



BROMELETTER

***THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF
THE BROMELIAD SOCIETY
OF AUSTRALIA INC.***

bromeliad.org.au



BROMELETTER is published bi-monthly at Sydney by The Bromeliad Society of Australia Incorporated.

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Vol 57 No 5 — September-October 2019 Vol 57 No 5- Sept / Oct 2019.



Spring Show—26th-27th October—in Federation Pavilion

September talk - 'Art of Ikebana' PLEASE BRING A FEW BROM FLOWERS

November talk by the very popular 'Frog Lady'. (George Bell Pav)

Please send articles for Bromeletter to **editor@bromeliad.org.au**
and all other correspondence to:

The Secretary, Bromeliad Society of Australia Inc. PO Box 340, RYDE NSW 2112.

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The Secretary, P.O. Box 28, Cairns. Qld. 4870

Gold Coast Succulent & Brom. Society

The Secretary, P.O. Box 452, Helensvale Plaza Qld. 4212.

The Hunter Bromeliad Society Inc.,

Tonya McEntyre, 23 Blue Gum Drive Aberglasslyn 2320

Townsville Bromeliad Study Group,

C/- Barb Davies, 5 Sharp St, MT LOUISA. Qld 4814.

NT Bromeliad Society Inc

C/- Ross Hutton, PO Box 36283, Winnellie. NT 0821

Fraser Coast Bromeliad Society Inc

C/- Sue Loughran, sueloughran1@bigpond.com

***Aechmea
sphaerocephala***
***Photo Front Cover
and more on page 11***

Facebook page -UCLA Mildred E.
Mathias Botanical Garden

Life Members:

Grace Goode O.A.M
Ruby Ryde
Bill Morris
Ron Farrugia
Graham McFarlane
Ian Hook

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Member Secretary & Purchasing Officer	Kerry McNicol
Catering	Helga Nitschke
Raffle Sales	Peter Fitzgerald
Pots, Labels etc Sales	Ron Farrugia
Plant of the Month / Show Registrar	Terence Davis
Show coordinators	Ian Hook / Terence Davis
Show Display	Joy Clark
Publicity Officer	Di Tulloch

Report from Treasurer Alan Mathew - 2nd July 2019

Operating Account to 1st June 2019

Opening cash at bank	\$15,759.96
Income:	\$1192.30
Expenses:	\$1453.74

Bank Statement as at 30th June 2019	<u>\$15,498.52</u>
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Unpresented cheque	<u>\$50.00</u>
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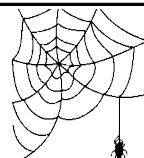
Closing balance	<u>\$15,548.52</u>
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Bank Balances at 30th June 2019

CBA cheque account	\$15,498.52
Gateway Credit Union - Savings (816839510	\$207.79
Gateway Credit Union - Term Deposit (331191277)	\$41,272.14
Gateway Credit Union - Term Deposit (331191278)	\$53,193.27
	<u>\$110,171.72</u>

WEBSITES

Bromeliads in Australia	http://bromeliad.org.au
Encyc of Bromeliads	http://encyclopedia.florapix.nl/
BSI Cultivar Register	http://registry.bsi.org/
Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies	http://fcbs.org/
Bromeliario Imperialis	http://imperialia.com.br/



Facebook users: search for the group 'Planet Bromeliad' & associated 'Planets & Moons' sub-groups for Bromeliad Enthusiasts.

Drilling for Pups

(or Inducing Bromeliad Pup formation by Drilling)

(Ref: Timmins, D. Journal of the Bromeliad Society of New Zealand Vol 57: No 9, 2017)

Occasionally you may have a plant that has been damaged or no longer looks desirable, so rather than waiting for it to flower and then pup, it's worth trying this method, which involves using your electric drill to bypass the flowering stage.



