

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO

APRIL 2014



Meeting Specifics

When: April 17

Time: 7:30 PM

Where
Recreation Room
San Francisco County Fair
Building
9th Avenue at Lincoln Way

Pamela will be bringing plants for sale and will also provide our plant table.



Hybridizing tillandsias - natural and artificial

This month, Pamela Koide Hyatt will be visiting us for the first time in many years. Pam founded Bird Rock Tropical Nursery in 1961. Over the years the nursery has had many locations and is now in Encinitas, California. It is open by appointment only. Her nursery has one of the largest living collections of bromeliads in the country. Although she carries mostly orchid species and many bromeliad species, she specializes in tillandsias and propagates over 600 species and 225 hybrids.

Pam will provide a show on hybridizing tillandsias - a task she has been involved with since 1981. She has created more than 3000 tillandsia hybrids and because tillandsias take more time from seed to flowering (15 to 25 years) than almost any bromeliad, this is truly a labor of love. In 2013, her hybrid Tillandsia Samantha won the Flora Holland Glass Tulip Award (the Oscar of the European horticultural industry) as the best garden plant as well as best cut flower. Don't miss this meeting. Pam will provide a great show.

Casper Curto and Roger Lane signed up for refreshments this month. Any additional refreshments will be appreciated.

Hyphaene thebaica palm, *Neoregelia* Powerpoint, *Neoregelia* Vertigo



March Meeting

Gary Turner's Show may be Part 1 of the Colorful Bromeliads of Hawaii

Gary Turner gave us a slide show on his 2011 trip with John Molnar to the state of Hawaii. He started with the normal tourist attractions in Honolulu with a focus on the Foster Botanical Garden, probably the oldest and largest of the gardens in Honolulu. Although there are many bromeliads in the gardens, the gigantic palm was of particular interest.

The Doum Palm (*Hyphaene thebaica*) is from north Africa and gets as tall as 60 feet. And Gary pointed out that you must be careful to avoid falling fruit.

Our next stop was on the northern part of Oahu where the Olomana Tropicals Nursery is located. Lisa Vinzant has several acres of greenhouses and lath houses where she produces magnificent bromeliad

hybrids. Lisa has been growing and breeding plants in Hawaii for over 15 years and some of the best bromeliad hybrids in most of the more popular genera are coming from Lisa. Gary wowed us with photos of stunning plants. If there was a favorite plant of Gary's, we saw several photos from all angles. The colors were so intense that I doubt we could maintain the

Photo of Richard Wigen's amazing *Aechmea* Big Mama does not do it justice!

Hawaii has ideal conditions for growing almost any tropical plant. Lisa ships some of her hybrids to the Michael Kiehl nursery in Florida where they can be distributed on the mainland. I suspect most of us have at least one of her gems.

Because there were so many beautiful photos in so many greenhouses, Gary did not

get to show us his slides of the nurseries on the big island. So I guess we will be seeing Part 2 of John and Gary's vacation at a later meeting. Thanks for the amazing plant photos Gary as well as promoting the upcoming conference in Hawaii.



Although our plant table was fantastic as always, 2 plants stood out: Richard Wigen's *Aechmea* Big Mama was "big" and colorful. Darold Petty's *Tillandsia seleriana* was twice as large as any I have ever seen.

Get Acquainted With The Other Genera (Part 2)

This article by Herb Plever is reprinted from the March 2001 newsletter of the New York Bromeliad Society. Continued from last month.

Lindmania holstii



Pitcairnia andreana



Navia arida



Catopsis berteroniana

Connellia (6 species) is a genus, which, regrettably, does not seem to be in cultivation. The species are small with leaves ranging from 4" to 12" long and the flowers are showy with rose to violet petals. These plants are narrowly distributed at very high altitudes in the Guyana Highlands and Bolivar Mountain in Venezuela, and perhaps they do not readily adapt to outdoor culture at sea level. [they might do well in our area, if they were available. - Ed.]

Lindmania (38 species), a recently resurrected genus, is narrowly distributed in the mountains of Venezuela at relatively high altitudes. The species range from small to large with leaves from 3" to 3' long. I don't know if the tiny rosette. *L. holstii*, can be grown out of habitat, but it (and other likely ornamental Lindmanias) are not in cultivation at this time. It was discovered by Bruce Holst of Selby Botanical Gardens in two large colonies on the floor of a cave-like sandstone crevice at 6,000 feet. Only with the use of a helicopter was it possible for Mr. Holst to reach this rock-sloped location.

Pepinia was resurrected as a genus in 1998. Its taxonomic relationship with Pitcairnia has been and still is confusing. The latest "Alphabetical List of Bromeliad Binomials" by Harry Luther shows Pepinia with 52 species, 40 species having been removed from Pitcairnia, subgenus Pepinia. This valuable list, published biannually by BSI is available for \$10.00 pp. on line at

www.bsi.org (Click on Publications). (Robinson and Taylor merged Pepinia back into Pitcairnia in 1999 but Luther has retained it as a genus for now.) The species may grow epiphytic or saxicolous at low altitudes, moist near water in Venezuela, Columbia, Ecuador, Suriname, Brazil, Haiti, etc. They have very attractive 3 feet upright leaves so they take little horizontal space, and long, brilliant red blooms. I am familiar only with *P. sanguinea*, *P. corallina*, *P. fulgens*, and *P. sprucei*.

