



East London Bromeliad Society South Africa

Established: 25 July 2009

NEWS
LETTER

August
2021

*Our aim is to promote and encourage awareness and interest
in Bromeliads in East London and all of South Africa!*

ELBSSA is an Affiliated Society



of Bromeliad Society International

Barrels and Mushrooms! - Lyn Wegner

What do you do when you have heaps of some *Tillandsia* varieties and you are running out of space! Where do you put all of them?

Barrels can be made in a variety of sizes, height and circumference, depending how many plants you have available. I use stiff wire mesh to form a barrel shape, sometimes I attach this wire barrel to a pot that fits the base of the barrel as in the *Tillandsia crocata* barrel, which has a nice coloured clump of *Tillandsia juncifolia* positioned on top.

My giant barrel of *Tillandsia* 'Ed Doherty', topped with *T. novakii*, (inflorescence developing now) has its base attached to a cement pot. This prevents it blowing over in the wind. It is a constant reminder of someone special, Ed Doherty, a former BSI Treasurer.

I have 3 hanging barrels. One with *T. funckiana*, *T. mallemonitii* and another of *T. albertiana*, which is still in process.

You can cable tie individual plants to the outside of the barrel or you can attach individual plants and hook them onto the side of the barrel. I have also used fishing line when I need extra attachment.

Then there are the mushrooms. I have used wire baskets, handles removed, turned them upside down and voilà you have a mushroom shape! I then add *Tillandsia* and prefer to use one variety per mushroom. I use fishing line to hold the plants in place.

I position the mushrooms on metal stakes. I have individual mushrooms in the garden as well as a group of 3 'plonked' onto metal spikes of varying lengths. They look great!

Tillandsia carminea (imported many years ago but it seems the name is

Tillandsia crocata barrel
with *Tillandsia juncifolia*
on top.

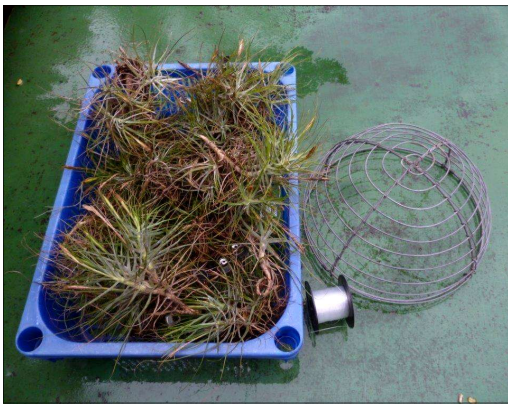


A 'barrel' of *Tillandsia funckiana*.



A 'barrel' of *Tillandsia* 'Ed Doherty' topped with *Tillandsia novakii*.

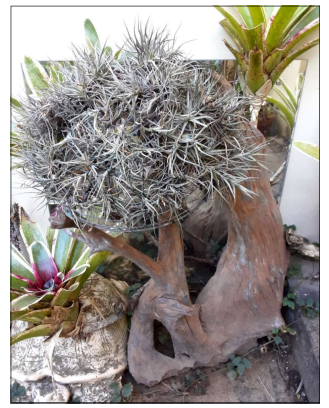
In light of the country still being on Level 3 Lockdown and rising infections in the Eastern Cape, the committee has taken the decision to cancel the forthcoming August meeting.



What you need to create a mushroom.



My three standing 'mushrooms' in the garden and a *Tillandsia bandensis* 'mushroom'.



incorrect, disappointing!), *T. erecta*, *T. araujei* (or is it *T. tenuifolia*?), *T. 'Veronica's Mariposa'* and the most recent, *T. schiedeana* var. *minor*.

These were fun to make and I am sure there will be more as time goes by!

Text and photos Lyn Wegner

Species of the Month - Lyn Wegner



A big surprise! My *Aechmea tocantina*, which I imported many years ago, has a developing inflorescence!

This species is found in Northern and Central America in the torrid Amazon Jungle. Torrid? I am surprised it is even blooming with our horrid, chilly temperatures this Winter.

We have had some rather low temps some mornings and evenings. I have noticed a fair amount of cold damage on *Neoregelia* in particular.

