

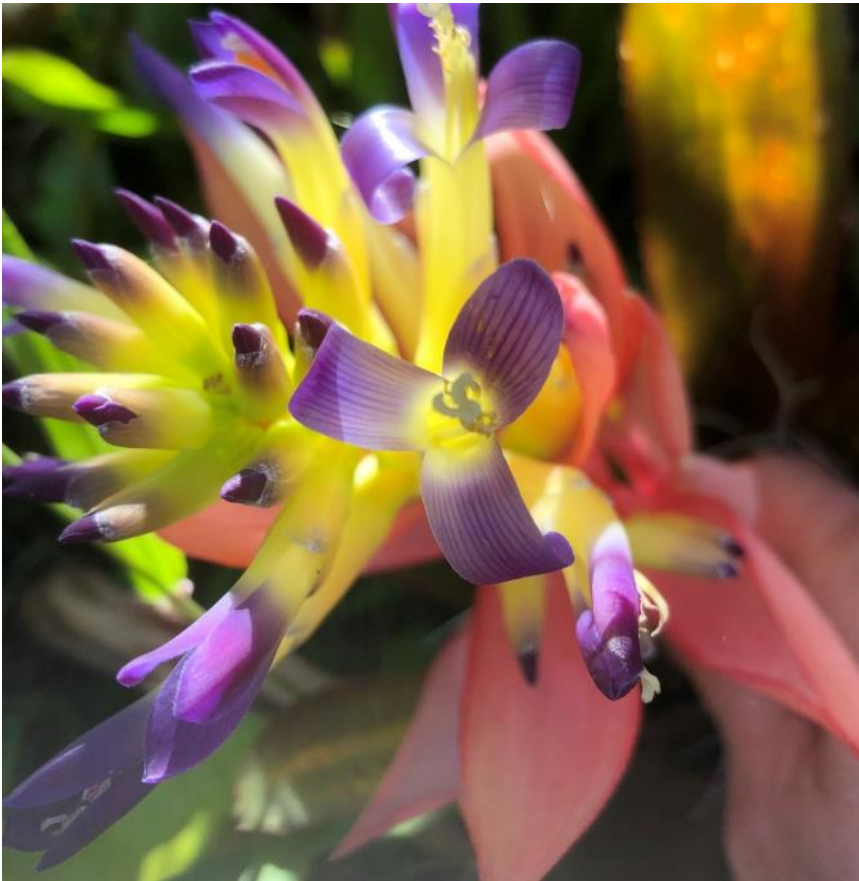


BROMELETTER

***THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
THE BROMELIAD SOCIETY
OF AUSTRALIA INC.
bromeliad.org.au***



**BROMELETTER is published monthly during the
2020 COVID19 restrictions by
The Bromeliad Society of Australia Incorporated.
ISSN 2208-0465 (Online)
Vol 58, No 9 - October 2020**



Please send articles for Bromeletter to editor@bromeliad.org.au
and all other correspondence to:
**The Secretary, Bromeliad Society of Australia Inc. PO Box 340, RYDE
NSW 2112.**

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Photo Front
 Cover
*Ian Hook's
 Bilbergia Red
 Raven*

Photo
 L.Victoria

Greeting BSA members,

Spring has come, everything is bursting with new growth, the bees are active again and the frogs are out and about, as member Len Smith found out while cleaning up some broms. Vrieseas are flowering and many broms are getting some beautiful colours after the colder months.

One of the good things about COVID that I have been hearing from people is how they have slowed down, stopped rushing and are enjoying seeing things in their gardens that previously they had missed. There's always a silver lining in every circumstance, so I hope you found and appreciate yours. For me it has been lots more in the gardening sphere, new brom projects, more of the neighbours stopping and chatting about my garden, touching base with 'garden' people through Facebook, lots of opportunities to help new gardeners with plant gifts and even getting the 5 kids next door working on their garden.

This issue we look at the genus *Dyckia*, one which is often confused with succulents and agaves and the travel section takes us to Germany to present day Schloss Dyck, now an open garden to the public.

Like many, back when restrictions began, I did not realise how long our meetings and normal activities would be put on hold. So as our newsletters continue in this different format, we need more member contributions. Please send in photos of your broms, stories or questions, as this takes the place of our 'show and tell' and exchanging ideas, successes and failures is the best way we learn.

