

NEWSLETTER



JULY 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	

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.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

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

SEPTEMBER

- 11 Regular Meeting and Cent Auction

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.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our June meeting was attended by 22 members and a visitor, Kathleen Henderson from Billinudgel and 17 apologies. We got off to a late start as some of our members attended the Combined Cacti and Bromeliad Show at the Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens in Brisbane before the meeting. We had been invited to put on a display there but we had to decline as we had a display at the Gold Coast Rotary Landscape and Garden Fair only the previous weekend.

Our very experienced landscape man, Graham, again did a wonderful job under difficult conditions of erecting an eye-catching display. He had a choice, for a change, of having more plants to choose from than could be used and everybody had plants to take home. Thank you one and all. We have been invited to participate again next year. For the next display we have had the offer of a light which will make the display so much brighter. We did such a good trade on Saturday that calls for help went out Saturday night and by 8.00 am on Sunday the call was answered. A special thank you to those people who went out in the dark and cold for their Society.

The Pioneer Rally set up by the South Coast Restoration Society is to be held on the 7 and 8 August. It was very pleasing to see in one of our free newspapers a piece on Society. Our thanks to our hard-working PR lady, Olwen.

Our day finished with the Cent Auction which went off very well. There is a certain member with royalty in her name who has an uncanny knack of always going home with a truckload of plants. Who could this be? Thank you everybody for supplying plants. Keep up the good work. Our next Cent Auction is in September. Last but not least, a few thank yous that must be said. To Diana Hughes for standing in a Secretary; John Carpenter for stand-in plant salesman; Audrey McAlister for stand-in ticket seller; Mac McAlister for Cent Auction ticket seller; to Peter Ludswici for taking on the Society's sales table; and to John Catlan, Peter and Genny for their excellent handling of the Cent Auction.

There were only a few plants on Show and Tell:

Vriesea Natacha

Tillandsia vicentina

Tillandsia stricta Nigra on a branch

Crypthanthus Coffee Royale on a hollow length of log

Aechmea orlandiana

Aechmea recurvata on a rock

Billbergia x Quesnelia

Clump of *Aechmea Lucky Stripes* in a piece of treefern

On a sadder note, we would like to express our sympathies to Peter Ludswici at the loss of his father.

DISPLAY

The Pioneer Rally organised by the South Coast Restoration Society will be held at Carrara Sports Complex on 7 and 8 August 1993. Please would you have your plants ready for display and sales. There will be 20% commission, so please price your plants accordingly. We will be in a tent outside in the field with all the others as last year. The time of setting up is not as yet known but please contact Mary or Olwen at a later date.

Mary

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.

WELCOME

A big welcome to some new members:

Jim and Gwen Kerr.

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.

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.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Before the last meeting began, I went out to see who was arriving and noticed an elderly lady staggering up the footpath. She called to me for help and asked to be taken to a local clinic for an injection for the pain. Just at that moment Cath arrived on the scene and I asked her for help. She took the lady around to the clinic and she was given the pain killer. Then Cath took her home and put her to bed before coming to attend the meeting. Thank you, Cath. We're very proud of you.

Mary

VALE

It is with extreme sadness that we have to inform members that Tom Alton, a member of our society from Sydney, passed away on 28 June 1993. Tom joined the society in June 1991 while he and his wife, Pat, were visiting with Graham and Wendy during the Queen's Birthday long weekend. Tom was a very active member of the Australian Bromeliad Society and displayed, competed and organised shows. He also served on information panels and contributed with articles for Australian and international societies' newsletters and held a position on that Society's Committee until recent times. As a society, we extend to Pat and her family our sincere condolences.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS: Conducted by Derek Butcher

QUESTION: Why do some bromeliads in my collection never flower?