It grows epiphytically (mounted) and is rarely found growing as a terrestrial (in the ground) or as a saxicole (on and between rocks and crevices).

The plant grows from 1 to 2 meters tall, in an upright narrow bottle form with the upper foliage flaring outwards. The narrow leaves (mine has only 6) have large brown spines, spaced about 1 mm apart and end with a sharp spiky tip. I find the foliage attractive.

One source tells me the inflorescence, which is panicle (branched flower cluster), reaches 1 meter and another source says it reaches 17 to 33 cm. It has yellow/green berries.

It was first collected by Weddell near the Tocantin River in Brazil in 1844.

Mine is potted, in the garden in a sunny spot, next to *Ae. egleriana* which is still to bloom. Maybe I need to think about mounting it once it has finished blooming.



Aechmea tocantina

Information taken from Eric Gouda's *Bromeliad Encyclopaedia and Bromeliads* by Francisco Oliva-Estevé.

Member News

- A very big **WELCOME!!!!** to Ben Mayo from Cape Town and Ken and Rosalie Hillstead from Kei Mouth. We hope you enjoy a long and happy association with the society growing and spreading the love of bromeliads.
- We were very sad to learn of the passing of David Flint last week. Many of you will remember David from the early days of the society. He lived at Cove Rock Estate with his wife Carol and hosted one of our end of year Christmas Bring and Braai's. He had a riot of bromeliads and clivia in his typical coastal bush garden. Eddie and I visited him in April and he had planted up a new garden of bromeliads out on the front lawn so that the other residents could enjoy seeing them as they passed by. Our sincere condolences to his wife Carol.



In fond memory of David.

Committee Stuff

- If you would like to be listed on our website as a vendor selling bromeliads or Tillandsia in your community or countrywide, please go to the website, ELBSSA.co.za, scroll to the bottom and find the vendors application, you can also upload your business logo. I get requests via our Facebook page for bromeliad and Tillandsia vendors and as no buying or selling or promotions are permitted on the site it would be nice to be able to redirect folks to our website where they can find information for suppliers in their area or vendors who supply countrywide. Even if you don't have a business, but sell your plants, you can still have your name up there as a supplier in your area.

Upcoming Society Events

You will be advised via e mail with regard to the holding of further meetings. Although disappointing for many of us, it is not worth jeopardizing the safety of our members and their families.

- 29th August:** Due to Covid Level 3 regulations it has been decided it would not be advisable to meet this month. Keep safe, keep gardening!
- 26th September:** **ELBSSA AGM and 12th Birthday Celebrations, Annual Quiz, Tilly Toss, extra Raffles and Fizz Ananas** hosted by Trevor Wegner at 'Bromeliads for Africa', 18 Wentworth Road, Sunnyridge. This will be confirmed.
- 31st October:** Carol Gregory in their farm garden.
- 28th November:** **Christmas Bring and Braai**, Auction, BBB and loads of fun!!!!!!!!!!!!!! To be hosted by Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead in Beacon Bay.

Upcoming International Conferences

2021: The 70th Anniversary WBC2020 Due to the global Covid 19 pandemic this conference has been rescheduled. It will now take place on the 8 - 12 June 2022 in Sarasota, Florida, USA.

The following conference has now been postponed again to **March 22nd to 26th, 2023** due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. This biennial **Australasian Bromeliad Conference 'Kiwi Broms'** will again be hosted by The New Zealand Bromeliad Society and held at the same venue, Waipuna Hotel. Five of our members have already registered for this conference.

From Our Members

Local member, **Betty Heunis** sent a photo of her *Nidularium fulgens*. It is endemic to Brazil. Leaves have small spines and tend to be slightly narrower near the base and wider down their length before tapering to a definite point. Needs bright shade to morning sun.

Mark and Beth Brewer in Zimbabwe are looking for bromeliad seed. It is very difficult to get new varieties of bromeliads into Zimbabwe and they would like to add to what they have by growing from seed. If you have seed that you can harvest from any interesting varieties, please send it to me as I send parcels to Johannesburg regularly and Beth can arrange for someone to collect at some stage. If you would like to contact Mark and Beth direct: info@specialistsafaris.com

Would anyone be interested in getting something like this going? would anyone else be interested in growing from seed? Please contact me if you are interested in either getting seed or supplying seed for this kind of venture. blacket@telkomsa.net



Nidularium fulgens



Paul Isley

Lyn Wegner: Paul Isley visits South Africa!