We are fortunate to have Ian as our president, as he has amazing knowledge and is very willing to solve mysteries. Many of you have known Ian for a long time, but as our membership increases others don't know much about Ian, so in this issue read a bit more about our president. As always, stay safe and stay busy with broms.

from Larissa (Editor)

Life Members:

Ron Farrugia
Graham McFarlane
Bill Morris
Ian Hook
Allan Beard
David Scott

WEBSITES

Bromeliads in Australia

<http://bromeliad.org.au>

Encyc of Bromeliads

<http://encyclopedia.florapix.nl/>

BSI Cultivar Register

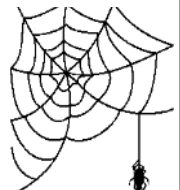
<http://registry.bsi.org/>

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

<http://fcbs.org/>

Bromeliario Imperialis

<http://imperialia.com.br/>





Dyckia—Allan Beard



Dyckia altissima (photo
Ruud de Block)

DYCKIA

Dyckia is one genus in the family Bromeliaceae, subfamily Pitcairnioideae which also contains the genus Hechtia, Pitcairnia and Puya. These are considered to be the most ancient of all bromeliads and are endemic to the arid and high-altitude regions of Brazil and the central part of South America. These are terrestrial bromeliads that do well in pots and in landscape in warm, arid climates.

They are often confused with agaves due to their barbed rosettes and drought tolerance. Most bromeliads are not drought tolerant, but dyckias along with puyas and deuterocohnias are quite well adapted to desert life and are often found in the cactus and succulent sections of botanical gardens.



Dyckia 'Red Devil'
(photo Salchuiwt)

More facts about dyckias:-

- ◆ Dyckia is pronounced di-key'a.
- ◆ Dyckias typically have stiff, long, thin leaves and sharp spines around the leaf edges.
- ◆ Dyckia inflorescences rise between the leaves and not from the centre like other bromeliads. Their inflorescences are unbranched.



This genus is named after the Prussian botanist, botanical artist and horticulturist The Prince and Earl of Salm-Reifferscheid-Dyck (1773–1861). Dyck the owner of Castle Dyck, was a member of an important aristocratic family that ruled a small territory and liased closely with the French botanists and botanical artists of the Napoleonic period. He was friends with Redouté who illustrated de Candolle's 'Plantarum Succulentarum Historia' and this led Dyck to study succulent plants and take lessons in drawing and painting from him. He developed a living collection of succulents at Dyck. 1999.



Left and right above—*Dyckia velascana* (photo Ruud de Block)



Above:- *Dyckia cf. rariflora*
(photo Eric Gouda)

- ◆ Dyckias range in sizes, from a few centimetres to a metre in width and come in shades of red, green, yellow and silver.
- ◆ The flowers come in a variety of brilliant orange and yellow colours, whereas hechtias nearly always have white flowers.
- ◆ Dyckias are NOT monocarpic, ie they keep on growing year after year and do not die off.
- ◆ Dyckias have a natural tendency to clump forming thick, large mats.
- ◆ Dyckias are fertilised by hummingbirds and insects.
- ◆ Dyckias are one of the most cold tolerant of all the bromeliads, tolerating temps down into the low 20s F.
- ◆ Dyckias are tough and require little maintenance.
- ◆ Dyckias can survive drought conditions but don't thrive in them. If they become too dry, their growth stops and they wilt, but they will recover when watered.
- ◆ A few dyckias are saxicolous (live attached to rocks), although most grow in the ground.



Dyckia 'Snowball' (photo Ignacio Moreno)



Dyckia brevifolia 'Yellow Glow'



Dyckia esteves above and below



◆ Dyckias have very extensive root systems and need to be grown in a larger pot than one for a similarly sized other bromeliad. The roots quickly poke through the drain holes so be prepared to repot to a larger size container before the size gets out of hand. It is best to choose pots that have some depth to them as shallow pots are not the best choice for dyckias.

◆ Although dyckias originate from arid parts of S. America, they benefit from generous watering schedules. The large number of spiny leaves may completely cover the surface of a pot which results in water running off and never finding its way to the potting mix. Also the roots can completely fill the pot so the water passes through quickly with little or no retention. If either of these is a problem, consider placing the pot on a saucer and keeping water in the saucer. Allow the plant roots to dry out though to prevent brown leaf tips.

