



FLORIDA COUNCIL OF BROMELIAD SOCIETIES

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Tillandsia Concolor

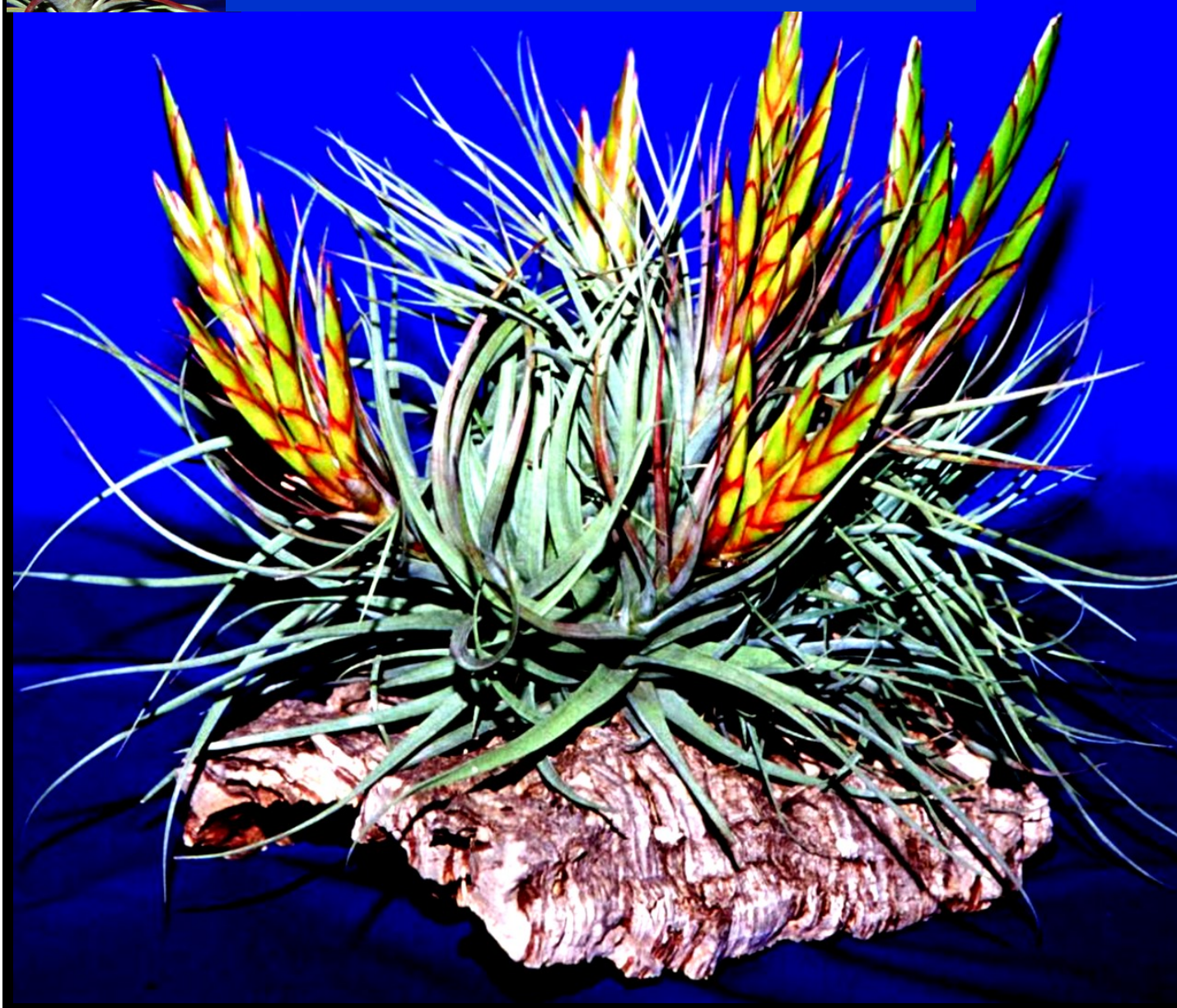




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FRONT COVER: Tillandsia Concolor photos by Carol Wolfe

PUBLICATION: This newsletter is published four times a year, February, May, August, and November, and is a publication of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies. Please submit your bromeliad related activities, articles, photographs, society shows, news and events of your society.

DEADLINES FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS ARE:

January 15 for February issue

April 15th for May issue

July 15 for August issue

October 15th for November issue

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I Love Bromeliads...by Carol Wolfe, Editor

Greetings FCBS members,

It is amazing how computers are impacting our daily lives. Our emails, communications, appointments, work, calendars, and newsletters demand a working computer! Although smart phones fill in the gap when the desktop is down, I don't like the strain on the eyes from looking at small type.

Our FCBS February newsletter is late due to computer problems. However the longer than necessary delay was due to a technician claiming that he was working on the repair but later admitted that he was not qualified nor had the tools necessary for the repair. It was difficult to learn that the contents of the computer had not been restored nor worked on as claimed. The main thing is that I now have a working computer and most of my information has been restored! Praise the Lord!