ANSWER:

We do not really know the answer and we all have similar problems. If we could repeat the conditions of the habitat we might expect success but how many hobbyists have such facilities? Experienced growers have reported very long delays and failures with plants that they collected, and they should know all about the original growing conditions. Local climates probably have a great effect on bromeliad flowering. Sometimes local conditions will be more beneficial than the natural. *Puya raimondii*, for example, is believed to take over 100 years to flower in the Bolivian Andes but seeds grown at the Berkeley Botanical Gardens of the University of California reached maturity in 28 years?

You may use carbide, Florel, or even a ripe apple in a bag with your reticent plant but what we are seeking is to have the plant flower on its own under the conditions that we can offer.

Without using artificial stimulants why not think about possible reasons. Has some change created a draft where the air used to be calm? Have you added shade cloth and reduced the amount of sunlight and air circulation? Too much shade can retard flowering as much as too much light. Have you tried moving the plant to another location?

Some plants flower readily only when they have formed a clump such as *Vriesea flammea* likes to do. You may have to know the idiosyncrasies of your plant. some caulescent plants like *Tillandsia edithae* do not like to be forever pointing upwards but prefer to hang down with only the growing tip pointing up.

When your hard-to-flower bromeliad eventually obliges, it is a great thrill, so don't throw that plant away prematurely. Remember that the older the plant the larger the inflorescence. Keep experimenting.

Reprinted from Journal of The Bromeliad Society
Bromeliad Society Incorporated, May-June 1993

FIND-A-WORD

A	R	V	E	N	S	I	S	A	N	E	O	M	A	N
R	U	B	R	A	C	A	U	D	A	T	A	T	H	O
G	C	L	A	P	S	L	O	W	T	S	E	I	S	L
E	U	I	P	A	R	B	Y	U	I	G	C	L	U	Y
N	S	X	N	A	R	I	O	V	E	R	H	L	T	T
T	P	A	T	A	R	D	E	E	P	O	M	A	A	C
E	N	S	V	I	C	A	L	Y	X	W	E	N	E	A
A	A	B	I	L	L	B	E	R	G	I	A	D	T	D
A	N	E	S	E	I	A	P	E	X	T	I	S	C	O
T	U	R	U	N	E	N	B	R	A	C	T	I	A	R
A	S	T	N	S	I	I	D	N	O	M	I	A	R	H
N	E	W	E	E	T	I	I	W	O	W	O	G	B	T
R	B	I	G	U	N	R	E	X	D	E	L	A	X	Y
O	R	E	D	Q	A	N	A	I	N	O	B	I	L	R
V	J	U	N	C	E	A	I	R	E	S	S	A	L	E

Amoena	Billbergia	Deep	Lasseri	Rubra
Aechmea	Bract	Erythrodactylon	Nanus	Red
Albida	Big	End	Neo	Raimondii
Argentea	Bracteatus	Genus	New	Slow
Arvensis	Bert	It	Ornata	Star
Apex	Carinata	Juncea	Over	Ti
Ananas	Caudata	Liboniana	Out	Tillandsia
Axil	Cusp	Lax	Quesnelia	Var
Ant	Calyx	Laevis	Rex	Vriesea
				Wow

Cross off words across, up, down, diagonal or backwards. If done correctly a message of 12 letters remains. What is it. Some letters are used more than once. Answer next month.

OUR INVOLVEMENT AND EXPERIENCE WITH BROMELIADS

Alastair (Mac) and Audrey McAlister

Our interest in Bromeliads first started in 1976 when visiting New Zealand and were fascinated by *Vriesea carinata* in a glasshouse in Auckland. Prior to that we had *Billbergia pyramidalis* (then commonly known as the "Pineapple Lily" or "Flaming Torch") in our garden and we had consumed many delicious juicy pineapples (*Ananus comosus*) without knowing the Bromeliad connections.

Subsequent to our visit to the land of the long white cloud, we endeavoured to buy some similar plants here, but this proved to be more difficult than we expected. However, our interest didn't wane and the purchase of two small books, "Bromeliads for Modern Living" and "Bromeliads and Orchids" gave us some interesting reading and more knowledge.