◆ Like any plant that grows quickly, dyckias respond well with good fertilization. These are one of the few bromeliads that don't benefit from foliar feeding. Use a slow release type fertilizer in the potting mix instead.

◆ Dyckia pups don't separate easily, as they're very, very spiny, and is why you often see multiples in one pot.

Photos this page - Amal Eid

Tip: Wear thick garden gloves when taking on a dyckia, whenever repotting, planting or trimming!

IN THE WILD



Photos above right *Dyckia brevifolia* (UF)

above left *Dyckia maritima* on rocky crevices on cliffs in Brazil (photo Marcia Stefani)



Photo above—*Dyckia oligantha*. Rosettes with second leaves, in the species natural environment. Elidio Guarçoni



Dyckia nobilis H. Büneker, K. Soares & L.C. Assis (Büneker 296 et al.). A. Habitat. B. Grouped individuals in habitat . C. Fertile specimen in habitat . D. Rosette. E. Branched inflorescence. F. Flower in lateral view. G. Inflorescence detail. H. Inflorescence detail with flowers in bud.

Photos—Constatino,
dyckiabrazil.blogspot.com

LET'S TRAVEL TO GERMANY - SCHLOSS DYCK

Source: Berthold Holzhofer, www.stiftung-schloss-dyck.

After looking at the Dyckia genus it seems apt to travel to Castle Dyck (Schloss Dyck), in Germany, as it is today. These gardens are included in some tours of the Gardens

of Europe.



Unfortunately at no time did The Prince of Salm-Reifferscheidt-Dyck cultivate any kind of bromeliad in his garden, although he described many succulents and also a few bromeliads.





The family of Salm - Reifferscheidt - Dyck owned the castle since the 14th century, over 900 years, until 1999 when it became the Centre for Garden Art and Landscape Design.



There are no bromeliads, particularly Dyckias grown at Schloss Dyck currently. An unfortunate situation considering its name was applied to the species.



MEMBER PROFILE—IAN HOOK

Source: Ian Hook; photos L. Victoria

Born into a farming family in Victoria, Ian went to a small local school with just 30 pupils. Out of school, his playground was 1000's of acres of natural rainforest and former Aboriginal Reserve now part of Healesville



Sanctuary. As a young boy he spent time exploring 'the bush', and in times of fire and drought helped out at the Sanctuary by finding animals in need of help, and food for platypuses and echidnas.

His dad was a carpenter in the Regular Army and when the family moved to Sydney, in preparation for his Dad going to Vietnam, Ian was thrown into the biggest crowd of 'people' he had ever seen at the Riverstone High School assembly. A huge culture shock for a boy from the bush.

On finishing school, (1972) while the family was moving all over Australia, Ian enrolled at New England University into a BSc course, and majored in Nuclear Physics and Pure Maths, then added a DipEd for good measure. After graduation, with few jobs for Atomic Physicists, he started teaching high school science. Electronics had been a hobby during Uni days and led Ian to write 5 Electronics text books for a Science extension course and running the Youth Radio Scheme for the Wireless Institute of Australia.

On leaving teaching, Ian worked as Scientist/Electronics Engineer at Ausonics where the Artificial Heart, Bionic Ear and the first Ultrasonic Scanner were ground-breaking projects to work. Next at James Hardie Research, his team was tasked with finding a substitute for Asbestos.

Then as PCs were becoming available, (but not outside USA), Ian was given the task of building a PC from scratch as none were allowed to leave the US, then writing its operating system.

Moving to Sydney University in 1993, as head Researcher, he was involved in Fibre Optic research.

HOW A HOOK WAS HOOKED

1990 saw Ian and Gen moving from Leichhardt to their current house in Northmead, and this is when the real fun began.

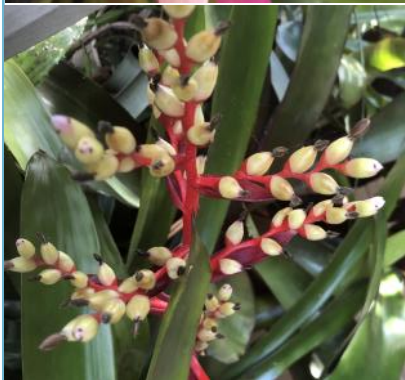
Ian recalls....

