

# S E M B S

## The Southeast Michigan Bromeliad Society an Affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International March/April 2024



Growing under the masterful care of Kevin Patterson, 14-month-old seedlings of *Quesnelia marmorata* are rapidly taking on characteristics of mature plants. Note the healthy roots developing in chunk coir based potting media. This photo encapsulates the focus of our upcoming meetings on growing from seed and an exploration of potting media for bromeliads. *Photo courtesy of Kevin Patterson.*

## ***Calendar March/April 2024***

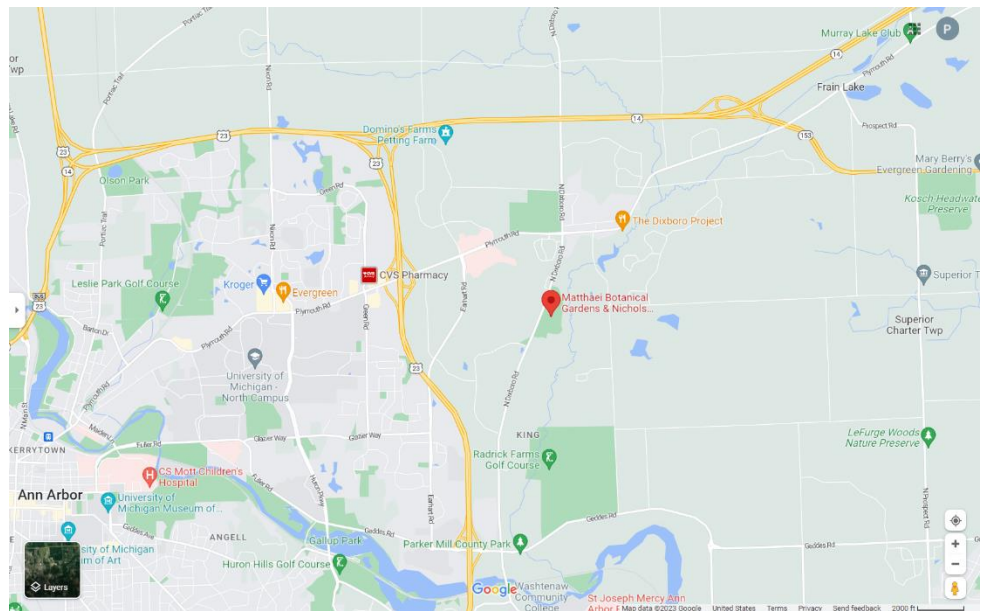
We will resume in-person meetings on **Sunday, March 17, 2:00 P.M.** in the potting room down the back hallway at Matthaei Botanical Gardens. 1800 N. Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor, MI. The featured topic will be a Seed Starting workshop. Growing bromeliads from seed has been talked about at various meetings over the years, but this is the first time that we are organizing a hands-on experience! There are about twenty different varieties of seed that will be available to distribute in a wide variety of genera. Approximately 2000+ seeds have been saved and are ready to share. Seed starting media and pots will be provided. The process of growing from seed requires a bit of self-discipline, and a lot of patience, but they are generally easy to grow. Initially, seedlings are slow to develop. Many resemble little tufts of grass for the first 6-12 months. In the second stage of growth, leaves begin to take on the characteristics of the adult plant, and the growth rate increases exponentially! This phase of growth is very satisfying to observe! The majority of bromeliads will grow from seed to flower in about 3-5 years. Of course, there are outliers, but we will discuss those at the meeting! For Show and Tell, members are encouraged to bring any bromeliads that they have raised from seed to provide inspiration for what is possible!

**Saturday, April 20, 2:00 P.M, Room 139** at Matthaei Botanical Gardens. Meeting topics will include a brief presentation on Carnivory in Bromeliads. This is not common with many bromeliads, but there are a few species in which this trait has evolved over time.

The primary topic for the meeting will be “Sampling growing media for Bromeliads”. There are so many potential components for our potting mixes: Canadian peat, perlite, vermiculite, shredded/composted pine bark, cedar mulch, pumice lava rock, coir, and the increasingly popular chunk coir. We will have samples of each and discuss the pros and cons of each element.

The final agenda item will be to plan for our annual group plant order. Meeting attendance is not mandatory, but anyone wishing to participate should contact [Paul Wingert](#) by April 30. Plants will be distributed during the meeting on Saturday, May 20, 2:00 P.M at Paul and Karen Wingert’s home. More details to follow in the next newsletter.

***Dues reminder:*** Kindly pay your membership dues at the March or April meeting. Dues remain at \$12 individual membership, \$15 for a family membership, and \$5 for members living more than 75-mile radius of downtown Detroit. If you are unable to attend either meeting, please





remit dues by check to SEMBS by April 30, 2024 and mail to: SEMBS, PO Box 80472, Rochester Hills, MI 48308-0472. If you have renewed your dues since May 1 2023, or joined SEMBS at a meeting or during our September show, you are current for calendar year 2024.

***The following photos illustrate bromeliad seedlings at various stages of growth:***



> 14-month-old seedlings demonstrate greater definition of colors, markings, and spines. Note that there are a few laggards in the group. Some are just slow to develop, but this can be a time to begin the process of culling plants which are less desirable. It's a painful process, but all growers face that dilemma!

Photos courtesy of Kevin Patterson.

< 9-month-old *Neoregelia* seedlings are just beginning to develop colors, spots, and banding that will continue to intensify as plants mature.



< Kevin is an avid grower of bromeliads from seed, with experience in growing several thousand plants! He fertilizes his plants generously, which contributes to the fast rate of growth. These *Neoregelias* and *Billbergias* are about 2 years old and approaching blooming size!