"Bromeliads for Modern Living" was printed in the USA in 1977 and part of the introduction included a section on "What's a Bromeliad" and this commenced with the sentence "Bromeliads as a group are not well known because they are relatively recent introductions to plant culture". Realising that the plants were native to tropical America and grew in the wild from southern United States to deep into South America we didn't expect to find them in great abundance in Australia.

We did, however, always call at nurseries on our travels and enquire about Bromeliads and mostly received the reply that they would only be found in a specialist nursery but we could never find such a place. The few plants we did manage to purchase in the early days of our collection were mostly unnamed or tagged with the word "Bromeliad" and were costly compared with current prices. During a visit to the Brisbane Exhibition in the late 1970s, we sighted some *Vrieseas* in the Bromeliad Society of Queensland display and whilst talking to the lady in control of the display we mentioned that we would like to be able to buy some similar plants. Her reply was, "So would I".

We eventually placed a notice in the Ipswich daily paper "Queensland Times" asking if any locals were interested in growing Bromeliads and from that notice we received a few phone calls which led to the formation of the Ipswich Bromeliad Society in about 1980. We subsequently joined the Queensland Society, Australian Society and American Society but currently are members only of Queensland and Gold Coast Societies.

Attending monthly meetings in Ipswich and Brisbane enabled us to enlarge our collection of plants and also gain more knowledge by listening to the experts and by the purchase of more books on the subject.

There haven't been too many worrying problems in our years of growing Bromeliads but we recall one instance that greatly concerned us in the winter of 1983 when we added plastic to the walls of our shad house in Ipswich to keep out the cold winter winds and by doing so, air circulation was reduced and a fungal problem developed in the *Vrieseas*. Several plants toppled out of pots after rotting at the base and a check of other plants showed similar symptoms developing, so Audrey took a chance and cut the tops off above the rotting section, dusted them with Lane's Cutting Powder and then placed them in fresh mixture. Twelve months later they were firm in the pots and showed no sign of rot.

Plants that were rare and costly some fifteen years ago are now more readily available at reasonable prices for society members starting a collection.

We are still learning and don't profess to have a great knowledge but we do know that the Gold Coast Society is very fortunate in having many knowledgeable members who are always willing to pass on their vast experience in many years of growing these interesting plants.

It has been said that to fall in love with Bromeliads is to enjoy a lifelong romance.

REPOTTING AND POTTING ON

When a plant outgrows its container, the question arises as to whether the plant should be repotted or potted on. The first action is to gently tap the plant out of the pot and inspect the roots and potting mixture. The ideal situation is where the potting mixture is fresh and well aerated, with no breakdown with all the mixture held by a network of fine roots with white tips. This indicates that all is well and the plant can be potted on.

If these conditions are not found, then a closer inspection is required. If the roots have not filled the pot, then check the size of the pot, quality of the potting mixture and the watering programme. If the roots have no white tips, this indicates no active growth. In this case, the grower should check for insect pests (mealy bug or symphylids), broken down potting mixture or unsuitable watering schedule. If the potting mixture has broken down causing waterlogging and loss of aeration, then check the composition of the mixture and the time in use.

In any of these latter instances, repotting of the plant is required. This involves washing the old mixture away from the roots, trimming away any dead roots and working fresh mixture between the healthy roots. This will cause some shock to the plant, but in the long run will be more beneficial than not doing anything.

Where potting on is appropriate, this involves putting the plant with the root ball undisturbed into a larger pot and filling in the extra space with fresh potting mixture. Disturbance to the plant is minimal, and growth usually proceeds uninterrupted.

Peter Paroz
*Reprinted from Bromeliaceae
Bromeliad Society of Queensland, November-December 1986*

QUESTION & ANSWERS: Conducted by Kathy Dorr

QUESTION: Are bromeliads parasites? What is the difference between a parasite and an epiphyte?

