BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

APRIL 2012

NEWSLETTER

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 19, 2012 at 6:00 PM

April Program

Flora Grubb Gardens

This month we will be visiting the Flora Grub Gardens instead of meeting at our regular location. This is an exceptional nursery and we will be able to visit after it is closed, so do not miss this opportunity.

Our meeting will also be starting earlier than usual. **We can enter the nursery at 6:00 PM, but you must be there by 7:00 PM.** Zenaida Sengo will be demonstrating the latest ideas in tillandsia mounting and crafting.

Note: This meeting begins at 6pm with a no host picnic. Address and map: http://www.floragrubb.com/idx/location.php

Tillandsia myosura photo by D Butcher

See the article about this *Tillandsia myosura* in the newsletter. Photo is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

April Refreshments

Casper Curto, Daryl Ducharme and **Richard Ostreicher** signed up for refreshments this month.

Dues are Due

If you have not paid your dues for 2012, this will be your last issue. Please contact Harold Charns to pay your dues (see back page)

March Meeting

Last month **Peter Wan** completed his show on his trip to southern Ecuador last year. We thought it might have been a three-part show, but he squeezed all of the remaining slides into part 2. As always, it was an exciting show and Peter is a superb photographer.

Unavailable Bromels Need Production

This article by Herb Plever is reprinted from the December 2000 newsletter (BROMELIANA) of the New York Bromeliad Society.

This is the second article of this series begun in BROMELIANA last month. *Orthophytum navioides* (L.B. Smith) is another great plant which is listed on only one bromel nursery catalog and even there it is in such short supply it is not available for sale. This, despite the fact it can be readily found in its habitat in Bahia, Brazil. A mere look at the photo on this page will tell you how beautiful this plant is, so why on earth should it be unavailable to growers? Perhaps its proper culture has not been understood by growers. Thus, when it was available some years back, growers were not successful in growing it to bloom. I know that for a number of years I managed to kill every small plant I bought. I couldn't get one to establish roots and soon it would completely dry out and die. Dr. Smith's monograph indicates that it grows in open areas on rocks near streams. Growing that way it must be bathed in high humidity to thrive.

Nat DeLeon of Miami has successfully grown many pieces of *O. navioides* and used them in hybridizing. He advised that you must vary its culture according to seasons. In the warm growing season, the plant needs lots of water and fertilizer, but in the cooler season you must keep it relatively dry. (Not a problem for indoor growers.) Also, Nat says that pups should not be removed even if they appear large enough, until roots appear at the base of the plant. I vowed then that if I could ever find a piece of *O. navioides* again, I would try to adapt this horticultural advice to my indoor environment.

This stunning *Orthophytum navioides* was shown by Michael Kiehl at the 15th World Bromeliad Conference. Photo is by Michael Andreas and is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

Well, about a month later I managed to obtain a six inch pup of Orthophytum navioides from Michael Kiehl. It did not have any roots, but beggars can't be choosers. I was happy to have it and I potted it in my standard very friable mix which contains about 30% coarse pieces of peat moss and about 15% shaved redwood chips. These materials are water retentive, but as the pot was wick-watered, they stayed damp but not soggy.

At first I grew the plant shaded with no sun and frequently sprayed it with a solution of Peat Lite Special (20-10-20). After about a month, it miraculously took hold and rooted and I then placed it in an unobstructed east window which gets morning sun (even more in the summer). Thereafter I sprayed it once or twice a week with the fertilized solution. You might think this was too much fertilizer, but the plant grew very rapidly. It put up a nice pup in December and started to turn red by February, 2000. It developed a brilliant red by the end of March and produced many beautiful white flowers. Although its leaves can grow to 12" long in habitat or outdoors in Florida, indoors my plant flowered with leaves about 7-8 inches long.

I'm particularly proud of this achievement as it comes after my having killed perhaps 3 or 4 prior pieces of O. navioides (and they were costly)….

In view of the patent scarcity of *O. navioides* on the retail marker, it is nice to report that my plant

has now put up an additional three pups on long stolons. When they have grown large enough to take off, I'll pot them and bring them down to our plant sale table.

This beautiful plant should be in every grower's collection. I am convinced that its culture can be mastered regardless of where you grow it. It may take a few tries before you find the right combination, and that is why we need to create a supply of plants for distribution. It is well worth the effort.

Brazil has now adopted strict laws governing the collection of its native plants. But I believe *O. navioides* is still collectible in Bahia, Brazil with the supervision and control of the Brazilian authorities and the Bromeliad Society of Brazil, and quantities of seed can be readily obtained. Thus enterprising dealers can grow seedlings on for sale. Additionally, it would be great if the plant could be tissue cultured and thousands of *Orthophytum navioides* were produced.