Exciting news! Paul Isley and Jerry Robinson from Rainforest Flora, the Tillandsia nursery in Torrance, California, USA, will be in South Africa in April 2022 with their wives for Paul's daughter Kelsey's wedding to Brad Tandy, a South African Olympic swimmer to be held in the Drakensberg.

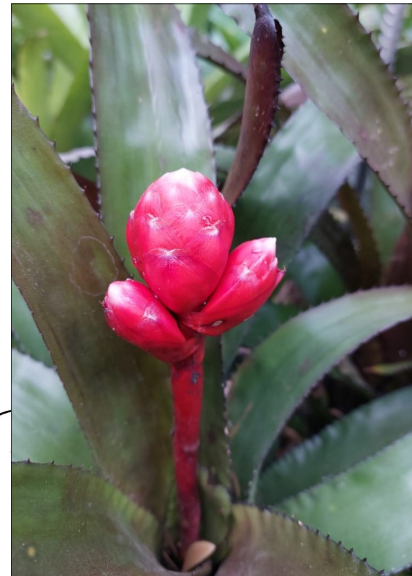
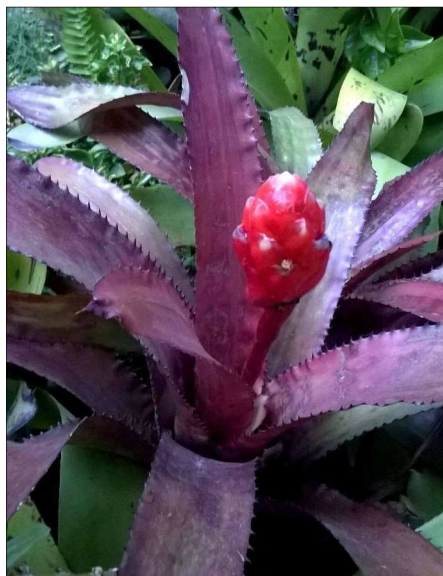
Paul is keen to see cycads, in particular, growing in situ. Paul will be visiting Durban and Cape Town too after the wedding towards the end of April.

This is the really exciting part! Paul will give a Tillandsia talk in Durban and Cape Town if any of us are interested. Maybe you would like to co-ordinate this (I will assist too) if you live in the Cape Town or Durban areas? It would be great if we could extend an invitation to all Tillandsia enthusiasts who are not necessarily members of our society. Contact Lyn brommiesfa@telkomsa.net

Barbara Black: Quesnelia time! I have been looking for information re my *Quesnelia edmundoi* var *rubrobracteata*. It has always sent out a single headed inflorescence over

the years, as shown in one of the mother plants from a few years back, and now a "grandchild" with three heads, or whatever they are called, has developed. I see that the single head is similar to *Q. edmundoi*, so I presume the divided head is like *Q. rubrobracteata*? which I cannot find any reference to. Is it a natural hybrid or just an aberration? We have had drought, could that be a reason? All I find reference to is that it is native to Brazil.

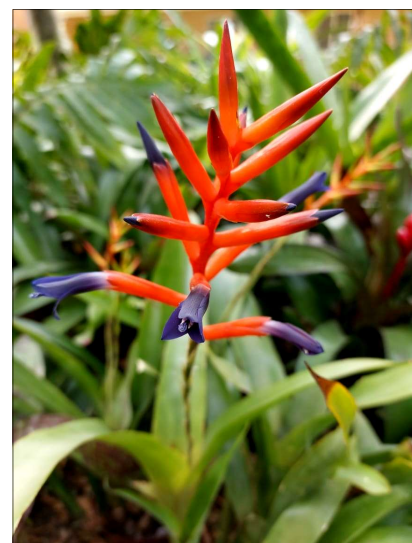
I need to place it in more sunlight to get the lovely deep maroon colouration back in the leaves. I do like the spined, slightly crinkled leaf edges and form of the plant. It readily sends out pups but takes many years to



Quesnelia edmundoi var *rubrobracteata* - the granny and the grandchild!

mature and bloom with tiny short lived blue/lilac flowers. The red colour of the inflorescence remains for quite some time compared to other members of the *Quesnelia* family which are not long lasting. Mine are all in pots grown in dappled light shade.