“In 1990, I had brought a ‘weird’ upright tubular plant from Leichhardt when I moved to Northmead where the garden had several other ‘weird’ flat plants with red centres and some upright grey prickly ones with a big pink flower. After making enquiries, I contacted Derek Butcher, in Adelaide, who on finding that I lived ‘just around the corner’ from Ken Woods (BSA President), made me an appointment (order!) to go to Ken’s place. After seeing not just more weird plants, but a wide diversity of weirdness, I was hooked.

Soon I was a regular at BSA meetings at Burwood and began getting more and more plants. I learnt to recognise my originals at Northmead as *Neo. carolinea* and *Ae. fasciata*. The Leichhardt plant was an un-registered *Billbergia* and I finally got Derek to register it just a few years ago, it’s a *Billbergia Breauteana*.

In those days Ken Woods, Keith and Ruby Ryde rotated as BSA Presidents and I got involved in setting up Bromeliad Shows at Burwood, having my own table then setting up and maintaining the Bromeliads in Australia web site”.





MEMBER PROFILE - cont

Ian became the president of the BSA in 2007, here are his thoughts of his time in that role. **“Sometimes it has been a difficult time as President. Shows are always exhausting, moving out of Burwood RSL and into Castle Hill was hard, and the Bromsmatta Conference was massive.**

There are daily behind-the-scenes tasks, monthly meetings, lots and lots of emails and the website. But my BSA role has been both exciting and enjoyable and is made so much easier thanks to the dedicated team we have.

Bromeliads became fashionable in the 80s and 90s and at the time we published our successful ‘Growing Bromeliads’ book. Now nearly every gardener is at least familiar with some variety of bromeliad.

Bromeliad Clubs have multiplied in Australia and world-wide and we now have many websites and Facebook bromeliad groups. Our BSA numbers prove that it is a worthwhile interest but we must ensure we continue to bring in the next generation of people to drive this machine for BSA to survive”.

Ian does an amazing job with running meetings, admin and maintaining a website all of which is so time consuming. Most importantly his amazing knowledge of bromeliads is a great asset for our club.

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE BONUS!

THE GOOD

- All our members are safe and healthy, to date no-one from our BSA membership has COVID.
- There has been more time at home for brom time—always a good thing.
- The extra newsletters (now monthly)contain more information than usual, in lieu of information you would have received at meetings, so we trust you have enjoyed these.
- Check out our BSA website for other COVID extras.

THE BAD

Sadly **no meetings** for the rest of 2020.

Reason, our premises, hired from council, have a number limit due to the internal physical space and the usual numbers that attend our meetings far exceed that limit. This means some members will need to be barred from attending (unkind). Secondly, many of our members are in the 'at risk category', so their safety must be foremost in all our decisions. Thirdly, administering the extra guidelines set by council (not just the government), is extremely difficult and if not adhered to, fines apply, so it's not worth it.

THE BONUS

And then there is the bonus!!! We are fortunate that our coffers are healthy and virus free, so the committee has made a decision to benefit all current (2020) financial members.

So, if you paid your 2020 fees then your 2021 fees are **FREE**. But if you haven't paid, or know someone who hasn't, do so quickly to avoid being un-financial.



Please note, un-financial 2021 members:-

- ◆ Cannot sell any plants at meetings or shows.
- ◆ Cannot vote or enter competitions at meetings or shows.
- ◆ Cannot vote at AGM or hold office.
- ◆ Will not receive Bromletters or any email updates.

RED and BLACK OPAL

Source - JBSNZ Vol 59 No 6; M.Belot; BSI.

Photos - M. Belot; BSI, SuenGoff Loughran

In 2008, Peter Tristam imported a number of plants from Chester Skotak (Costa Rica) some of which were unnamed variegated *Neoregelia* hybrid seedlings.

From these Peter grew two outstanding, large sized, striated plants to maturity. In 2011, the paler one with blood - red zoned markings was named and registered as *Neoregelia* 'Red Opal' and the darker grex-mate *Neoregelia* 'Black Opal'.