I am certain that it would be well worth the expense to these dealers, as there will be a ready market of many bromelphiles who will be eagerly waiting to buy the plant.

The Poop on Goop

This article by the late Valerie Steckler is reprinted from the April 1997 newsletter of the Houston Bromeliad Society.

A while back I began to hear that Goop, the product my husband often used to clean his hands when they were greasy, was manufactured by a company that also produces various adhesive products that are successfully being used to attach epiphytic Tillandsias to their mount, and does not disintegrate like so many other products. I was told that there was a range of different formulations. I got various answers from several people as to what formulations I needed, so I decided to ask the manufacturer.

There are gobs of Goop! You can take that as Bible from me! The manufacturer gave me a very informative and colorful brochure, which I will share with you.

Varieties:

1. Amazing Goop which repairs everything around the house from teacups' handles to fixing cracks in cement, and adhering new handles onto garden tools.
2. Shoe Goo II for repairing and rebuilding shoe soles.
3. Automotive Goop for car maintenance such as repairing torn vinyl seats, floor mats, and convertible tops, as well as protecting battery terminals from corrosion.
4. Plumbers' Goop which makes a stronger bond than silicone, on PVC tubing, pool tiles, porcelain fixtures, down spouts or gutter seams.
5. Marine Goop (UV RESISTANT) is weatherproof and can be used as an adhesive and a sealant and stops major damage from setting in.
6. Crafters Goop is useful for applying stones and gems to homemade jewelry; it is washer/dryer safe, so it can be used to apply rhinestones, decals, and buttons to fabric.
7. Sportsman's Goop seals waders, wet suits, rainwear, diving masks, tents, rafts, air mattresses, and most of the other "stuff" people tote to their favorite sport.
8. Household Goop is waterproof, durable, and easy to apply. If you have it, you need no other tubes or jars cluttering up your kitchen drawers.
9. Outdoor Goop (UV RESISTANT) is excellent for sealing gutters, mending awnings, repairing lawn furniture and anything else exposed to the elements.
10. Carpenters Goop, the woodworkers' best friend, attaches wood paneling, trim, baseboards, crown moldings, and fixtures to walls, dovetail joints, and guides to drawers. Watta GOOP!

As of January 1998, the Sportsman Goop will also be UV Resistant. The back of the brochure has a comprehensive cart comparing Goop to Liquid Nails, G.E. Silicone and Polyseamseal Goop is impressively stronger.

I also managed to get "The Goop Scoop" which is given to their distributors so that they can answer customers' questions. Here's the inside word! Household, Plumbers, Automotive and Sportsman's Goop all have the same basic formulation.

Shoe Goo II is a thicker formulation, contains more rubber, is abrasive resistant, and has heat dissipaters built in which disperse heat away from shoe and foot. The product contains a resin system designed for stronger abrasion resistance and better adhesion to flexible materials. I plan to conduct my own road tests on my seven

grandchildren any of whom can destroy a pair of shoes in under two weeks and will let you know just how tough this product is.

Construction Goop contains more solid material for better adhesion and working strength on wood. This material is easier to extrude for every woodworking application, non-slump and non-sag on vertical substrates, and cures faster than caulks.

Crafters' Goop is developed for small projects (whatever that means!)

Marine and outdoor Goops have a completely unique formulation that is water clear and UV resistant. Performs well in outdoor applications and in fresh and salt-water environments, and should mount tillandsias well and in a more lasting manner than some other products I've used. The adhesive is just to keep the plant stable until its roots attach. With some tillandsias, that's a long wait. I will still use, whenever possible, a small gauge covered wire to help secure the plant until it has a meaningful relationship with its mount and Goop!

I am buying either the Marine or the Outdoor type, and I'm really looking forward to trying it. I have felt for years that the UV breakdown of adhesive was the culprit when previously "glued" and stable tillandsias that have grown for some years and show roots into planting media, would come crashing down after 8 months or 12-18 months.

Home Depot, McCoy's, Service Merchandise, Target, and Ace Hardware are supposed to have Goop. Call first to be sure they have the kind you want. Happy Mounting!

A Tale of Two Mice

This article by Dereck Butcher is reprinted from the September 1993 newsletter of the Bromeliad Society of Broward County, Florida. It originally appeared in the December 1994 Australian Bulletin.