We are only a week away from spring and there are many bromeliads blooming all over the property. On the following pages are some springtime pictures of our yard. The Azaleas and Camillas are also in full bloom! My pink *Tabebuia* bloomed for the first time but it did not coordinate with the blooming of the yellow *Tabebuia*, although I see many blooming yellow *Tabebuias* around town. However, I am thrilled it bloomed in its third year.



Aechmea bromeliifolia



Billbergia amoena species



Neoregelia macwilliamsii



Billbergia pyramidalis



Aechmea chlorophylla



Nidularium species Photos by Carol Wolfe



In addition to a beautiful spring, we have the World Bromeliad Conference, May 22-25, 2024, at West Palm Beach, Florida. The Conference Chair, Tom Ramiccio, and his committee lined up an exciting slate of events including a welcome reception, botanical tours, a banquet dinner, several world-renowned speakers and guest, the world's largest bromeliad sale and a professionally judged bromeliad show! Register now!

Included in this issue is Dr. Larry Giroux's article, *How Judges Select Ribbon Color!* If you plan to enter plants in the world conference show this article may be helpful.

If you haven't read Dennis Cathcart's book, *Koulèv*, you will enjoy the book review from Chris Bruce of the Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society. This is an excellent review and you will certainly be excited to read his book!

Our thanks to Maureen Adelman, former President of the Bromeliad Society of South Florida and Editor of the newsletter, *BromeliAdvisory*, for her research for the article, *Ask Dr. Brom*. This reprint is her last article on *Ask Dr. Brom* published in the December, 2023 issue! Maureen ran the column for 32 issues and provided a lot of information to her readers from her diligent and informative research. With all the bromeliad name changes, new subfamilies, and new genera based on DNA research, she writes a very informative article complete with bromeliad pictures. Great job Maureen on your BSSF newsletters and *Dr. Brom* column! We will miss you but we hope you enjoy your retirement and travels!

Dr. Terrie Bert is calling for nominations for the Wally Berg Award of Excellence. The deadline for nominations is April 1, 2024. Please read her article and make your nominations by the deadline.

Some Garden Clubs advise members to put Spanish moss in the microwave for a few seconds before using it in arrangements to kill the chiggers (red bugs). The Gainesville club gives us different advice in *Stories about Chiggers in Spanish Moss*. The article makes a lot of sense!

My thanks to Tom Wolfe, Calandra Thurrott, and Greg Kolojeski for their assistance in proofing the Newsletter!

Have a Happy Spring!!

Photos by Carol Wolfe







Bromeliad Society International Presents
World Bromeliad Conference 2024
May 22-25, 2024 • West Palm Beach, Florida

WBC 2024 will feature an exciting slate of events including a welcome reception, botanical tours, a banquet dinner, several world-renowned speakers & guests, the world's largest bromeliad sale and a professionally judged bromeliad show.

Conference registration for attendees includes:

- Welcome Reception — International poolside barbecue
- Historic WBC 2024 tote bag
- World conference banquet dinner with speaker Andrew Devonshire on 'Hybridising, The Kiwi Way'
- Mounts Botanical Garden tour by luxurious motor-coach
- Access to world renowned speakers & honored guests
- World's largest bromeliad sale
- Professionally judged bromeliad show



Don't wait — register and reserve a hotel room online soon to save!

(Special reduced rates are available to all current BSI members)

Grant's Farm Nursery Tour



Join us for a special, behind-the-scenes tour to Florida's oldest bromeliad nursery! Reserve your space online for only \$25.

WBC 2024 World-Renowned Speakers



Find the latest WBC 2024 news and registration links online:

www.bsi.org/new/conference-corner/

We look forward to seeing you at WBC 2024!

Conference Chairman Tom Ramiccio (Tramiccio@aol.com) & Conference Co-Chairman Alex Bello

Post-Conference Ecuador Field Trip with Plant Expeditions



Complete your conference experience with a 15 day tour through Ecuador. See over 150 bromeliad species in their native habitat!

Also see wildlife—butterflies, birds, insects and monkeys!

For more tour information and to reserve your space visit:

www.plantexpeditions.com/plant-tours/2024/ecuador





HOW JUDGES SELECT RIBBON COLOR!

By Dr. Larry Giroux

During the judging of bromeliads in a Standard BSI Bromeliad Show, a team of judges who have undergone years of study or who are currently enrolled in a judging school apply a series of questions to determine which plants conform to the ideal species, cultivar or hybrid it is supposed to represent and which is exhibited in a way to demonstrate its best qualities. There are basically three Categories—Horticulture (judged as single blooming and foliage and multiple blooming and foliage Sections), the second is Horticultural Display (composed of single and multiple Sections). Lastly, we have the Artistic Category with Sections for Decorative containers where live bromeliads are shown in harmonizing containers and Artistic Arrangements where plant and floral parts are arranged according to conventional rules. These questions asked by the judges concerning the exhibits are mostly general and apply to all the Categories, while some are more specific and deal with the way the plants are shown again using certain conventions. When you get your Show Schedule or if you have an older schedule, you will find tables for point scoring which the judges use. They use the following questions to determine points earned and thereby the ribbon color won.

