

# BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

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May 2008

## NEWSLETTER

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Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, May 15, 2008** at 7:30 PM  
Recreation Room, San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park,  
San Francisco

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### May Program

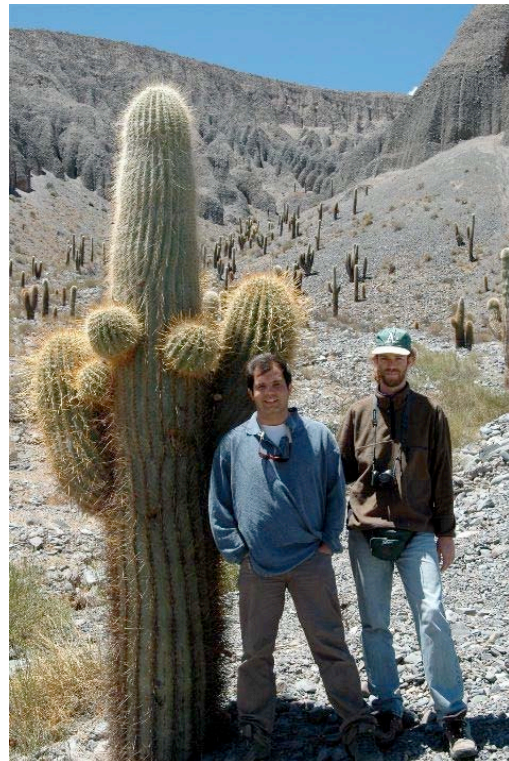
#### Bromeliads in Brazil

We are privileged this month to have **Guillermo Rivera** visit us from Argentina. Some of us know **Guillermo Rivera** because he has been the guide on many of the trips some of our members have taken to Argentina, Bolivia, and Chile over the last few years. Guillermo has a PhD in botany and uses his background to arrange tours for us to see some of our favorite plants in habitat

Guillermo has put together a show on some of the bromeliads that you can see on his tour to central Brazil. Some of our members are planning on his trip in June 2009 that covers both cactus and bromeliads. Among the bromeliads that we can expect to see are Encholoriums, Dyckias, Orthophytums, Cryptanthus, Neoregelias, Achmeas, and more. Argentina so come to the meeting for a treat.

### May Refreshments

**Roger Lane** and **Dennis Westler** will provide our refreshments this month.



Here are **Guillermo** and **Diego**, our guides for plant expeditions in Argentina. Photo is courtesy of Joe Quijada.

## April Meeting

Last month **Francisco Olive-Esteve** showed us bromeliad slides native to Venezuela as well as a short movie about the Tapuis. Did you know that in addition to the various flora, there are also dinosaurs? Just kidding! Apparently, before anyone actually visited these table-top mountains, there were expectations that dinosaurs lived there. The movie showed some recent explorations of some of the Tapuis. Francisco generously donated one of his books to the Conservatory of Flowers. He visited the Conservatory before our meeting.

## Strybing 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Spring Plant 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 the plants were flying off the tables very rapidly Friday night at prices that greatly helped the Strybing coffers. Over the years we have become one of the premier plant societies that the customers seek out.

Our members contributed many plants and Strybing grows leftovers and stock plants that have been provided in the past. We never know what will be coming from their greenhouses, but there are always many wonderful plants.

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. A special thanks goes to **Marilyn Moyer** for organizing our participation and **Dan Arcos** for generating handouts to promote our society.

## June Plant Sale

Our combined plant sale with the San Francisco Succulent and Cactus Society will be on June 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> this year at the County Fair Building. Setup will be on Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> from 3 PM to 8 PM. 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.

We are using the bar code system again. If you are selling plants, you must determine in advance how many bar codes you want made for each sale price (for example, 10 plants @ \$5.50, 15 @ \$10.00, etc.). You do not need to use all of the priced bar codes, but they **all must be made in advance of the sale** and placed on the plant or pot before the sale. You will be able to change the prices during the sale as long as you have a replacement-priced bar code, so determine all prices you will need in advance. **There will be new cash registers for this sale, but if you have sold plants in the past and have left-over barcodes, they will work on the new registers.**

We are using the providers of the cash registers to provide the bar code sheets. **Keith Anderson** has made these sheets for us for many years and we appreciate his efforts. The new bar code sheets have 80 bar code items per sheet and they are more impervious to water than our old tags. You can not mix prices per sheet (all 80 items per sheet must be same price).

**Roger Lane** will be the collector of your bar code requests. At the May meeting there will be a handout for you to specify your needs. If you have sold plants in the past, Roger will need your department code (the numbers at the beginning of the bar code) as well as the dollar amounts you need. **There is a \$1.50 charge per sheet. We**

need as much advance warning as you can provide on making the bar codes. If you can not make our May meeting, call Roger at 650-949-4831 or e-mail at [rdodger@pacbell.net](mailto: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.

