



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

THE BSGC NEWS

March/April, 2012

President	Lori Weigerding	(630) 978-7340
Vice President	Martha Goode	(815) 459-1623
Treasurer	Paula Darning	(847) 295-2559
Secretary	Roberta Torossy	(847) 548-5503
Newsletter Editor	Steve Goode	stevegoode1@ameritech.net

WEB SITE

<http://bromeliad-chicago.org>

Webmaster

Lori Weigerding

It was good to see those who were able to make the March meeting. We hope you are enjoying spring this month. Spring has been early this year. Your plant color will be improving with the increased sunlight.

It is time to renew your membership if you haven't done so yet.

President's Column

Wow what an excellent slide show was presented by the Goode's! Some day I hope that I get to go to some of those places and see them for myself! Thanx to everyone that came and the wonderful treats were excellent also. I'm sure we're all looking forward to our show in July!! I will talk to Russell's in the beginning of July to see if they can tell me what our plant order will be! We all need to start looking at our collections and seeing what we might be able to bring to the show. Now's the time to start talking to them and telling them how beautiful they are, so they'll be glowing in July!

Martha's looking into us going to Pesche's on May 20th. That should be an exciting trip. I just looked them up and they say that Fairy gardens are becoming more popular and they have a wide selection of accessories! I can't wait!

Look forward to seeing you all soon! Happy holidays to everyone and Happy Mother's Day to all our Moms!

Lori Weigerding

Bromeliad Meeting

2pm Feb12, 2012

Attendance: Lori Weigerding, Jeff Weigerding, Paula Dering, Priscilla Segel, Julie Jimenez, Marjorie Leon, Roberta Torossy, Anne Coughlan

Old business: Plants were ordered for the show; Lori is going to accept the shipment.

New business: Karen Finerman from 'Gardeners for the North Shore' came and gave an interesting program on how to get more speakers for our programs to help generate more members for our group:1. The Botanic Gardens have speakers who will come and present programs. (There may be a charge for these speakers)

2. Call other groups such as the garden clubs of Gray's lake. 3. The library at the Botanic Gardens has films that would generate interest.

We were also told that there is a meeting room at Pesches garden center and the subject of plants would be arranged. It would be an interesting field trip for our group. We were invited to come to one of their meetings; they meet from April 1st till November.

Bromeliad Society Meeting

2:00pm

March 11, 2012

Attendance: Jeff and Lori Weigerding, Martha and Steve Goode, Paula Dering, Julie Jimenez, Roberta Torossy, Marjorie Leon, and Delano J. Buscznaski

Martha and Steve presented a brief history of Arizona, and then, they showed slides of a lot of plants from their trip and the plants showed that they received a lot of care.

There was a talk about the world conference in September, and Martha and Steve plan to go as well as Paula. Steve will take some good pictures from that conference.

The summer bromeliad show and sale will take place in July. It is hoped that the Reilly's will come and bring some of their posters and tapestries. The cactus Society will be in our show also,

Our next meeting will take place on May 20 if possible , Martha will check with the gardens if it is ok.

Martha closed the meeting at 3:40 and Lori seconded it .

Notes taken by Roberta Torossy

Lori mentioned that the Botanic Garden was selling Tillandsias. Martha contacted Jillian Jablonski, our liason there to see if they would be interested in providing care sheets if we provided them. Marjorie took the care sheet we had and made it shorter and hopefully more user friendly. When you are at the Garden check to see if the care sheets are there. Great Team work!



Neoregelia spectabilis

photo by
Derek Butcher

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In the July , 2011 edition of the Bromeliad Society of Northwest Florida's Newsletter, there was an article on Pigmentation.

Pigmentation

Viral infection is responsible for some leaf variegations; mutations for others. Mutations can be caused by radiation or chemicals (as melian in people who tan); botanical counterparts of melanin are leaf anthocyanins and

carotenoids, for example the Painted Fingernail (*Neoregelia spectabilis*).

ANTHOCYANINS are responsible in most instances for the red to violet coloring in petals and leaves. Patterned albinism is common. Albinism can crop up as an anomaly, a symptom of disease or a regular feature of entire populations. Stripes may be variegated (center) or marginated (side). Spots are a common feature. Offshoots may be normal and seedlings may be all green. Variegated plants are usually less vigorous and those who are all white perish.

Flowering time can cause color change, such as in Till. Ionantha. When birds or insects are the pollinators the plant is highly visible at flowering time. When plants are wind pollinated they fade faster.



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On the opposite side of the pigment palette we have *Catopsis*. These are completely void of anthocyanin; powder protects the plant instead.



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In the July 2010, Newsletter from the Bromeliad Society of New South Wales, there was an article on George Hardy's talk, (Remember when reading this, that they are in the Southern Hemisphere. Our Winter is their Summer!)(abridged)

“Sun and Shade through the Seasons”

At our Sydney shows the question is often asked: “How much sun do I need to give these plants? Do I put them into full sun or should I give them shade?”

Over time I have developed a standard reply: “Pretend you look down onto a tree from the air. The area immediately surrounding the trunk is in the shade most of the year except during six or so weeks in the middle of winter when it receives direct sunlight. In the middle of summer, on the other hand, that area only receives direct sunlight early morning and late afternoon; the rest of the day the tree canopy shades the ground. Bearing this in mind you should place your plants under the drip line or just outside it from March to September (autumn/winter) and progressively closer to the trunk from September to March (spring/summer). Most bromeliads thrive in strong dappled light.”

The following is an abbreviated version of a recent talk aimed at people who want to grow their bromeliads in the garden.

