



East London Bromeliad Society

South Africa

NEWS LETTER
March
2020

Established: 25 July 2009

Our aim is to promote and encourage awareness and interest in Bromeliads in East London and all of South Africa!

ELBS SA is an Affiliated Society  of Bromeliad Society International

From the Chairman



I am sure you are as I am, sorting out bromeliads which you think might be worthy of entering on our Bromeliad Magic Show at the end of March. As I have mentioned, it is not only to have your plants judged, but what plants appeal to you in your collection, which you would like to show off to the public. The main aim of this event is to showcase bromeliads and Tillandsia to the East London community, to stimulate interest and educate folk on this family of plants.

A big thank you to Tracy Moss, for presenting an informative talk on show preparation. Thank you to the committee and all the members who have been involved in the preparation and work towards the show. It would be an impossible task without your support.

So, don't make any plans for the weekend of the 28th/29th of March. I am sure it will be an enjoyable and educational event. All of the best until we chat again... Happy Bromming.



February Meeting

We all enjoyed a well supported meeting with 44 of us including 4 visitors seated under the trees in Boots and Alison's driveway surrounded by their lovely rambling garden. A perfect summer afternoon, bromeliads, like-minded folks, interesting information, sharing, raffle draws and a yummy tea! What more could you ask for on a Sunday afternoon?! A big thank you to Boots and Alison for agreeing to host the meeting again and working so hard in the February heat and humidity to get the garden ready for visitors.



Dr Boots Horsfall and Alison in their lovely front garden.

28th – 29th March: ELBSSA Show 'Bromeliad Magic' at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School, 45 Avalon Road, Beacon Bay. See you at the show, bring your family and friends!

No easy feat after a long visit from their overseas family with four children under 7 plus the devastation caused by Boots and Alison's 6 month Border Collie puppy.... and we all know how much puppies love munching on bromeliads! Thanks to all the rain we have been having, everything is looking lush and green and you can see the difference in how the garden and plants have responded.

Thanks also to Tracy Moss for giving an interesting talk to guide us through preparing our plants for the upcoming show at the end of March. The committee have been focused on this mammoth task over the last few months. It promises to be a wonderful eye popping event for the public, so bring your best broms and tillies to enter on the show and bring your family and friends along too.

Tips on Preparing your Bromeliads for a Show by Tracy Moss

Go through your bromeliad collection carefully and look for plants you could enter on the show.

Look for plants beginning to flower, mature plants with good colouration, shape or markings, good structural clumps of bromeliads and rare plants.

1. Evaluate a plant for show entry
 - Does the plant look healthy and properly grown.
 - Is the size close to maturity?
 - Is the leaf damage minimal?
 - How much grooming does the plant require?
2. Material/tools required for show preparation
 - Tweezers, the long ones are best
 - Artist's brush
 - Scissors
 - Cloth
 - Gloves, new pots
 - Potting soil
 - Lemon juice/soda water
 - Cardboard boxes or crates
 - Packing material
3. Pots and potting
 - Remove any weeds and or moss growing in your pots.
 - Is your pot dirty, scarred, cracked and covered with algae or calcium deposits?
 - You need to ensure your plant's pot is clean.
 - Sometimes it is easier to re-pot a plant into a new pot than to try and clean a pot.
 - Check your pot size - is the plant in proportion to the pot size? Re-pot if necessary.
 - Check that the plant is in the centre of the pot.
 - Check the planting depth of your plant. Is it too deep? is it too shallow?
 - Too shallow - removing old leaves could expose more of the plant's stem. Potting soil also leaches out a little when watering, Potting soil also compacts over time.
 - Too deep - remove the plant, add more potting soil to the bottom of the pot to elevate plant to the correct depth and then replace the plant.
 - Make sure your plant is straight and firm in the pot.
 - It is best to repot earlier than later to give the plants a chance to settle and firm up in the new pot.
4. Grooming/cleaning your plant
 - Remove any large debris by hand.
 - Use a gentle hose to give your plant a good spray to flush out dirt and debris.
 - After the first flush examine your plant carefully for any remaining debris. Use tweezers to remove the debris being very careful not to damage the leaves of your plant.
 - Flush your plant with water again to remove all the loosened material.
 - Using a cloth/cotton wool, clean the leaves individually. Cleaning intensity will depend on the amount of surface dirt, dust, algae or salt deposits.
 - Also check for any scale and make sure to remove any with a brush.



Brenda Wegner and Lyn Wegner in the garden near the pool. Tough sun tolerant bromeliads have been used along the boundary hedge to create interest.



Colourful bromeliads make a nice splash of colour in part of the front garden.