The second *Quesnelia* blooming is *Q. liboniana*. Indigenous to the central higher altitude areas of Brazil. We have had this plant for a long time and it has multiplied into a nice clump. It is hardy, amazing with such a delicate inflorescence! This is a good year with 5 inflorescences showing up. I love the colours of the tubular flowers, orangy-red with contrasting deep blue-purple tips and intricate stamens, spectacular hey? The leaves grow in a slender tubular form branching outwards at the ends, slightly spined. The pups form on thick rough stolons that creep over the outside of the pot if they need space. Very happy growing in bright dappled shade most of the year. Would be nice mounted but I have my clump growing in a pot.



Quesnelia liboniana

Text and photos BK Black

From the Editor



I think we are all ready and waiting for Spring rains and new growth to brighten our mood after a really long dry season of drought, water restrictions and negative news all around us. Our garden has become a dust bowl, but recent small amounts of rain over the last two weekends did help settle the dust somewhat. The bromeliads are all thriving but shrubs and even some trees are taking a knock and looking very sad. We still have pops of colour to enjoy from some tough Aechmea.

Our neighbour had all his boundary trees cut down and it has entirely changed the little microclimate in part of our back garden. I am looking forward to doing something with this new open aspect with a lot more light, but without water, it will have to be put on hold. The falling leaves become mulch between the plants and we have continued to tidy up and remove dead leaves and flower spikes and split some large bromeliads. Quite a satisfying job to do as we have had some really awesome sunny, even hot days, it has been far more enticing to be outside than indoors considering most of us are remaining close to home with Covid 19 figures rising in our area at this time.

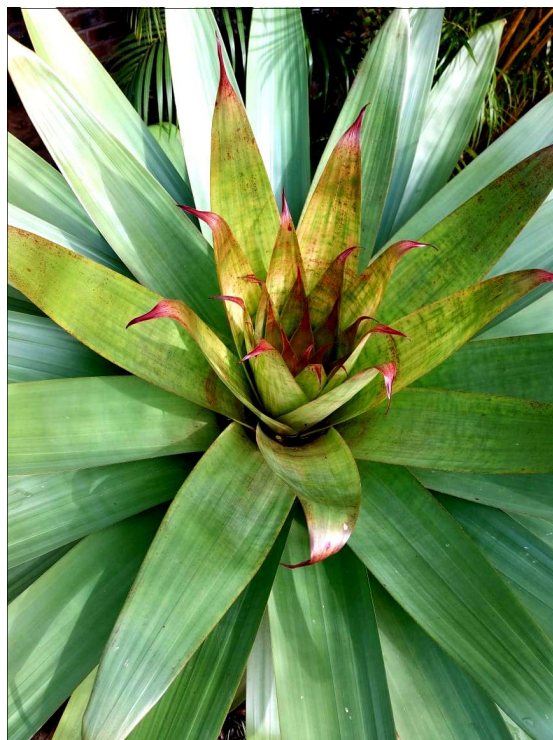
I am hoping as always, that some of you will share your glorious bromeliad happenings with us, do send me words and text, anytime, via Whatsapp or e mail. I look forward to hearing from you.

As the Covid losses become names to all of us, we extend our deepest heartfelt sympathies to those who have lost loved ones, friends and colleagues in this pandemic. There are no words for loss on such an enormous scale. All we can reasonably do is just get vaccinated and keep safe to help us get back to some sense of semi normal living.

Looking forward to seeing you all sometime soon, not sure when it will be, but it will be a celebration!

Please take care of yourselves and those around you, in the meantime happy bromming in your happy place.

Barbs.



My second Alcantarea nahoumii is gracing us with an emerging inflorescence, it is huge and slap bang in our faces every day on the patio. I am sure anyone else who grows Alcantarea will tell you, they are also in love with them!