Cultural Perfection of the whole entry:

What is the condition of the container/ mount? Clean? Good condition? Appropriate size? Mix? Clean without debris? Right depth? Top dressed? If so, distracting? Leaves' condition? Damaged? Scurf damage? Holes? Scratches? Appropriately trimmed? Are leaves removed prudishly? Is the caudex exposed due to leaf removal? Wide and narrow leaves? Elongated leaves? Folded or channeled leaves? Gaps between leaves? Are there water and mineral spots, algae, dust, debris or insects on or between the leaves?

Conformation: Is the plant symmetrical? Looking from the top (radial symmetry)? Looking from the side (lateral symmetry)? Is the stem straight? Is the cup pulled off center? For blooming plants...Is the inflorescence correctly positioned for this variety? Do gaps between the leaves cause lose of plant contour? Is there too much leaf trimming? Is there incomplete or excessive grooming?



The judges at a WBC gave this exhibit a **RED** ribbon. They justified their decision based on the exhibitor's use of a commercial pot, low level of media, the poor cultural condition and variable leaf growth of the leaves among other faults.

Photo by Larry Giroux.



The exhibitor of this entry apparently made no effort to prepare the plant for the show. This blooming Tillandsia was entered as a Horticultural Display... implying that it should be showing some permanence on its mount. Besides not having that characteristic, there are innumerable leaves that have been poorly trimmed or should have been trimmed or removed. The inflorescence is browning and appears spent. I'm not sure how common this particular plant is in cultivation, but exhibitors can't count on rarity to impress the judges, when the relatively objective criteria of the Show schedule are used for judging. Photo by Larry Giroux.



Most Judges are generally understanding of an exhibitor's frustrations showing plants. They are growers themselves and are required to enter shows and earn so many blue ribbons during their judging cycles. But, sometimes that understanding goes only so far. This bigeneric xQuesmea can be a very attractive plant with its smoky scurf, upper leaf coloration and flashy yellow branching inflorescence. Unfortunately, with this specimen most of its few leaves have damaged scurf and scarring; the leaves have been poorly trimmed and are floppy and the large inflorescence appears spent. There isn't much a judge can commend about this plant. The judge has to give it a low score. Photo by Larry Giroux.



Two stages of growth? Are leaves the appropriate number, shape, width and length for this specific plant type?

Color and Markings: The color is optimal for this variety? Markings are typical and evenly distributed for this variety? Markings and color are clear, intense, vibrant and evenly distributed? Are there color breaks not appropriate for this plant? Excessive scurf marring?

Overall balance and symmetry and permanence: Most of these questions can apply to all entries, but Permanence is of more critical importance for Horticultural Displays: Is the individual or group of plants well balanced with equal growth all around? Is the plant(s) mounted or potted so that the natural growth habit of the plant(s) are enhanced? Is the shape and size of the container appropriate for the size of the plant(s)? Does the plants appear stable? Does the entry look well established and permanent?

Maturity of Plant: How mature is your plant? Most Categories allow 10 points for maturity. A whole ribbon color is lost because of this determination by the judges.

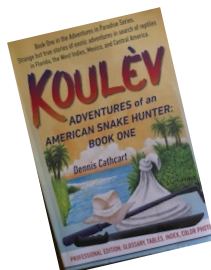
Inflorescence: (for blooming plants) Is the size appropriate? What is the stage of bloom? Quantity?...Well branched? Mature flowers? Quality?... Scape and floral bracts are undamaged? Spent blooms and bracts removed? Dispersed pollen has been removed from foliage? Color?...flower color is bright, not faded? Floral and scape bracts are clear, not muddy? Symmetry of color throughout the inflorescence?

If you look hard enough and long enough, all plants will have deficits. Fortunately, judges are growers and exhibitors themselves and are understanding. At the upcoming CBS meetings prior to the Show, experienced judges will review some of what has been presented here.



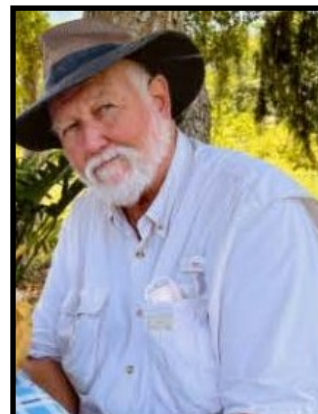
Judges are trained to be as objective as possible and in their head are comparing the plant they are judging with what is considered to be the perfect specimen of that variety. The exhibitor should be doing the same when he decides to enter a plant. Neoregelia Speed Demon's variegation is generally irregular so it doesn't figure into the judging as prominently, but the vivid iridescent green dots and the pink coloration throughout the plant separates this plant from many others. Exhibitors who are emotionally invested in an expensive, favorite or rare plant may not understand why judges don't feel the same way, even when it has seen its better days. Photo above by Larry Giroux; photo below by Rosie Kelly.

