



BROMELETTER

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CONTENTS

Management Details	Page 2,3,17,20,22,23
Colour and Contrast	4,5,6,7
Seasonal Colour and Gardens	8,9
Landscape Gardening in Brazil	10,11
Phytogeographical Garden	12
World of Bromeliads Show; Plant Growth	13
Fitting in More Broms	14,15
Tillandsias	16,17
Quesnelia	18,19
This Months Hints	20
Online Resources	21

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Greeting to all members,

Gardens by their nature, are in a perpetual state of change, as there are always new varieties to add, new ideas to incorporate and new projects.

It has always been a form of living art, seen in the ancient palace gardens of the Assyrian King Sennacherib who reigned 704 – 681 BC, in Nineveh, perhaps what we know as the Hanging Gardens of Babylon.

In China, the beginning of gardening started as early as the Shang (1600-1046BC) and Zhou (1045-256 BC) dynasties in the form of appealing vistas initially only found in the emperor's domain.

Like all art forms, gardens for pleasure and enjoyment, rather than food production, only exist in times of peace and prosperity, when leisure time is available as opposed to times where people work the land in order to survive.

Bromeliads are easy to use in pleasure gardens because they suffer minimally with transplanting and can be left in pots, which maybe slotted into the garden until you discover their right spot. There are so many species that no matter what microclimate or conditions of your particular space, it is possible to find bromeliads that will grow well.

Spectacular garden designs always consider colour palettes, plant structure, size and growing requirements. Whether you use mass planting of the same species, create a single colour or genus theme or carefully place contrasting colours together, the bromeliad combinations are endless and exercise your creativeness.

In this issue we look at a few bromeliad gardens and the aspects of design such as colour and contrast and how these are used. We have Ray's chart of seasonal garden colour, a look at Pedro Nahoum's landscape trends in South America and a phytogeographical garden in Rio de Janeiro.

Now that we are coming out of the colder days, I hope you are all happily productive in your gardens and bromeliads areas.

from Larissa (Editor)

**Photo Front Cover -
Colour and contrast in Ray Henderson Garden**

COLOUR and CONTRAST

Source: Larissa Victoria: Photos: Members

While many members grow fabulous specimen bromeliads, a number also enjoy growing bromeliads in their gardens. The variety of bromeliad colours and markings make for varied and visually interesting gardens or display, much more than you could achieve with any other genus of plants. This is how some members use colour and contrast to produce great gardens.

COLOUR



In **Helga Nitschke's** garden the background of red highlights the vivid greens of the broms. (Photo top left).

The colours of *Aechmea* 'Sangria Blanco' (**Anna Ernst**) look spectacular

when the leaves are viewed from the tank base with the sun filtering down through the leaf. Many other bromeliads with a red colouring of the underneath of the leaf look great when viewed from below. (Photo middle right).

Vibrant winter colours in **Bryan Alchin's** garden are mainly provided by neoregelias. The advantages of keeping broms in pots is being able to move them around easy. (Photos bottom left and right)



Above: *Aech* 'Sangria Blanco'





Neo. 'Volcano'

Bob Sharpley loves the great colours of bromeliads, here are some to consider for adding colour and contrast to your garden.



Neo 'Moon Dust'



Neo 'White Cloud'



Neo 'Pink River'



Neo. 'Predatress' Novar

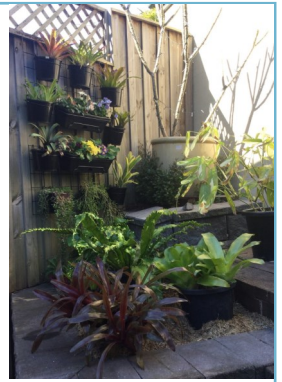


Brom stripes, dots and vibrant colours make a spectacular winter display.

CONTRAST



Contrast as opposed to repetition and uniformity is a clever way to achieve good garden design. Contrast can be achieved by using different leaf patterns, height of plants, position, texture and size.



