Bromelcairns
Bimonthly Newsletter of Cairns Bromeliad Society Inc. 2010 # 4
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Life Member - Lynn Hudson
Life Member - Robert (Bob) Hudson

Aims of the Society
Promote and Develop Interest in Bromeliads through Friendship
To Co-operate with similar Clubs throughout the World

Membership Fee: $15 single, $25 family,
$7.50 junior (if not in family membership). Country Member $25
Meetings start at 1 pm sharp first Saturday of the month.
Please bring a cup and a chair.

Library: All books & magazines borrowed are to be returned in good order to the following meeting. If not on wait list, they may be rebooked.

Plant Display/Sales: To participate, a member must be financial and circumstances permitting, have attended at least three meetings in the past six months. Where the society is charged a stall fee - 20% of sales are deducted for club funds.

No charge venue & meetings - 10% of sales is deducted.
All plants to be clean, free of disease, named and price tagged.

Show Plants: Must be the property of and in the custody of the entrant for the past three months. For Society Shows the entrant must be financial and have attended at least three meetings during the past six months.

Pens, Plant Tags & Pots: available at each meeting.

If reprinting article, wholly or in part, please acknowledge Author & Newsletter.
Any article will be Emailed on request to lynnie@ledanet.com.au

Club Activities & Around the Members

JULY: We travelled “up the Range” to meet at Elaine & Bill’s slice of paradise. This will probably be our last visit as Elaine & Bill are moving to the Sunshine Coast and the property is for sale.
* There were many plants brought in for identification, so we each learned something. A good range of tillandsias were entered in the mini show. Maria was surprised when she gained third place for her flowering Till. juncifolia.
* The beauty of Marie’s Aechmea chantinii variegated took our breath away. The markings are perfect, the plant lustrous and healthy. John & Bernice entered well grown and perfectly presented neoregelias. Rob showed the largest Vriesea ‘Splenreit’ we have ever seen, even Judge Neville was amazed and considered it may be very close to the original Vriesea splendens plants. Well done each of you, keep it up.

MINI SHOW – Tillandsia
1st. Tillandsia fasciculata Karen Stevens
2nd. Tillandsia ehlersiana Gail Taifalos
3rd. Tillandsia caput-medusae Bill Asher

Flowering Tillandsia
1st. Tillandsia duratii Thomas Jones
2nd. Tillandsia streptocarpa Bob Hudson
3rd. Tillandsia juncifolia Maria Grant

POPULAR VOTE:
NOVICE:
Bromeliad
1st. Aechmea chantinii variegated Marie Giddins
2nd. Neoregelia ‘Ruby Vale’ John Mark
3rd. Neoregelia ‘Paula’ Bernice Mark
3rd. Vriesea ‘Splenreit’ Bob Giddins
Cryptanthus Nil entries

Tillandsia – Tillandsia juncifolia Maria Grant

OPEN: Bromeliad
1st. Guzmania ‘Optima’ Karen Cross

Cryptanthus
1st. Cryptanthus ‘Starlight’ Lynn Hudson
2nd. Cryptanthus ‘Marion Oppenheimer’ Karen Stevens
3rd. Cryptanthus ‘Starlight’ Gail Taifalos

Tillandsia
1st. Tillandsia bulbosa monster Bob Hudson
2nd. Tillandsia fasciculata Karen Steven
3rd. Tillandsia streptocarpa Bob Hudson
3rd. Tillandsia crocata Bob Hudson
AUGUST: We gathered at Dave & Brendans and it was a busy meeting. Again there were more plants to be identified and excellent plants on display. Some we had not previously seen, one being a miniature stoloniferous vriesea, with pure white central leaves. Dave was given the job of separating a Vriesea glutinosa for Frances, easing and tearing the larger plants apart and he explained how to grow the smaller adventitious plants.

* Members were interested in Rob’s Tillandsias lieboldiana and somnians, each potted, not appearing like the tillandsias we usually see - there are more folks! Some members were amazed at Brendan’s XNeophytum ‘Galactic Warrior’ - yes he grows them big and with great colour.