Even if you are not selling plants or entering plants in the show, we need your help. The more workers we have, the less time each of us has to put in – and we have more time to shop for some of those plants we just have to own. If you have never worked at one of these sales, it is really fun. There will be sign-up forms at the May meeting, but even if you do not sign up try to come to the sale.

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

### **Hohenbergiopsis** **How this Genus was “Discovered”**

This article by Eloise Beach, originally appeared in the July 2007 edition of *Olandiana*, newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida.

**I**n September of 1974 while visiting Mrs. Louis Herring in Orlando, Florida, a group of unusual bromeliads came to my attention. There were several large specimens in the group, each one about 6 feet in diameter, growing in the ground under a tall oak tree. Luckily, one specimen was in full flower. It was not brilliantly colored, but it was unlike anything I had ever seen before. Mrs. Herring gave me a piece of the inflorescence to send to the Smithsonian Institution for identification, and that was the beginning of an interesting sequence of events.

Dr. Robert W. Read, bromeliad taxonomist at the Smithsonian Institution, was quite excited about the find. He wrote: “It looks very much like *Hohenbergia guatemalensis* which is rather rare and not commonly collected. Dr. Smith described it... however, he did not have fresh flowers and

there are some very interesting characters which I would like to study further.” Dr. Read asked for additional material for illustration and study and he wanted to make duplicate herbarium specimens to be sent to the herbaria of other institutions. Before long, I returned to Mrs. Herring and asked her to donate the entire inflorescence and some leaves as well. She graciously agreed to make the contribution of the plant materials to further the cause of bromeliad taxonomy.

After carefully examining the fresh plant material, Dr. Read reported: “It appears to be quite different from the genus *Hohenbergia* in Jamaica and the West Indies and may even be remote from the Brazilian portion of the genus. The main thing that I find is what I don't find. There are no petal appendages<sup>1</sup> and it would not key out to *Hohenbergia* using the flowers.” That was the first hint of the eventual name change. Because of this fresh material, Dr. Read was able to write a more detailed description of the so-called *Hohenbergia guatemalensis* and it was published in *Phytologia* in 1975.

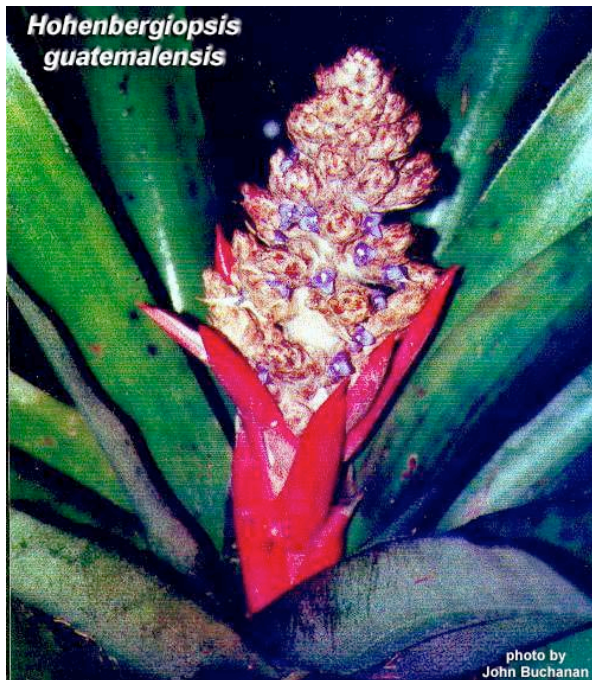
During the following months, Dr. Read and Dr. Smith concluded that the problem plant should not remain classified as a species of *Hohenbergia* because of the lack of petal appendages, since petal appendages are the major factor used to separate genera from one another in the Bromelioideae subfamily. Therefore, in the June 1976 issue of *Phytologia*, a new genus was described: *Hohenbergiopsis*, which means resembling *Hohenbergia* and *Hohenbergia guatemalensis* was described as the only known species in the genus. Consequently, *Hohenbergia guatemalensis* became synonym: a name replaced by another one recognized as having greater validity.

The original collection of *Hohenbergiopsis guatemalensis* was made in April 1939 by Paul C. Standley in Alta Verapaz, Guatemala. It was growing on a tree in a dense, wet forest at an altitude of 1500-1600 m.

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<sup>1</sup> Petal appendages are very small flaps of tissue present on the inner surface of each flower petal in certain species.

In cultivation, the plant forms a rosette up to 6 feet in diameter with serrate leaves 4-5 inches wide and 3-4 feet long. The upper and lower leaf surfaces are dusted with silvery scales and are reddish towards the base. The inflorescence can extend to a height of 3 feet and is branched at the base. The flowers are arranged in Hohenbergia-like clusters. The sepals are green and the petals are purple, turning reddish as they age. The scape bracts dry to a light brown color as the flowers begin opening. The most noticeable characteristic of this species is the brown, woolly covering throughout the inflorescence and scape.



