

# NEWSLETTER



JUNE 1993

# THE GOLD COAST SUCCULENT AND BROMELIAD SOCIETY

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	Graham Besgrove	
	Terry Vogt	
	John and Pat Carpenter	
PLANT SALES SUPERVISOR	Doug Reilly	
LIBRARIAN	John Catlan	
CATERING SUPERVISOR	Irene Small	
RAFFLES SUPERVISOR	Roy Wenzel	

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## MEETING DATES AND VENUE

Our meetings are always held at the Red Cross Rooms, 11th Avenue, Palm Beach on the second Saturday of each month starting at 1.30 pm.

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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### JUNE

25, 26 & 27 Home Garden Expo, Nambour Show Ground

### JULY

10 Committee Meeting at 12.30 pm  
Regular Meeting: Slides and Auction of Letter Holder

### AUGUST

7 & 8 Display at Carrara: Pioneer Rally  
14 Regular Meeting

## DISCLAIMER

Opinions expressed in the Newsletter are the contributor's own and are not necessarily those of the Committee or the Gold Coast Succulent and Bromeliad Society.

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We had no meeting in April. Our meeting in May was attended by 24 members. Phyllis Hobbs gave a talk on "Growing Bromeliads". An extract of this talk is included in this newsletter. Lucky Door Prize was won by Cath Chumbley.

It was with regret that we accepted the resignation of our Secretary, Genny. Work commitments have forced her to do so. Thank you for your work, Genny.

Our April/May newsletter was printed before our trip to Mullumbimby. We would like to thank Clarrie and Gloria for a lovely day and for arranging a surprise visit to Buck and Joyce's home. To Clarrie and Gloria, many thanks from members and their guests who were all presented with a potted Blood Lilly on their departure. More news of these visits later in this newsletter.

We are having another display for the Pioneer Rally South Coast Restoration Society at Carrara on 7 and 8 August.

We will be voting on the name of our Newsletter at the July meeting.

Some of the plants on Show and Tell:

*Billbergia macrocalyx*, Chas Webb, *Aechmea recurvata* variety *benrathii*, *Guzmania*, *Neoregelia* Rosella - miniature  
*Canmea* Jaspa (*Canistrum fosteriana* x *Aechmea orlandiana*)

Don and Phyllis Hobbs brought plants in for sale and donated the money to the Society. Genny auctioned a pup of one of the Show and Tell plants and this was also donated to the Society. Many thanks to you from the Society.

Thanks also to our roving reporters, Olwen Ferris and Barry Hertzog for their reports on our field trip to Mullumbimby.

## **DISPLAY**

The Pioneer Rally organised by the South Coast Restoration Society will be held at Carrara on 7 and 8 August and will be out in the field under cover like last year. We will be selling plants. There will be 20% commission, so please price your plants accordingly. We will let you know about times to set up when we find out more.

Mary

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## **PLANT SALES**

You can bring in your excess plants for sale at our meetings. They must be healthy plants and be named, if possible. They can be any kind of plant, not just succulents and bromeliads. There is a 10% commission to the Society on all sales.

Please see that you have a tag with your name and the price of the plant attached to each pot. The tags are available through the Society now. Make use of them and make Doug's work easier for him.

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## **WELCOME**

A big welcome to some new members:

Buck and Joy Staff  
Joy Flockhart  
Monica Bailey  
Jill Syreh  
Robert Larnach

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## **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Subscriptions are due in October of each year. If you require postage of your newsletters, please forward 11 (eleven) current-price stamps.

Family - \$6.00  
Single - \$4.00

## A GARDEN OF DELIGHT

Olwen Ferris

On Saturday, 24 April 1993, about twenty-odd members and friends visited Clarrie and Gloria Morrow at Mullumbimby in Northern New South Wales.

As you left the street front and walked up the driveway towards the house, you enter a nice woodsy area that has been added to over the years with exotic palms, cycads, etc.

Delightful alcoves have been added here and there by adding attractive rocks, tree stumps and old attractive bits of timber.

A level area has been set aside for a barbeque area with seating for guests, who are surrounded with bromeliads and other plants, all placed in strategic positions. I don't think I've ever seen a better *Vriesea hieroglyphica* specimen than the one with three lovely offsets attached.

The lovely rock and log mounds had pockets for plants and here bromeliads and native orchids were thriving while higher up tillandsias were getting established.