Reprinted from the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society's
'Meristem' issue Sept-Oct, 2023



Koulèv By Dennis Cathcart

A Book Review
by Chris Bruce



Adventures of an American Snakehunter Book One is the subtitle for this new book in our library collection. Prior to this book, Dennis Cathcart was only known to Bromeliad aficionados as the founding owner of the famous Tropiflora Plant Nursery in Sarasota, Florida. But in this book, the author recounts his endless adventures that added to an expansive knowledge of snakes and snake behavior.

From an early age, he sensed adventure growing up in woody, rural Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. The home of his youth backed up to 25 acres which he frequently explored. That is where his fascination with snakes began. By the age of six, he convinced his dad to build a cage for his first Red Ratsnake. His knowledge of snakes seemed to grow faster than school earned knowledge. By fourth grade he was allowed to keep a snake cage outside his classroom. Frequent absences were eventually accepted by his teachers since they recognized that he was learning while in the outdoors. Growing up in the 1960's, the world was a simpler place than today. The safe world around him allowed him to explore and discover the ocean, the forest and native fauna. Eventually he found other boys who shared his interests. Their friendship provided a sound base for an outdoor life.

By the age of fifteen, he was collecting snakes and riding with them on his bike to Wild Cargo, an animal store twelve miles from his home. There he was able to trade his snake finds for others he wanted to collect. His membership in the South Florida Herpetological Society introduced him to new relationships with scientists, professors and businessmen. Many of these people became lifelong friends and co-adventurers and advisors.

The school librarian was always on the lookout to find books that would inspire him. His friends were a wholesome group with no smoking, drug taking or alcohol use. They stayed out of trouble and enjoyed an idyllic youth hunting, bagging, trading and selling snakes. At first, snake collecting took him on trips throughout Florida to obtain specimens. Soon he was in business and shipping snakes far away to Japan. By 1965 he began taking trips to Bimini, Mexico, Haiti, the Bahamas, and Costa Rica. He never seemed to refuse an opportunity to join the next adventure. He was saved from disaster and death many times, including being left on an uninhabited island with no food or water. His basic intelligence and life experiences gave him the common sense to solve ongoing challenges.

The author only mentions Bromeliads and orchids in passing descriptions of snake habitats. By the end of the book, the reader does not understand how he changes his focus and becomes a plant expert. This memory-filled recollection of a life from childhood to young adulthood describes a very unique individual.

Koulèv, the Haitian word for snake, provides a fast-paced, exciting read. It is perfect for a late summer's day. And the reader is left with a thirst for Book Two.

Article Reprinted from the Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society, Pup Talk, September 2022



ASK DR. BROM

By Maureen Adelman

Dear Dr. Brom: I am having some difficulty keeping the different types of bromeliads straight and figuring out how to care for each different one. Can you help me?

Learning about bromeliads and their care is a lifelong process.

We do recommend you buy a book about bromeliads for beginners which will give you some basic knowledge. Here are a few:

Bromeliads for Home and Garden - Jack Kramer

Starting with Bromeliads - Bromeliad Society of Queensland

Starting with Bromeliads - Robert Reilly

You can always check the online databases of Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies (FCBS) and Bromeliad Society International. Pick a genus, such as *Portea*, that does not have too many species. Scroll down until you have seen photos of them all to familiarize yourself with the plants. Then try a genus that has more species, such as *Hohenbergia*.

But absent a book, here is a brief synopsis.

The family Bromeliaceae is divided into 8 subfamilies:

Brochinioideae - 1 genus

Lindmanioideae - 2 genera

Hechtioideae- 1 genus

Navioideae - 5 genera

Pitcairnioideae - 5 genera

Puyoideae- 1 genus

Tillandsioideae - 21 genera

Bromelioideae - 39 genera

While you really don't have to remember the Family or the 8 Subfamilies, it is helpful to remember the genera (plural of genus) in each subfamily. There are 76 total genera. Popular genera in south Florida include *Dyckia*, *Alcantarea*, *Catopsis*, *Goudaea*, *Guzmania*, *Tillandsia*, *Vriesea*, *Aechmea*, *Ananas*, *Billbergia*, *Canistrum*, *Cryptanthus*, *Edmundoa*, *Hohenbergia*, *Neoregelia*, *Nidularium*, *Orthophytum*, *Portea*, *Quesnelia*, and *Sincorea*.

These names should be more familiar to you. There are a total of 76 genera some of which don't even grow in south Florida due to their need for higher elevations. Each genus has similar characteristics. For example, most of us know that *Neoregelia* do not have big flowers but do have multicolored foliage.

Each genus then has a number of species. *Tillandsia* has the most species at 775. You would be quite knowledgeable if you knew the species in even this one genus. There are a total of 3640 species amongst the 76 genera. And that does not even count the hybrids, cultivars and intergenerics. Thus the admonition that this is a lifelong learning process.

But if you are like me you don't even know whether the genus comes first or the species. To remember, I just think Girl Scouts. Genus first, species second. Thus *Alcantarea odorata* is genus *Alcantarea*, species *odorata*.