* There were two main topics of conversation - members success at our Cairns Regional Agriculture & Mining Show (page 3) and the 24 Australians who attended the World Bromeliad Conference in New Orleans. Yes another record for Australian attendance - but they claimed Australia organizes far superior and better interactive, therefore friendlier, conferences.

MINI SHOW – Vriesea & Guzmania
1st. Vriesea ‘Tiger Tim’ Brendan Leishman
2nd Vriesea ‘Snowball’ Rob Giddins
3rd. Vriesea saundersii Bob Hudson
1st. Guzmania ‘Diane’ Lynn Hudson

POPULAR VOTE
NOVICE
Bromeliad 1st. Vriesea ‘Snowball’ Rob Giddins
Cryptanthus - Nil entries
Tillandsia 1st. Tillandsia lieboldiana Rob Giddins
2nd. Tillandsia somnians Bob Giddins

OPEN:
Bromeliad 1st. XNeophytum ‘Galactic Warrior’ Brendan Leishman
2nd. XAnamea ‘Raspberry Ice’ Dave Weston
3rd. Neoregelia ‘Margaret’ Dave Weston
Cryptanthus 1st. Cryptanthus ‘Ruby’ Gail Taifalos
2nd. Cryptanthus ‘Marion Oppenhiemer’ Karen Stevens

Tillandsia 1st. Tillandsia ‘Showtime’ Bob Hudson
2nd. Tillandsia tenuifolia Bob Hudson
2nd. Tillandsia complanata Thomas Jones
3rd. Tillandsia fasciculata Karen Stevens

Tillandsia xerographica drew most comments, next was Vriesea ‘Splenriet’ over a metre across with 14cm wide leaves we impatiently await flowering to further the identification - I don't really want this soul food to flower! I was asked if Pepinia sanquinea was a bromeliad or cordyline; who curled the tops of Quesnelia ‘Tim Plowman’; “Isn’t it ridiculous that the same people win all the prizes?” - my answer “Isn’t it ridiculous that if these people didn’t enter plants there would be nothing for you to complain about”. There were more tillandsias both entered and on show this year – and they were goodies that drew comments and questions. On show, to show, to educate, check our Aims.

Thank You to the members who helped carry the never ending boxes and bits that make up the display, both at setup and pull down. I really appreciated it as we flew out to New Orleans early Sunday morning. Two new members deserve special mention – Gloria & Max gave me Monday afternoon, assisting with the entries. Gloria was a fast learner in listing the entries and Max was a fast bleeder and good cussers. (Max -> Dave’s plants!)
Aechmea nudicaulis

*Aechmea nudicaulis* is an easy plant to grow and flower in Cairns with best results from all day sun. Most of those listed are in Cairns collections. The binomal lists 10 varieties, plus there are many cultivars. All plants are easy to recognize by the ‘thumb print’ at the base of the plant, it appears someone pushed their thumb into the tissue. The scape bracts are very bright red, demanding notice.

* var. *nudicaulis* - tall and green, goes yellow with purple spots and blotches in our all day sun.

* var. *aequalis* - green plant, flushes pink in good light has a long loose inflorescence and scape bracts along the scape, not just below the inflorescence. Name refers to the equal size scape bracts.

* var. *aureorosea* albomarginata - green leafed, with white leaf margins.

* var. *aureorosea* - also has red markings, the sepals are spotted with red, petals plain red. (*aureorosea* = golden yellow and rose, refers to the inflorescence.)

* var. *cuspidata* - as above but with yellow sepals and petals. Also in variegated form.

* var. *flavomarginata* - with yellow leaf margins.

* cv. ‘Silver Streak’ - has silvery lepidope leaves with dark cross bands.

* cv. ‘La Tigre’ - from Costa Rica, reddish orange with silver banding, redder than ‘Silver Streak’

* cv. *Lightning* - opposite variegation to ‘Mary Hyde’.

* cv. ‘Mary Hyde’ - albo-marginated, cream/pink cast in good light, dark spines.