One area was guarded by a realistic dinosaur, sprawled between the trees and rocks. In another spot, sprawled a fiery dragon, complete with flashing red eyes. They were works of art and made from different types of rocks.

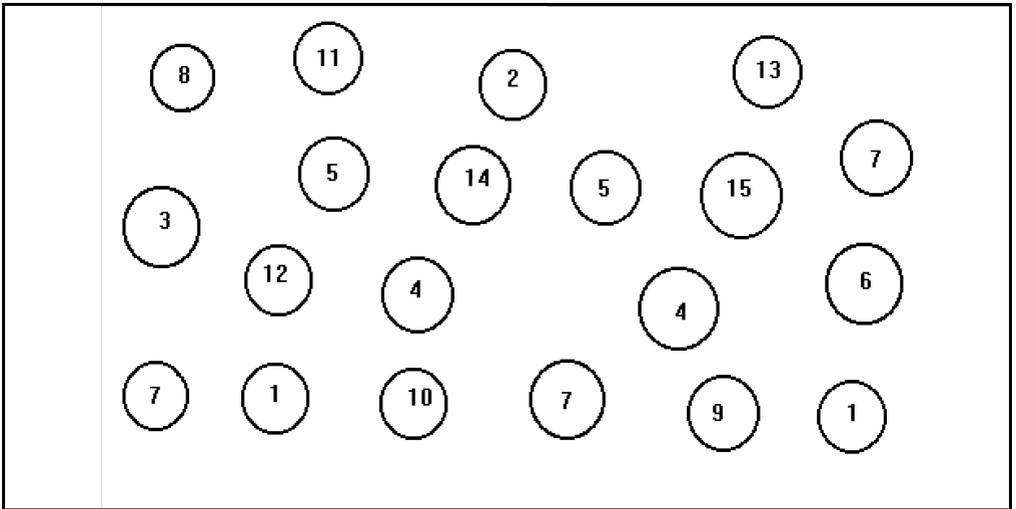
The land slopes down behind the house and here a giant poinciana tree protects a large group of heliconias and other plants.

Thanks Clarrie and Gloria for a remarkable experience in your garden.

## ANSWER TO A FREQUENT QUESTION

Olwen Ferris

What plants can I grow in a sloping rockery bed in full sun?



Answer:

- 1 *Cryptbergia* Red Burst
- 2 *Aechmea distichantha*
- 3 *Aechmea distichantha x recurvata*
- 4 *Aechmea* Mary Brett
- 5 *Aechmea nudicaulis*
- 6 *Aechmea pineliana* variety *minima*
- 7 *Aechmea recurvata* (All varieties)
- 8 *Ananas comosus* (Plant a pineapple top)
- 9 *Dyckia brevifolia*
- 10 *Dyckia leptostachyl*
- 11 *Neoregelia pascoalina* (*carcharodon*)
- 12 *Neoregelia chlorosticta*
- 13 *Neoregelia cruenta*
- 14 *Neoregelia marmorata*
- 15 *Neoregelia monstrusum*

## CLAY VERSUS PLASTIC

Clay pots vary from plastic pots in one basic way, evaporation from the side of the pot. This evaporation results in a reduced temperature of the container and a loss of fertilizer shown by a white salt powder on the container.

The evaporation comparison between containers was made by filling the containers with potting mix but no plants. Everything seems to effect the results wind, cloud, temperature and humidity, so results have been expressed in percentages and are only for comparison.

<b>SEASON</b>	<b>PLASTIC</b>	<b>CLAY</b>
Summer	25%	40%
Winter	10%	15%

This means clay pots will need watering more often than plastic and will have a greater exchange of air in the soil, for as the water evaporates it will drag air down through the top of the container. You will have to pay particular attention on hot, low humidity, summer days.

The evaporation has a cooling effect resulting in winter being about 1°C different but in summer it is not uncommon to be 5°C cooler, with bromeliads from the colder areas the reduction in winter temperatures should not effect growth but with summer temperatures it may be beneficial.

Terracotta coloured plastic pots were used because during the day, white plastic pots in the open can be 5°C cooler.

John and Genny  
Mango Mansion, 4208

## EXTRACTS FROM TALK BY PHYL HOBBS

Olwen asked me to write an article for the journal, setting out the subjects that I covered in my talk at the May meeting. As a follow up to this article, I would like to suggest opinions, for or against, be prepared for future journals. We are still learning when it comes to growing bromeliads, and your input could be helpful in ideas to try and improve what we are doing.

