



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

THE BSGC NEWS

October-November, 2011

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WEB SITE

<http://bromeliad-chicago.org>

Webmaster

Lori Weigerding

It is hard to believe that our last meeting of the year is coming up. The annual luncheon for members is set for 11:30 am, Nov. 13th at Lambs Farm which is located at 14245 W. Rockland Road, Libertyville, IL 60048. The luncheon is paid for by the Society. If you have any questions please contact Paula who made the arrangements. We will approve the slate of Officers and discuss any ideas for next year.

After the luncheon, the Society will visit Pasquesi's Nursery. Pasquesi Home and Garden is located at 975 North Shore Drive, Lake Bluff, IL. It is located about 3 blocks south of Route 176 on the corner of Waukegan Road and North Shore Drive.

President's Column

WOW what a time we've had! I'll tell ya I'm so glad that I didn't miss Anne's presentation!! It was a blast and it was almost as if you were actually there!! That was really nice of her husband to help her construct a 3D rendering of their green house! She has loads of plants and knows just how to take care of them all. They're all arranged very neat and orderly. She has a coiled water line so she can give each a drink without having to carry a watering can around! The room has heat and vents that open to cool it off in the summer. She and her husband often share a meal out there amongst the plants. If you weren't able to attend the meeting Anne uploaded the video and with Anne's permission I'll put a link on our web site, so Anne please let me know if this is OK with you.

Lori Weigerding

Dear Bromeliad Society folks:

I showed a 360-degree view of my greenhouse at todays meeting @ the Botanic Gardens. If you would like to re-visit it (or if you missed the meeting and are curious), please go to this link:

<http://photosynth.net/view.aspx?cid=52105265-df23-442c-842a-7366477807ca&m=false&i=0:0:0&c=0:0:0&z=443.476012110826&d=-1.23436310577529:-1.23436310577529:-1.1928213433687&p=0:0&t=False>

and you can tour” the greenhouse including moving around the walls; going up and down; and zooming in and out. Enjoy!

Anne T Coughlan

September 9, 2011 BSGC Meeting

A plant raffle was held with members purchasing raffle tickets. Members picked out plants that were left from our Show and Sale as well as plants that were donated by Chris Hill. Martha and Steve had taken care of the plants.

The slate of officers for next year was approved. If anyone else would like to be considered let one of the officers know before the Lambs Farm luncheon. The slate is Lori Weigerding-President, Martha Goode- Vice-President, Paula Dering- Treasurer, Roberta Torossy- Secretary. Please vote by phone or email to one of the officers or at the November 13th Lambs Farm luncheon.

A discussion of the holiday luncheon at Lambs Farm was brought up as well as a visit to Pasquesi Nursery afterwards. Paula will be making the arrangements.

The Meeting Calendar for next year was discussed. The members decided to meet every two months beginning in February. Meetings will be held on the second Sunday of the month at 2pm at the Chicago Botanic Garden Annex unless otherwise specified.

Martha received the contract for the 2012 Show. It will be a combined show with the Cactus & Succulent Society. The Show dates are July 20-22, 2012, There was discussion of where and who should order the plants. Lori moved that we order the plants ourselves from Russells. Roberta seconded the motion. The motion was carried.

We want to thank Paula for bringing the key lime bundt cake to share.

Martha moved to close the meeting and it was seconded by Lori.
Minutes taken by Roberta Torossy.

Steve and I stopped at the Southwest Bromeliad Guild Show and Sale on our way to Arizona. We have included some pictures from it. The Houston Bromeliad Society will have more pictures in their October issue of their bulletin at <http://bromeliadsocietyhouston.org> They had many beautiful plants for sale. I only bought three dyckias. While I was there I talked to Bryan Windham from New Orleans, who had a great selection of dyckias for sale. I asked if someone had crossed Dyckia 'Naked Lady' (proper name is 'Nude Lady') with one of the silvery spiny ones. He said that they had not succeeded but would try again. Maybe in the future we can have a silver spineless dyckia so we don't get all scratched up when repotting or planting it.

The San Diego Society had an article on hechtias, which are also in the subfamily Pitcairnioideae in their April 2011 Newsletter.

***Hechtias* - Plants for All Seasons**

Andy Siekkinen

Summer through fall is usually the season when we think of our bromeliads as looking their best. They like to have the good growing season to bring out their color and form. However, I have noticed that like many *Tillandsias*, the *Hechtias* really look great in late winter and spring.

Bromeliads, like many plants, tend to show the greatest intensity of color when stressed. This can be achieved by a lack of nutrition or water, by intense sunlight, by high temperatures or by a combination of these. I think that in the case of my *Hechtias* it is the cool winter nights and the warming days combined with strong sunlight that creates the perfect balance.



Like so many *Hechtias*, the first one I grew was an unidentified plant. It looked green and slightly scurfy that first summer but, over the winter the leaves turned a dark red-maroon color.



Knowing that *Hechtias* are considered frost sensitive I was afraid it was close to melting. This plant is special to me as it was a gift from a friend who got it from the collection of the late Lynn Deilman. Some people suggested that the reddening could be due to insufficient fertilizer or water. However, I feed and water my terrestrials generously. Much to my relief, as the weather warmed the color returned to green with some vigorous growth. Now, without fail each winter, that plant gets a wonderful rich color while most of my bromeliads are looking tired and beat up.