Now that you have the big picture, we'll describe the 20 most popular south Florida genera and their care.

Dyckia - 172 species. Stiff, spiny edged leaves. Hard to divide. Turn upside down to divide. Can take full sun. Likes a saucer underneath but don't let it sit in water.

Dyckia burle-marxi



Alcantarea - 41 species. Full sun. Large plant that likes being in soil, not pot. Tall inflorescence. Can take up to 10 years to flower. Excellent in landscape. Great feature plant.

Alcantarea imperialis

Catopsis - 18 species. Epiphytes. Smooth edges, coated with scurf. Full sun. Berteroniana is native.

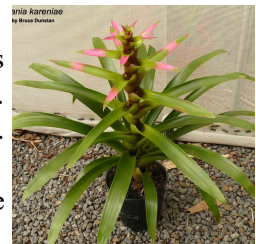
Catopsis berteroniana



Goudaea - New genera, only 2 species. Full sun to partial shade. Goudaea ospiniae var. gruberi has 'smeared' foliage. *Goudaea ospiniae* var. *gruberi*

Guzmania - 220 species. Solid or variegated leaves. Likes more shade than other species. Likes lower tree limbs. No spines. Does not produce a lot of pups.

Guzmania kareniae



Tillandsia - 775 species. Epiphytes. Grow in trees, mount on wood, hang from wire. Likes sun. Many shapes and sizes from 1" to 60". Soft leaved tillandias are from the rainforest and like less sun. Silver leaved ones like sun. No cup like most other bromeliads.

Tillandsia capitata

Vriesea - 237 species. Does not like to be wet. Pebbles are good instead of soil. Beautiful patterns on leaves. Dappled light. Most are medium to large. Smooth leaves. Flowers last for weeks. Many Vrieseas have been moved to other genera such as Lutheria, Wallisia or Alcantarea.

Vriesea fenestralis





Aechmea - 252 species. The best known bromeliad. Flowers are vivid, upright and can last for months. Two to four ft tall. Tubular shape with spines. Can have multiple pups. Bright light. Keep vase of plant watered.

Aechmea rubens



Ananas - 4 species. Pineapple. One of the oldest genera. Plants need space. Grows in large rosette with spines. Top of fruit is pup and pups attached all over fruit. Full sun. Frequently hybridized.

Ananas comosus

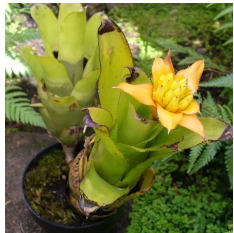
Billbergia - 64 species. Many hybrids.

Blooms 3x/yr. Fewer leaves than many bromeliads.

Tall and tubular. Colorful bracts on pendant, short lived flowers.

Many speckled varieties. Bright light, even sun. Keep vase filled. Don't need a lot of care. Bill. pyramidalis is prolific in S. Florida

Billbergia pyramidalis



Canistrum - 13 species. Good houseplant. Flower head is hidden. Likes tree trunks and rocks. Dappled light to semi- shade. Slow to pup. Distinctive flower. *Canistrum auratum*

Cryptanthus - 56 species. Small, insignificant flower is always white.

Grown for its foliage. Slow grower, few pests. One of the smaller bromeliads.

Likes shadier area and likes to be moist.

Grows well on top of pebbles covered with water.

Cryptanthus fosterianus



Edmundoa - 3 species. Was part of Canistrum. Epiphytic. Most common form is Edmundoa lindenii. Flowers are covered in something resembling wool. Grows in large flat rosette. Deep to light shade. Distinctive flower. *Edmundoa lindenii* - albomarginated

Hohenbergia - 49 species.

Long erect flower spike. A tall bromeliad.

Bright sun. Many are vase shaped.

Hohenbergia leopoldo-horstii



Neoregelia - 123 species and countless hybrids.

Probably the most popular bromeliad. Like shadier locations and good air circulation. Grown for its foliage as flowers do not leave the cup. Colors up at blooming time and the color can last for months. Keep pots in a low location so foliage can be viewed. Has multiple pups. Neo. johannis and its variations can take full sun.

Neoregelia compacta



Nidularium 48 species. Needs more light than neoregelias. Gets a flat rosette at blooming time and center turns red Pups readily. Do not let it sit in water - will rot. Flower is like a mini plant on top of the larger plant.

Nidularium espiro-santense

Orthophytum - 58 species.

A hardy bromeliad resembling a succulent. Likes the sun. Pups grow on long flower spike. Likes to grow on rocks. Many thorns.

Orthophytum glabrum



Portea - 9 species. Large, clumping bromeliad with long spiny leaves. Large, decorative flowers. Full sun. Clumps can get thick and hard to manage. A tall plant with blue flowers.

Portea petropolitana var. *petropolitana*

Quesnelia - 23 species.

Most popular is *Quesnelia marmorata* 'Tim Plowman'. Likes to grow in masses. Filtered light such as a screened patio/pool enclosure. Pink and blue flowers are striking en masse. Thick leaves, few pests. Robust growers that can adapt to sun. Pups readily.