Bromeliads are perfect for small spaces, as seen in the area our new member **Karen Czarnecki** is creating (Photo top right). Incorporating different levels is a good way to show broms to their best advantage.

Anna Ernst uses baskets and pots (Photo: top left) with contrasting bromeliads which she moves around her garden throughout the year to create interest. In another area, she has attached contrasting broms to logs. (Photo: middle left)



Inflorescences with colour and height provide interest in **Janet Kuan's** garden. (Photo: left 3rd from top)



There is an enormous variety of striped, lineated and albo-margined bromeliads that contrast well with coloured ones. (Photos: Larissa Victoria - bottom right)

Importantly, make use of all available space by going up. As many bromeliads grow epiphytically in their natural habitat finding ones that will attach to branches and hanging platforms is easy. Learning more about your bromeliads natural habitat will help you develop your garden spaces.

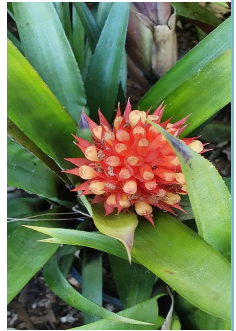
Kerry McNicol gives us more ideas of bromeliads that give colour and contrast in gardens.



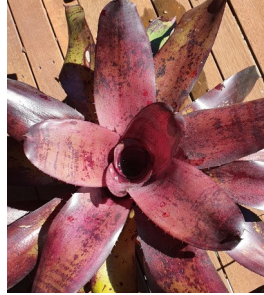
Neo. 'Aquarius'



Bill. 'Halleluia' looks fabulous when left to grow into a large clump. (left)



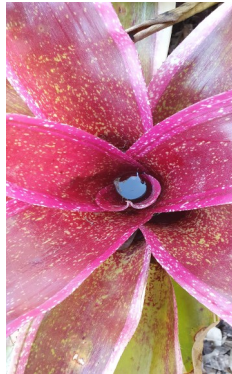
Above: *Aechmea 'Covata'*
Below: *Aechmea recurvata* hybrid



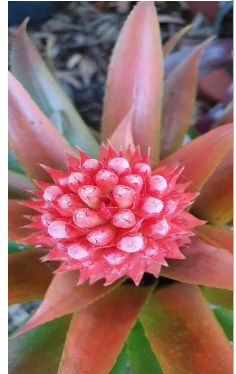
Above: *Neo. 'Cliff Siverd'*



Neo. 'Tangerine'



Neo. 'Cane Fire' pink

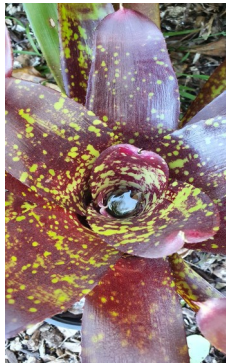


Below: *Neo. 'Pop Tart'*



Neo. 'Red River'

Neo. 'Bullis Margaret'



Neo. 'Aztec'



Neo. 'Gee Whiz'



SEASONAL COLOUR and GARDENS

Source: Ray Henderson, - text and photos.

Ray explains how he maintains colour in his garden for all four seasons.

Spring

I grow a lot of hybrid alcantareas by one of the best breeders, Peter Tristam. These are distributed around the garden and in spring they are still looking good. In addition other bromeliads such as neoregelias and cliveas are spring highlights.

Summer

I grow a lot of portea and Aechmea blanchetiana for spring colour but the frangipanis start to bloom in late spring and carry through the whole summer and the dombeyas are summer flowering.

Autumn

Most of the summer colours carry on through autumn, which is the recovery time for the garden. I do most of my maintenance in autumn, removing leaves scorched by the high summer temperatures and general tidying up. The foliage is probably the most significant feature at this time.

Agave and Aloe flowers together.



Contrast and colour in the full sun at Paradox.