WHAT YOU NEED

Drill - cordless, is safer

Drill bit - a 1 cm diameter x 40 cm length bit

Small brush - the metal, toothbrush size ones are ideal

Sulphur powder - this can come under several names such as Flowers of Sulphur / Sulphur powder / Brimstone (old name) or ground cinnamon

Plastic bottle for dispensing sulphur powder, such as one used for tomato sauce

ANATOMY - at the base of the well or tank is the 'meristem', this is the point where new leaves develop until the growth cells form the flowering stem or inflorescence. Once the leaves stop forming, the latent growth buds start growing pups. This technique aims to damage this growth area, putting the plant into '*survival mode*' of forming as many pups as energy levels permit. Do not attempt this if your plant has started to form a flower.

METHOD

1. Empty all the water out of your bromeliad a few days prior to drilling and leave in a dry place, to reduce the risk of rotting.
2. Prior to drilling secure the pot, your bromeliad is in, with your feet, so there is no spinning of the plant, as this causes extensive damage. Wearing gum boots or thick rubber soled shoes aids in securing the pot and stops slipping.
3. Position yourself over the central tank, drill down the middle, slow speed.
4. Drill in a few stages, bringing the drill out and cleaning off the imbedded plant material from the drill. Avoid injury and switch the drill off when cleaning the drill bit using a brush and not your fingers.
5. Stop drilling when you feel a lessening in resistance, ie when your drill bit has

Drilling for pups cont

reached the potting mix. It is necessary to make the hole right through to the soil, so no water is held in the centre tank or the parent plant and pups may rot.

6. Clean and dry the tank with a cotton bud then apply sulphur powder. Squeeze the powder from the plastic bottle, so the powder is puffed into the throat of the plant. The sulphur helps prevent fungal rot. Alternatively use cinnamon powder, as this is more readily available.

7. Leave bromeliad in a sheltered position so it remains dry before returning to the outdoor elements a few days later.

8. Then keep your fingers crossed and wait.

John Mitchell demonstrated this method to the NZ bromeliad group, who found drilling broms this way, produced close to double the number of pups several months sooner, than if the bromeliad flowered normally.

Our July guest speaker

Our guest speaker was Ian Barnett of the Westside Garden Club, whose love of gardening began at an early age. Ian recollects seeking refuge in the fernery when he was quite young whenever he was in trouble or seeking peace and quiet.

For people who have a love of gardening the loss of this pastime when moving into Aged Care is frequently hard to take.



His talk highlighted many truths and benefits that members of his club experience which are common to us as bromeliad enthusiasts. Gardening (incl growing bromeliads) keeps you active, gets you out in the fresh air, keeps you in contact with like minded people, builds community, maintains an interest in new things, allows you to meet new people, keeps you learning, gives us different experiences and is 'Good for the Soul'. All great things to remember next time someone puts your interest and passion in bromeliads into a negative light of being an 'addiction'.

Thank you Ian.

Plant of the Month July 2019

Open Judge's Choice

1st	Tillandsia recurvifolia x arathos (photo no 1)	Carolyn Bunnell
2nd	Tillandsia bulbosa (photo no 2)	Elizabeth Mudriczki
3rd	Tillandsia 'Houston' (photo no 3)	Helga Nitschke

Open Member's Choice

1st	Tillandsia recurvifolia x arathos (photo no 1)	Carolyn Bunnell
2nd	Tillandsia bulbosa (photo no 2)	Elizabeth Mudriczki
3rd	Tillandsia 'Houston' (photo no 3)	Helga Nitschke

Novice Judge's Choice

1st	Tillandsia ionantha hybrid (photo no 4)	Harold Kuan
2nd	Tillandsia exserta (photo no 5)	Harold Kuan
3rd	Tillandsia guatemalensis (photo no 6)	Warril Evans

Novice Member's Choice

1st	Vriesea 'Gultz' (photo no 7)	Gordon Blanch
2nd	Tillandsia exserta (photo no 5)	Harold Kuan
3rd	Tillandsia guatemalensis (photo no 6)	Warril Evans

Margaret Draddy Artistic Competition

1st	'The Floral Wonder' (photo no 8)	Janet Kuan
2nd	'A Whale of a Time' (photo no 9)	Gordon Blanch
3rd	'Pink & Black' (photo no 10)	Carolyn Bunnell