First of all let me say, that how we grow is for the conditions in our locality. This has to be taken into consideration. We have a lot of wind which makes it difficult to maintain humidity but as not all plants require high humidity, we have tried to make different areas of the greenhouse like separate habitats. Growing in the open garden has been trial and error, and we are still trying.

### **Potting Mix**

We have tried lots of different combinations. Some have broken down too quickly leaving the mix holding too much moisture. We have finally settled on the following. All measurements are bucketfuls:

- 5 fine pine bark (sieved)
- 1 peatmoss
- 1 ½ fine charcoal
- 1 fine styrienne granules
- 1½ cups blood and bone

### **Removing Offsets**

I take them off whenever they are ready, regardless of the time of year. I don't let them get too large as this will sometimes spoil the shape of the plants. The most important thing is to be sure that the heel of the offset is hard. It is from here that the new roots will form. A small amount of twelve-month Nutricote is added at potting time. Be sure and cover the Nutricote with mix to ensure the even release of nutrients.

## **Watering**

The more open the mix the more often you water. During the summer I thoroughly soak the plants once a week making sure the pots are watered. The greenhouse is also misted every day. The hotter and drier the weather conditions the more often I do it. A misting attachment on the end of the watering wand make this job quick and easy. It also raises the humidity levels. Very important. The Tillandsias, Vrieseas and Guzmanias are foliar fed regularly. Through summer once a week and keeping this up except for the few fairly cold weeks in the middle of winter. At this time it is best to water and feed before 11 o'clock allowing the plants to dry thoroughly before night time.

## **Light**

This is one of the most important aspects of cultivating bromeliads. Every genera has different requirements. Even in one genera there are different requirements. It is impossible to generalise. The best method I have found is when you are visiting a bromeliad grower's garden and you see something looking perfectly happy take notice of where it is placed in relation to shade and sun. Ask a million questions. Plant people are happy to share their growing tips. Another way to learn is if you buy a plant that you think is growing well, take it out of the pot and have a look at the potting mix, but relate it to your own conditions. I don't like a mix that is heavy when you pick the pot up, but that is just me, it doesn't make it wrong.

Don't every stop asking question. Enjoy your plants.

Phyl Hobbs

## THOUGHTS ON ROOTING DIFFICULT BROMELIADS

Dutch Vandervort

For years I have had a terrible time getting offsets from some of my choicest plants to root. I have tried all kinds of variations of mix, pH, wetness, dryness, wet/dry cycle, rooting hormone, Superthrive, superphosphate, balanced fertilizers, and every other variable I could think of. In spite of this it regularly takes a year or more to get roots on the likes of *Orthophytum navioides*.

Just to prove it could be done, I once grew a hard-core terrestrial bromeliad, *Hechtia tillandsioides* in water. It grew well for about three years until my normally tolerant and accommodating wife got tired of having it on her kitchen counter and made me plant it in the garden.

About a month ago, while planting up some *Orthophytum navioides* pups, I reflected on the time it would take to get them rooted. The *Hechtia* experience came to mind and I decided to try one of the *Orthophytum navioides* pups in water.

The pup was about two inches tall. I stripped off six or eight of the basal leaves, dipped it in rooting hormone, let it dry, and propped it up in a narrow-mouthed mustard jar (the label is gone, and I can't remember the brand), which I filled with clear water and a drop of Superthrive. That was it! The result was beyond belief. In less than a month my plant produced a fair mass of mature branching roots. Sibling pups potted at the same time have yet to form their first visible root.

Does this mean that hydroponics is the wave of the future for bromeliads? Only time and experimentation will tell.

*Ventura, California*

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Bromeliad Society Incorporated, January-February 1991*

## **PHOTOGRAPH APPEAL**

If you have an additional copy of photos of your Bromeliads in bloom, why not donate them to the Society's Library.

The goal is to have a compilation of photos in albums to help with future identification of plants. So bring in those photos, please.

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## **JULY AUCTION**

We would like to thank Buck and Joyce Staff (new members) for their gift of a letter holder/serviette holder. We will hold an auction of this delightful gift to raise funds for the Society. This holder is handmade so dig deep into those pockets to show our appreciation.