- Stubborn salt deposits can be removed by wiping with lemon juice or soda water.
 - And then you need to rinse the plant well and set aside to dry.
 - Often you can only tell whether a plant is clean or not when it is dry.
 - You may have to repeat the process to touch up missed spots.
 - Very important to work carefully and to take the delicacy of your plant's leaves into account.
 - Be very careful not to remove/damage any silvery trichomes or scales called 'scurf' from your plant's leaves.
5. Leaf trimming
 - Before removing leaves always analyze the effect removing a leaf will have on the overall appearance of your plant. You could damage the natural shape and conformation of your plant.
 - Very badly damaged leaves should be removed if possible, ie. more than half of the leaf.
 - Trimming of any leaves should be done at the last minute so as not to have any dry edges where the leaves have been trimmed.
 - To stop the drying of trimmed leaves apply a little Aloe Vera along the trimmed edge.
 - Always copy the shape of one of the good leaves when trimming.
 - Always use very sharp scissors.
 - You can decide to not trim minimal damage on your plant's leaves if you think it will do more harm than good.
 6. Cleaning the inflorescence
 - Remove any old/spent flowers.
 7. Labelling
 - Try to ensure your plant is correctly labelled as far as possible.
 8. Transporting
 - Take extra care and time in preparing your plants for transporting.
 - You don't want to damage plants in transit.
 - Make sure to space your plants so that they don't touch each other during travelling.
 - Uprturned boxes with holes cut out to fit pots works very well.
 - Take your cleaning tools and a little potting soil with you to the show venue, just in case of any mishap along the way.
 9. Show entry form
 - Don't forget to fill in your entry form and to bring it along with you.
 - Remember that the show classes form will be entered/completed by the show stewards.

The number one reason for holding the 'Bromeliad Magic' Show is to expose the East London community to the wonderful world of bromeliads. So please bring your plants along, even if just to put them on the show. We need to fill Little Beacons Pre-Primary hall with bromeliads and Tillandsia to wow the public and hopefully gain some new members. This is a fun event for all our members and we need your plants, the plants that are special to you, regardless of their perfection. Remember we have Artistic Classes too where you can go wild with your entry! We are not all worried that our plants will not be the best, they are the best to us!

Most importantly please show your beautiful plants. Remember there are very few, if any, perfect plants. Don't be over critical about your plants. Just fix what you can. Good luck everyone!

Purpose of holding a show.

- Introduces and educates the public about the amazing world of bromeliads.
- Promotes the society and attracts new members to the society.
- Educates out society members and also inspires us to grow better plants, expand our collections and it also inspires us to get creative.
- Enhances friendships and fellowship amongst our members.
- Most of all it is FUN!

References: Tips for Preparing Bromeliads for Shows - Dr Theresa M. Bert, Sarasota Bromeliad Society Newsletter Nov. 2019.

Far North Coast Bromeliad Study Group NSW Australia Newsletter Feb. 2019
www.bsi.org/webpages/sbba/preparing_bromeliads_for_shows

Species Bromeliads

Lyn Wegner: *Nidularium angustifolium*: This species originates from Brazil where it is found either on the forest floor or growing epiphytically on the lower level of the forest trees. It has narrow green finely serrated leaf edges. The inflorescence has red primary bracts and the flowers have blue petals with white margins. I grow mine in bright shade.



Nidularium angustifolium

Lyn Wegner: *Neoregelia pascoaliana*: This is another Brazil species. It grows as an epiphyte in tropical forests. A nice, tough plant for full sun. It has a semi open upright rosette. The leaves are stiff and leathery and about 60cm long and 7cm wide, with fine reddish purple spots on the upper leaves and heavily banded underneath. It has attractive prominent reddish spines. The leaf tips are red and end with a large spine. Mine grows in full sun.



Neoregelia pascoaliana



Racinea dyeriana

Robert Moss showed his *Racinea dyeriana*. He has struggled with this plant that he has had for over two years in the shade house. It has finally produced a very eye catching bright orange inflorescence with white flowers. The leaves are stiff and have brown speckles on them at the base. It is endemic to only a few spots in the mangrove forests of subtropical West-Ecuador at elevations of 0 to 500 meters above sea level. So this species clearly prefers a moist environment. Poison dart frogs are found in amongst the bracts of this plant and may lay their eggs there. It is a species threatened by habitat loss. Recently this plant was reclassified as *Racinaea dyeriana*. It was previously a *Tillandsia*.



Neoregelia uleana

Brenda Wegner showed *Neoregelia uleana*, a lovely smallish species found in Brazil. It got sold so we didn't get a photo of it! (The photo is from Lyn's garden!)

