



East London Bromeliad Society

South Africa

NEWS
LETTER

August
2022

Established: 25 July 2009

*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

From the Editor



What an awesome meeting for our 13th birthday! It was great to

see so many members and some we have not seen for a while and some visitors too! It was a chilly afternoon reminiscent of our very first meeting held at Lyn and Trevor Wegner's home 13 years ago. Who would have thought all these years later we would have grown and learnt so much and have spread the love of this amazing genus of plants far and wide in South Africa. We have 73 local members, 56 country members and 5 international members. Plus 13 of our members belong to the BSI and have access to the BSI Journal and the BSD species register with the most up to date information. We still have far to go; stay with us for the ride!

Dudley welcomed everyone to the meeting and started the formalities with his Chairman's report covering the activities of the last year and then a call for nominations for the committee. It seems there is no way off this committee for some of us! However, we do need new young blood, new ideas, so if you are keen to get involved, please speak to Dudley or Lyn. If you have any ideas for meetings, topic recommendations, please do let one of the committee know. We do want to remain relevant and meet your



Our super hosts for the traditional Birthday Bash at their home, Lyn and Trevor Wegner.

Next Meeting: Sunday 28th August at 2 for 2.30pm. To be hosted by Lee-Anne and Roy Botha at 19 Linaria Drive, Vincent Heights. See you there!

needs in terms of what you want to learn and experience at the meetings.

Everyone was catered for with Fizz Ananas on arrival, which contributed to the fierce contest between the 'Barmy Billies' and the 'Green Fingers' to win the Annual Quiz! The 'Green Fingers' won and got first choice from a wonderful array of give away plants supplied by Lyn. Every member who wanted plants got to take at least a bunch home. Thank you Lyn for your generous donation to the very happy recipients on the day. There were also Queen pines for everyone.

For our birthday meeting the raffle draws were increased to six each for local and country. A happy festive afternoon was enjoyed by all, with birthday cake, tea and scrumptious eats and a wander around Lyn's immaculate garden and bromeliad collection with some really special bromeliads and Tillandsia to ooh! and aah! over, evidence of big cleanouts and revamps and dedicated nurturing by Lyn!

Everyone seemed to thoroughly enjoy the garden, the celebration and a scrumptious tea, I hope the visitors will be back to join us for another meeting. Those who were not at the Birthday Bash, we missed you, and hope to see you at the next meeting to be held at the home of Lee-Anne and Roy Botha in Vincent Heights. Dudley will be presenting 'The Wonderful World of Tillandsia'.

A huge thank you to those who have contributed to the newsletter over the last year, I hope that you will send a photo or two to include, especially plants too big to bring to a meeting. Country members please share too, we all have some insight, tips and news to share. We learn from each other.

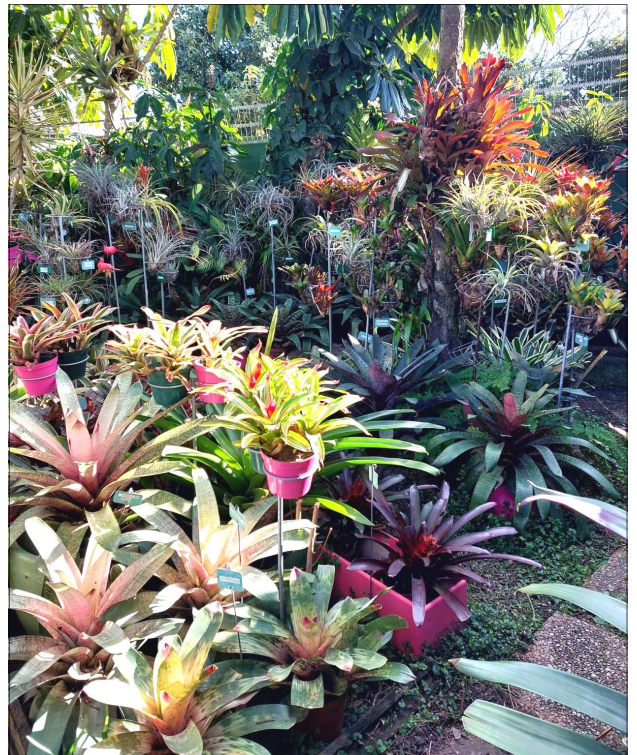
We have had some wonderful very welcome rain lately and hopefully a last blast of Winter all over the country! The magic of Spring is just around the corner folks!