Quesnelia testudo



Sincoraea - 11 species. Species are all very similar. No stem. Flower does not rise above cup. Was in orthophytum family. Sunburst type of growth. Likes to live on rocks in Brazil partly shaded by shrubs. Likes a dry environment. Many narrow, stiff leaves with large curved spines. Bright light. Base for many hybrids and inter-generics. Resembles a succulent.

Sincoraea burle-marxii

There are other genera grown in South Florida that are not as well known such as: *Lutheria*, *Werauhia*, *Wallisia*, *Deuterocohnia*, *Pitcairnia*, *Acanthostachys*, *Androlepsis*, *Bromelia* and *Lymaia*. Please see the following chart listing the subfamilies and genera.

Sources:

Jack Kramer, Bromeliads for Home and Garden

FCBS Photo Index

Victoria Padilla, Bromeliads

Encyclopedia of Bromeliads

Larry Giroux, "Time to Start Relabelling Your Plants, Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society

Meristem, Jan-Feb., 2019

Tropiflora.com

8 SUBFAMILIES OF BROMELIACEAE

BROCHINIOIDEAE (1 genus) 1 GENUS <i>Brocchinia</i> – 20	LINDMANIOIDEAE (2 genera) 2 genera <i>Connellia</i> – 6 <i>Lindmania</i> – 39	HECHTIOIDEAE (1 genus) <i>Hechtia</i> – 76 1 GENUS
NAVIOIDEAE (5 genera) 5 genera <i>Brewcaria</i> – 6 <i>Cottendorfia</i> – 1 <i>Navia</i> – 92 <i>Sequencia</i> – 1 <i>Steyerbromelia</i> – 9	PITCAIRNIOIDEAE (5 genera) 5 genera <i>Deuterocohnia</i> – 17 <i>Dyckia</i> – 172 <i>Encholirium</i> – 36 <i>Fosterella</i> – 31 <i>Pitcairnia</i> – 408	PUYOIDEAE (1 genus) <i>Puya</i> – 226 1 GENUS
TILLANDSIOIDEAE (21 genera) 21 genera <i>Alcantarea</i> – 41 <i>Barfussia</i> – 3 <i>Catopsis</i> – 18 <i>Cipriopsis</i> – 3 <i>Glomeropitcairnia</i> – 2 <i>Goudaea</i> – 2 <i>Gregbrownia</i> – 4 <i>Guzmania</i> – 220 <i>Jagranthia</i> – 1 <i>Josemania</i> – 5 <i>Lemeltonia</i> – 7 <i>Lutheria</i> – 4 <i>Mezobromelia</i> – 5 <i>Pseudalcantarea</i> – 3 <i>Racinaea</i> – 78 <i>Stigmatodon</i> – 18 <i>Tillandsia</i> – 775 <i>Vriesea</i> – 237 <i>Werauhia</i> – 92 <i>Wallisia</i> – 5 <i>Waltillia</i> – 1	BROMELIOIDEAE (39 genera) 39 genera <i>Acanthostachys</i> – 2 <i>Aechmea</i> – 252 <i>Ananas</i> – 4 <i>Androlepis</i> – 2 <i>Araeococcus</i> – 9 <i>Billbergia</i> – 64 <i>Bromelia</i> – 71 <i>Canistropsis</i> – 11 <i>Canistrum</i> – 13 <i>Cryptanthus</i> – 56 <i>Deincanthos</i> – 1 <i>Disteganthus</i> – 5 <i>Edmundoa</i> – 3 <i>Eduandrea</i> – 1 <i>Fascicularia</i> – 1 <i>Fernseea</i> – 2 <i>Greigia</i> – 35	<i>Hohenbergia</i> – 49 <i>Hohenbergiopsis</i> – 1 <i>XHohenmea</i> – 1 <i>Hoplocryptanthus</i> – 8 <i>Lapanthus</i> – 2 <i>Lymnaria</i> – 9 <i>Neoglaziovia</i> – 3 <i>Neoregelia</i> – 123 <i>Nidularium</i> – 48 <i>xNiduregelia</i> – 3 <i>Ochagavia</i> – 4 <i>Orthophytum</i> – 58 <i>Portea</i> – 9 <i>Pseudoaechmea</i> – 1 <i>Pseudoananas</i> – 1 <i>Quesnelia</i> – 23 <i>Rokautskyi</i> – 14 <i>Ronnbergia</i> – 22 <i>Sincoraea</i> – 11 <i>Ursulaea</i> – 2 <i>Wittmackia</i> – 44 <i>Wittrockia</i> – 7 <i>Zizknera</i> – 1

FAMILY BROMELIACEAE

8 SUBFAMILIES
76 GENERA

GENUS → SPECIES

3640 SPECIES



Call for Nominations for the BSI Wally Berg Award of Excellence

By Dr. Theresa M. Bert, Curator of the BSI WBAE

Introduction: The Wally Berg Award of Excellence was initiated in 1999 to honor the late Wally Berg (1927-2000) of Sarasota, Florida. Wally and his wife Dorothy were extraordinary bromeliad growers. Their private collection was one of the most diversified and unique in the world. The setting of their bromeliad gardens was magnificent and immaculate.

