

# The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the  
San Diego  
Bromeliad Society

November 2019

VOLUME LIV

NUMBER 11

## President's Message

By Morlane O'Donnell

Just when we thought the summer weather was over, October had some of the hottest days all year. Hopefully your plants did not sustain any sun damage as I found the sun's rays were more intense and a few vrieseas and neos suffered some leaf burn. Soon we'll have to start preparing our plants for the winter months. Hopefully we'll have a mild weather with good rainfall.

Christmas is just around the corner and so is our Holiday Party. It will be held during our regular December meeting time in Room 104. We will have a gift exchange. If you wish to participate, bring an unwrapped bromeliad valued at between \$20 and \$25. If you don't have one, there are many places where you can pick up. SDBS will provide the main course, plates, and utensils. The rest is potluck provided by you, the members.

Speaking of December don't forget December Nights. According to the event calendar, the dates are Dec. 4

through Dec. 8. As usual, SDBS will have a tree decorated by the members. Please consider volunteering to help decorate. Nancy Groves will have more info.

Unfortunately, it is during our show in June. No alternative dates were available in Balboa Park so we'll still have our show and sale during the second weekend in June.



*Spotted in a random garden in Encinitas: Who would have thought to use Wallisia cyanea as groundcover? The gecko says he's cool with it.*

Here's another reminder that the BSI is holding the 2020 World Bromeliad Conference in Sarasota, Florida. See the BSI website for more details.

This month is election month. Since there were no other nominations for president and vice-president, Steve Zolezzi and I will serve a second term in our respective offices. There are two positions available for our Board with three people running, so there will be a vote. The candidates are Charles Oelsen, Robert Walters, and Krista Mills.

If any of you took a seedling from Dan Kinnard, bring it to the meeting along with your paperwork. It will be interesting to see how the plants fared in different growing conditions. Thank you all so much for your help with cleaning up after the last meeting. I hope you all have a festive

Thanksgiving. I'll see you at the meeting. Meanwhile, safe and happy growing.

# October Meeting Recap

SDBS member Andy Cuffel, the enthusiastic tillandsia grower and owner of Cuffel Farms delivered an informative talk on creative ways to display tillandsias. It was a detailed hands-on demonstration aided by a slideshow. Andy brought several gorgeous tillandsia displays to the demo, including driftwood, frames, and the wreath in the picture. Everybody got their creative juices flowing!



# Show and Tell

**Nancy Groves**

Mystery tillandsia by John Arden

**Don Nelson**

Hollow grapevine wood with Tillandsia ionantha and tectorum

**David Kennedy**

Tillandsia 'Antonio' *below*  
Tillandsia streptophylla x balbisiana

**Al Evans**

Portea 'Candy' *upper right*  
Tillandsia ionantha 'Fuego' on petrified wood *lower right*



# November Meeting

We will have a 2-part program:

## Aechmea Brevicollis Growing Trial Results



Last May some of us took seedlings of *Aechmea brevicollis* to see how we would fare on cultivating them for six months. Well the six months have passed and it is time to bring the plants back in for all to see and discuss how we grew them. So bring them in (dead or alive) with the growing trial form to share our learning experiences at the meeting. How have they done? Bring yours in to let us all see how the different conditions in each member's garden have affected growth. This is not a competition. We just want to know how the effects of sun, shade, fertilizer and temperature have led each of them to its present condition. To help there, bring in with your plant the single sheets that Dan will distribute to you ahead of the meeting. We'll hold a discussion where you can tell us in a little more detail what your conditions were. But be sure to bring in your plant - we need a good turnout.

## A Special Brom

In the second item Rainer Ziermann will tell us about a bromeliad of his choice. He'll talk about the origin of its name, about its discovery and about growing it. In case you don't know him, Rainer has been growing bromeliads for many years in northern California before he joined us several years ago. We think it may be a *Vriesea* or a *Tillandsia*, but we know it will be interesting to hear him talk about it.

## Plant Table

Featuring large potted broms from the estate of the late Don Patterson, and plants from *Tillandsia International*.

