

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



June 2008

NEWSLETTER

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, June 19, 2008** at 7:30 PM
Recreation Room, San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park,
San Francisco

June Program

Bromeliads in Brazil

Each year the government of Venezuela limits the number of people eligible to visit the Tabletop Mountains (Tepuis) and many of these mountains have still not been explored. Last December, **Bruce McCoy** and **Peter Wan** were among the lucky visitors to one of the Tepuis. This month, Peter will give us a slide show that highlights some of their adventures.

His presentation will include photos of some of the unusual bromeliads (including *Lindmania*, *Connellia*, and *Brocchinia*) as well as the colorful *Tillandsia*, *Racinaea*, and *Vriesea*. We will also see slides of Angel Falls, one of the most beautiful and highest waterfalls in the world.

June Refreshments

David Feix, **Casper Curto**, and **Daryl Ducharme** will provide our refreshments this month.



Here **Peter Wan** standing beside a *Brocchinia tatei* on the Ayan Tepui where Angel falls is located. Photo is courtesy of Joe Quijada.

May Meeting

Last month **Guillermo Rivera** gave us a slide show on the bromeliads found in the Minas Gerais province of Brazil and some of the bromeliads in the Atlantic Forest region of Brazil. The diverse group of bromeliads (especially in the Atlantic Forest) convinced your editor to sign up for Guillermo's trip to Brazil in 2009. I think this was the first time that I have seen photos of any *Lymanias* in habitat – usually they are in pots.

There may be some space left on Guillermo's trip next June, but it is filling up fast. Contact your editor if you are interested in more information on this trip.

Strybing 41st Annual Spring Plant Sale

The Strybing Big Spring sale in May was a huge success. Sales totaled \$98,000. The Bromeliad Societies participation was far better than any year before. We helped out to the tune of \$2,815. This was due to the exceptional quality of the plants. David Granucci, volunteer worker at the Strybing nursery does an extraordinary job growing our donated *Billbergias* and other bromeliads into large specimens. Our booth at the sale has been upsized to stacking the tables in order to handle all the plants. We are delighted to watch as the doors open and our display gets rushed and emptied of the beautiful and the colorful plants

Thanks to our member volunteers: **Dan Arcos, Eric Teberg, Peder** Samuelsen, Yolanda Huang, Miloanne Hecathorn, Dennis Westler, Jon Dixon, **Ford Greene and Catherine, Richard Wigen, Lawrence Lee, Stacey Michaels, and David Feix.** And we want to give a special thanks to **Marilyn Moyer** for coordinating this activity. We appreciate the talent in throwing all this together so fast and for the exceptional plants. It was frantic and fun.

June Plant Sale

Our sale this month was a fantastic success. Last year on Saturday (always the busier day of the sale) 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. This year, the lines were just as long but they did not let up until closing. Woe to the people working at the registers!

The overall weekend gross sales for all vendors (we are considered a vendor) was \$39775 (does not include sales tax). Last year's gross was \$45,000. Our share of that overall amount was about \$6700. This is not quite as good as last year when we grossed \$7200. Roger has the register totals and will turn this over to Harold to determine how each vendor 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 great newspaper coverage. The write-up on the *Neoregelia* hybrid in the Chronicle brought the people in, but the two plants that Tom Vincze brought to sell did not sell. The plants that we got from Hawaiian Sunshine (*Vriesea* hybrids and *Tillandsia cyanea*) that **Marilyn Moyer** jumped off the table. At the end of the sale there was only one *Vriesea* left.

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!**

Tillandsia ponderosa

This article by Len Harrison (England) is reprinted from the March 1998 The Bromeliad News, newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Sacramento.

Tillandsia ponderosa is a large plant by tillandsia standards. Fully grown, it is over 24 inches across and as high.

Its habitat is the cloud forest of Guatemala. The plant shown was 3 years old when it flowered [photo is not the same as provided by author. – Ed]

The two plants I have grown were in a 50-50 mix of bark and perlite. In winter they were kept with a 50 degree minimum and sprayed daily. The cups were kept dry to prevent rot in winter, but the potting mix was watered a little, spraying and watering being carried out frequently enough to keep the leaves turgid. In summer the cups at the leaf bases were kept full. The most important part of watering in the summer was to use lime-free water and that each time it was watered, twice a day in very hot weather, that all the water in the cups was flushed out and replaced by fresh water. The plants were fed each time with very dilute fertilizer.

Unfortunately though one plant produced pups, they failed to grow and as the plants died after flowering I no longer have them. For the good of plants in the wild it is probably best not to grow this species unless you know the plants are nursery raised. It probably only propagates from seed and this is probably the best way to obtain plants. You are unlikely to grow the plants on by vegetative propagation as this is very difficult in our climate and they rarely pup.

Colonization of Spanish Moss

This article by Derek Butcher (Australia) is reprinted from the October 1998 The Bromeliad News, newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Sacramento.

I am not quite a wild colonial boy but I do feel that Tillandsias would take a long long time to get a foothold in the wilds of Australia. They take years to reach the age of puberty. How many plants do you need for a viable regenerating

group? I know a few people who have stuck seedlings on local trees and left them for nature to look after and the plants have survived! I feel that when their property is sold the plants wouldn't last long under their new owners.

I know of complaints by people who have had their *T. usneoides* pinched for nesting material and if there were a candidate for colonization then this could be one. It doesn't need seed to multiply. However, no one has complained or commented about any sightings in the wild.

Remember that Australia has concentrated built-up areas where the Brom growers are with a lot of space in between. Not spread out like Florida. This reminds me that if it were easy to colonize how is it that there are no man-introduced Tillandsias in Florida – so far? Perhaps Felicity has introduced the other 9 non-indigenous forms of *T. usneoides* to that exotic tropical island of hers. No doubt she would like to comment and keep Uncle in order.

(Felicity) Actually, Uncle Derek, there is more likelihood of the local *T. usneoides* being introduced into my collection than vice versa. I have large oak trees on my property and in the field behind my house and they are heavy with Tillandsias.



This is one of Len Harrison's *Tillandsia ponderosa*. Photo is by Len Harrison and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

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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We will explore the Tapuis this month!