This is a publication for the **East London Bromeliad Society, South Africa** for the interest of its members. Articles may be used by non profit societies with acknowledgement to the author where applicable and East London Bromeliad Society South Africa. Please use the photos that accompany the article used. If you require higher resolution photos please request them from the Editor. Any opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Society.

When submitting items for inclusion in this newsletter, please ensure that all facts and information, including spelling, is checked and accurate.

ELBSSA is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

Address: c/o 18 Wentworth Road, Sunnyridge, East London 5201 South Africa, brommiesfa@telkomsa.net

We meet on the last Sunday of every month at 2.00 for 2.30pm, January to November, at various venues around East London. We have a topic for each meeting and Show and Tell where members are encouraged to bring along their brag or problem plants. There are member raffles, lucky draws for those present, tea time, library and member plant sales, plus a monthly newsletter sent out via e-mail only. Visitors are always welcome and can attend three meetings before they will need to join the society in order to continue attending. Annual subs are R120.00 for individuals/families and R60 for students.

Committee Members

Chairman:	Dudley Reynolds		079 478 2338	dudleyreynolds1@gmail.com
Vice- Chairman:	Dr Peter Pfister		082 625 5533	tanuki@mweb.co.za
PRO & Secretary:	Lyn Wegner	043 736 1737	082 970 2293	brommiesfa@telkomsa.net
Treasurer:	Lynn Friend	043 748 2271	083 318 1179	lynnfriend1@gmail.com
Editor & Publisher:	Barbara Black	043 7212775	072 1787 421	blacket@telkomsa.net
Proof Reader:	Lyn Wegner	043 736 1737	082 970 2293	brommiesfa@telkomsa.net
Raffles:	Lyn Odendaal	043 726 1075	083 441 6813	lyngerald.vogt@gmail.com
Librarian:	Brenda Wegner		082 743 2141	brendawegner@gmail.com
Catering:	Marianne Hillstead		0715315146	
Events Co-ordinator:	Brenda Wegner		082 743 2141	brendawegner@gmail.com
Sound System	Xenia Winter	043 726 2978	083 981 1312	winther@telkomsa.net
Member Badges:	Betty Heunis		073 226 1610	bettyheunis@gmail.com
Web Master	Danie Taljaard		079 563 7725	danie@tillandsias.co.za



You will find ELBSSA on Facebook: type 'East London Bromeliad Society' into the fb search bar. You can request to join the group and will then be able to upload your photos and comments on the wall. The ELBS SA page and other bromeliad related sites are a useful and informative forum to share and 'meet up' with other like-minded bromeliad folks.

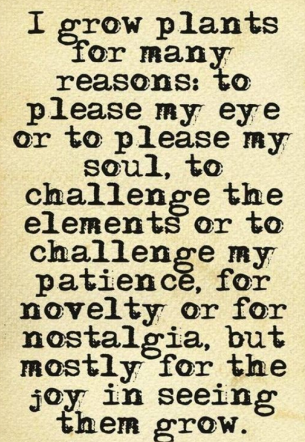
You can view most of all the bromeliads mentioned in meetings or in the newsletter at the following websites:

The BSI's official Bromeliad Cultivar Registry www.registry.bsi.org which is maintained by Geoff Lawn, the BSI Cultivar Registrar. Plus other information regarding the Bromeliad Society International and bromeliads is found at bsi.org

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: fcbs.org This is another very useful site where you can also reference many bromeliads, clarify identification or just trawl through the site and add to your wish list!

Encyclopedia of Bromeliads <http://bromeliad.nl/encyclopedia/> (Bromeliad Taxonomists and Growers Society) has photographs. It also now has keys for the genera and sub-genera. If you like to be informed what is happening, just follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bromeliadsencyclopedia> Just type in 'Encyclopedia of Bromeliads' into the Facebook search bar.

For internet resources you can also go to TAXON (The New Bromeliad List) for the most authoritative and right up to date list of genera and species, accepted and new names and taxonomic keys - <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php> or just type in 'New Bromeliad Taxon List', it's much easier!



I grow plants
for many
reasons: to
please my eye
or to please my
soul, to
challenge the
elements or to
challenge my
patience, for
novelty or for
nostalgia, but
mostly for the
joy in seeing
them grow.

— David Hobson