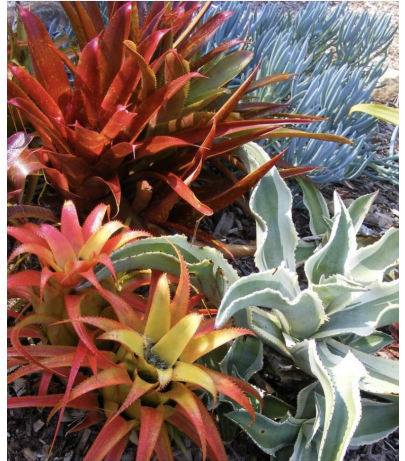


Photo: bottom left - Aechmea eurycorymbus (on the right) is not very well known, but a lovely bromeliad which when grown in full sun has leaves that glow like a golden fleece.

Winter

This is the best time for bromeliads such as alcantareas, but is also ideal for aloes, fire sticks and Crassus as particularly the bluish ones such as cultivars 'Bluebird' and 'Blue Waves'. Colour is accentuated in winter and everything is brighter and more brilliant in winter.



All photos are of Ray's garden this winter.



LANDSCAPE GARDENING IN BRAZIL

Source: Excerpt from talk by Pedro Nahoum, August 2020 - LBVBS.

In Brazil, during the 1990's, the vibrant colours and great shapes of bromeliads made them popular in landscaping in and around Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

Unfortunately there were no specialised growers of sun loving landscaping varieties, so increasingly these bromeliads were sourced from the wild, negatively impacting the population of all wild bromeliads. The

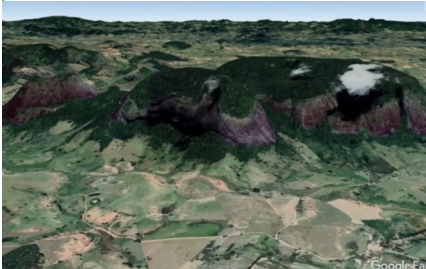


Photo above shows how farming has reduced the bromeliads natural habitat right up to the base of the inselbergs.

bromeliads commercially is just one way to slow the removal of bromeliads from the wild.

Pedro Nahoum runs farms and nurseries (Photo: right and bottom left) some in shade houses and others in specific ecosystems of Brazil, that are naturally suited to different bromeliad genera, these include:- **Restinga vegetation** - an open ecosystem found in sandy soil near the coast. (Photo right)

Rupestrian fields - open ecosystems found in high altitude, rocky soils in Cerrado and where Pedro grows dyckia and bromelia genera. (Photo - pg 11, bottom left)



spread of farming also reduced the wild habitat where bromeliads grew.

Currently, in Brazil, not all inselbergs are conservation areas, so plants are not protected. Growing

Caatinga vegetation - open ecosystem in dry, semi-arid regions of the North-eastern part of Brazil. These areas have varied soils, very hot sun and low humidity and little rain and are these areas are where Pedro grows sun tolerant species.

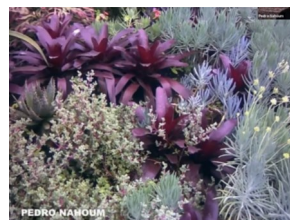
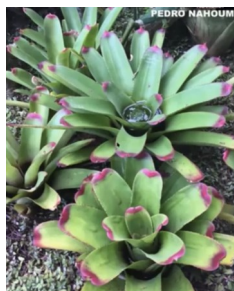
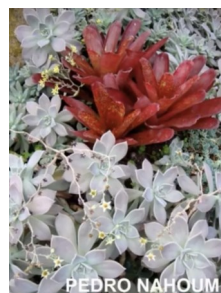
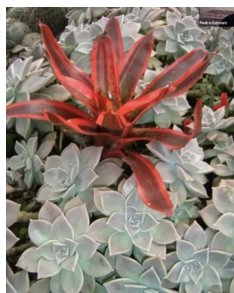
Pedro Nahoum's Background:

After growing up on a farm which grew native plants Pedro studied botany at the university of São Paulo. From an early age he was fortunate to meet and travel with well known bromeliad experts and to visit large Californian bromeliad nurseries. In 1989, he started his own germplasm bank to conserve and genetically improve the native species of Brazil and is currently the CEO of Botanica POP, Brazil. He is a Biodiversity Management student in order to be a specialist from the National School of Tropical Botany.