* cv. ‘White Lightning’ - of variegated ‘Mary Hyde’, is almost purely yellow leafed.

* cv. ‘Big John’ - of *aequalis*, 75 - 90 cm tall, broad green leaves, orange bracts.

* cv. ‘Dee Butt’ - variegated with two shades of green.

* cv. ‘Xavante’ formerly the red form or ‘rubra’ - appears someone brush-painted the leaves with red, more heavily on the outside. Most common form has vertical markings, there is also a horizontally striped plant.

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One of the Joys of Spring

Spring is sprung, the grass is riz,

I wish scale babies would stay where they iz.

Yes, it is hatching time for black scale, flyspeck or pin spot scale. This scale is only found on bromeliads, not any other plant. DO NOT use White Oil or other scale sprays, as bromeliads breathe through their leaves and your plant will choke. We recommend Chemspray Antiscale, some prefer ‘Rogor’ which is more toxic. Whatever you use, use it only as directed by the manufacturers, safety first.

You can always get another plant but there is only one YOU. They are insects that crawl; they attach themselves to the plant and suck. They secrete a black hard protective cover and lay eggs. In spring and summer they hatch - one female can release up to 100 eggs!! SPRAY them NOW before they hatch, then respray regularly.

Do not scrape them off, you will release the eggs into the leaf bases and come summer you will have hundreds of them on your plants. It is irresponsible to scrape them off and sell, or even give, a plant away. Sometimes it is best to donate the infested plant to the council, via the wheelie bin, just cut the mother off and you will get a pup from the stump - but watch it for hatchlings.

Before treating, empty out the plant, clean out any debris and allow it to dry. Spray thoroughly and leave it for 24 hours without watering. Check it after 10 days, it may need to be retreated. This spray will also kill the softer light brown scale of our current invasion.

Please do not bring scale infested plants (dead or alive) to meetings. This is the only DO NOT rule we insist on.

CAM or crassulacean acid metabolism

Green pigments (or chlorophyll) use sun energy to combine carbon dioxide (CO$_2$) with water, then form sugars that are the source of energy in other parts of the plant for tissue growth.

Most plants function with day carbon fixation, ie the stomata (pores) open during day and moisture loss can be quite high. Most bromeliads function with night carbon fixation (crassulacean acid metabolism or CAM) where the stomata are closed during the day and open at night.

They take in CO$_2$, convert it to malic acid and store the acid in the leaf. Malic acid is broken down during the day to CO$_2$, which is retained by the leaf and is converted to sugar by the sunlight. It does not seem a very efficient way of trapping the sun’s energy but stomata closed during the day means moisture loss is minimal. The trade off is slower growth rate but they survive in moisture deficient environments.
BROMELIADS AND THE MIGHTY AMAZON BASIN

by Len Butt.

It is almost impossible to imagine the vast quantities of wild territory that houses our bromeliads, when they are in their native habitat! The magnificent Amazon River that winds across the country, nearly splitting it in twain, is the great beating heart of that very tropical paradise of plants and rainforest.

Rising as a small stream some 17,000 feet above sea level, in the snow capped Peruvian Andes, it tumbles and plunges down ravines and chasms onward through a great green jungle basin and finally enters the Atlantic Ocean. It is 200 miles wide at the mouth and laced with many islands. The journey of this river being 4,000 miles and it is said that the ocean going liners can navigate some 2,300 miles inland.

The jungle surrounding the great green basin is unique in world’s geography. Wet, dripping, dimly lit, the area is unmarked by the seasons and has relatively no disturbance or change in over one million years. Now man the primary destroyer, is trying to change it!

The epiphytes, be they orchids, aroids or bromeliads, which live in this vast ecological system have developed their own water supplies and have come to terms with their own mini-world of life. Other great forests of our Northern and Southern hemispheres, have experienced Ice Ages and therefore are only young in comparison, so like parts of our Tropical Australian Rainforest, here is an ancient primeval area where one can look into the past.