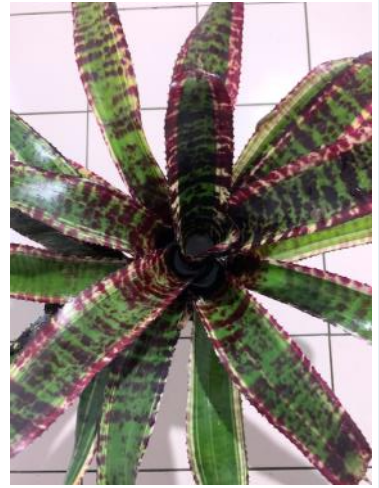
Both of these are from an early second-generation cross made by Chester (2005) using *Neo.* 'Skotak's Tiger' (a cultivar of *Neoregelia carcharodon*), where the cross was *Neoregelia*

carolinae x 'Skotak's Tiger'

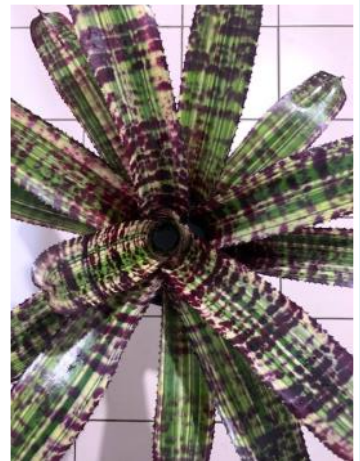
x 'Skotak's Tiger'. Many variegated broms with *Neoregelia carcharodon* genes are quite slow growing and these two plants are no exception. Mark Belot tells us "the Black Opal and Red Opal have been around for a number of years and the prices have come down significantly. Prices several years ago were \$200-\$250 for Black Opal and \$300-\$350 for Red Opal. Today prices range from \$40-\$50 for Black Opal and \$70-\$90 for Red Opal. Black Opal has

Neo. 'Red Opal' always been cheaper probably because there has always been more available to purchase. Black Opal tends to produce pups as it grows, whereas the Red Opal does not seem to. My Striated Black Opal is going to push out its third pup and the albo form has got its first pup, while the Red Opal has not had any pups.

striated form
of *Neo.* 'Black Opal'



also marginated form
of *Neo.* 'Black Opal'



Several forms have developed over the years which is typical with variegated broms. There are the typical more striated original form of Black Opal and Red Opal,



P. Tristram hybrid Neo. 'Black Opal' x 'Skotak Tiger' - 860 ml across

and also the albo-margined Black Opal form.

On Facebook

there have been very

white forms of both

'Black Opal' and 'Red Opal'. Some of these forms maybe from vegetative sports or from seed variation, as a lot of people are now growing seed and doing hybrid crosses.

Some of the well-known hybridisers that have been using Black Opal and Red Opal are, Peter Tristram, Ross Draper

and Peter Kilpatrick. One of Peter Tristram's well

known hybrids using 'Red Opal' is *Neo 'Bahia Opal'* (Red Opal x *pascoaliana*)."



Neo 'Bahia Opal'

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Neo. 'Black Opal' | Mature large, open rosette to 80cm. diameter. Mid-green leaves heavily marbled sepia purple and margined red. |
| Neo. 'Red Opal' | Mature open large rosette to 60cm. diameter. Mid-green, black-spined leaves heavily striated white and strongly cross-banded and splattered cherry red. The foliage reverse can have even more intense colours and markings |
| Neo. 'Bahia Opal' | A tricolor bromeliad which has mature open rosette to 50cm. diameter. Leathery, stiff, black-spined, upturned mid-green leaves with random creamy yellow striations / lineations and dark red spotting / fragmented red cross-banding. |

Report from Treasurer Alan Mathew for September 2020

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Opening balance at bank | 1.9.20 | \$16,392.62 |
| Income: | | 566.80 |
| Less Expenses: | | 2,758.06 |
| Closing balance | 30.09.20 | \$14,201.36 |

ACANTHOSTACHYS

Source: K.McNicol; bromeliad.or.au; bromeliads.info; Wikipedia; gardenonline.com.au; Map: plantsoftheworldonline; .

