

SOUTH BAY BROMELIAD ASSOCIATES NEWSLETTER

REGULAR CLUB MEETING: 1:30 p.m.

First Sunday of the month*

Peninsula Center Library

701 Silver Spur Road, Rolling Hills Estates, CA

Website: www.bsi.org/webpages/sbba/

*Exceptions: July Summer Picnic, August Show/Sale, December Holiday Party

2024 SBBA OFFICERS

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| President—Barbara Smiley | 310-337-7710 |
| VP/Programs— OPEN | xxxxxxxxxxx |
| Treasurer-Katherine Poehlmann | 310-308-0048 |
| Secy/Roster—Nada Chatwell | 949-463-0637 |
| Auctioneer— OPEN | xxxxxxxxxxx |
| Editor—Katherine Poehlmann | 310-308-0048 |

SBBA September 1st Meeting:

It's a Small World: The Complex Connections of Bromeliad Biota

Sandy Masuo is uniquely qualified to guide us through her presentation to explore the worlds of life that bromeliads host. In her words, “Like most plants, bromeliads have evolved to function as part of a complex web of life. In cultivation, most of these connections are absent because humans take over many of the relationships that would exist in habitat. In the wild, these charismatic plants often act as mini biomes, providing resources for menageries of creatures, from microbes to a range of vertebrates.”

Sandy is a writer, educator, and conservationist on a mission to enlighten and to inspire wonder in the world around us. She currently serves as botanical content specialist at The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. Prior to that she was the associate editor in the Los Angeles Zoo publications division for 18 years.

From 2010 to 2014, Sandy served on the Southern California Horticultural Society board of directors, and from 2010 to 2021 was an active member of the Association of Zoological Horticulture.

In 2016, she published her debut novel (as Rosana DuMas), *Unnatural Selection: Life and Death on the Paper Trail*. This is the story of a horticulturist/detective investigating the dubious death of a zoo docent. She has taught fiction and business writing as well as a variety of classes from succulent gardening to birdwatching at local community colleges.

Sandy holds a BA from Brown University and an Ed.M from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

► **Meeting refreshments.** Munchies will be provided by Georgiann Keller, Lori Watson, Sherry Faust, Nada Chatwell, Katherine Poehlmann, and Pat Powers. Thank you!

► **SBBA Plant Auction.** Please let Ted Johnson know a week before the meeting how many plants you wish to sell. There is a limit on the total number of plants by all sellers so that we can vacate the library's community room before the maintenance man comes to clean up at around 4:45. Call Ted: 310-850-2824 or Email: tedjohnsonyh@yahoo.com

► **Reminder** Although succulents harmonize nicely with various tropicals in the garden, please limit your inputs to the auction and door prize table to bromeliads. If you wish to share plants other than bromeliads, please put them on the entry door table with either a “Free” sign or a

price tag. Those plants will be sold on the honor system, a private transaction between buyer and seller. No need to bring tags to the treasurer for reporting.

► **Status Report: August 10th SBBA Bromeliad Show/Sale.** Many thanks to all those who participated in the event as volunteers to set up, take down, worked the cash register, provide information to visitors, act as security to protect displays, catalog show plants – and do all the many tasks needed to put on a major production like this. A lot happens behind the scenes that the public (and even club members) never see.

Ted Johnson, our amazing Show Chairman, set the wheels in motion months ago with the logistics of room rental, insurance payments, and contacting sellers. As 8/10 approached, Ted broke his hip but continued in his admirably conscientious way to make sure that the event was on track to be a success. Co-chair Bryan Chan and spouse Mary took care of cashiering, post-show tag processing, and accounting for all sales income (\$5792).