Apparently this great rainforest and its almost limitless canopy, is unbelievably rich in fauna and flora and yet to quote some few of the naturalists who have wandered there, it is the most hygienically clean walkway ever. Everything that crashes down, be it a tree or an animal, is consumed by the denizens of the area in a very short period. Trees are ant or borer ridden and become dust in a short time and fungi also help in this. Excrement from man and animal vanishes overnight, back into the forest floor. Animals and the burial dead of man are picked to clean bones in short order.

Bromeliads flourish as epiphytes on a huge quantity of the jungle trees, never really reaching the top storey section of the tree, but growing on lianas, buttresses, in tree crotches, out of stump holes and among rocks on the jungle floor. The Neoregelias, Billbergias and Aechmea genera are scattered through many parts of Brazil. The shoreline of the great river’s many streams, inlets and rocky terrains is very rich in the Bromeliaceae.

Bromeliads not only are a cache for water, but often many forms of small animals and insects live in these reservoirs. Some forms harbour mosquito larvae as well as crabs, swimming beetles, little lizards and even brilliantly painted tree frogs. These latter are known as arrow poison frogs, having deadly toxins in their skin glands. (from Bromletter No.3 1982 p.7)

The Amazon rainforest produces more than 20% of the world's oxygen supply. The Amazon River pushes so much water into the Atlantic Ocean that, more than one hundred miles at sea off the mouth of the river, one can dip fresh water out of the ocean. The volume of water in the Amazon river is greater than the next eight largest rivers in the world combined and three times the flow of all rivers in the United States.
One phone call can make a difference from Gloria Smith

Who would ever think that a simple phone call could change two persons holiday and lives. I phoned Lynn to see where the next meeting was and she said it was a bus trip, join us. It was fast, as a few days later we were sharing a fantastic bus trip with a lot of strangers who quickly became our new made friends - all with one very special point of interest, bromeliads. Who would think that one single word could change your life forever?

We visited some wonderful tropical gardens full of tropical plants and of course, bromeliads! So quickly we covered from Etty Bay and Moresby to Kuranda and Kewarra Beach - amazing gardens. We were invited to inspect so many interesting areas that we can only wonder what must still be out there to be discovered by the members of this society.

One of the more interesting highlights was our introduction to the Cairns Show after our offer to give a helping hand was taken up by Lynn. With sweat running off our brows, Max and I stumbled our way through the entries. I had to learn lower case all over again (it was like going back to Kindy) and poor Max needing a blood transfusion every time he went near those blasted dyckias. Thanks whoever entered those - we shall give you the “XXXX” transfusion bill on our return!

At the end of our long afternoon Lynn very kindly stated that as we are now the experienced Show penciller & runner, we could do the same next year! Sorry Lynn, unfortunately our camp site booking has been cancelled, no more vacancies. All joking aside, we both had a great time and would love to help out again if needed next year.

Congratulations to Bob for “Grand Champion” you finally did it and the tillandsia is a beauty.

We are going back to Burrum Heads with knowledge, hints and lots of suggestions from the ‘experts’ and hope all these we can put into place with our own ‘babies’.

Because of all the plants we collected since we have been here, we have often been asked if we are “permanents” here at the park - or “did you bring all your plants with you” - or “how are you going to get them home”? Our standard answer is “We have bought a two man tent - the plants will go in the caravan and we will sleep in the tent” - it is amazing how many believe us.

Anyway everyone, thank you for kindness and friendship. We are returning to Burrum Heads a much wiser pair of oldies and hope to see you all again next year. Best regards to All, Gloria & Max.

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Guess what - just before they left, they told me their Burrum Heads home will go on the market and they will move to Cairns! Lynn

Importing Bromeliads

The first bromeliads in Australia were probably Billbergia nutans sent out with orchids for safe keeping, from war torn Europe. Our importing rules were not as strict then as they are now. Over the years there have been bromeliads imported to Australia by various persons.

