

# BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



## JULY 2011

# NEWSLETTER

WE WILL NOT HAVE A REGULAR MEETING THIS MONTH

## July Program

### Peninsula Garden Tour

**W**e will **not** be having our regular monthly meeting this month at the Hall of Flowers. Instead, we are visiting 4 gardens on the peninsula (in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties) followed by a pot luck dinner at the last stop. It has been four years since we have visited the peninsula, so we can expect to see lots of changes. Thanks in advance to **Dan Arcos** and **Thomas Vincze** for arranging this popular annual event.

The tour will be on **Sunday, July 17<sup>th</sup>** and start at **11 AM** and run until whenever.

Details about the gardens and directions are inside the newsletter. This information with maps is not on our website but is available here: <http://sfbromeliad.org/tour2011/potluckTour2011.html>.

**Daniel Arcos** is coordinating the food items for the potluck, **so please call him** (415-821-7377) or **e-mail him** (darcos@pacbell.net) 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 diverse plants in magnificent condition and maybe even get an idea of what you need in your collection.



Photo of *Neoregelia zonata* by Dorothy Berg is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

## June Meeting

**T**ed Kipping was a lifesaver for our society last month. Our scheduled speaker cancelled and he was able to provide a show with almost no advance notice. His slide show on the cloud forests of Oaxaca and Chiapas showed the incredible diversity of plant material found there. In addition to the bromeliads, Ted introduced us to possibly “hundreds” of other plant species and this show represented a downsizing from the photos he took when in the cloud forests. Ted is amazing – he knows the botanical names of almost all the plants he showed us. Thanks Ted for an amazing viewing of wonderful plants we probably will never see in cultivation.

## Tour of Peninsula Gardens

**I**t is that time of year again and we will be visiting members’ gardens on the peninsula. . Our tour is scheduled to start at 11:00 AM and finish after a potluck dinner at the last stop on **Sunday, 17 July**. All gardens will be open for viewing for approximately 45 minutes with a 15-30 minutes travel time between each garden. Please bring a potluck item (vegetables, salad, dessert, etc.) . The main entree will be provided by the club. **Please RSVP with item to be brought and number of people attending directly to Dan Arcos** at (415) 821-7377 or e-mail him ([darcos@pacbell.net](mailto:darcos@pacbell.net)). If you have perishable items you may leave these at Marilyn Moyer’s before the first tour stop or at Roger Lane’s at the second stop.

### First Stop, 11:00 A.M. to 11:45 A.M.

#### Tom Vincze

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.

**General Directions:** Regardless of your starting point, it is probably easiest to visit the gardens via Interstate I-280.

#### Directions:

1. Head South or North on **I-280**
2. Take the exit towards **Magdalena Avenue**
3. Turn left onto **Magdalena Avenue** (0.3 miles)
4. Turn right onto **Hillview Drive** (0.3 miles)
5. Turn right onto **Fairway Drive** (0.2 miles)
6. Take the first right onto **Plateau Avenue**. Destination will be on the right (240 feet)

### Second Stop 12:15 P.M.-1 P.M.

#### Roger Lane and Peter Wan

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, another greenhouse houses many fine succulent and caudex specimen plants.

#### Directions:

1. Head East on **Plateau Ave.** towards **Fairway Drive**
2. Turn left onto **Fairway Drive**. (404 feet)
3. Take the first left onto **Hillview Drive** (240 feet)
4. Turn the first right onto **Magdalena Avenue** (0.5 miles)
5. Turn left onto **Foothill Expressway** (at the second light)
6. Turn right onto **South El Monte Avenue** (0.6 miles)
7. Turn right onto **Hawthorne Ave.** (4-way STOP Sign)
8. Turn left on **South Clark Avenue** (259 feet)
9. Turn left on **Hawthorne Court** (75 feet - first house on the right corner).

### Third Stop, 1:30 P.M. -2:15 P.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.

If you want to stop for food or drink or get your potluck item, there is an Andronicos grocery store in the Stanford Shopping across the street from North Quarry Road.

### **Fourth Stop, 3 PM + (Potluck)** **Marilyn Moyer and Peder Samuelson**

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 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

### ***Neoregelia ampullacea* and its Neighbors**

This article by A. Herndon is reprinted from the May 2003 newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of South Florida.

Among the miniature bromeliads, the *Neoregelia ampullacea* complex is a source of both great charm and great frustration. Thirty years ago, life was simple – there were only four plants available in the group (*ampullacea* v. *ampullacea*, *ampullacea* v. *tigrina*, *ampullacea* v. *zebrina*, and *ampullacea* *variegata*) and they were all readily distinguishable (although I am not sure I remember exactly what plant was called *ampullacea* v. *ampullacea*). Now, several of the plants from the olden days are known by different names, there are many more distinct types of plants available in this group, and an uncertain number of species are treated as *ampullacea* cultivars in the trade.

The core group of *Neoregelia ampullacea* is characterized by the narrow cylindrical shape of the water-holding cup formed by the leaf sheathes and slender stolons that are generally long enough to keep the water-holding cups of individual rosettes separate from each other.