Above farm in a restinga ecosystem with sandy soils and a natural water supply grows pineapples, wild bromeliads, native cacti and aloe.

Pedro finds the characteristics that make a good landscape bromeliad include ones that are easy to grow, a full sun variety, one that make big clumps, has strong colour and big size. His landscapes incorporate combinations of vibrant contrasting colours and form.



Above: Fields of xerophytic plants growing in natural type conditions. Dykia and orthophytum (xerophytic bromeliads) are becoming popular in landscaping as they require little water and can withstand harsh conditions.

He finds the advantages of alcantareas are their strong colours including white and silver, eg *Alcantarea cerosa*. Many are big plants and can grow just on rocks, even straight on concrete.



Aechmea blanchetiana
‘Rubra #9’ in landscape.

The good news is there are now over 100 growers in Brazil growing alcantareas from seeds, so well established sources are now available rather than relying on taking broms from the wild.

To view the entire talk search ‘Bromeliads in Brazil, Part 1—Pedro Nahoum’ on YouTube.

PHYTOGEOGRAPHICAL GARDEN

Orlando Graeff lives in Rio de Janeiro in an area that he describes as being perfect for growing bromeliads. In Orlando's garden bromeliads are grown in the same way (terrestrial / epiphyte) and situation as they would be found in nature. When he acquired the land, the forest had to be re-established as the photos in 2007 and ten years on show.

Phytogeography - the study of vegetation, its function and ecological relations with the environment, and its geographical dispersion throughout the land.



2007



2017



Photo above: forest restoration with new trails.

In the open areas, (Photo middle right) the garden bed arrangements are a copy of landscape seen in the wilderness.

This type of garden takes a lot of research and planning.

Photo: bottom left - More than

50 species of plants are planted just in this small area by the pond.

Many are hidden so maps are kept so all is meticulously recorded.



Photo above, left to right:
Neo. correia-araujoi;
Barbacenia purpurea;
Neo. carcharodon

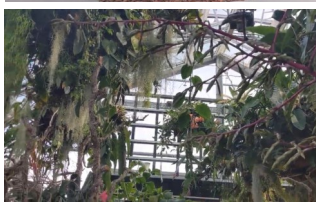
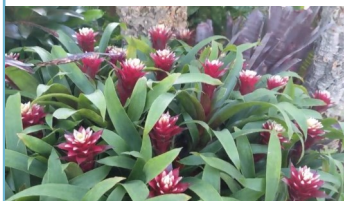


(further details on Orlando's talk on page 21)

The World of Bromeliads Show

Source: 'Bromeliad Show at San Diego Botanical Garden 2021'- Mary-Lou Gibson.

While our spring show could not eventuate this year, here's a snippet of '**The World of Bromeliads Show**', at the San Diego Botanical Gardens, held this year from August 14th to September 26th. There are many techniques and clever ideas to inspire you such as glass shelf tables. Search the source above, on YouTube to view full video.



PLANT GROWTH

Source: www.britannica.com; Image: www.biologyreader.com

Plant growth occurs in response to certain stimuli, this is called tropism, most are orthotropic; i.e. they are directed toward the source of the stimulus. Types include:

Geotropism or Gravitropism - the growth of the parts of plants in response to the force of gravity. The upward growth of plant shoots is an instance of negative geotropism; the downward growth of roots is positive geotropism.

Ageotropism - the absence of any tendency of an organ (e.g. root) to grow in a particular direction relative to the force of gravity.

Hydrotropism - the growth of the parts of plants towards moisture/water.