Photos L.Victoria,
pininterest

Pronounced - a-cantho-steak'-is



One of the attractions of bromeliads is the weirdness factor.... or if you prefer its unusual form, uniqueness, distinctive form, peculiarity, individuality or originality. Whatever word you use to describe bromeliads there is no doubt they never fail to surprise with their unique features. *Acanthostachys* is a less know genus which has features unlike other bromeliads, so definitely worth adding to your collection!

The *Acanthostachys* genus is native to Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay and contains just two known species, the *Acanthostachys strobilaceae* and *Acanthostachys pitcairnioide*.



The *Acanthostachys strobilaceae* is unlike other bromeliads having long, thin, pendant, terete leaves, which emerge from a stoloniferous caudex. The leaves are a deep green and covered with scurf, with edges that are sharp and spiny, so take care when handling this bromeliad. The inflorescence is reed like and produces flowers that look like a miniature pineapple. The small flowers are orange-yellow and approximately 1cm in diameter and 2.5cm in length.

Acanthostachys strobilaceae can

be propagated by seeds (not viable for long) or pups.

First described by Schultes and Schultes in 1830 and classified as *Hohenbergia strobilaceae*, then revised to *Acanthostachys* genus.

Left photo: 1930 drawing
Acanthostachys strobilaceae



In the wild *Acanthostachys strobilaceae* (photo right) can be found growing epiphytically in the tropical rainforests.

Lay name - pinecone bromeliad

Kerry's *Acanthostachys* grows happily in a wire basket which hangs under a tree canopy, its elongated leaves cascading over the sides.



Acanthostachys comes from the Greek "acanthos" - thorny, spiny "stachys" - a flower spike

GLOSSARY

Terete - botanical term describing a circular cross-section; more or less cylindrical without grooves or ridges.

Caudex - the stem of a plant, especially a woody one; also used to mean a rootstock, or particularly a basal stem structure or storage organ from which new growth arises.

TEST YOUR BROM KNOWLEDGE

Now don't cheat...what do you think is the problem with these bromeliads? Answers on pg 22



DID YOU SEE THIS?

Congratulations to Ray Henderson on his ABC Gardening Australia episode, with Costa, showing his garden and the amazing features of bromeliads. Missed it? No worries, find it online on www.abc.net.au/gardening Series 31, Episode 27.



SO WHAT SHAPE IS THAT? - LEAF ANATOMY

Leaves come in many shapes and sizes, so what is the correct way to describe the shape? Some name are quite obvious, others not so much.



Linearis - from Latin meaning consisting of lines, linear, lineal.



Rotundus - from Latin meaning round, spherical, rounded perfectly.



Lanceolatus - from Latin meaning having the form of a lance.



Oblongus - from Latin meaning longer than wide; roughly rectangular.



Ovatus - from Latin, meaning Egg-shaped, with the broadest extremity near the base.



Ellipticus - from Greek, meaning oval or egg shaped.

Spatulatus - from Latin, meaning a flat piece or broad or flat tool.



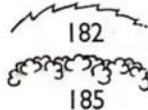
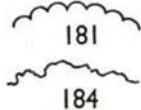
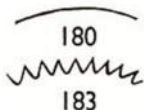
Cuneiformis - from Latin 'Cune', meaning wedge shaped.



Acerosus - from the Latin, meaning needle like, as the leaves of pine.



Patterns of leaf edges, referred to as margins, are also used to identify or compare species.



180 - intergerrimus;
181 - crenatis;
182 - serratus;
183 - dentatus;
184 - erosus;
185—crispus

A MOUSE'S TAIL!

Text and photos by Dale Dixon, Sept 2020 - Facebook
Tillandsia myosura (subgenus *Diaphoranthema*) from central Bolivia along the Andes to Argentina. The specific epithet 'myosura' is Latin and means 'mouse tail' and is probably a reference to the curved form of the leaves. The species is most probably autogamous, meaning that it always self pollinates within the same flower and it is hypothesised that the switch to this type of pollination occurred as a result of the absence of pollinators in the extreme habitats that this species inhabits. I have two clones of this species. The flowers of this clone open much more than the other. My plants always produce fruits.



I woke up one morning and felt I should thoroughly clean the house I quickly went out into the garden until the feeling passed.

A friend suggested horse manure on my strawberries. I am not doing that again. I am going back to whipped cream.

A LITTLE BIT OF BROM HISTORY

Source: Bromlink; GCSBS Issue 4:2020. Photos - K.Gercens
www.karlgercens.com; BSI; L.Victoria.