Worthy of special mention and sincere thanks from all of us in SBBA:

Mallory Hartt and Mary Kermani (assistant cashiers)

Pat Powers (transport of show necessities in & out, set up, break down, pulling tags)

Mary Chan (cashier, set up, break down, handled credit cards)

Norm Nakanishi (transport of tillandsia racks in)

Ray Van Veen (transport of tillandsia racks out)

Don Debok (helped with assembly of tillandsia racks)

Personal message of appreciation from Show Chair Ted Johnson:

Due to my recent injury, I cannot recognize contributors with individual plant gifts as I have done previously, but I do want to thank all who supported the show on both Friday and Saturday. From entering plants (and cards and ceramics) sales, putting in your beautiful show plants and arrangements, talking with guests, and lending a hand wherever needed, it combined into a wonderful show. We could not have had such a show without your support.

► **Free used cash register.** The club upgraded to a new machine. If you'd like to have the old cash register, please contact Mary Chan at mchan2001@aol.com or 818-366-1858.

Which Household Products Kill Weeds?

Here is a list of some common ones and explanations for their effectiveness:

- **Vinegar:** Effective because it contains acetic acid that can burn and kill vegetation on contact. It's most effective on young, annual weeds that are still small. Vinegar is best used in areas where you want to kill all vegetation, such as on patios or walkways, because it does not differentiate between weeds and desirable plants. Avoid using vinegar in garden beds or near desired plants or grass.
- **Salt:** Dehydrates plants and disrupts the water balance of weed cells, leading to their death. It is especially useful for weeds growing in gravel driveways or paths. However, salt should

be used sparingly and carefully as it can easily leach into the soil and negatively affect the soil structure and fertility, making the area inhospitable to all plants for a long time.

- **Boiling Water:** Pouring boiling water directly onto weeds cooks them and their seeds, effectively killing them. This method is ideal for weeds in sidewalk cracks or driveway joints, where it's difficult for desirable plants to be accidentally harmed. Boiling water is a safe, immediate, and non-toxic method but is not selective and requires caution to prevent burns.
- **Soap:** Dish soap or a biodegradable soap can act as a surfactant, reducing the surface tension of water and helping it to stick to and penetrate the leaves of weeds, which can enhance the effectiveness of other weed-killing methods like vinegar. Soap alone won't kill weeds, but when mixed with vinegar or salt, it can be more effective (see section below). Use it with care near desirable plants, as it can harm them as well.
- **Corn Gluten Meal:** This is a natural pre-emergent herbicide, meaning it prevents weed seeds from germinating. It's best used in garden beds or lawns where you want to prevent weeds from sprouting without harming existing plants. Avoid using it when you've just seeded an area with desirable plants, as it will inhibit their growth, too.
- **Rubbing Alcohol:** Rubbing alcohol draws water out of weed leaves, leading to dehydration and death. It works well for spot treatment of weeds in garden beds or between pavers. Because it can harm desirable plants, it's important to apply it carefully, using a spray bottle to target only the weeds.

DIY Weed Killer

Mix 1 gallon of white vinegar with 1 cup of salt and 1 tablespoon of dish soap directly into a pump-style garden sprayer, a handle-held spray bottle, or an empty plastic gallon bottle. Everyday white vinegar is fine, but you might consider a stronger brand such as Calyptus Vinegar which is 30% strength, compared to white vinegar, which is 6% concentrate.

When using a higher concentration of vinegar, gloves, and eye protection are essential to avoid any personal injuries. Once you have combined all of the ingredients, shake well to mix, find your weeds, and spray generously.

How the mixture works: the acid in salt and vinegar dries out the weeds. The dish soap helps the mixture to soak into the growing weeds rather than remaining on the leafy surface.

This formula will work best when applied to weeds (including poison ivy) when the ground is dry, and there's no rain in the forecast. Spray in the morning while the sun is shining.

Get as close to the unwanted weed as possible and saturate the entire area. You will notice the leaves start to turn brown within a few hours. Make sure you take precautions to avoid spraying any flowers or grass.

One of the advantages of using this DIY weed killer is that none of the ingredients are harmful to pets or children.

This method of killing weeds doesn't always penetrate down to the roots. Therefore, the weed may resurface, so be prepared to spray the weed-killer mixture several days in a row. Because this concoction contains salt, overuse can affect future plant growth in surrounding soil.

For large and more stubborn weeds try poking the middle of the weed with a screwdriver before spraying the DIY weed killer to the center of the weed.