This is the flower of *Hohenbergiopsis guatemalensis*. Photo is taken by John Buchanan and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

It was fascinating for me to be a part of this change from *Hohenbergia guatemalensis* to *Hohenbergiopsis guatemalensis*, a change that took nearly 2 years to become final. The bromeliad family lost a species of *Hohenbergia* but gained a new genus!

### Cultivars

The following article is reprinted from the November 2007 BROMELIANA, newsletter of the New York Bromeliad Society. It originally appeared in the

BROMLINK of September 2007, journal of the Bromeliad Society of Western Australia.

I've had a couple of people come up to me recently with a lack of understanding of the nature of plant names, specifically with cultivars masking the identity of species. This has become more important over the last few years, as there have been a number of members starting to collect species of plants, rather than hybrids. Sometimes the rules by which our plants are named under the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants (ICNCP), create some confusion.

The term cultivar in the Bromeliad Society International (BSI) publication 'A Bromeliad Glossary' is "A plant produced as opposed to one growing in habitat; a horticultural clone or strain. A plant type within a cultivated species that has recognizably different characteristics." Most of us understand cultivar to mean the plant produced in cultivation, such as hybrids or sports. Many don't consider the second part of the definition where it can mean a particular form of a species, which doesn't have the necessary criteria to gain the status of a variety; or even assume the title of a form.

The ICNCP rules state that all genera, species, varieties and form names are Latinized (although it was usual to Latinize cultivar names until early last century). The rules also state that when the cultivar name is used, the species name should not be included.

So the upshot of all this is that where we have a naturally occurring species, like *Tillandsia* 'Druid', many mistake it for a hybrid. *T.* 'Druid' is a form of *T. ionantha* occurring naturally in Vera Cruz, Mexico, and is distinct in that the plant has white flowers and blushes yellow instead of red. Taxonomists don't consider it different enough to give it a varietal status, *T. ionantha* var. *maxima*, so botanically the plant rates as *T. ionantha*. However, as collectors, sometimes we find the need to differentiate between different clones of a species, and as a result someone registered the name 'Druid' for this plant.

Under the ICNCP rules which the BSI follows, the plant becomes *T.* 'Druid'. Orchid societies do

not follow the ICNCP rules and if it were an orchid, it would be *T. ionantha* Druid. When I write tags I often use the ICNCP rules, but at other times I write a tag “the orchid way” – especially if I’m giving the plant to someone else, as I feel it conveys the identity of the plant more fully. However, when you are reading bromeliad literature, or buying plants, be aware that sometimes the name may not present all the information you are looking for.

(There is much to be said for labeling “the orchid way for naturally occurring forms of a species like *T. ‘Druid’*. Using *T. ionantha ‘Druid’* gives better information about the identification of the plant, especially for newer growers. (I still use the single quote marks to indicate it is a registered cultivar.) The ‘Druid’ form of *T. ionantha* is so consistently distinct from the species (white flowers instead of dark blue and yellow or orange coloring at flowering instead of red), one wonders at the reluctance of taxonomists to at least title it as *forma* Druid. They have done so for the variegated form of *Neoregelia carolinae*, *forma* Tricolor.

When I label or refer in writing to a variegated or albo-marginated form of *Guzmania lingulata* var. *minor* or of *Aechmea fasciata*, I always write “variegated” or “albo-marginated” on the label or in the article. Ed.)

## Refreshments

Our members have been very generous in providing refreshments for our meetings. If you have signed up for refreshments but will not be able to provide them, please notify one of the officers so we can cover for you. Our membership is growing and we don’t want them to starve.



This is cultivar *Tillandsia ionantha* Druid. Photo is by Ken Marks and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

## Dinner with Our Speaker

If you want to join us for dinner with our speaker, **Guillermo Rivera**, join us in the parking lot promptly at 6 PM and we will then go to the restaurant of Guillermo’s choice.



This may be one of the plants that we will see slides of in habitat. It is *Encholirium horridum* and it would take 3 people to lift this pot. Photo is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

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**BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO (BSSF)**

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The BSSF is a non-profit educational organization promoting the study and cultivation of bromeliads. The BSSF meets monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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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**BSSF 2008 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS**

PRESIDENT	Carl Carter	510-661-0568	carl.carter@ekit.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Bruce McCoy	510-835-3311	bruce.mccoy@gmail.com
SECRETARY	Dorothy Dewing	650-856-1441	
TREASURER	Harold Charns	415-861-6043	Harold@States-Street.com
DIRECTORS:			
	Roger Lane	650-949-4831	rdodger@pacbell.net
	Marilyn Moyer	650-365-5560	MarilynMoyer@comcast.net
	Peder Samuelsen	650-365-5560	Pedersam@comcast.net
	Peter Wan	408-500-2103	peterkwan@earthlink.net

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**BROMELIAD SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL**

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BROMELIAD SOCIETY  
OF  
SAN FRANCISCO

Roger Lane  
Newsletter Editor  
551 Hawthorne Court  
Los Altos, CA 94024-3121

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**We have a special speaker this month!**

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