The earth circles the sun in 365.25 days or 8,766 hours and because the earth is tilted 23.5° to its axis, we have the four seasons. Also, the farther away from the equator we live, the longer the days are in the summer and shorter in the winter (compare Hobart with Darwin!). However, regardless of where we are on the earth, the potential sunlight falling on a level surface always adds up to 4,383 hours.

This also means that for several weeks each year the sun never sets at either pole during summer, whilst there is total darkness at the poles for several weeks, in winter. In Sydney on 21 December at noon the sun shines from an angle of about 80° whilst the angle is 34° on 21 June. Total potential sunlight hours for Sydney on 21 December are 14.28 hours and 9.88 hours on 21 June.

However, these are potential hours imagining a flat surface without cloud cover. In fact, Sydney on average only receives between 6 and 7 hours of sunlight-

just over half of the potential 12. In other words, the sun is often hidden by clouds. It does not take into account shading from hills, buildings and trees either. Remember that sunlight still penetrates the clouds enabling photosynthesis for plant growth and-if they (and you) get too much-they sunburn.

What this means for bromeliad growers is that in winter bromeliads can take full sun all day. In the case of Neoregelias especially this helps to establish good colour for spring. However a tree canopy also may afford protection from frost, hail and from excessive rain. Between March and September the plants should be moved under the drip line in the beginning and closer to the tree trunk for September through March, depending on the density of the tree foliage.

The main thing to remember is that many bromeliads prefer bright dappled light to produce strong colours, uniform growth and to stay healthy. Exposure to direct sunlight in summer in the middle of the day and after rain will most likely result in sunburn. In winter, frost burn may result if they are not protected by tree-shrub cover. Newly bought plants should be put into shady areas before moving them into brighter light over a couple of weeks as you usually don't know under which conditions the plant was grown originally.



Dyckia 'Arizona'

You can provide more suitable light and shade also by tying your plants to tree branches that have permanent bark, by using the wall areas under eaves of east and north facing house walls or by investing in a shade house that does not use copper treated timber in its construction.

On the day of Arizona's Centennial (Feb. 14), my Dyckia 'Arizona' bloomed. I bought it at the Southwest Bromeliad Guild Show and Sale in Austin in the fall. The hummingbird has been enjoying the nectar from the

flowers. I now have quite a few seeds developing. I received the following instructions from Bryan Windham who is a hybridizer in the New Orleans area.



Dyckia 'Arizona' Bloom

The seed pods form and swell. They turn brown and when they pop open you can harvest them. Go to Home Depot and get a bag of seed starting soil. Take a 6 inch pot and fill with mix. Wet it really well. It takes a while to get it wet. Once it's wet good, sprinkle seeds over the top of mix. Do not cover.

Take pot and place it in a zip lock bag and seal. Put it in the greenhouse or in a bright window, not in full sun. The seeds will germinate in one to two weeks. Leave in the bag till next season. Then at that point you can separate into 2" pots.

Maybe I will have some to share.

The May 2011, Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society Newsletter had the following article about Dyckias which they got from the Houston Society. I'm so glad we can share our information.

The following excerpts are from the Houston Bromeliad Society's treatise on the Genus Dyckia:

The genus was introduced into Europe during the nineteenth century, and was named for Prince von Salm-Dyck, an early expert on succulents. Although Dyckias have no internal water storage tissue like true succulents, they are xerographic and survive long periods without water by going dormant. Their rosette of thick succulent leaves will eventually wilt, but recovery is rapid when watering is resumed. These plants are tough! They will withstand more neglect

than almost any other commonly cultivated plant and still pup and bloom every year. Their only demand is a little water and a lot of sunshine. In the spring they bear multiple red, yellow or orange flowers on a thin stalk that emerges from the side of the plant. The stalk length can range from about 10 centimeters for a small species like *D. Choristaminea* to more than 2 meters for *D. Maritima*.

Water:

Although they will tolerate drought, they thrive on frequent watering while actively growing. However keep plants on the dry side during cold weather or during periods of reduced light. In the summer time they tend to dry out rapidly; it is helpful to keep them in a shallow container of water.

Medium:

Grow in a heavy mix that contains water retaining polymers and a large quantity of organic matter. A mix similar to what would be used for a *Cryptanthus* or a *Hechtia* would be appropriate.



Dyckia jonesiana, specie from Brazil

Containers:

Dyckias probably do best when they are grown in the ground. Their ability to take temperatures in the 15-20 degree range makes them one of the best Bromeliads to use for landscaping in the Houston area. They should be able to take all but our most severe winter weather with only minimal protection. If you do choose to grow them in pots, use one that will accommodate the plant's large root system. This is one plant that appreciates a pot that is about as wide as or wider than the plant itself. But WARNING; usually the larger the pot and the more the fertilizer the bigger the plant.

Propagation:

Most *Dyckia* species have leaves armed with sharp spikes that make working with the plants painful. It is often difficult to separate pups from the mother plant. It is helpful to remove the plant from its pot and try to work on it from the bottom. You want to bring out the heavy equipment when dealing with



D. Jonesiana

your Dyckia collection. Leather gloves, a sturdy knife, a small saw, and , in extreme cases, a hatchet could all come in handy when it is time to separate and repot large clumps of plants. When you separate a pup, try to preserve as much of its root system as you can. If it has no roots, treat its base with rooting hormone before potting. In either case pot the plant in a fairly small pot using a well drained mix, and leave it there until the plant has a chance to establish itself. Most pups are slow to root and start growing, but when the plants root system fills the pot, move the plant into a larger pot using a heavier mix.

Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago

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