Show and Tell

Lyn Wegner: This is one of our raffle plants for today. *Neoregelia* 'Tartan Warrior' novar. Just a reminder, when a plant name includes the word novar it means it was a variegated plant which has unfortunately lost its variegation. There is hope though if the plant shows a hint of variegation. This one has 2 leaves that have a thin variegated stripe so the pups just might revert back to the variegated form!

When there is no sign of variegation it isn't impossible, but not too likely, that it will produce variegated pups.



Neoregelia 'Tartan Warrior' novar.

Glossary of interesting words!

Another two new words to remember!

Bract	This is a specialized leaf found below a flower or on the stalk of a flower cluster and sometimes brightly coloured.
Novar	A variegated or albomarginated plant that has lost its variegation.

Member News

- A big welcome to new local member Carol Gregory and new country member, Denise Cain from Midrand, who is a tilly fan! AND Denise has joined BSI too.
- Local member Ian Kotze has also joined the BSI bringing South Africa's BSI membership to 17!



New member Carol Gregory and visitors arriving for the meeting, right Maren McCosh, back Audrey Newman.

Thanks

- Dr Boots and Alison Horsfall for hosting the February meeting.
- Dr Pete Pfister and Lyn Wegner for lucky draw plants.
- Dr Pete Pfister and Lyn Wegner for giveaway plants.
- Marianne Hillstead and Dr Pete Pfister for catering a delicious tea.

Congratulations to the February Raffle Winners

- Pam Stoltz won 2 of the local raffles this month and chose *Tillandsia mallemonitii* and *Neoregelia* 'Tartan Warrior' novar.
- Lyn Odendaal chose *Neoregelia* 'Kahala Dawn'.
- Dr Boots Horsfall chose *Tillandsia* 'Jackie Loinaz'.
- Eugene Ernest from Durban chose *Neoregelia* 'Savoy Truffle'.
- Mike Whitten from Durban chose *Neoregelia* 'Unraveled'.
- Philip Visagie from Pretoria chose *Tillandsia* 'Jackie Loinaz'.
- Christo van Wijk from Pretoria chose *Tillandsia* 'Jackie Loinaz'.

Attendance Lucky Draw Winners: There were numerous lucky winners this month!

Upcoming Society Events

28th – 29th March: **ELBSSA Show 'Bromeliad Magic'** at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School, 45 Avalon Road, Beacon Bay. Don't forget you can bring your plants to enter them on the show from Thursday 26th March 2.30 to Friday 1pm. No late entries will be taken after this time. If you are not involved with the show please visit and bring all your family and friends! We want to showcase bromeliads to the East London community. Refreshments will be on sale for the duration of the show.

Please let the committee know if there are any particular topics you would like discussed.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 26th April: | Host: Bev McGregor, Cove Rock Estate |
| 31st May: | Host: Karen in Rosemount |
| 28th June: | Anyone keen to host the meeting? |
| 26th July: | 11th Birthday Celebrations at 'Bromeliads for Africa' Sunnyridge. |
| 30th August: | Artistic Expression at Little Beacons Pre-Primary Beacon Bay. |
| 27th September: | Travelling Meeting to be confirmed |
| 25th October: | Hosts Michael and Zena McClaren in Vincent |
| 29th November: | Annual Bring and Braai, Auction and BBB Surprise Lucky Dip hosted by Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead |

Upcoming International Conferences

2020: 9-13 June, **70th Anniversary WBC2020** to be held in Sarasota, Florida, USA.

2021: This biennial **Australasian Bromeliad Conference** will again be hosted by The New Zealand Bromeliad Society. **'Kiwi Broms'** April 8 - 11 2021, venue, Waipuna Hotel. Exciting news! 4 of our members have already registered for this conference! Start saving now! !

From the Members

Graham Watts from Umzumbe KZN is looking for a name for the two plants pictured on the right. Above is a *Guzmania* he has had for a while. (Barbs: It looks very much like *G.* 'Tutti-Frutti' to me.) The red one Graham bought from a nursery recently, it appears to have an inflorescence very like an *Aechmea fasciata*. Any one have any ideas? Whatsapp Graham: 082 820 9500.



Raffle winners, Pam Stoltz, Lyn Odendaal and Dr Boots Horsfall.



The Reynolds clan at the February meeting!



David Gower has an absolutely stunning *Aechmea* 'Star of Linda' in bloom. "A beautiful creation of Chester Skotak's. BCR 565. Named for Linda Cathcart, the wife of Dennis Cathcart of Tropiflora Nursery in Florida. I received the plant from Christo Van Wijk, Pretoria on 11 March 2017. I potted it into a 24cm terracotta pot using ordinary nursery potting mix from Floradale Nursery. I positioned it against a wall where it was well sheltered and enjoyed afternoon sun. Having one of the parents *Aechmea fasciata* (spineless), I doubted it would do well in full sun. The other parent is *Aechmea mariae-reginae* (female). I never used fertilizers and very seldom watered it. It thrived on our natural rainfall." David has included photos of the parent plants; *Aechmea mariae-reginae* (female) and *Aechmea fasciata* (spineless), which are also beautiful bromeliads in their own right.