Pitcairnia (305 species) is too complex a genus to describe in this short space. It is widely distributed from Mexico and the West Indies and Brazil to Argentina, in diverse habitats. I would generalize its cultural needs as being moderate light and good humidity. Its species may or may not have spines; its flower petals may or may not have appendages and their colors may range from white to yellow to green to red to violet. The genus has many ornamental species, the most popular being *P. andreana*, *P. flamma* (with 7 varieties), *P. heterophylla*, *P. smithiorum*, and *P. tabuliformis*.

Brocchinia (20 species) are medium to very large terrestrial plants narrowly distributed in the mountains of Venezuela and Columbia. Their very long leaves are mostly upright. I don't know if any species are in cultivation and I don't believe they are very ornamental.

Ayensua is another single species genus. *A. uaipanensis* is a small plant which grows in dense colonies terrestrially and saxicolous in the mountains of Venezuela. I don't believe it is in cultivation.

Navia (90 species) includes some tall and many low and small plants distributed in Guyana, Venezuela and Columbia. Their habitats may range from as low as a river ledge to 2,000 feet up. No doubt, there are many attractive ornamental species, but only a few are in cultivation: *Navia igneosicola*, *N. arida*, *N. pungens* and *N. splendens*. These are small low plants with few, flat leaves that turn color when they produce orange or yellow flowers in the center without a scape, like a neoregelia or *Guzmania sanguinea*. *N. arida* turns intense orange and yellow. *N. splendens* turns red. *N. pungens* turns white and *N. igneosicola* turns bright yellow and red. Those who attended the last World Conference in San Francisco received a special gift of *Navia igneosicola* and other plants.

Brewcaria (6 species) is a recently created genus with which I have no familiarity.

Sub-family Tillandsioideae has 9 genera (*Guzmania*, *tillandsia* and *vriesea* are not covered):

Glomeropitcairnia (2 species) are large epiphytes, which grow in open forests in the Lesser Antilles, Trinidad and Venezuela.

Glomeropitcairnia erectiflora has a tall, compound inflorescence similar to *Hohenbergia stellata*, with a bright red axis and yellow bracts and flowers.

Catopsis (18 species) are small epiphytes found in Florida, Mexico and the West Indies to Brazil and Peru. Strongly asymmetric sepals distinguish them botanically. Their branched inflorescences put up many small bright yellow flowers. Many species grow shaded on branches where leaves fall into their cups and decompose into a nutritional mush. Some species, such as *C. berteronia* grow unshaded in the open where falling leaves are unavailable. But they have a cretaceous, waxy coating on the inside of their leaves, which turn out to be an evolutionary device to obtain nutrients. The strong ultra-violet reflections on the shiny coating cause insects to lose their bearings and fall into the water into the cup where they drown because the slippery coating makes it difficult for them to climb out. In cultivation are *C. berteroniana* (carnivorous), *C. subulata* (nice, tight conformation), *C. morreniana*, *C. hahnii*, *C. montana*, *C. paniculata*, and *C. sessiliflora*. I like *C. compacta* but it is hard to find.

Alcantarea (17 species) was created by elevating the *Vriesea* sub-genus *Alcantarea* to genus status. These are large plants from southeastern Brazil. Best known are *A. imperialis* and *A. regina*.

Werauhia (72 species) was named for the late Werner Rauh. They are narrowly distributed in Costa Rica and Panama at high elevations. They range from medium to small and their flowers are generally dull white to green. Some, such as *W. kepperiana* have strong leaf markings.

Racinaea (58 species) was created by elevating the *tillandsia* sub-genus *pseudocatopsis* to genus status. Botanically, it is characterized by its asymmetric sepals (as in *Catopsis*). The inflorescences are branched with many very small flowers, which range from white to bright red. Most of the species are quite small, frequently weird and contorted as in *R. crispa* and *R. undulifolia* and some are medium-large with

large branched red blooms, such as *R. fraseri*.

Mezobromelia (9 species) are medium to larger sized plants growing epiphytically at high altitudes in Ecuador, Columbia, and Peru. Inflorescences are impressively showy with bright red scapes and red or yellow bracts.



Racinaea undulifolia

Bromeliad Plant Sale

Tom Koerber, a longtime member of our society and possibly our best grower, is selling some of his surplus bromeliads. This is a unique opportunity because Tom's plants are spectacular. If you are interested in purchasing some of his plants, please give him a call to set up an appointment. His phone number is 510-655-0983.

A Greenhouse for Beginners - Part 1

This article is by Carola Ziermann (one of our members) and I think you will really enjoy it and perhaps get a greenhouse for yourself.