It is not only this particular plant that has colors that come to life in the

winter, for that is the season when *Hechtias* with ‘bloodspots’ near the spines really appear.



The cool season is also when the ‘*texensis*-type’ plants really strut their stuff.



While I enjoy growing terrestrials year round, wintertime is the season when *Hechtias* earn a prominent spot in my garden.



At the Southwest Bromeliad Guild Auction, I purchased several old Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Newsletters as well as the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies Newsletters. I will be using some of their articles. You can see how our knowledge of the plants has grown and changed over time. This article by Carol Johnson was in the May 1998, FCBS Newsletter.

Dyckias

It seems that whenever Dyckias are discussed, they are lumped with the rest of the subfamily Pitcairniodeae and given little attention. They are, however, very much different and deserve special attention. Terrestrial plants with wicked spines and tremendous root systems, they really should be grown in the ground and not in pots, as they conform poorly to potting. All (at least 90% anyhow) are indigenous to Brazil, and 100% from South America. While the bloom spikes may be susceptible to frost, the plants are extremely hardy and seem to thrive during the cold season in Florida.



Bryan Windham D. Mar.lap X pitzii

Blooming occurs in Florida, normally, between February and May. I am probably wrong, but I swear many of my Dyckias seem to bloom more than once from the same plant. Blooms are yellow thru orange, stand well above the foliage, and are susceptible to chewing insects while in bloom.

Of the more than 100 Dyckia species named in the bi-nomial alpha list, it is doubtful that more than 10 or 12 species exist in our Florida collections, and these

species are (to me) of doubtful authenticity if grown from seed, as the plants enthusiastically cross pollinate and produce some strange progeny.

Culture: As I have said Dyckias do best in the ground. In Brazil, they grow

in arid regions and on rocky outcroppings, but over the years I have found that if you are going to grow the plants in pots, overpot to accommodate the root system, keep well watered and fed, and furnish small amounts of lime as a top dressing twice a year. Soft and orchid scale seem to be fond of Dyckias, and the best treatment for this is a 50/50 spray solution of alcohol and water.

Growing from seed: The Dyckia seeds are the only bromeliad seeds which I make a habit of covering at planting time. Lightly, lightly, or perhaps just push the seed into the soil with toothpick. Taking Dyckia seeds is quite an experience. The seed is produced at the top of the tall bloom spike where the three-part capsule turns dark brown and eventually splits open. Stacked in the pods like pennies in a coin wrapper, seeds must be taken just when the pod splits. Delay even one day and the seeds are gone with the wind. Take seeds when the pod is not completely ripe and germination will be poor or non-existent. The plants do cross-pollinate, so if you want to keep pure species, stick with the offsets.

Bigenerics: While the Dyckias cross-pollinate freely, it is beyond my understanding how it is possible to manage a bi-generic cross with any other Pitcairnioideae considering the physical makeup of the various seeds. Hazel Quilhot swore she had what she called "Dyckipoo" Dyckia X Puya but I always maintained that any resulting seed must be a selfing of one side or the other, and I have yet to see a bloom on any so-called bi-generic.

There is one hybrid resulting from *D. Encholirioides* X *D. Brevifolia* which has no spines on the leaves at all. It is called *D. Naked Lady*. It is apparently sterile, as I have never known one to bloom.

Many Dyckias are not suitable for a collection where space is limited. Recommended species are: *D. Brevifolia* (+ orange glow), *dawsonii* (which does not readily self-seed), *fosteriana*, *choristaminea*, *remotiflora*, *platyphylla*, and *marnier-lapostolle* (a little difficult in



Billbergia intarsia
Phil Speer
Best ART

Florida). I have yet to authenticate any of my supposed hybrids. I inherited a very nice, red plant from Geo. Anderson which I named D. Nola Red. Also I am growing seedlings from Mr. Foster's Lad Cutak, which should be quite an adventure.

Hint: When you boil eggs, save the water, and (when cool) pour it on the soil in the Dyckia pots. Calcium.



Till. Rothii
Elizabeth Patterson
Mulford B. Foster Best of Show

Dyckias are attractive, different bromeliads, and belong in every collection. Just remember that you are in Florida and don't try to grow them as you would in Brazil.

Note: I have a Hechtia marnier-lapostolle which is setting copious seed which look viable. It will be interesting to see what results, or did it just cross pollinate with the Dyckias which were in bloom at the time?

The Cryptanthus Society has a new web address:

www.cryptanthussociety.org

Check it out if only to see the pictures.

I need to divide my Dyckia 'Cherry Coke' but I will wait until the weather cools down. I was happily surprised this year after getting back to Arizona that the plants made it through the long hot summer. I think using the frames with shade cloth helped a lot. I was glad I didn't have to bury any of my plants. (You already have the Headstones in the plant labels! Dear.)



Till. Rothii X concolor
Margo Racca
Best of Division I-Blooming



Allyn Pearlman
Morris Henry Hobbs
Best of Show-Artistic



Till. Stricta
Martha Burg
Best of Division I Section A
Single Blooming



Arizona (Brittle Star) F2
Chris Nguyn
Best of Div V Sec B