REMINDER

What to bring and do at every meeting

Bring a box/bag for your purchases

Remember to sign on

Wear your name badge, and chat to a new member

Bring a plate for afternoon tea or put in a donation

Bring a mug for your coffee/tea

Look at the competition entries and cast your vote



No 5



No 6



No 3



No 1



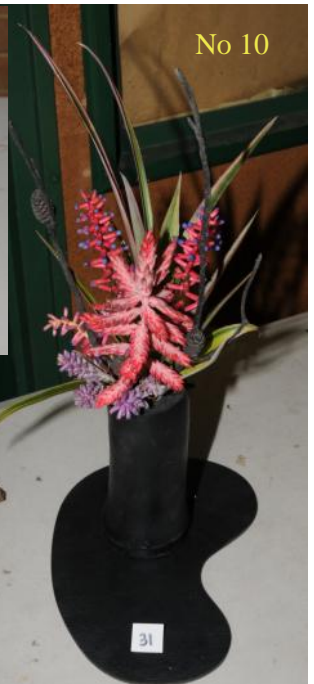
No 9



No 7



No 2



No 10



No 8



No 4

July Meeting – all about Alcantarea Vinicolor

(Sources: Mark Belot - main text; Mark Paul - historical and locality information)

Mark Belot brought in 11 *Alcantarea vinicolors* to show. These develop deep glorious red colours when grown in full sun. Remember to keep any Alc. and broms well watered on the hottest days to help to reduce burning.

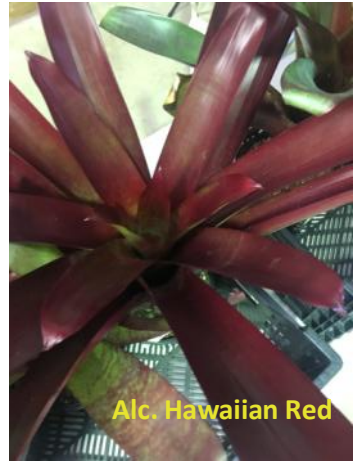
Hybrids with vinicolor in the mix are generally smaller in size than other Alc. Although this is not always the case ie Divine Plumb. ('pur' indicates where Mark purchased his plants). Mark showed:

The 3 types of the *Alcantarea vinicolor* species commonly grown in Australia: **vinicolor Hawaiian Red**, **vinicolor Morriera** & **vinicolor Leme**. All 3 are fairly small, growing generally to less than 1m in diameter. The more sun they receive the better the dark red colouring, which completely covers the reverse & obverse sides of the leaves. If grown in the shade the red colouring of the leaves will be less intense with a lot more green in the leaves. The inflorescence is shorter than most other Alc. grown in Australia, reaching 1.2m or less. All 3 are very hardy and can take temperatures up near 40deg C in the sun, if they are continuously grown in full sun.

Vinicolor Hawaiian Red is the most commonly grown of the vinicolors and was brought into Australia by the Olive Branch Nursery, QLD, presumably from Sharon Peterson in Hawaii, hence the name. (pur Peter Tristram)

Vinicolor Leme was collected by Elton Leme in Brazil, possibly from its original habitat. (pur Jan & Jon Townsend at BSA show).

Vinicolor Morriera seeds were brought into Australia by Mark Paul and Peter Tristram and sent to Bruce Dunstan (worked at Green Stock Nursery, QLD) to grow them on then send back the plants to Mark & Peter. Bruce & Michael Grange (also from Green Stock Nursery) kept pups and grew them on for themselves. (pur Michael Grange in QLD) Neither vinicolor Leme or Morriera have flowered yet for Mark, but he tells them apart from the slight differences in the leaves.



2 other Alc.were unidentified & unnamed *extensa/vinicolor* types which originally were collected in habitat by Elton Leme. These 2 types are rare and the seeds were brought into Australia then grown by Mark Paul. Mark hopes one day Elton will formally identify and name them.