Wally was an enthusiastic supporter of the BSI. He donated many rare plants for sales and auctions that benefited the BSI, the Bromeliad Identification Center at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, research on the "Evil Weevil", and other worthy causes. He volunteered many hours of service at Selby Gardens. He had a broad knowledge of bromeliad horticulture and science and frequently spoke to bromeliad societies on a variety of topics, especially about his adventures exploring and collecting in Central and South America. He served in many offices in the Sarasota Bromeliad Society. He introduced several *Aechmea* cultivars into culture and created several hybrids, including *Aechmea* Forest Fire. He frequently won top awards, including Best in Show, at BSI world bromeliad conferences and Florida local and regional bromeliad shows. A number of bromeliad species were named in his honor. Some of Wally and Dorothy Berg's achievements and adventures are featured on the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies' website: https://www.fcbs.org/articles/Wally_Berg.htm A list of the previous recipients of the award is available at https://www.bsi.org/new/wally_berg_award_of_excellence/

Following are the award criteria and procedures for nominating individuals for the Wally Berg Award of Excellence. Individuals, couples, or BSI members deceased within the past two years are eligible. Previous non-winning nominees will not be automatically considered. Only nominees submitted during the present (2023-2024) call for nominations will be considered. Nominees must be past (for posthumous nominations) or present members of the BSI and nominators must be current BSI members in good standing.

Award Criteria The verbiage below is the most up-to-date for this award. In addition to being BSI members, nominees must excel in at least 4 of the remaining 7 criteria. In your nomination, please describe how the nominees excel in at least 4 criteria.

1. The individual or couple must be past or present members of the BSI.
2. The individual or couple should be (a) bromeliad grower(s) nationally or internationally recognized for diversity of species cultivated and excellence of cultivation.
3. The individual or couple should actively pursue one of the following activities:
 - a. collecting and identifying bromeliads in natural environments, including collecting new species/varieties/cultivars; the members of the various bromeliad societies and organizations, including the BSI and the BIC, should benefit from this activity;
 - b. promoting the appreciation and cultivation of bromeliads at the international level, including such activities as organizing and participating in collecting trips with international representation, giving presentations and seminars to national and international audiences, and writing manuscripts for publication in national or international books, journals, or other media (e.g., Internet).



4. The individual or couple should actively support efforts to further the scientific, taxonomic, or cultural understanding of bromeliads through donation of time, effort, or money to recognized organizations, institutions, or groups of individuals (e.g., the BSI, Bromeliad Identification Center, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, local or regional bromeliad clubs or councils).

5. The individual or couple should be active in a local, regional, or national bromeliad society and be recognized by other members of that society for their contributions to the functioning of that society and its activities.

6. If the individual is a bromeliad hybridizer or the couple are bromeliad hybridizers, he, she, or they should be internationally recognized for excellence in one or more of the following categories:

- a. innovation in creating bromeliad hybrids,
- b. success in cultivation of bromeliad hybrids,
- c. promotion and distribution of bromeliad hybrids.

7. The individual or couple should be generally recognized as expert in one or more of the following aspects of bromeliads:

- a. ecology, evolution, or taxonomy,
- b. cultivation or hybridization,
- c. display or exhibition.

8. The individual or couple should be generally recognized for his, her, or their generous nature in sharing knowledge of bromeliads and for personally giving of time and expertise for the benefit of both other people interested in bromeliads and bromeliad organizations at all levels.

Procedures for Nomination

1. Nominators must be present members of the BSI.
2. The nominator should submit the nomination in writing by electronic mail. The nominator should provide a brief resume of the accomplishments of the nominee(s) in bromeliad-related activities (e.g., service, offices held, major awards won) and a letter (500 words, or less) describing the way in which the nominee(s) meets at least four of Criteria 2-8 listed above. Past nominees may be re-nominated if they meet the current award criteria and were not award recipients. Previous award winners are ineligible for re-nomination.
3. Please send nominations to theresa.bert1949@gmail.com. If you do not receive an acknowledgement of receipt within 10 days, please send the nomination again, call (941) 795-6012 and leave a clear message if no one answers, or send a text message to +1 941704 4343.
4. **Submissions must be received by April 1, 2024.**



THE REAL TRUTH ABOUT CHIGGERS & SPANISH MOSS

Stories about chiggers in Spanish moss

Trombiculidae is the name of the family of mites that contains “red bugs.” Red bugs are the adult mites (they are not insects but mites that have eight legs, not six like insects) that run around on the ground in spring. They are tiny, only 1-2 millimeters long, but their red color makes them conspicuous when they run about on tile or concrete or paving stones. These adult mites are harmless to humans although you may wish to crush them when you read the rest of this article; these adults prey on insect eggs and tiny insects in the soil. It is the immature stages (larvae, no bigger than a third of a millimeter, and pale yellow or orange or even red) of these mites that sometimes cause a problem for humans. The larvae climb up grass blades and “latch onto” passing animals (mice, rats, rabbits, cats, dogs, deer and cattle). An excellent place to find them is a cattle pasture where they may latch onto you, but perhaps your lawn will do if your pets or your neighbor’s pets run around on it. Larvae of Trombiculidae are called chiggers in the USA. When they latch onto you they head for any bit of skin they can access, often your ankles and lower legs, but they can climb higher if they get under your clothes and often end up around your waistline, stopped from climbing higher by your tight belt.

