



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

# THE BSGC NEWS

October, 2014

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Lori Weigerding

The next meeting will be Sunday Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm in the Annex at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Steve and Martha will show pictures from their Hawaii trip to Maui and Kauai. There will also be a raffle of several bromeliads.

We were sorry that some people were unable to make the meeting because of the change in date last month. If there is enough interest, we may do the Bright Encounter Tram Tour in the spring or summer. If you would like a meeting on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> please let us know at the Oct. 12<sup>th</sup> meeting or if you can't attend then call or email one of the officers. Another item we need to take care of is the nomination of officers. We still need to fill the open vacancy of Secretary.

### *President's Column*

*We had a small, but cozy meeting. Martha and Steve raffled off their place settings from the world conference in Hawaii. Larry and I won. We took the Bright Encounters Tram ride. It was short, but sweet. Learned a lot about areas we see when we come in, but didn't know all the particulars. If you've never been on it you should give it a try.*

*Our upcoming meeting in October will probably be our last for the year. We wish you safe and happy holidays for the remainder of the year. We'll probably have our next meeting in February, we'll keep you posted.*

*Lori Weigerding*

Steve and I visited several gardens on three Hawaiian islands, Maui, Kauai and Oahu. There was a great variety in them. The Kula Garden on Maui was a small private more manicured garden. The Himaluhi garden on Kauai is owned and run by the National Tropical Botanical Garden. We also visited the McBryde and Allerton Gardens on Kauai which are also managed by the NTBG. These two will be shown at a later date.



Bromeliads and Ferns



Kula Botanical Garden

Kula Botanical Garden in Maui was first established in 1968 by Warren and Helen McCord as a display garden for Warren's landscape architecture business. It has evolved over the years into a tourist destination. It is still a family owned business. The garden encompasses 8 acres of a large variety of plants including native plants, many large trees, heliconias, ferns, ginger, proteas, banksias, bromeliads and orchids in their own house as well as throughout the garden and also annuals and common bedding plants. There is also a koi pond, a pond with Nene geese and an Aviary. According to the Ducks Unlimited website, it is the sixth most endangered waterfowl species worldwide. It is among the most isolated, sedentary and threatened waterfowl. They grow coffee and Christmas trees to help support the continuing maintenance of the garden



Alcantarea



Protea



Banksia serratifolia



Banksia Raspberry Frost



Bird of Paradise



Brighamia insignis-Now extinct in the Wild

Limahuli Garden & Preserve in Kauai is a part of the national Tropical Botanical Garden which was chartered by the U.S. Congress in 1964. When you arrive you receive a booklet which explains about the origin of the plants. First it explains about the Canoe Garden. These are the plants the Polynesians brought with them to survive.

People from the Marquesas Islands sailed to Hawaii sometime between 200 AD and 1000 AD. They brought food and animals in their canoes to survive. Some of these were taro, breadfruit, sweet potato, banana and sugar cane. The coconut palms which they brought had many uses: food, drink, mats, roof, thatching, canoes and more. The Candlenut tree was used to produce light by roasting the kernels and skewering them on a coconut frond and set on fire.

In the 1800's, plumeria, pineapple, mango, gardenia, orchids, bird of paradise, ginger and heliconia were brought in. Some of these "modern introductions: have damaged the natural ecology. The original native forest are virtually gone. 90% of the plants you see in the lowland regions are actually modern introductions. Botanists estimate that more than 10,000 different species of plants have been introduced to Hawaii since Captain Cook arrived in 1778



*Hibiscus waimeae* ssp *hamnerae*  
Rare form of tree hibiscus  
Now it is known only from  
Northwest Kauai



*Pritchardia limahuliensis*  
Hawaiian palm species on the verge of  
extinction



*Hibiscadelphus distans*  
Found only on Kauai, that is on the verge of  
extinction.

The Bromeliad Conference in Honolulu was hosted by a small in number but high in Aloha spirit. Hawaii Bromeliad Society. There were several great seminars and excursions. I will give a small sampling in this Newsletter. There will be more in the next one.

Geoff Lawn from Australia who is the Cultivar Registrar of the BSI gave an excellent talk about registering hybrids. His many pictures showed us the parents of many of the hybrids. To look at the BCR website go to <http://registry.bsi.org>

He noted that by registering plants we can avoid duplication so the same plant doesn't have one name in one location and another name somewhere else. The registration also gives the names of the parents. The species name is latinized and the cultivar name is in English.

Alan Herndon who is now the BSI Newsletter Editor gave a talk on *Aechmea chantinii*. He noted the great amount of variability in this plant. The crossbanding can be wide, narrow, close together and vary in color of the banding.

Nigel Thompson from Australia did a great talk on feeding bromeliads. He believes it is better to fertilize bromeliads especially when they get enough light and water. To get even growth, he said that it is better to do it regularly. He suggested using low nitrogen and high potassium for neoregelias and billbergias. For Guzmanias, Vrieseas and Aechmeas, he suggested a 15-3-17 to use. A plant that is grown in low light and fertilized will develop long strappy leaves. He has found that the guzmanias will do better in cold weather if they have been well fed previously. Another tip was, after removing pups give the mother fertilizer to produce more offsets.

Andy Siekkanen from San Diego talked about the plants in Oaxaca, Mexico. He found *tillandsia ioanthas*, growing on Dioons and other *Tillandsia* growing on cactus. He noticed that hechtias show better color during the dry season when they are stressed. Many of the hechtia have white flowers. The male flower of *Hechtia rosea* is pink.



Tillandsia 'Samantha'

Pamela Koide-Hyatt of Bird Rock Tropical in Encinitas, CA gave her talk on Tillandsia hybridization. She discussed her hybridization as well as showing pictures of some of the natural hybrids. It can take from 3 to 15 years for a seed to develop into a plant and flower. She had made a box of cards of species as well as hybrids which I purchased for the Club. If you have a particular tillandsia, you would like to know about, write down the name and bring it to the meeting. You can look through the cards and when you find it; you will be able to read how to grow it. Her Tillandsia 'Samantha' was in the top 20 finalists in the Chelsea Flower Show. It won the Glass Tulip Award in houseplants in 2013 in the Netherlands.

[https://www.birdrocktropicals.com/glass\\_tulip\\_tillandsia\\_samantha2013.htm](https://www.birdrocktropicals.com/glass_tulip_tillandsia_samantha2013.htm)

The roundtable discussion consisted of four of Hawaii's great hybridizers: David Fell, Sharon Peterson, David Shiigi and Tillandsia specialist Peter DeMello. They had beautiful plants in the display area of the Plant sale. An interesting point that Sharon Peterson said that I hadn't heard before was that she believes that her neos produce an enzyme in their cups and axils which can prevent base rot. She places hard to root pups in the cup or upper axil and finds they quickly produce roots and do not rot.

The final seminar was the effect of the Pineapple on the Culture of Hawaii by Heidi Leianuenue Bornhorst from the University of Hawaii. The point I found most interesting was the fact that during the time when pineapple was a big industry there, they made sure that hummingbirds weren't allowed in. Since it is a big source of pollination for Ananas, there would have been a lot of cross pollination which they did not want.

Steve won the Hawaiian pineapple quilt at the auction. We will display it at our Show next year. Ardie Reilly is keeping it with her other quilts until then.

At the last meeting, we had asked if anyone had heard from Marjorie and none had so I contacted her. She still has a ways to go so we wish Marjorie well in her continuing recovery.