Another type of *vinicolor* also brought into Australia by Mark Paul, has large scape bracts on the inflorescence compared to typically grown *vinicolors*. This type was collected in habitat at Pedra Azul in Brazil.

The following hybrid *vinicolors* were also shown:

Alc. Lemme x Aladdin a fairly new hybrid by Peter Kilpatrick in Nth QLD



Alc. Aladdin - *extensa* x *vinicolor* is an Allan Ladd hybrid. This is small growing and Mark has only seen it grow between 60-70cm in diameter, but the BCR states it grows up to 1.2m. (Pur Ray Henderson, whom originally bought his seedling plants from Alan Ladd before Aladdin had been named & registered).



Alc. Totara Orange - *imperialis* x *vinicolor* by Peter Coyle in New Zealand. This Alc. hybrid was possibly imported into New Zealand from Hawaii where a lot of the early *imperialis* & *vinicolor* hybrids came from. (pur Jan & Jon Townsend, Bonville Bromeliads).

Alc. Vampira - unknown parents, registered by John Byth. Grows up to 1.4m diameter with lovely dark wine red coloured leaves and possibly has *vinicolor* in the mix.

One of Marks favourites is the Robert Dilling hybrid, **Alc. Devine Plumb – *vinicolor* x Silver**, which grows up to 1.4m in diameter with a 2m plus inflorescence and is quite tough because of the *vinicolor* in its breeding. If acclimatised to grow in full sun it will withstand temperatures into the high 30s near 40 degrees before it starts to burn from the hot afternoon sun. If you can provide some sun protection on the hottest days it will develop superb colouring. (pur Dillings Nursery)

ADDITIONALLY - Helga brought a brom with *Billbergia* type flower but long stolon— suggestions Pink Piglet. Larissa brought a brom to identify which had a label Pinegrove Spots, but could not find in the register. Suggestions 'Cheers ' or not registered but grown by Pinegrove nursery.

The Oldest Brom? - *Hechtia argentea*

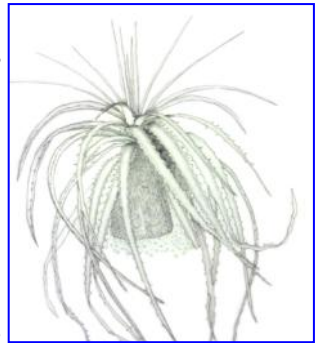
(sources – Barcay, G. JBSNZ Vol 58 No7, 2018; Kew Gardens Website; Ency of Bromeliads, Botanical Artists Guild of Southern California blog)



At the 2018 BSI World Conference, a large *Hechtia argentea* (photo left) was displayed along with a pencil sketch of it and the following note....”***this male Hechtia argentea was found in 2012 floating down the river in the bottom of a steep canyon in Mexico. It had fallen from a cliffthis plant has a trunk which indicates great age....a Hechtia argentea at Kew Gardens... has been in their collection since before 1860, and it still has no trunk, so how old would you think this plant is?***” *Hechtia* expert A. Siekkinen guessed 250 to 500 years.

Sketch by BAGSC member
Leslie Walker for BSI
conference

Hechtia argentea was discovered in a Mexican canyon in 1860, but for a long time remained unknown from wild populations and known only from the cultivated plants at Kew Gardens. The Kew Gardens specimen was exhibited in Brussels in 1864 where it was awarded ‘**Best in the Show**’. Today you can find it in Kew’s



Tropical Zone 3 Desert Conservatory. Recently thousands of plants have been found growing in a single canyon system in the Barranca de Tolimán, in south- western Hidalgo, Mexico.



Hechtia argentea in flower

Hechtia is a lateral blooming species, meaning its central meristem can grow indefinitely and not die after flowering like most other bromeliads.



Kew Gardens specimen

Fertilising Neoregelias

(source - Catlan, J. JBSNZ, Vol 51 No 11, 2011)

Knowing when and how much fertiliser to apply to *Neoregelias* is a difficult task, as both too much and too little fertiliser has significant effects on variegation, colour and growth.