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## **FIELD DAY: PART 2**

Barry Hertzog

A convoy of cars left Clarrie and Gloria Morrow's home proceeding back into Mullumbimby where we visited the home of Buck and Joyce Staff. As we walked up the drive, Buck invited us to enter his home. What a surprise was in store for us. Buck must be the "Prince of Collectors".

Most walls in the house were covered with shelves and units which displayed their many outstanding collections. These included Jim Beam ceramic whiskey decanters, Toby jugs, Whiskey jugs, Jim Beam miniatures, china and brass shoes and boots, old telephones, and Australiana. There was even a Jim Beam train-set consisting of an engine, tender and carriages - over a metre in length and the contents were untouched.

Next we went outside to a shed where there was a collection of bottles which dated back to the last century. My guess was there would be more than a thousand bottles on display. And there were other collections including plates, inkwells and barbed wire. Next we went into the large shadehouse which displayed a nice collection of plants, and pennants which they had won from the Northern Star Garden Competition. The gardens of the house were neat and well presented.

## **LIBRARY BOOKS**

Library books are available on loan for one (1) month only. Please return them so someone else can take the book out.

We are trying to build up our Library. The money raised by a cent auction in March will be of great use for this purpose. John is trying to get the old magazines together in folders as many of you are asking about them. They will soon be in the Library for your use.



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## **ORDINARY RAFFLE**

This is one way of making money for the Society. It is up to all of us to help by bringing in some plant/s when we have extra ones. It doesn't have to be a bromeliad, just something you would like to win yourself. Let us see if we can make this one good continuous raffle.

## PLANT ROSTER

We are now operating a roster to share the responsibility of bringing in plants for the Lucky Door Prize and the Special Raffle. If anyone other than the people rostered for that month would like to donate a plant, please feel free to do so. The plants do not have to be succulents or bromeliads.

### JULY

Lucky Door Prize: Graham Besgrove

Special Raffle: Pat Carpenter, Evelyn Reilly, Bev Collins

### AUGUST

Lucky Door Prize: Barry Hertzog

Special Raffle: Phyllis King, Rolly Reilly, Mac McAlister

If you are unable to attend the meeting, either get the plant to someone to take it in for you or swap with someone else.

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## !! CONGRATULATIONS !!

Happy Birthday to Jum Daniels and Don Hobbs.

Happy Wedding Anniversary to Terry and Jan Vogt.



If you would like to have a birthday message put in the Newsletter, please just let us know. You don't have to tell us the year. This is your newsletter, make use of it.

## THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*To err is human*

*but to really foul things up*

*requires a computer.*

*Anon*

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### WANTED URGENTLY

Could you please get pen to paper and write us a story, long or short on how you began collecting bromeliads, or your first attempt to grow bromeliads, or even the way you grow your favourite bromeliads.

There are many members who have a long distance to come to meetings so this is one way you can participate. This is your Newsletter. Let's try to make it better.

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### FANTASTIC PLASTIC

On this particular day we had a very startling display of bromeliads, one of the passing public stopped dead. With a voice that would shatter plate glass she stated, "that's exactly what I want for my lounge room".

When I mentioned they would require a bright location, "You mean they're not plastic. Oh, no! I don't have any plants that are not plastic", was the shrill reply.

John and Genny  
Mango Mansion, 4208

## HELP?

If you have a plant that you are not happy with the way it is growing, bring it in and our panel will help with ideas on what you can do different.

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## BUY AND SELL

If any members have plants they are looking for or plants to sell, tell us. We will put it in the newsletter for you. This is your newsletter, make it work for you.

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## ITEMS FOR SALE

<b>POTS</b>	125 mm squat pot	25c
	140 mm	30c
	165 mm	40c
<b>LABELS</b>	10 for	50c
<b>PENCILS</b>	\$2.50	each
<b>SALES STICKERS</b>	5¢ each or 10 for 50¢	
	Available from the	Treasurer, Jum Daniels
<b>SOCIETY BADGES</b>	\$3.00 each	
	Available from the	Treasurer, Jum Daniels
<b>BOOK</b>	"Bromeliads for Everyone" by Bea Hanson -	\$3.50

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## WHO AM I?

Don't forget, anyone who has a mature plant or one in flower but doesn't know it's name, our experts are here to help identify it for you.

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