Photos Barbs and Lyn Wegner

Barbs



Liz Nass, Nancy Brindley, Dr Pete Pfister, Marianne Hillstead and Chairman Dudley Reynolds get ready to blow out the candles on the pineapple birthday cake made by Marianne.



Check out our Facebook page for more super photos taken by Brenda Wegner of the fun at the Birthday Bash!



Lovely to meet visitors, Liz and Freddie Nass, invited by Margaret Baker.

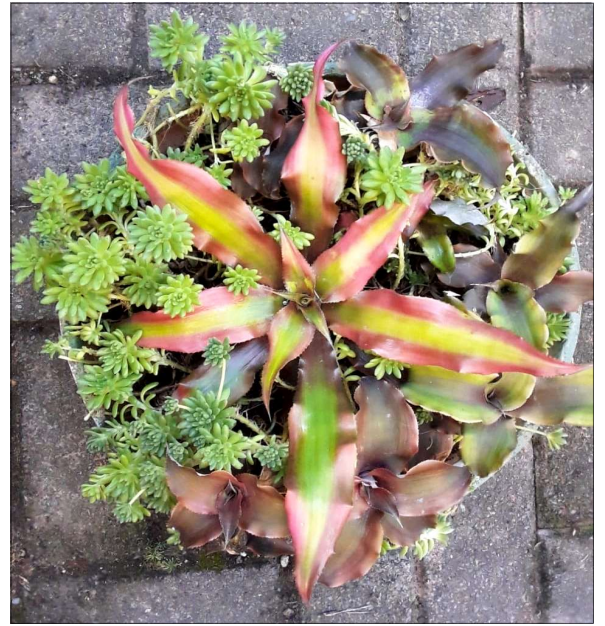
Wot is It?

Lyn Wegner: Wow, isn't this *Cryptanthus* in the centre super spectacular! I am most particular about my plants being labelled and with the correct name! But.....

I only have one label in this flat bowl, *Cryptanthus* 'Rita Padden'. These you will notice are growing around the centre plant. I find it to be a tough, vigorous and easy grower and because I had an excess of it I decided to group them in a large flat bowl.

I wonder if it is possible that the centre plant is also *C.* 'Rita Padden'? It is so different from the others and yet there are similarities. *C.* 'Rita Padden' also has a broad centre stripe on the leaf with a narrower outer margin. The leaf edges are similar, slightly wavy but then many *Cryptanthus* have this waviness on their leaf edges. The centre plant has beautiful colour and the plant is much larger. The parents of *C.* 'Rita Padden', a Carole Richtmyer hybrid, are ['Trail Blazer' x (Orange 'N Rose' x 'Deep Purple')] Maybe this colourful centre beauty is reverting back to it's parentage? What do you think?

Photo L. Wegner



Member News

- Sincere condolences to Terrence Reynolds on the loss of his sister and to Leon van Niekerk on the loss of his mom recently. Our thoughts are with you and your families at this sad time.

Thanks

- Our hosts, Lyn and Trevor Wegner.
- Robert Petschel donated of a bottle of homemade Honey and Pineapple Mead won by Marianne Hillstead.
- Loads of super give-away bromeliads from Lyn Wegner.
- Marianne Hillstead and Lynn Friend for birthday teatime eats.
- Rose Hillstead for assisting in the kitchen.

Birthday Bash Raffle Winners!

- Sandy Baxter chose *Aechmea* 'Pickaninny' x 'White Knight'.
- Lorraine Parathyras chose *Aechmea* 'Rainbow'.
- Mavis Downey won two raffles, *Aechmea orlandiana* 'Pink' and *Aechmea* 'White Knight'.
- David Gower chose *Neoregelia* 'Cats Pyjamas'.
- Lee-Anne Botha chose a Raffle Voucher to the value of R200.
- Avikar Chunilall from Durban still to choose.
- Graham Watts from Durban chose *Neoregelia (carolinae x concentrica)* x 'Proud Mary'.
- Carolie Pouwels from Pretoria chose *Vriesea* 'Tasman' hybrid no 10.
- Dr Rob Hazell from Swellendam won 3 raffles. Wow! He chose *Neoregelia* 'Freddy Krueger', *Neoregelia* 'Namaskar' and *Billbergia* 'Hallelujah'.