# Missed Opportunity

By Dan Kinnard

We were cleaning up one of those easily neglected areas in the "back 40" that had some coyote bush, sumac (*rhus*), a palo verde tree, a brachychiton tree, a puya and some other plants with spines of varying sizes. As the site was being cleared, a tall bloomspike was found with the end reaching up into the brachychiton. Naturally we thought it was one of our small, wild annuals that seem to grow to immense sizes almost overnight and spread seed by the bushel. On closer inspection, we



*Mystery puya!*

## Upcoming Events

### SDBS Meetings

**November 9, 2019, 10:00 AM**  
**SDBS Monthly Meeting**  
 Balboa Park Casa del Prado, Room 104  
 1650 El Prado, San Diego 92101  
[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)

**December 14, 2019, 10:00 AM**  
**SDBS Christmas Party**  
 Balboa Park Casa del Prado, Room 104  
 1650 El Prado, San Diego 92101  
[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)



### Monthly Meetings

**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, 6:30 PM**  
 San Diego Orchid Society  
 Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101  
[www.sdorchids.com](http://www.sdorchids.com)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 1 PM**  
 San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society  
 Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101  
[www.sdcss.net](http://www.sdcss.net)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 7 PM**  
 San Diego Epiphyllum Society  
 Balboa Park, Case Del Prado, Room 101  
[www.SanDiegoEpi.org](http://www.SanDiegoEpi.org)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, 5:45 PM**  
 San Diego Horticultural Society  
 Congregation Beth Israel (CBI)  
 9001 Towne Centre Drive  
 San Diego, CA 92122  
[sdhort.org](http://sdhort.org)

(continued from page 3)  
 found that the spike belonged to the Puya. Darn! This is one of the Puyas without a name that came from seed collected by Pam Hyatt & Werner Rauh around 1988. We've been growing the things for years, are usually quite observant, and still missed the bloom. What triggered the blooming of this one plant? Will the other plants from the same seed group bloom soon? Will this particular plant bloom again in a year or so? I suppose we have to be more vigilant in the future, so we don't miss the blooms.

## In Brazil

Our friend Roberto Menescal sends these stunning Aechmea woronowii in bloom. From Paulo Tosta's collection, Rio de Janeiro.



## SDBS 2019

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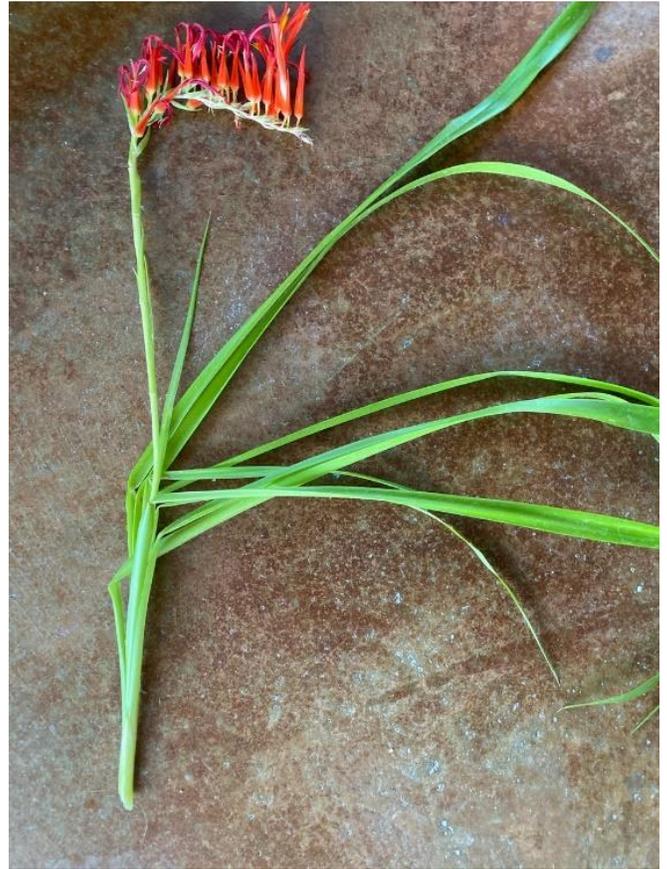
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# Hasenpfeffer Anyone?

by Dan Kinnard



The *Pitcairnia bergii* finally came into bloom. As you can see from the photo, the bloom is an interesting shape and is a true red where many of the red *Pitcairnia* lean more toward the red-orange. It is also a reluctant bloomer. We were looking forward to watching the bloom cycle this time.