It was my husband's hobby, really: Bromeliads -these plants that hardly ever change. I joined the Bromeliad Society with him so we'd do something together. Dedicated to the growth and spread of horticultural and scientific knowledge of the Bromeliad Family (Bromeliaceae) and enthusiasm for the preservation of its species and habitats, the Bromeliad Society of San Francisco has monthly meetings where they show these attractive plants, share their knowledge and give informational talks.

The meetings start with a show-and-tell session, usually presented by the most knowledgeable guy I've ever heard talking about plants, Dennis. He knows all and everything about just any plant it seems, not only bromeliads. I happily carried a protea one day that I had bought at a sales event next door, and I stood immediately corrected: "That is not a *Protea*, that's a *Leucodendron*". At the end of each meeting there is a raffle to cover some of the cost for the room rental. I suspect it is purely done to help redistribute the longtime members' plants of which they must have in abundance. Carl, the Society's president and in this function the raffle facilitator, makes sure that everyone gets to take home a fair share of the seemingly never ending supply of plants on the raffle table.

At first, I kept coming back because I liked the people so much. It was fun to help out at the annual plant sale or with the setup before the sale. Even though I had no clue about bromeliads, I finally felt I could contribute a bit more than the annual membership fee when I was asked to write the labels for the plants for sale. Since I took Latin in school, I know how to spell the mostly Latin based names for these plants: Bromeliad *recurvata benrathii*, for instance, with two "i"s. Or *Tillandsia somnians* -and I actually understand what these names mean: A bromeliad with leaves bent backwards and named after Mr. Benrath; and a "dreaming" tillandsia -this one is actually very rare and special but Society member Dan has plenty of them. I really felt to be part of the group after I seemed to have found even Dennis' approval when I had baked a mushroom pate' for a meeting and almost everyone asked me for the recipe. However, I still didn't know anything about these plants. Is a Tillandsia a Bromeliad? What is a Vriesea and why is this a Billbergia? And what is the difference between a Neoregelia and an Aechmea again?

After a while, I had collected a great amount of bromeliads through raffle winnings, from sales leftovers and gifts from members. BSSF has a very nice Christmas party in lieu of the December meeting where members exchange gifts, usually the most awesome plants. I had watched these plants grow and many of them show their unique characteristics and some of them unfold their amazing blossoms that they keep for months. Beautiful! I developed a real interest in them and one day, I bought two pounds of stickers, asked a lot of questions and began to sort out my plants and to label them. Finally, I was somehow able to tell them apart.

The Bromeliad Society organizes annual garden tours where members



open their homes and gardens for everyone to see. Realizing that most of them have not just one, but several greenhouses, I now understand the question often asked at the show-and-tell "...and you have this one in your dry greenhouse...?" Aren't all greenhouses dry? That's the point isn't it - to protect the plants from cold and rainy weather? "No, I have this one in my wet greenhouse." A wet greenhouse? Some members have greenhouses with sophisticated spraying and watering systems on a timer, especially when collecting Tillandsias. Take Marilyn and Peder, for instance. They must have at least four or five greenhouse on their huge property. Marilyn even has a separate "Potting Station" and Peder explained to me the tubing sprinkler - or should I say misting system in one of their greenhouses - so thought-through and detailed that it not only provides each tillandsia with the necessary amount of mist in certain intervals, but it also maintains a steady humidity level. Roger, our newsletter editor, has two or three greenhouses, one full of cacti and succulents in tiny pots that stand on roster-like shelves. "This is good; makes the watering easy, right? You just use a hose and the water runs through." "No, of course not, I water each plant individually. "He showed me a pint-sized watering can with a long thin spout. "With this one? That takes hours...!" "Just takes me about one and a half..." Now that is dedication! I can't possibly spend that much time on my plants. "Bromeliads actually thrive on neglect" said Carl and other members agreed. That advice works for me.

(We will complete article next month.)

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 sfbromeliad.org 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 payable to the BSSF to: Harold Charns, BSSF Treasurer, 255 States Street, San Francisco, CA 94114-1405.

OFFICERS and DIRECTORS

President	Carl Carter	carl.m.carter@sbcglobal.net	510-318-2379
Vice President	Dan Arcos	darcos@pacbell.net	415-823-9661
Treasurer	Harold Charns	Harold@States-Street.com	415-861-6043
Director	Roger Lane	rdodger@pacbell.net	650-949-4831
Director	Marilyn Moyer	MarilynMoyer@comcast.net	650-365-5560
Director	Peder Samuelson	Pedersam@comcast.net	650-365-5560
Director	Peter Wan	Peter195110@yahoo.com	408-500-2103



Tillandsia pamela

BROMELIAD SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

The Bromeliad Society International publishes the Journal bimonthly at Orlando, Florida. Subscription price (in U.S. \$) is included in the 12-month membership dues. Please address all membership and subscription correspondence to Membership Secretary Annette Dominquez, 8117 Shenandoah Dr., Austin, TX 78753-5734, U.S.A. or go to www.bsi.org.

Roger Lane

551 Hawthorne Court
Los Altos, CA 94024