Photo of *Neoregelia ampullacea* by Pamela Koide is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

Leaves are decorated by dark patches, generally in the form of bars running partway across the leaf blades. Plants produce pups before flowering, so they tend to form clumps quickly. The flower petals are relatively large (2-3 open flowers fully cover the top of the cup) with purple tips and a white throat. This group includes *Neoregelia ampullacea* v. *ampullacea*, *N. ampullacea* cv. Bert, *N. ampullacea* cv. Midget (known long ago as *N. ampullacea* v. *zebrina*) and *N. liliputiana*. These cultivars differ in size and the darkness of leaf bars. *N. ampullacea* v. *ampullacea* has the lightest coloration, and with ample fertilizer, may show no trace of the leaf bars at all. *Neoregelia ampullacea* cv. Bert is slightly smaller than *ampullacea* v. *ampullacea* and has darker leaf bars. The leaves on this cultivar are more pointed towards the tip in contrast to the rounded leaf tips on other cultivars. *Neoregelia ampullacea* Midget, as the name implies, is smaller than *ampullacea* v. *ampullacea*. It also has very dark leaves, including both bars and a multitude of small dark dots, under all conditions. *Neoregelia liliputiana* is even smaller than *ampullacea*

Midget, and has prominent leaf bars, but is not nearly as dark as Midget. Plants currently sold as *Neoregelia ampullacea* v. *ampullacea* are not the same as plants originally available under that name. Plants currently called *Neoregelia ampullacea tigrina* (or *Neoregelia tigrina*) in the trade differ from the plants called *Neoregelia ampullacea tigrina* 30 years ago. They are also totally different from the core species of the *ampullacea* complex. This plant has a funnel-shaped water holding cup and the bracts along the plants are loose, so the stolons appear 'leafy'. In addition, the petals are wholly white and much larger than those in the core group. The plant called *Neoregelia albiflora* in the trade is almost indistinguishable. These two differ only in the presence of a yellow-brown color in the leaves of *tigrina* and its complete lack in *albiflora*. To complicate matters further, the current *Neoregelia albiflora* was treated as *ampullacea* v. *ampullacea* in the trade for a time.



Photo of *Neoregelia lilliputiana* by Graham Alderson is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

*Neoregelia ampullacea* Purpurea is a cultivar of *Neoregelia punctatissima*. These plants have a barrel-shaped water-holding cup and the leaf surfaces are much waxier than in *Neoregelia ampullacea*, but the stolons are essentially identical.



Photo of *Neoregelia tigrina* by Dorothy Berg is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

*Neoregelia zonata* has the same general characteristics as *Neoregelia ampullacea*, but it is at least twice as large. Still, *Neoregelia ampullacea variegata* of the trade belongs here and the plant we used to call *Neoregelia ampullacea tigrina* appears to be a hybrid between *Neoregelia ampullacea* and *Neoregelia zonata*. It is even possible that the plant we called *Neoregelia ampullacea* v. *ampullacea* is another *ampullacea*-*zonata* hybrid.



Photo of *Neoregelia punctatissima* by W.W.G. Moir is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

Finally, I have a plant called *Neoregelia ampullacea* cv. Oppenheimer that does not appear to have any relationship to the *Neoregelia ampullacea* group. This plant has no stolons, the leaves have no dark bars and pups are not produced until the parent blooms. How the name came to be applied to the plant is a complete mystery. *Neoregelia ampullacea marnier-lapostollei* and *Neoregelia ampullacea Black Beauty* are also available in the trade, but I don't know these plants beyond the names, so I can't comment on them (although I have an unnamed plant that could represent one of them). Furthermore, the *Neoregelia dungsiana* brought to the January meeting by Dr. Karl Green is undoubtedly related to the core *ampullacea* group. It is likely that other species less frequently seen in cultivation also belong here. Due to their pleasing size and characteristics, members of the *ampullacea* complex (including allied species) have been used in many hybrids. Regrettably, name changes and uncertainties in the application of names within the group introduce great confusion concerning the parentage of hybrids. For instance, *Neoregelia Red Waif*, a Gary Hendrix hybrid, is listed as having *zebrina* and *Fireball* as parents.

If you have been paying attention to your history, you realize that the current name for the first parent is *Neoregelia ampullacea* cv. Midget. But, what if a hybrid lists *tigrina* as a parent? Is the parent the *tigrina* of many years ago or today? It is even more

complicated if the parent is listed as ampullacea without qualification. Now it is totally unclear whether the parent is a member of the core ampullacea complex, an albiflora, a punctatissima, a zonata, or a hybrid. Furthermore, the range of possible choices depends upon the year the hybrid was made and to the extent the hybridizer knew and used up-to-date names.



Photo of *Neoregelia dungsiana* by Tropiflora is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

Of course, confusion over names does not distract from the charm of the plants or hybrids made from them. If you prefer to not get involved with the intricacies of identification, just buy the plants that look good to you. Your enjoyment will be just as complete regardless of the name on the label.

For those who are interested in the intricacies of identification, please bring any plants you believe belong to this group to the June meeting. An opportunity to see a wide range of plants and to compare plants grown under different conditions should help us all to understand this charming and frustrating complex better.



Photo of *Neoregelia Midget* by Geoff Lawn 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 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 Charms, BSSF Treasurer, 255 States Street, San Francisco, CA 94114-1405.

**BSSF 2011 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS**

PRESIDENT	Carl Carter	510-661-0568	carl.carter@ekit.com
VICE PRESIDENT			
SECRETARY			
TREASURER	Harold Charms	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 Samuelson	650-365-5560	Pedersam@comcast.net
	Peter Wan	408-500-2103	peterkwan@earthlink.net

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SAN FRANCISCO

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

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