last few years, Michael has provided our plants for the holiday pot luck. For those of you who know Tom, he is quite an expert on aroids and he supplemented the bromeliad slides with shots from the annual aroid show at Fairchild.

March

Jerry Robinson, one of the owners of Rainforest Flora nursery in southern California, was our speaker. Jerry represents the business end of the nursery and he gave us a history of their nursery and how it is evolving. Since their nursery can not survive on the plants desired by a bromeliad collector, they have found a niche in mounted tillandsias found in places such as Home Depot. But to be successful, you must advance from selling tillandsias mounted on grape wood. Jerry traveled to China and now has several contracts for ceramic figurines on which to mount the

plants ranging from pumpkins to toucans to Indian chiefs. The quality of these figurines is so good that the public will buy these and get the tillandsias as a bonus. Jerry's story was fascinating and he kept us spellbound as he pulled another object from his box of figurines.

April

Dan Arcos provided a PowerPoint slide show of the bromeliads that we can grow outdoors in the Bay area. Members were asked to bring in plants that are grown outdoors and they came through big time! Our show-and-tell table was overflowing with outdoor plants in addition to the many plants that were in bloom in April.

May

Jerry Krulik from southern California gave us a slide show on the plants at the Singapore Botanical Gardens and how the gardens have evolved over the years. Originally the bromeliads were all grown outdoors, but the conditions on the equator are not conducive to happy bromeliads, so they are now grown in a shade house with the orchids. He also had slides of the plant material on the roof of the Singapore International Airport – mostly cacti and succulents. It is amazing how well some of these cacti did growing on the equator.

June

Roger Lane gave 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.

July

Although we had no monthly meeting this month, we did get to visit several beautiful gardens on the peninsula. **Keith** and **Bev Anderson, Tom Vincze, Peter Wan** and **Roger Lane, Marilyn Moyer** and **Peder Samuelson** opened their homes for us to visit their awesome plant collections. Thanks to **Marilyn Moyer** and **Peder Samuelson** for hosting the potluck. As usual the BSSF membership came out to have a great time together and share a beautiful spread of delicious food. Tom and Marilyn did a great job of

organizing the day which was sunny and warm and otherwise perfect.

August

Cristy Brenner from southern California gave us an exciting slide show of her trip to Peru. Even though we saw lots of bromeliads, Manchu Pichu, local cultural scenes, and wonderful insects and critters, she did not have enough time to go through all of her show on Peru. We missed Lake Titicaca.

September

Carl Carter gave us Part 2 of the slide show for the trip that he and **Peter Wan** made to Bolivia last November. His slide show emphasized bromeliads (including cute small Puyas) and cultural scenes of the parts of Bolivia that they covered – mostly at very high altitudes. A lot of the puyas that Carl showed us are really nice. Since Carl was able to bring back some of these, let's hope he is able to successfully propagate them. .

October

Roger Lane gave us a slide show on the species of the *Neoregelia* genus. Although there are some really beautiful and unique species, many of the small "ampullacea-type", such as *Neoregelia binotii* and *N. dungiana*, are very plain and mostly green.

November

Tom Vincze makes an annual trip to the National Aroid Convention in Florida. On his trip this year he also visited some bromeliad nurseries. His favorite nursery is Michael's Bromeliads, owned by Michael and Donna Kiehl. According to their website: "Michael's Bromeliads was established in 1988 as a mail order nursery and remains a family operation dedicated to providing quality bromeliads to collectors and enthusiasts world wide. Our collection has grown to include nearly 1900 varieties of bromeliads from over 40 genera." Tom gave us a slide show of many of the most beautiful bromeliads he saw.

**2008 Application and Membership
Renewal**

Yes, it's that time again. The dues are \$15 for single member and \$20 for a dual membership. Please pay at the meeting or by mail to Harold Charns.

Aechmea mariae-reginae

This article is a composite of two articles that is reprinted from the April 2004 "Orlandiana", newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida. The articles were written by Penrith Goff of the South East Michigan Bromeliad Society and Derek Butcher.

Aechmea mariae-reginae is a large plant over four feet in diameter and three feet high in bloom. The flowers are white with a tinge of blue at the petal tips, changing to red when the flower dies. Most bromeliad flowers are equipped with both pistils and stamens (monoecious). This plant is either female or male (dioecious). The flowers are small, even insignificant, but the large deep pink bracts (there is also a red form) can be seen from a considerable distance. This is indeed a regal plant.



This photo of *Aechmea mariae-reginae* is by Adam Smith and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

A. mariae-reginae is the queen of the genus. In Costa Rica, its native home, it is known as the "Flor de Santa Maria" and is used there exclusively in decorating the churches. In Europe it created a sensation when first exhibited. It is described as one of the most beautiful bromeliad plants ever introduced. It is a robust growing plant, the leaves being 18 inches long, arranged in a vase-like way, and bright green. The flower

scape grows two feet high and half of its length is covered with large boat-shaped bracts, some four inches long and of an intensely rich rosy pink. The flowers, which are tipped with blue, changing to salmon color with age, are arranged compactly upon the upper portion of the spike, and materially add to the beauty of this extremely grand plant. The bracts are very persistent, retaining their rich color in full perfection for several months.

it almost completely in a few years. It is a fine plant for naturalizing in South Florida, as it is much more gorgeous than any Orchid known.



This photo of the male flower spike of *Aechmea mariae-reginae* is by John Catlan and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.



This photo of the female flower spike of *Aechmea mariae-reginae* is by John Catlan and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

This species, rare in this country, is perfectly at home in Florida, growing more vigorously than any of our native Bromeliads. Planted on a rough-barked post, it soon takes hold and covers

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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OF
SAN FRANCISCO

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Join us for our Holiday Pot Luck Dinner and Party!