If you have wondered how and when bromeliads were first discovered by the rest of the world here is a very brief summary.



Aechmea fasciata

The first bromeliad recorded in history, around 500 years ago, was the pineapple (*Ananas cosmosus* – photo top right), brought back to Spain by Columbus from the New World. (Issue 1, 2020 for more info on this historical event).

Several hundred years elapsed before more bromeliads entered cultivation in Europe and these were:

- 1776 *Guzmania lingulata*
- 1828 *Aechmea fasciata*
- 1840 *Vriesea splendens* (now *Lutheria splendens*)

How many of these older varieties do you have in your collection?

Photo; bottom right - *Lutheria splendens* - flaming sword bromeliad



Guzmania lingulata



We continue to attract new members into the Society and would like to warmly welcome our most recent enthusiasts:

Gregory Maloney and William Teoh



Thankyou to Todd and Jodi Cameron in their work as Secretary, who are unfortunately unable to continue in the role.

Christine Johnson has kindly stepped in to fill this position.



Neo. 'Skotak Alcatraz'



Vr. 'Pink Rapids'



Neo. 'Bobby Dazzler'



Neo. 'Royal Burgundy' albo



Vr. hieroglyphica



Neo. 'Broken Heart'

Some lovely bromeliads from Allan Beard



PERON'S TREE FROG

Hearing a ratchet or a heavy machinery sound in your broms or garden? It's the Peron's Tree Frog that loves to sit in downpipes as that amplifies

their mating calls. Depending on light, temperature, and moisture, this frog appears in a range of different colours, shades of white during the day and brown at night always with green speckles on their back.

Source: www.backyardbuddies.org.au.

Photo left: Len Smith's Peron Frog in *Bilbergia*; photo right L.Victoria's Peron in *Tillandsia*



If you have seed to donate please contact Terry .

Below is the list of seeds in our Seed Bank.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| <i>Al. imperialis rubra</i> | 15.10.19 | Terry Davis |
| <i>Tillandsia fasciculata</i> | 28.5.20 | Steve Molnar |
| <i>Tillandsia setacea</i> | 22.5.20 | Steve Molnar |
| <i>Tillandsia gardneri</i> | 25.9.2020 | Terry Davis |

Seeds cost 50¢ per packet (plus postage) for Members and Seed Bank supporters
or \$1 per packet (plus postage) for all other enquiries:

Contact **Terry Davis (02) 9636 6114 or 0439 343 809**

For a full list please go to bromeliad.org.au

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

| | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|
| Annual Membership (Single/Family): | Australia | A\$25 |
| Overseas Membership: | Asia/Pacific Zone | A\$40. |
| | Rest of the World | A\$45. |

New Membership requires a \$5 joining fee, plus Annual Subscription.

(Those joining after our spring Show are covered for the following year.)

Note: Un-financial members must add \$5 rejoining fee when re-applying for membership.

ANSWERS from page 17 - TESTING YOUR BROM KNOWLEDGE

- First check under leaf for scale, which will come off with rubbing with a fingernail; or might be flyspeck, these have/leave a little black dot or could be marks left from the cold; or might be cold damage if no bugs.
- This bromeliad didn't get enough water for a long period, so the leaves turn inwards to conserve water reserves. Solution:- water with rain water, or you can soak for a short while, to aid recovery.
- Alcantarea with frost damage.

(Source photos: A:- J.Amor (Facebook); B:-Brom Dr, JBSNZ Mar 2020; C:- Ray Henderson)

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LITERATURE for Sale

<http://www.bromeliad.org.au/Contacts/BSALibrarian.htm>

| TITLE | AUTHOR | PRICE |
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| Bromeliads for the Contemporary Garden | Andrew Steens | \$20.00 |
| Bromeliads: A Cultural Manual (Rev. ed. 2007) | BSI | \$ 6.00 |
| Bromeliad Hybrids 1: Neoregelias | Margaret Paterson | \$25.00 |
| Bromeliads Under the Mango Tree | John Catlan | \$10.00 |
| Bromeliad Cultivation Notes | Lyn Hudson | \$10.00 |
| Growing Bromeliads – 3rd Ed. by BSA IS BACK! | | \$20.00 (member price) |

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