A few days later we found a mortality.

Closer examination reveals the culprit — a rabbit. The rabbits usually just take a bite and drop the stem without consuming it. Perhaps it doesn't taste good enough for them to eat or they were expecting vinaigrette on their salad. The rats usually cut the stems / leaves and carry them back to their nest for an expensive, soft bedding.



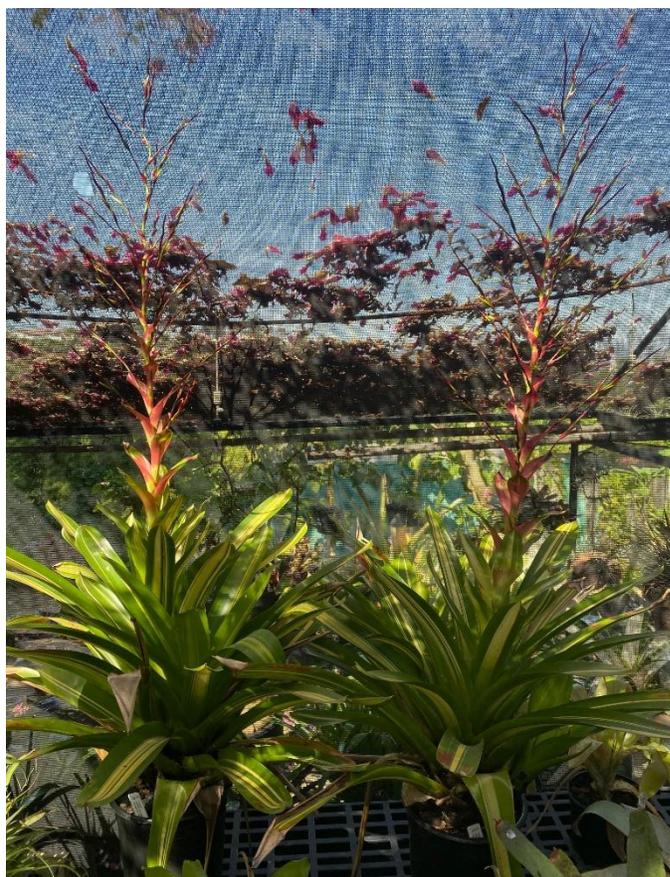
Not any more acceptable but at least they use the leaves they cut. An inspection of the wall of the shadehouse revealed that a new hole big enough for the rabbit to use as an entrance had been made in the wall. That has now been repaired—again. We are now just waiting for the next visitor to open a new “door” to the restaurant.

Those darling little bunnies that chew holes in the shadehouse fabric, bite the plants, and knock plants over should be made into hasenpfeffer ... but there again their nastiness as inflicted on the bromeliads might just carry over into the stew and make it totally inedible.

# Blooming



First is xQuesistrum 'Claudia' at Andrew Wilson's garden. Bottom left: Vriesea 'Batik' rests on the edge of a pond, from Monica Mroz. Vriesea philippo-coburgi 2 ways: 'Rafael' twins (the variegated cultivar) at Dan and Eloise's. At Juliana Raposo's, the common form of the plant grows attached to a palm tree.



## And Finally...

Remember Alcantarea 'Florys' the striated cultivar of glaziouana? It was featured in my talk about Brazilian collectors a year ago. It's coming into bloom after 15 years with Paulo Tosta. The plant has yet to produce a truly striated offset. Let's hope!



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To send material for publication,  
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Make sure to submit your  
contribution before the 20<sup>th</sup> of  
the month for inclusion in the  
next newsletter.

### SDBS MEETING

The club meets on the second  
Saturday of the month at 10am in  
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado,  
room 104.

### SDBS WEBPAGE

[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)