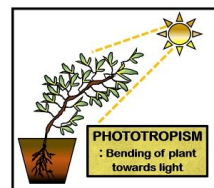
Heliotropism/ phototropism - the growth of the parts of plants in response to sunlight.

Chemotropism - response to particular substances

Thigmotropism - response to mechanical stimulation

Traumatotropism - response to wound lesion

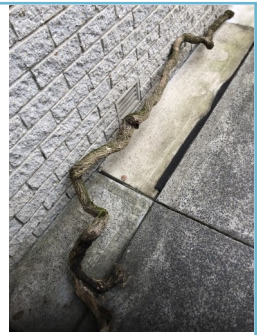
Galvanotropism/ electrotropism - response to electric current.



FITTING IN MORE BROMS

Text and photos by Larissa Victoria

Like most bromeliad enthusiasts I'm always looking for more ways of fitting in new broms. About a year ago I was able to obtain some interesting shaped vines and at first wasn't sure how I was going to use them. (photo: top right) My first project was to put the convoluted oval shaped vine into the middle of



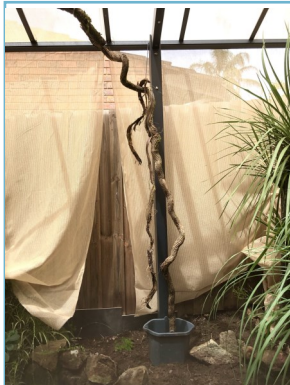
my bottlebrush tree. I began by clearing out all the lower small branches of the tree and then jammed the vine into the central space. (photo: top left) The vine is heavy and is quite stable, so nothing else was required to secure it in place. The vine and bark of the bottlebrush blend well together, so it doesn't look strange although it sits in the horizontal position.

I used different methods to secure the broms to see what would be the best

method for keeping the bromeliads in place, as this area gets a lot of wind and the attachments had to be very stable. The methods I used included stockings (least effective), U-shape nails, hessian tape (screwed in), cable ties and wire. I started attaching mini and midi broms in March 2021 and the best attachments have been the hessian tape ones, of course these are the hardest to do.



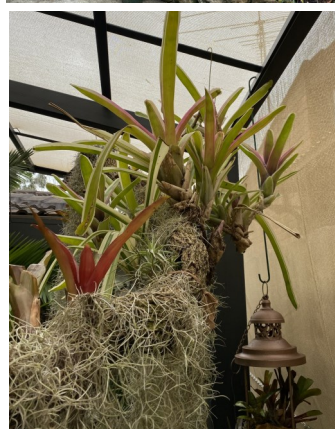
Photos from left to right: I used timber screws with a square recessed top, with a drill bit to fit the square top; hessian tape is doubled over at ends; it will pull quite tight when you pull it around as it has some give; last photo—bromeliad secured.



Two other vines were used together, and were visually joined together in an area under shade cloth. One is suspended by hooks from the frame of the shadehouse and the second one was stood in a bucket (**photo: top and middle left**) and then filled with mortar (sand, water and cement) and is quite stable. Many of the bromeliads here are simply looped over the vine (**photo: top right and bottom left**) and have no actual attachments, others are attach by hessian tape or wire and the joins and ugly attachments are covered with *Tillandsia usneoides* (**Photo: bottom right**) I have one more vine left for a future project,



but where that will be is still not clear.



We would like to welcome our recent bromeliad enthusiasts

Walter Tinney (QLD)

Mark Brewer (Zimbabwe)

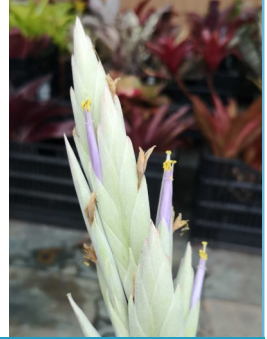
Jennifer Webb (Wentworth Falls)

TERRIFIC TILLANDSIAS

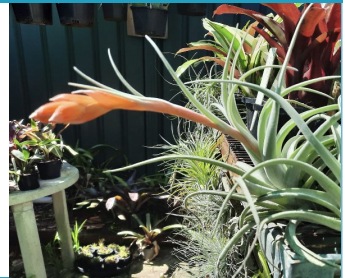
Many of our members grow beautiful tillandsias, here are just a few beauties.