This tale starts early in 1993 when an article appeared in the BSI Journal 1993 page 24, which was a reprint of a previous article in 1975 by George Kalmbacher entitled "A Tale of a Mouse Tail – with details". In between these two dates another plant with leaves like a mouse-tail had been named and I wrote an article for the BSI Journal pointing out the problem but for various reasons it was not published.

Let us go back to the late 1980's when I acquired copies of Rauh's Bromelienstudien and I had to quickly learn botanical German to help me understand these works. I translated, amongst many others, the description of a plant called *Tillandsia crocata* var. *tristis*. We all know that *T. crocata* is a pretty little plant with a large yellow flower and an exquisite scent. Here we had a variety with a small flower that was dirty yellowish brown. Needless to say, I wanted to acquire one

The next thing I found out was that Dr. Walter Till from Vienna had named a *Tillandsia caliginosa* and had split up what Smith and Downs had treated as *T. myosura*. The *T., crocata* var. *tristis* became a synonym of *T. caliginosa*. So the field was reduced to *T. caliginosa* and *T. myosura*.

It is interesting to note that in 1935, Lyman Smith indicated his worries about two of the collections within his concept of *T. myosura* and it took 50 years before anything was done about it. I still didn't know what the real difference was and I went to the World Conference in Tampa in 1992 with high hopes of a solution. Instead of being rare, *T. caliginosa* was on sale everywhere but no *T. myosura*. In addition, this *T. caliginosa* looked like what I had been growing as *T. myosura*. When I asked the obvious questions, I was told it was easy to tell them apart, but no one could tell me how! So I went to the trouble of importing this "new" species with the usual traumas and cost of quarantine. The plants survived and when placed side by side with the "Aussie" *T. myosura*, I could find no difference.

Dr. Walter Till is currently world authority on the subgenus of Tillandsia called Diaphoranthema; this subgenus includes *T. usneoides*, but generally speaking if the plant is small and has very small flowers with exciting colors like green, dirty yellow, brown, dark violet to black, you are talking about Diaphoranthema. I felt I just had to contact Dr. Till in Vienna and as luck would have it, he writes and speaks English. I sent him a few bits of the Aussie *T. myosura* and guess what? It is *T. caliginosa*.

What is the difference between the two? Well, Dr. Till says this is what I have to look for…

T. myosura. Petals are always pure yellow in different hues, flower fragrance is not very strong. The leaves are not strictly distichous, very rigid and their sheaths glabrous (naked) to lepidote. The inflorescence axis is often somewhat

flexuous. Its habit is in the arid area near Cordoba, Argentina.

T. caliginosa. Petals are usually dark brown (hence the name), or if brownish yellow then spotted, flower fragrance is rather strong, the leaves are nearly exactly distichous, rather soft, and usually nearly straight with rather long internodes. It is widespread in northern Argentina and Bolivia.

By the way, if you cannot understand some of these terms, I suggest you acquire a copy of "The Amateur's Guide to the Grayish Leaved Tillandsioideae". The plant I call the Aussie *T. myosura* came to Adelaide via Queensland about 1980 and offsets so prolifically that it has become the most common Tillandsia in Adelaide. For the first few years we kept finding seed pods, but had never seen it flower. Maureen Hick was the first to claim a sighting and she pronounced its color was dirty yellow. This spurred others to be on the lookout, but we were finding brown to be the color. Eventually it "dawned" on us that Maureen got up earlier than the rest of us and that we late risers were seeing the flower just at closing time! Whatever, you have to be quick and observant.

When your *T. myosura* flowers would you please check the color of the petal and the rest of the description given previously. Remember, that in the wild *T. caliginosa* is more widespread than *T. myosura*. You may have the rare one, but then…!

Finally, you must have been wondering whether this is a tale or a tail. Well, in ancient Greek, "myos" means mouse and "ura" means tail!

Photos of Tillandsia caliginosa and its flower are 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.

BSSF 2012 OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT	Carl Carter	510-661-0568	carl.carter@ekit.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Dan Arcos	415-823-9661	darcos@pacbell.net
SECRETARY			
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

BROMELIAD SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

The Journal is published bimonthly at Orlando, Florida by the Bromeliad Society International. Subscription price (in U.S. $) is included in the 12-month membership dues: single ($28.), dual (2 members at one address receiving one Journal -$30). Address all membership and subscription correspondence to: Membership Secretary, Dan Kinard, 6901 Kellyn Lane, Vista, CA 92084, USA, membership@bsi.org

BROMELIAD SOCIETY
OF
SAN FRANCISCO

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

This month Meet at Flora Grubb for Tillandsia Crafts.