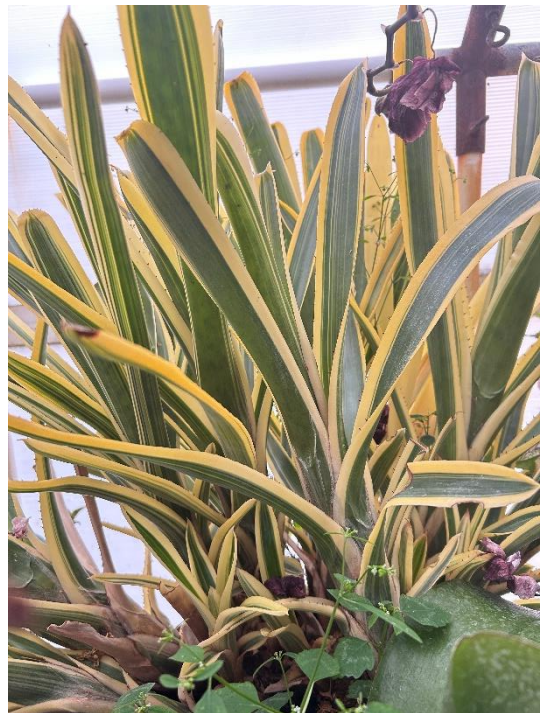


**February meeting recap.** Our Zoom meeting allowed an opportunity for our remote members to join in. Three out-of-state members participated in the “Show and Tell” event, including Carol Kimbrough (Toledo, Ohio), Kevin Patterson (Walkerton, Indiana), and Bob Watson (Terra Haute, Indiana). We had a discussion of our respective growing setups, ranging from greenhouse to solarium, to large windows, and growing using exclusively LED lighting. Kevin gave an extensive video tour of his multiple growing areas. He makes optimal use of large windows for natural lighting, enhanced with LED lighting to compensate for our short, cloudy winter days. Kevin has an impressive and varied collection of bromeliads. There were several beautiful plants in bloom, and as previously alluded to, a monumental number of promising seedlings!

Bob Watson shared pictures of his greenhouse and highlighted some of his favorite bromeliads. An avid collector of variegated plants, he revels in the perpetual foliage beauty of these wonderful bromeliad cultivars! Bob was kind enough to share the following photos of his plants for inclusion in the newsletter. Enjoy this member spotlight on Bob Watson!



*Aechmea orlandiana* ‘Ensign’



*Aechmea nudicaulis* *flavomarginata*



*Neoregelia* ‘Inkwell’

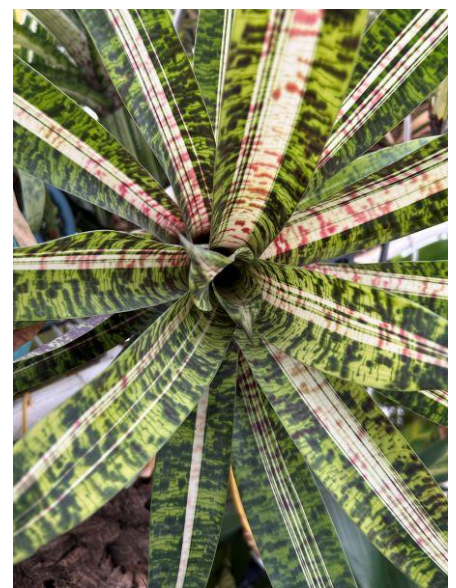




Billbergia 'Alan Ladd'



x Wallfusia 'Antonio'



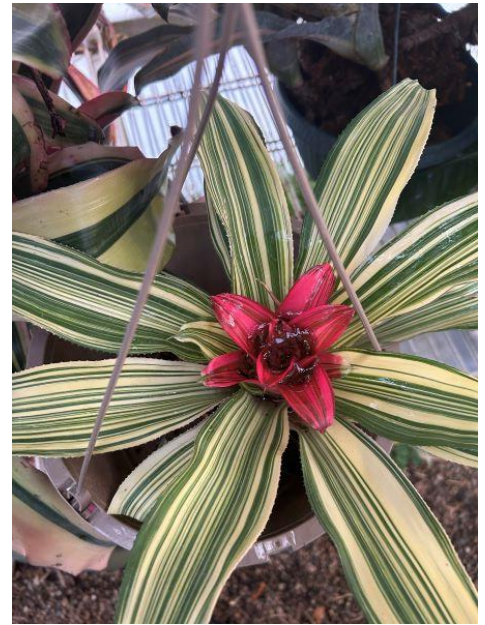
Goudaea 'Josefa Leon'



Guzmania sanguinea tricolor



Greenhouse overview



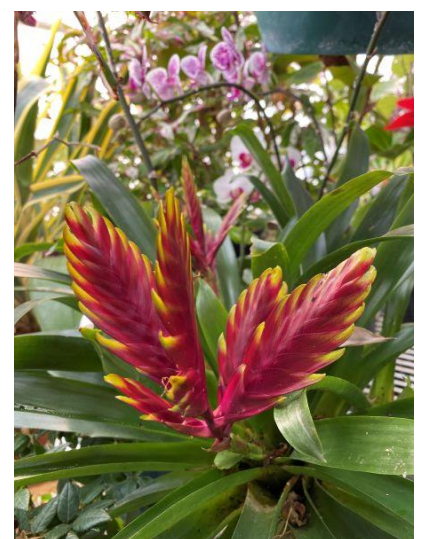
Nidularium 'Rojo'



Cryptanthus 'Rainbow Star'



Aechmea nudicaulis variegata



Vriesea carinata hybrid



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/](http://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](http://www.plantexpeditions.com/plant-tours/2024/ecuador)**