Our local Birthday Bash Raffle Winners, Sandy Baxter, Lorraine Parathyras, Mavis Downey, David Gower and Lee-Anne Botha, Congratulations
Photo BK Black

Attendance Lucky Draw Winners:

- Marianne Hillstead won the Lucky Draw for the Pineapple and Honey Mead.
- Everyone present at the meeting went home with a bromeliad or two or three, lovely plants to add to their collections!

Upcoming Society Events

- **28th August 2.00 for 2.30pm start.** Lee-Anne and Roy Botha, 19 Linaria Drive Vincent Heights.

Topic: The Wonderful world of Tillandsia presented by Dudley Reynolds. Please bring any blooming Tillandsia you may have to support his talk.

'Wot is It?' And 'Show and Tell' will also be on the agenda. Bring along your brag plants, problem plants or plants needing an identity. Raffles and Lucky Draws will be held as usual. You may bring special plants for the local raffle draws, for which you will be re-imbursed by the Treasurer. Don't forget to bring your Mug and a chair. Please remember if you are selling items before and after the meeting, to have your 'box' clearly marked with your name so people know who to pay. We look forward to seeing you all at the meeting.

- **25th September:** Trip to Wyndham Whitfield in Grahamstown. Details to follow.
- **30th October:** Please advise a committee member if you would like to host this meeting!
- **27th November:** Annual Bring and Braai, Auction and BBB Surprise Lucky Dip. Venue to be confirmed.

Upcoming International Conferences

The **21st biennial Australasian Bromeliad Conference 'Kiwi Broms'** hosted by the New Zealand Bromeliad Society will be held in Auckland at the Waipuna Hotel March 23-26 2023.

Go into www.bsnz.org for more exciting details! Registrants will get a special rate at the Waipuna but you would need to book via email quoting the BROM0421 code and advising that you are a bromeliad conference attendee. Rooms are limited so bookings should be made asap. Accommodation payment is only required when you get to the conference. Five of our members have already registered. These conferences are world class! If you would like more info please contact Lyn Wegner 082 970 2293.

From Our Members

Growing beautifully in **Lorraine Parathyras's** garden the colourful *Aechmea winkleri*. This species is endemic to Southern Brazil and *Tillandsia recurvifolia* var. *subsecundifolia*, also endemic to Brazil which Lorraine acquired as a single plant with one flower many moons ago. It is developing into a nice clump, grown in full sun and mounted on chicken wire in a frame.



Aechmea winkleri Photos L. Parathyras



Tillandsia recurvifolia var. *subsecundifolia* Photos L. Parathyras

From the Treasurer - Lynn Friend

Are your subs due? You can pay me at the meeting or you can do an eft directly into the society account.

Please use your name as a reference on the deposit so that I can identify the payee.

Standard Bank

Account Holder:

**East London Bromeliad Society
South Africa (ELBSSA)**

Branch: Vincent Park

Branch code: 051001 for efts

Cheque Account Number:

10169269351

Barbara Black

I think that most bromeliad society folks in East London have this tilly growing for them. We know it as *Tillandsia gardneri*. The exact name has been queried by some of us for as long as I can remember. Years ago I rescued piles of them from Floradale Nursery where they had removed loads of them from the trees as there was a total over population of them everywhere. I asked if I could take some from the discarded heap for the society, 'Yes, help yourself', I thought it was a good find! Haha! Well I now have them growing all over our garden together with *Tillandsia schiediana*, which I got from Pete long ago, which also self seeds a lot.

Tillandsia gardneri self seed extremely easily in East London's sub tropical climate. I do love them for their very silvery, heavily trichomed foliage, which is impossible for me to capture in a photo. The bright pink flowers are not prominent and don't emerge far out of the bracts, which have a lovely, creamy, fuzzy look to them. The centre leaves around the emerging inflorescence tend to be very fine and darken slightly at blooming time, which is around now in early Spring. Go and check yours out.

The correct name has been a bit elusive and various people have made suggestions over time. Christo van Wijk in Pretoria suggested it could be *Tillandsia geminiflora* var *incana*. The photo on fcbs.org for *T. gardneri* does not look at all like the plant we have. It is quite confusing!