Harold Kuan writes - my first time flowering this big beauty, *Tillandsia zacapanensis*. Probably it would like some more light, but it gets what it gets!



The emerging inflorescence of *Tillandsia recurvifolia* var. *subsecundifolia* in **Helga Nitschke's** garden



Tillandsia neglecta (subg. #Anoplophytum) is endemic to Brazil and occurs as a caulescent lithophyte on granite. The epithet 'neglecta' refers to the fact that the species was a rather late discovery. Sometimes meaning that it was sitting there in plain sight but neglected. The species was described in 1971.

This is the red leaf form of the species. Apparently these different leaf colour variants all occur mixed together in single populations. It does not appear to be any reaction to amount of exposure to sunlight as I grow my green leaf form adjacent to these red leaf forms and the colour is maintained. No matter the leaf colour this species is spectacular especially when a clump is in full flower.

I grow my plants atmospherically suspended on aluminium craft wire on a northeast facing internal wall of the #TillHouse, in QLD.



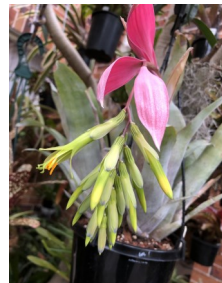
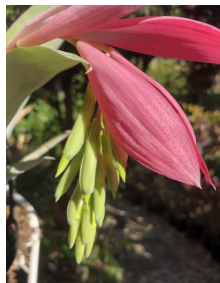
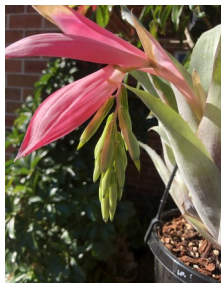
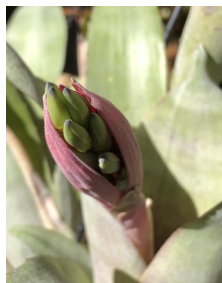


Right: **Kerry McNicol** - large form of *T.recurvifolia* var *subsecundifolia* . this tillandsia came from a USA source with pot luck of what it was, subsequently identified by Chris Larson. Left: **Bob Sharpley's** beautiful clump of flowering tillandsias. It has been in this position for years and obviously doing very well.



Sadly the label has long gone.

Anna Ernst - *Billbergia distachia* v. *straussiana*



In our June edition the photo of *Nidularium* 'Madonna' has been identified as belonging to Edwina Wain, her husband Stephen is holding this beauty.



Nature will always surprise and delight us.

Left: An amazing pineapple.

Right: Colourful companions.



WEBSITES

Bromeliads in Australia

<http://bromeliad.org.au>

Encyc of Bromeliads

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

BSI Cultivar Register

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

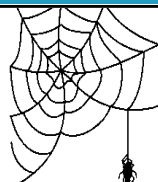
Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

<http://fcbs.org/>

Bromeliario Imperialis

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

Remember the tab of "INDEXED JOURNALS" on our Home page gives you access to other societies and past newsletters to enjoy during lockdown.



QUESNELIA

Source: BSA website; ELBSSA Newsletter Sept. 2019. Photos BSA website

The Quesnelia genus consists of about 30 species and is indigenous to Eastern Brazil where it mostly grows terrestrially in the forests and coastal areas. The smaller tubular varieties can be confused with Billbergia. Quesnelias can range from 30cm to 200cm in height. They are epiphytic, terrestrial or saxicolous/rupicolous. Their main attraction are their flower spikes which come in spectacular colours, but unfortunately are short lived. They are easy to grow and attach easily to trees and rocks due to their stoloniferous growth habit. Most are very spiny and some have a vicious spike on their leaf tip. They like bright light growing conditions, will tolerate



full sun and shade but don't like cold temperatures which causes the foliage to mark. They like warmth, moderate watering and good drainage. Less water is required during the colder months. Quesnelia are only found in the Atlantic forests in the state of Rio de Janeiro in S.E. Brazil where they grow on rocks (saxicolous/rupicolous) or as epiphytes on trees. The foliage is rather ordinary with a slightly flared form consisting of a few green leaves, not heavily spined, but end with a vicious spike.

