

THE FLORIDA EAST COAST BROMELIAD SOCIETY

April 2024 Newsletter

Meeting Date: April 14 at 1:30 p.m.
Meeting Location: Colony in the Wood, 4000 S. Clyde Morris Blvd.
Port Orange, FL



April 14th Meeting

This month's meeting will be held on April 14th at 1:30 pm at Colony in the Wood. Our speaker will be Dr. Terrie Bert who will be discussing the care of the bromeliads she will be bringing for sale. She is a longstanding member of the Sarasota Bromeliad Society and the Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society and will be a speaker at this year's World Conference. She cultivates more than 2,000 different bromeliads in about 35 genera.

There will be the usual bromeliad raffle, door prizes, show and tell, and refreshments.

--- Jack

The passing of two great bromeliad specialists

Derek Butcher and Paul Isley III have recently passed away. Derek devoted over 40 years to learning about bromeliads and sharing his knowledge to a worldwide audience. He was instrumental in building the Bromeliad Species Picture database and the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry. His wife, Margaret, shared his enthusiasm in bromeliads and in 2022 they were both awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (Australia's highest civilian honor) for their service to bromeliad horticulture.

Paul Isley III began his passion for Tillandsias in 1969. He developed cultural techniques for this genus and developed many hybrids introducing them into cultivation. Paul founded Rainforest Flora, Inc. in California which produced millions of Tillandsias, and pioneered the introduction of them to commercial trade in the US and worldwide. He also authored two important books on this genus and produced many educational YouTube videos which are worth watching.

Does Spanish Moss Contain Chiggers?

We have all been told that Spanish moss contains those nasty red bugs called chiggers. If you read the article in the February issue of the *Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies Newsletter*

which Calandra sent us, you will know 3 things: (1) the red bugs are mites (they are not insects as they have 8 legs), (2) it is the larvae that cause the itching problem, and (3) Spanish moss hanging from trees have not been found to contain chiggers. The larvae climb up grass blades and latch on to passing animals or maybe you and head for any bit of skin. You can read the article to find out how they cause the itching. I have always heard that Spanish moss hanging from trees is OK to collect, but don't take it off the ground. And now we know why!!!

More Information from the FCBS Newsletter

The column ASK DR. BROM by Maureen Adelman provides information on the 20 most popular south Florida bromeliad genera and their care. Each genus is briefly described giving the number of species in the genus and a representative photo of one species. This is a very handy guide.

On page 20 is an article on Bromeliad Tips reprinted from a 2002 article of the *Journal of the Australian Bromeliad Society*. Topics include mounting, fertilizing, re-potting, potting mix, building a shade house, and more. Another good read!

April is the time to start working in the garden

With the fluctuating temperatures the last few months it has not always been gardening weather. Hopefully, warmer temperatures will continue, and you can start evaluating what needs to be done with your bromeliads. Many species, like Neoregelias, have new pups or offsets that you may wish to remove and pot or plant somewhere else in your garden. Remember...if the pup is $\frac{1}{2}$ the size of the parent, it's large enough to be separated. However, if you wait too long the pup may begin to get deformed and you will not have a beautiful symmetrical new plant.

Use a sharp, sterilized knife, saw or scissors to remove the pup, cutting it close to the mother plant. You may want to remove some of the lower leaves to reveal the base of the plant. Once the pup has been removed the parent plant may continue to grow additional offsets. If your bromeliad is stoloniferous, you can remove the new pup by snipping the stolon near the base of the pup.

Whether you are planting the pup in a pot or back in the garden, be sure and use a good draining potting mix and don't plant the pup too deeply. You might have to support the offset, so it does not fall over, especially if it is windy. You can use a wooden stake or place a small rock at the base of the plant, so the plant remains upright while it produces new roots. New pups should not be placed in full sun, but in bright, indirect light until they develop a good root system. Be sure to keep it watered but not overwatered as it will rot. Now get to work!!!



We love to see pictures of bromeliads in our members' gardens

From George and Irene Aldrich's Garden:



Aechmea



Neoregelia



Vriesea



Vriesea

Bromeliads from other members' collections:



Dyckia 'Cherry Coke'



Dyckia 'Silver Dragon'
(Photos: Jane Villa-Lobos)



Neoregelia 'Freddie'



Vriesea splendens
(Photo: Calandra Thurrott)



Bromeliads at Sugar Mill Gardens
(Photo: Ruth Gessner)



Tillandsia stricta 'Black Beauty'
(Photo: Jane Villa-Lobos)

Send in your photos and articles about bromeliad events, blooms in your garden, or newspaper and magazine articles that may be of interest to our members. Email Jane at saravillalobos387@gmail.com.

Birthdays for April



Greetings to: Irene Aldrich, Jan Bentz, Annette Caito, Doreen DeBiasio, Greg Kolojeski, Joy Midkiff, Roberta Sappington, and Vince Schrider.

Future Events

April 6

**The Garden Club at Palm Coast
Spring Festival & Plant Sale**
Flagler Palm Coast High School
5500 E. Highway 100
Palm Coast
9-4

April 7

Jewish Heritage Festival
The Casements
25 Riverside Dr.
Ormond Beach
10-5

April 20-21

**Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant
Society
Spring Sale**
200 Fairmont Dr.
Sanford
9-4

April 20-21

**Bromeliad Society of South Florida
Bromeliad Show and Sale**
Fairchild Tropical Garden
10901 Old Cutler Rd.
Coral Gables
10-5

August 17-18

**Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society
Fall Sale**
200 Fairmont Dr.
Sanford
9-4

***Co-Presidents - Jack Dunlop 386-317-0054
Chuck Mamele 386-402-4830
Vice President - Bill Hazard 386-882-3850
Secretary - Ruth Gessner 386-767-3499
Treasurer - Eve Krauth 386-871-1041***