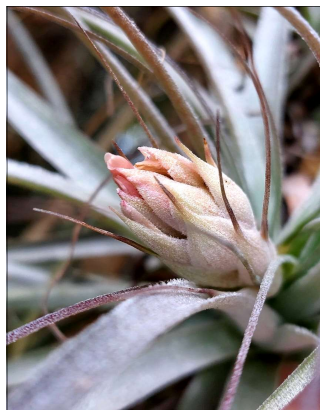
The BSD species data base gives three varieties. *T. gardneri* *T. gardneri* var *gardneri*, *T. gardneri* var *rupicola* and *T. gardneri* var *virescens*. The flowers or form are not quite the same as the one we know here, yet the *T. gardneri* looks the same, with another photo with a more open inflorescence.

Maybe because they are so prolific, there has been some natural hybridising taking place long ago providing us with many different forms of this plant to make us scratch our heads? Their natural habitat is around Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil.

Another identification came from Dave Weston, who referred to the Bromeliads in Australia website - bromeliad.org.au in response to photos I posted on the BSI Facebook page. Thank you Dave. The flowers, leaves and form of the plant look the same as ours. It is named *Tillandsia gardneri* and is much the same as the one we have growing here in EL. One would love to trace the origins of how it ended up in EL many moons ago?



What we know as *Tillandsia gardneri* growing in a nice clump. BK Black



The lovely soft inflorescence with bright pink flowers peeping out of my *T. gardneri*. Photo BK Black



T. gardneri with an open inflorescence. Photo BSD



T. gardneri. This inflorescence looks different, or another form? Photo BSD



T. geminiflora var *incana*. Photo fcbs.org



It is definitely not *T. gardneri* var *rupicola*, as Lyn got this plant as an import and is quite rare, it is very different. Photo BSD.

Right: *T. gardneri* looking very much the same as OURS. Photo BSD.



I am now leaning towards the fact that ours is in fact *Tillandsia gardneri*. Lyn knows it as *T. gardneri* and I believe Lyn as she knows these things!

However, Lyn has asked Pamela Koide-Hyatt for her opinion. Maybe she will shed some light. Watch this space!

However it is a lovely silvery addition to anyone's collection tucked into branches of trees or attached to mounts and grown in full sun to semi shade if you don't mind it spreading over the years, you will always have some to give to friends.

Another plant that is a favourite of mine in our garden for its jewel-like pink and purple inflorescence is the species plant, *Aechmea dealbata*. I originally got it from Lyn many years ago.

It was first described and published in 1889 by John Gilbert Baker. This species is endemic to the State of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

It is about 30cm tall and has finely spined, green leaves that grow in a loose tubular shape. It has stoloniferous growth, is epiphytic and grows in forested areas, but will grow in soil and they have been found growing on a variety of surfaces such as on trees, rocks and the forest floor at elevations up to 187 metres. It is commonly cultivated. They can tolerate temperatures above 1°C, but I have occasionally experienced cold damage on some of the leaves in past winters and we don't go below 9°C most winters. It is said to be a good substitute for *Aechmea fasciata* as it tolerates the cold and wet far better.

I grow them potted in semi shade. I find them easy to grow and they pup quite readily and bloom every year at this time, early Spring. The bracts are grey dusted with a whitish powder, with complex pink and purple flowers that peep out. Overall form and colour lasts some time. It is commonly cultivated.

Tillandsia gardneri

Brazil.

(See separate page for *T. gardneri* var. *rupicola*)



David Sheumack
plant, photo Ken
Woods.

Terry Davis 02/10.

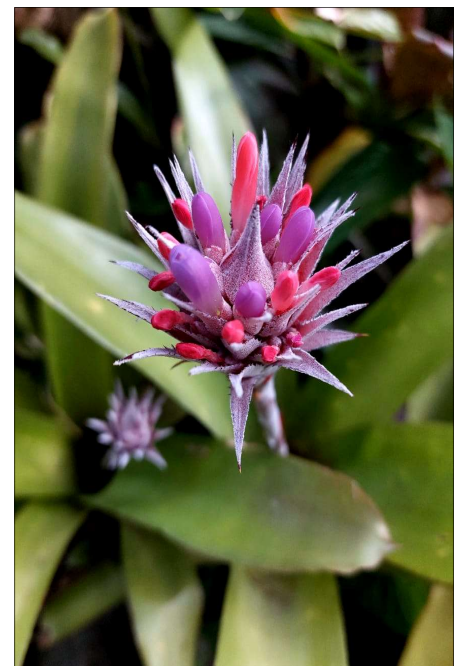
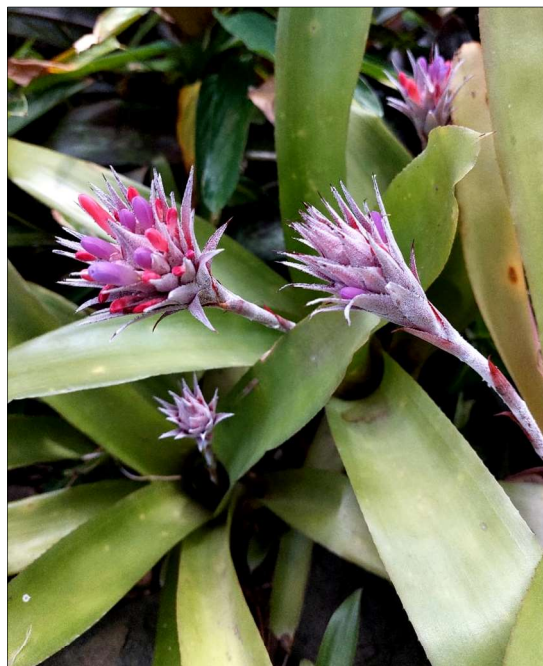