Some quesnelia species

Q. arvensis, *Q. quesneliana* and *Q. testudo* are similar species and relatively difficult to tell apart. All have strobilate inflorescences with 'shocking' pink floral bracts.

Q. testudo has spines on its lower scape (peduncle).



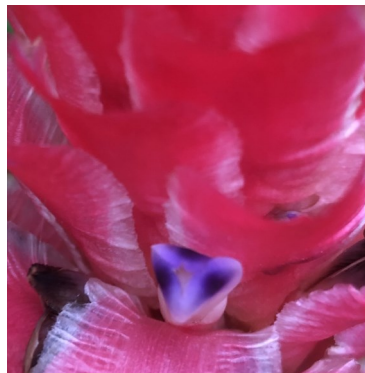
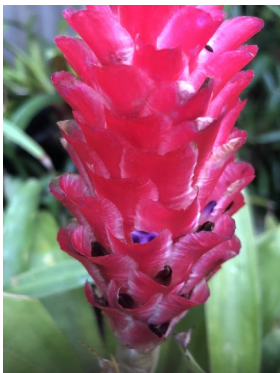
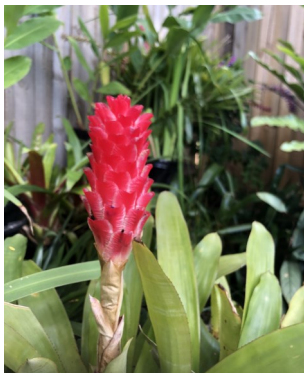
Q. testudo showing spines on the lower scape leaves



Photo above:
Q. testudo - Ian Hook

From BSA site ; photo by Michael Andreas

Q. arvensis has heavily textured dark green leaves with more pronounced spines than *Q. testudo*. *Q. arvensis* floral bracts have flat and uniform margins, and cobwebby indument. Fruit are violet when ripe.



Floral
bracts
with
wavy
mar-
gins



Q. quesneliana has a flower head longer and thinner than the other two. Its floral bracts are elongated and wrinkled along the edges (wavy margins), the base with white woolly indument. Ripe fruit is rose to violet. This one can even exist in water logged soils. (3 photos above - L.Victoria)

Q. marmorata is a tubular plant with distinctive distichous leaves, with a pattern of spots and sometimes light banding. Inflorescence is laxly branched with many flowers and floral bracts are minute. Fruit orange and cylindrical. Propagates by short rhizomes.



Q. marmorata
Above - Robyn Firth

Q. marmorata
Below - Ian. Hook



THIS MONTH'S HINTS

Source: FNCBSG March 2021 Photo: Amazon

Your kitchen provides a number of aids for bromeliad care, from cinnamon powder (to sprinkle on pup and mother cuts—acts as a fungicide), satay sticks or take away chop sticks (to support broms while the roots take hold), takeaway containers (to store or sow seeds in) and now your tea infuser has another use.



When preparing seed for planting, it is necessary to remove the jelly substance called '**mucilage**' that surrounds the seed. This is normally removed by soaking the seed in a container of water (often up to a week) with a drop of detergent, shaking the container frequently until the seeds appear clean of the jelly substance.

Alternatively you can squeeze the seed from the pod into the tea infuser and shake in a container of water and detergent until the seed are clean. Allow them to dry, before spreading over your seed raising mix and lightly watering.