Variegation and colour are prized in *Neos*, so the most disastrous consequence of over fertilisation is that variegation may reduce or disappear altogether (called unstable variegations). Unstable variegations are more prevalent in some varieties and are normally noticed over a few generations, when pups lack or have distorted variegations.

Too Much

Tell-tale signs in the pups of too much fertilisation include: longitudinal leaf corrugations, pointed leaf tips in normally rounded varieties, a deeper green leaf colour than normal often with yellow margins, the growing tip may abort completely or flower prematurely.

Too Little

On the other hand, growing *Neos* without adequate nutrients or in poor soil produces slow growth, the leaves tend to be thin, the plant lacks colour and is less able to withstand any adverse growing conditions, such as a hot or cold spell.

Fertilisers affect the intensity of the red pigment and with adequate levels the red pigment in *Neos* is more intense, has fewer gaps and has a resistance to bleaching. With low fertiliser levels the *Neos* tend to get short leaves with white margins, with many gaps in the red pigments.



Mosquitoes in your Broms?

This recipe comes from life member Len Trotman (NZ Bromeliad group). It causes foaming in the centre of your bromeliad, but can be left here without harmful effects. It is effective against mosquitoes, slugs, snails and other insects. It may be used for quilling (see article on quilling in our July/August 2019 issue). Kerrie's advice :- prior to use test on one of multiple plants and use with care.

Use **only** 30 to 60 ml **per one litre** for the final spray solution. To make 1 litre of concentrate mix:-

100 ml Sunlight dishwashing liquid

40 ml household cloudy ammonia

20 ml citronella or Pine-O-Clean

Waltillia - A New Genus

(sources <http://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:77162222-1>); Wisnev, M. - SFVBS newsletter July 2019)



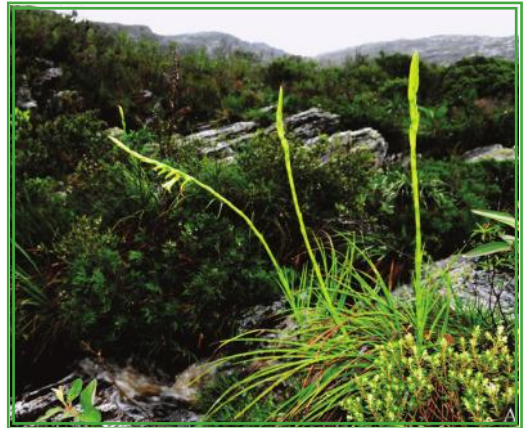
Following Ian's June talk on 'Lesser Known Genera' here is more on the new monotypic genus 'Waltillia'.

In 1975, Gert Hatschbach described a new bromeliad he found in the highlands Minas Gerais, Brazil, (state with the largest plant diversity). Lyman Smith and Robert Read named this bromeliad *Vriesea hatschbachii*, after Gert, but 20 years later it was moved to the *Alcantarea* genus.

This was a handsome green-flowered member of the Bromeliaceae family, but attempts to find out more about it were hampered as no further specimens were found and it

was believed to be extinct.

In 2009, a Kew Gardens team working on the Toucan Cipó project, were mapping and describing vegetation types in the municipality of Santana do Pirapama, Brazil. At the furthest point of a strenuous 10 km hike over mountains, this bromeliad was found growing amongst rocks, beside a stream. Brazilian Bromeliaceae specialist, Rafaela Forzza, was called in and confirmed this represented a



second location for the lost species. This time the point of collection was recorded using GPS.

Examination of these plants revealed the species differed from both *Vriesea* and *Alcantara* and after DNA testing it was placed in a newly formed genus *Waltillia*. This monotypic genus (having only one species) was formed to accommodate this rediscovered species which was formerly placed in either *Vriesea* or *Alcantarea*.



Photos sourced — <http://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:77162222-1>

<http://novataxa.blogspot.com/2017/03/waltillia.html>



Waltillia hatschbachii grows in rosettes, with long (80 cm x 5 cm), strap-shaped, pale green leaves. The pale, green inflorescences are borne on stalks up to 1.2 m in length and have boat-shaped greenish-cream bracts packed towards the end of the stalks, enclosing groups of flowers that face to one side when open. The erect flowers have three yellowish sepals with three cream petals and white anthers.