Peter Tristram 05/14

Bruce Dunstan 06/19

Peter Tristram 05/14 ... "*T. gardneri* is a favourite of us east coast growers but we have only had a form with a very tightly clustered, somewhat elongated inflorescence for all of the years since seed must have come from Brazil. Our 'common' form is just like the one that grows all over Rio in the old trees, usually under the branches. I have already mentioned a nice form that I spied at RFI in 2012 which I imported and quite a few have bloomed, all with this more globose head with more spread branches. They vary a bit in size and pinkness, this one being a larger but paler one. It reminds me of the picture Bruce has posted of a form near Oscar's, sort of in between *gardneri* and *chapeuensis*. Unlike *chapeuensis* this plant selfs, typical of *gardneri*. Paul said he collected these somewhere in Brazil back in the '70s."

Bruce Dunstan ... "A few shots of *T. gardneri* finally flowering. I have found the flowers don't seem to open up as much as the var. *rupicola*. Has anyone else noticed this?"



The attractive *Aechmea dealbata* growing in a clump in the front garden. BK Black

Glossary of new Bromeliad Terminology

We are maintaining the list of new terminology used during meetings when talking bromeliad language!

Bract	This is a specialized leaf found below a flower or on the stalk of a flower cluster and sometimes brightly coloured.
Novar	A variegated or albomarginated plant that has lost its variegation.
Inflorescence	Includes the flower stem and the flower head with usually small, sometimes insignificant flowers.
Grex	A group of plants with the same parents.
Aegeotropic	Ageotropic means growing in all directions ie not affected by gravity. <i>Tillandsia bulbosa</i> is an example of an ageotropic plant.
Caulescent	Stem-like growth.
Compact inflorescence	Branched inflorescence.
Digitate inflorescence	'Finger-like' with 'branches' coming from one point. <i>Tillandsia disticha</i> has a digitate flower spike.
Discolor	Having two different colours. In a bromeliad leaf it usually means a green leaf with red underside.
Myrmecophyte	Ants inhabit the base of bulbous <i>Tillandsia</i> varieties. An example <i>T. bulbosa</i> .
Pedicel	Flower stalk.
Stolon	Long runner or stem.
Stoloniferous	Pups/plants form at the end of a stolon.
Epiphyte	An epiphyte is plant that grows attached to another plant/tree but it is not a parasite.
Imbricate	Overlapping sections eg, on the inflorescence of <i>Tillandsia concolor</i> .
Lanceolate	Large at the base then tapering to a point.
Digitate	Finger-like.
Lithophyte	A plant that grows on and/or between rocks and crevices.
Rupicolous	Living or growing on or among rocks.
Saxicole	A plant that grows on and/or between rocks and crevices
Bract	This is a specialized leaf found below a flower or on the stalk of a flower cluster and is sometimes brightly coloured.
Novar	A variegated or albomarginated plant that has lost it's variegation.

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.

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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.

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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

The new **BSD** or **BSI Bromeliad Species Database** is the 'go to' resource for bromeliad species info on line which can be accessed at www.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 subscribe to **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 developed by Eric Gouda - <https://bromeliad.nl/encyclopedia/or> permanent URL for species names: <https://bromeliad.nl/species/<species name>> eg: <https://bromeliad.nl/species/Tillandsia/ionantha> Taxon list: <https://bromeliad.nl/taxonlist>