March 2017



2 February 2020



6 February 2020



25 February, the blue flowers appear on the inflorescence.

9 February 2020



Ae. mariae-regina (female)



Ae. fasciata

David has the parents of *Aechmea* 'Star of Linda'; *Aechmea mariae-regina* (female) and *Aechmea fasciata*. Both stunning plants in their own right.



Anne Holder has a splendid sight in her garden at the moment, all the *Bilbergia pyramidalis* are in bloom. They look amazing in a mass planting!

From the Editor



So from 21st March it is officially Autumn, my absolute favourite time of the year, balmy days, cooler evenings, everything looking lush from all the rain, fewer mozzies! (we hope) and more energy to get stuck in to all those tasks in the garden that

soon mount up with all the extra growth. We have been pruning trees to lift canopies to allow more light into the bromeliad garden beds that were far too shaded, even in summer. Amazing what a difference it makes. Everyone seems to have had burn on some of their bromeliads thanks to the fierce sun we have had over the summer months. Use scissors to cut away the damaged parts of leaves if they are really looking unsightly. A damaged mother plant will still send out pup/s and they should acclimatise to the spot where they are growing.

To those of you who have not been to a meeting in a while, you have been missed, life is busy, I know, hope we see you soon, especially as it is our big '**Bromeliad Magic**' show at the end of this month. Don't forget to look amongst your bromeliads for ones worthy of showing off, not necessarily to be 'judged', don't be shy,

bring it along. We are hoping the plants on show will WOW and inspire everyone who comes along to enjoy what I am sure is going to be an amazing display of bromeliads and Tillandsia. Plus there will be other vendors selling specialty plants as well. Tea and eats will be on sale too, so bring the family and friends. It is going to be loads of fun. If anyone is keen to assist over the two days and you have not already given your name to Brenda, please give her a call: 082 743 2141.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the 'Bromeliad Magic' Show at the end of this month!

Barbs

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Any opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Society.

When submitting items for inclusion in this newsletter, please ensure that all facts and information, including spelling, is checked and accurate.

ELBSSA is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

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We meet on the last Sunday of every month at 2.00 for 2.30pm, January to November, at various venues around East London. We have a topic for each meeting and Show and Tell where members are encouraged to bring along their brag or problem plants. There are member raffles, lucky draws for those present, tea time, library and member plant sales, plus a monthly newsletter sent out via e-mail only. Visitors are always welcome and can attend three meetings before they will need to join the society in order to continue attending. Annual subs are R120.00 for individuals/families and R60 for students.

Committee Members

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You will find ELBSSA on Facebook: type 'East London Bromeliad Society' into the fb search bar. You can request to join the group and will then be able to upload your photos and comments on the wall. The ELBS SA page and other bromeliad related sites are a useful and informative forum to share and 'meet up' with other like-minded bromeliad folks.

You can view most of all the bromeliads mentioned in meetings or in the newsletter at the following websites:

The BSI's official Bromeliad Cultivar Registry www.registry.bsi.org which is maintained by Geoff Lawn, the BSI Cultivar Registrar. Plus other information regarding the Bromeliad Society International is found at bsi.org

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: fcbs.org This is a very useful site to reference many bromeliads where you can clarify identification or just trawl through the site and add to your wish list!

Encyclopedia of Bromeliads <http://bromeliad.nl/encyclopedia/> (Bromeliad Taxonomists and Growers Society) has photographs. It also now has keys for the genera and sub-genera. If you like to be informed what is happening, just follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bromeliadsencyclopedia> Just type in 'Encyclopedia of Bromeliads' into the Facebook search bar.

For internet resources you can also go to TAXON (The New Bromeliad List) for the most authoritative and right up to date list of genera and species, accepted and new names and taxonomic keys - <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php> or just type in 'New Bromeliad Taxon List', it's much easier!

East London Established July 2009

Bromeliad Society

South Africa

BROMELIAD Magic

R10 Entry Fee

Judged Show, Displays
Sales, Bromeliads,
Airplants, Succulents
Orchids, Clivia
Lithops, Veg seedlings

**28th - 29th
MARCH**

at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School
45 Avalon Road, Beacon Bay



Sat: 9.30am - 4.00pm

Sun: 9.30 - 3.00pm

**Refreshments
will be on sale**