The trombiculid larva has only six legs, though you won’t see them without a microscope. It punctures your skin (or that of other mammals or even birds) with its mouthparts and injects saliva into the puncture wound. The larva sucks up hemolymph from the wound, and this is repeated and forms a tube extending downward from the skin. The digestion of skin cells causes intense itching. After a few days or it can be many days, when the larva is engorged, it drops to the ground and hides itself. It molts to the nymphal stage (a predatory not parasitic stage), and then after time into the adult which can mate (the females lay eggs).

An old wives’ tale in the southern USA is that Spanish moss in trees contains chiggers. That is strange because entomologists have NOT found chiggers in Spanish moss on trees, even despite repeated attempts. Nor have they found red mites (the adults). Indeed, what would be the point of chiggers “hanging out” in Spanish moss on trees when they need to find cattle or people or cats or dogs etc. which typically do not climb trees. How could such tiny mite larvae, hatching from eggs in the soil, manage to climb trees to get into Spanish moss?

REFERENCES: Rosenfeld, A.H. 1911. Insects and mites in Spanish moss. *Journal of Economic Entomology* 4: 398-309. ^ Whitaker Jr., J; Ruckdeschel, C. (2010). “Spanish Moss, the Unfinished Chigger Story”. *Southeastern Naturalist*. 9 (1): 85–94. [doi:10.1656/058.009.0107](https://doi.org/10.1656/058.009.0107). Repelling chiggers: DEET, N,N-Diethyl-meta-toluamide frequently sold as “Off” sprayed on sneakers and socks and the lower parts of trouser legs does a good job in repelling chiggers.

From Gainesvillebromeliads.org



BROMELIAD TIPS

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1. If you are mounting Tillandsias onto wooden or cork mounts, try to do this activity well before the plant flowers. This will improve the chances of the plant sending out roots onto the mount, as flowering plants often do not do this. Instead, flowering plants are probably using their energy to make flowers, then seeds and pups.
2. Some people prefer to make mounts, to which Tillandsias can be attached, from Leptospermum or Callistemon branches which have dried completely out. This can be achieved by removing all twigs and leaves from the branches and putting them on a shady place for 12 months to dry out. The process can be speeded up by leaving the twigs and leaves attached to the branch for 4 to 6 weeks. The leaves tend to draw all of the sap out of the branch, thus accelerating the drying out.
3. Consider re-potting bromeliads as soon as you obtain them. The mixture they may be growing in could stay either too "wet" or "dry" for your conditions. If it stays too wet or soggy, there is a real risk the plant could rot. If it stays too dry, you will either need to water it more frequently than your other plants, or its growth will be affected adversely.
4. If you can, delay removing pups until they are one-third to half the size of the parent plant. They will tend to grow more quickly, and be less likely to rot (or suffer from other death-inducing problems), than pups removed at a smaller size. The downside of this approach is that the plant may produce fewer pups than if they were removed at an earlier stage of their development.
5. Try to avoid removing pups until winter is definitely over. Pups taken off during this period will usually develop roots and commence active growth more quickly than pups removed during winter. Losses due to rot and other problems are also likely to be less.
6. Before applying liquid fertilizer to bromeliads, thoroughly wet the leaves with water. This helps to ensure the leaves are in the best condition to absorb the nutrients in the liquid fertilizer.
7. If you are trying to decide which potting mix is best for your conditions, it is worth remembering: A potting mixture which stays wet and soggy for any length of time will probably cause you more problems than one which tends to be on the dry side; and you may only experience some adverse weather conditions, e.g. a wet spell of a fortnight's duration in winter, once in several years. However, if your potting mixture isn't designed with these conditions in mind, you can suffer a lot of plant losses when they do occur.
8. If you are thinking of building a shade house, it may be best to build it during winter. Not only will you find it easier to build it then, rather than during hot weather, but the shade house will be ready to house the Spring "explosion" in bromeliad numbers due to the potting of pups, and acquisition of new plants.
9. There is no need to root pups in a special potting mixture. Just plant them in the regular potting mixture you use for that type of bromeliad.
10. Many bromeliad species like high levels of sunlight (but few can tolerate full sun in the middle of summer!) If a plant of a light-loving species has been grown in shady conditions, moving it straight into a well-lit position may result in sun damage, e.g. yellowing of the leaves, bleached "spots" on leaves. Give the plant time to adjust by moving it, over several months, into progressively more sunny locations.
11. Some bromeliads never seem to flower, even though they appear to be mature. Shifting them to a new location, where they receive more (or less) light, or changing the potting mixture in which they are grown, may induce flowering.