Mucilage is a gelatinous substance secreted by plants composed of proteins and polysaccharides. Its purpose is to retain moisture around the seed. (Wikipaedia)

TIP

When talking about plant groups, as in Aechmea, Billbergia, Neoregelia etc, it is not GENRE. It's either GENUS (singular) or GENERA (plural). Genre is for a category of books or movies e.g. Science Fiction, Mystery, Fantasy.

Financial Reports - July and August 2021 - Maureen Johns

Opening Balance 01/07/2021	\$ 16,218.96
Add Income	\$ 0
Less Expenses	\$ 1,426.87
Closing Balance 30/07/2021	\$ 14,792.09

Opening Balance 01/08/2021	\$ 14,792.09
Add Income	\$ 112.89
Less Expenses	\$ 1,135.68
Closing Balance 31/08/2021	\$ 13760.30

ONLINE TALKS

Missing your brom meetings? There are a number of online talks put up by brom enthusiasts from all over the world. Some are old and some have been recently put online due to COVID restrictions. Here are just a few you will find on **YouTube** with

approximate times in brackets:-

'The Lost Worlds Mountains of Venezuela' by Stewart McPherson, a talk that covers the

formation, bio-geography, history of exploration of the tepius mountains of Venezuela, where there are

tepius - from local dialect meaning 'sprouting rock'.

over 100 tepius. The tepius was featured in Bromelletter No 1 2021. (photo top left: Kukenan tepui - wikipedia) (60 mins)

'What I found on the top of Mount Roraima' by Fabio Kotinda, a video commentary of one mans visit to this tepius, with good footage of the type of vegetation on the top of this tepius. These ecosystems are home to many saxicolous bromeliads. (10 mins)

'The Most Beautiful Place I've Been - Mt Roraima, Venezuela . Morton's South America. Vlog No 7'. Beautiful video and photography of this tepius and although the photographer doesn't discuss bromeliads there are lots to see in their natural habitat. (10 mins)

'Bromeliads in Brazil' presented by Orlando Graeff (56 mins), a talk covering the different regions of Brazil in relation to bromeliads. Fascinating look at the variety of bromeliad habitats. (Source map: www.goway.com)



On a sad note our member Stan Hopping passed away in mid-August. His sister Denise wrote, "Our family thanks you for your kindness to Stan on the occasions he was able to attend meetings/functions etc. He always spoke warmly of the people he met on these occasions. He loved his bromeliads and we are dispersing his collection amongst the family".

Below is the list of seeds in our Seed Bank.

<i>Neoregelia kautskii</i>	5.10.19	Terry Davis
<i>Al. imperialis rubra</i>	15.10.19	Terry Davis
<i>Pseudalcantarea viridiflora</i> (red under leaf)	23.10.19	Terry Davis
<i>Tillandsia loliacea</i>	15.08.21	Greg Aizlewood
<i>Catopsis floribunda</i>	21.08.21	Greg Aizlewood
<i>Tillandsia tricholepis</i>	21.08.21	Greg Aizlewood
<i>Tillandsia bartramii</i>	23.08.21	Greg Aizlewood
<i>Tillandsia utriculata</i> (Florida)	2.09.21	Greg Aizlewood
<i>Tillandsia capillaris</i> - unknown form	3.09.21	Greg Aizlewood
<i>Tillandsia minutiflora</i>	4.09.21	Greg Aizlewood

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**

If you have seed to donate please contact Terry.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: Renewal is due **1st January** for membership year January to December.

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.

MAIL ORDER PAYMENTS BY MASTERCARD/VISA.

(Subject to A\$10.00 minimum.)

Members using Mastercard or Visa mail order facility should provide the following details, printed clearly in block letters, on a separate sheet of paper:

- Name and address of **MEMBER**.
- **TYPE of card** (Visa, Mastercard)
- **CARDHOLDER** name details, as shown on card.
- Mastercard/Visa **number** and **expiry date**.
- **CARDHOLDER** signature (essential).
- Payment details (membership renewal, book purchase, postage, etc.)

LITERATURE for Sale

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

TITLE	AUTHOR	PRICE
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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