ANSWER:

Webster says: "Parasite - a plant or animal that lives on or within another organism, from which it derives sustenance or protection without making compensation."

"Epiphyte - a nonparasitic plant that grows on another plant but gets its nourishment from the air, as certain orchids, mosses, and lichens; air plant."

Bromeliads manufacture their own food and only use the plant or tree for attaching themselves.

QUESTION: What bromeliads would you suggest for long-lasting, colourful inflorescences?

ANSWER:

For a striking inflorescence that will last (usually) a minimum of six months and sometimes longer, I suggest the following: *Aechmea fasciata*, *A. Foster's Favorite*, *A. fulgens* var. *discolor*, *A. miniata*, *Tillandsia lindenii*, *Vriesea splendens* and *V. x mariae*, to name a few.

Reprinted from Journal of The Bromeliad Society
Bromeliad Society Incorporated, May-June 1990

TIPS FROM A NON-GROWER

If you have a problem with insects, a piece of mothball in the pot will shift the bugs by nightfall. Place a few mothballs in the corner of your bushhouse. They are cheap and safe and stop insect problems.

!! CONGRATULATIONS !!

Happy Birthday to Hazel Hertzog and Grace Goode. Also belated Happy Birthday to Graham Besgrove.



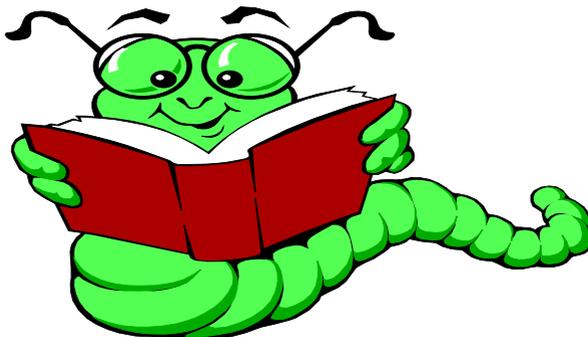
Happy 33rd Wedding Anniversary to Mary and Athol Nicholson.

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.

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.



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

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.

AUGUST

Lucky Door Prize: Barry Hertzog
Special Raffle: Phyllis King, Rolly Reilly, Mac McAlister

SEPTEMBER

Lucky Door Prize: Phyllis Hobbs
Special Raffle: Wendy Besgrove, Clarrie Morrow,
Diana Hughes

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.

CENT AUCTION

It was wonderful how much fun can be had by our Cent Auction every March, June and September. If members keep bringing in several plants each to be placed in groups the responsibility will be less of just the same few. The building up of our Library is the aim of the Cent Auction. Please remember to retain No. 1 ticket for the draw.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

*Flattery is telling other people
exactly what they think of themselves.*

WGP

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.

AECHMEA FOSTERS CHANT: AN OLDER BUT A GOODIE

A Grace Goode hybrid *A. chantinii* x *A. fosteriana*. There appears to be two clones - a green form with its shape leaning towards *A. fosteriana*. This plant flowered for me in 1992. It is not a spectacular flower and is probably why it has fallen from favour.

The second clone has characteristic black lines 0.5mm on the surface of the leaf running length-ways contrasting with the silver green of the leaf. It is very attractive.

Under magnification it would appear as if a line of cells on the surface of the leaf (epidermis) is missing and the cells under the surface (parenchyma) because of exposure to light have acquired red (melanic) colouring.

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.

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.

ITEMS FOR SALE

POTS	105 mm squat pot	20c
	125 mm	25c
	140 mm	30c
	165 mm	45c
	200 mm	65c
OSMOCOTE	500g	\$2.50 (9 month)
LABELS	10 for	50c
PENCILS	\$2.50 each	
SALES STICKERS	5¢ each or 10 for	50¢
SOCIETY BADGES	\$3.00 each	
	Available from the Treasurer,	Jum Daniels
BOOK	"Bromeliads for Everyone" by Bea Hanson -	\$3.50

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.