Olive Trevor’s first import was by mail in 1979 and other exciting parcels followed - some of the progeny of these bromeliads are still being cultivated in gardens of Oz. In 1995 Olive and Marjorie McNamara flew to USA and Olive selected her own plants for importing. This was infectious and since then Olive has imported many bromeliads - this is not easy and the cost is enormous. Many of us have plants Olive has brought in, frettet over and propagated. There are hundreds of them.

I was appalled to hear that Derek Butcher said Olive only brings in rubbish, the US growers rub their hands together and direct her to their rubbish dumps! While at the WBC I asked these nursery people and they were appalled - “Olive only selects the best and strongest, she always tries to get the latest releases for Australia. She never quibbles on cost. Yes we rub our hands together because we know that the Australians will be able to get these plants. Maybe Derek is envious” (Envy is bad company - Lynn)

Who makes a difference?

Last month there was a group of ten people sitting in a patio high on a hill with an extraordinary view. They were happy, chatting and although from very different backgrounds and places, they were very comfortable swapping tales, comparisons, adventures and kindly teasing each other. Where, who and how did this come about?

Where: We were at The Magnificent Obsession, the intriguing residence of Eloise & Dan at Vista California - take a look, you will be fascinated. http://web.me.com/dankinnard/Magnificent_Obsession/The_House.html#1

Who: Mine Hosts, + Aizlewoods, Davies, Hudsons & Thompsons after WBC19

How: In 2002 when Bob & I were heading for LAX Pam Koide said “follow me” and she took us to a bare hill with a beautiful view. There we met Dan and I saw Hohenbergia rosea in flower and I never forgot either. We met up with Eloise and Dan at WBC17; San Diego and finally went to stay in June 2007. What a change - that bare hill had had a magical transformation!

So from a simple introduction, Pamela had caused a wonderful friendship to be formed and many happy hours of memories and laughter. Yes, the tie that binds is bromeliads, but Pamela’s action made it happen. I read this in an email:

“Who I am makes a difference. Who you are makes a difference.” It is very true, so never sell yourself short, make your difference be for good.
WOMEN'S REVENGE

‘Cash, check or charge?’ I asked, after folding items the woman wished to purchase. As she fumbled for her wallet, I noticed a remote control for a television set in her purse.

‘So, do you always carry your TV remote?’ I asked.

‘No,’ she replied, ‘but my husband refused to come shopping with me, and I figured this was the most evil thing I could do to him legally.’

UNDERSTANDING WOMEN (A MAN'S PERSPECTIVE)

I know I'm not going to understand women.
I'll never understand how you can take boiling hot wax, pour it onto your upper thigh, rip the hair out by the root and still be afraid of a spider.

WIFE VS. HUSBAND

A couple drove down a country road for several miles, not saying a word. An earlier discussion had led to an argument and neither of them wanted to concede their position. As they passed a barnyard of mules, goats, and pigs, the husband asked sarcastically, ‘Relatives of yours?’ ‘Yep,’ the wife replied, ‘in-laws.’

WORDS

A husband read an article to his wife about how many words women use a day - 30,000 to a man's 15,000.

The wife replied, ‘The reason has to be because we have to repeat everything to men... The husband then turned to his wife and asked, ‘What?’

CREATION

A man said to his wife one day, ‘I don't know how you can be so stupid and so beautiful all at the same time.

‘The wife responded, ‘Allow me to explain. God made me beautiful so you would be attracted to me; God made me stupid so I would be attracted to you.’

WHO DOES WHAT

A man and his wife were having an argument about who should brew the coffee each morning. The wife said, ‘You should do it because you get up first, and then we don’t have to wait as long to get our coffee.

The husband said, ‘You are in charge of cooking around here and you should do it, because that is your job, and I can just wait for my coffee....’

Wife replies, ‘No, you should do it, and besides, it is in the Bible that the man should do the coffee.’ Husband replies, ‘I can't believe that, show me.’

So she fetched the Bible, and opened the New Testament and showed him at the top of several pages, that it indeed says ..'HEBREWS'

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God may have created man before woman but there is always a rough draft before the masterpiece !!

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Nothing just happens or just gets done - Somebody has to do it.