The inflorescence bracts are filled with a mucilaginous substance that protect the flower-buds against desiccation in the arid climate. Pollination is carried out by bats, and the small seeds are wind-dispersed.

Additionally the 2009 field trip found other new plant species including bromeliads *Encholirium ctenophyllum* and *Encholirium agavoides*.

Aechmea sphaerocephala (front cover)

is a species in the genus *Aechmea*, subgenus *Chavaliera*, which is endemic to the south eastern part of Brazil. The name indicates its shape, ‘*sphaero*’ meaning round and ‘*cephalait*’ denoting head.

This spectacular bromeliad was first recorded in 1879 and is an enormous, terrestrial *Aechmea* growing to 1.2-2 metres in open areas and in full sun. It has a slow growing inflorescence which develops gradually over a year and is long lasting (approx 2 years).



The flowers which never open contain no nectar and the brom is self-pollinating.

Sources: <https://www.facebook.com/uclabotanical/photos/flower-of-aechmea-sphaerocephala-in-the-bromeliad-garden-this-plant-is-endemic-t/1551240558277546/>

<https://wcsp.science.kew.org>

Sarasota Bromeliad Society July 2019

newsletter <http://fcbs.org/articles/Aechmea>

Our Mini Plant Fair was a great success



Lots of Tillandsias



**So many exotic and new
-to-Sydney plants to
choose from.**



**Mark with a few of
his purchases**



Always good to get Peter's advice



Our guest speaker, [Peter Tristram](#) with a *Goudaea Santa Maria*, a species he found in its natural habitat when he stayed in the small town of Santa Maria, Columbia. After seeing this brom in Franz Gruber's nursery (Columbia) he was given directions of where to find this bromeliad in the wild. Despite this, it still took 3 days to locate it, where it was growing on cliffs at 600-700 metres.



Lots of choices!

Trinette from Hahndorf (Adelaide Brom Soc) with her finds and daughter.



Elizabeth with her treasures



Our August 10th Mini Fair was a great success, with a large turnover and a fabulous selection of broms. It was good to see many new faces as well as old friends. Great to see Gary and Beverley Lock, Gary was our publicity officer some years ago. A very big thankyou to all the volunteers who helped make the day such a success.



Our generous raffle table



**Eileen from Bundenna
(Illawarra Brom Soc)**

Mini Plant Fair - cont

**Narelle (visitor)
with a difficult
decision**



Amendment

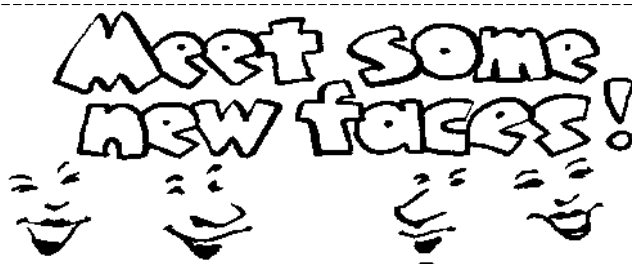


Moyna Prince from the Bromeliad Society of South Florida wrote to us about the Neo 'Aurora' pictured on page 7 in our newsletter vol 57 No 4. (photo top left)

You had a photo taken at your autumn show of a neoregelia labelled Neo 'Aurora'. The plant in your photo is not Aurora. Neo.

'Aurora' was made decades ago by Gary Hendrix. It has distinctive pointed narrow red and yellow leaves and is an outstanding miniature. You can find pictures on both fcbs.org photo index (photo bottom right) and also the bcr.org. It's not a prolific pupper so there aren't many of them around.





We continue to attract new members into the Society and would like to welcome our most recent enthusiasts:

Michelle Quinn

Michelle Davies

If you would like to become a Member, please see details below.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION: Renewal is due **1st January** for membership year January to December.

Annual Membership (Single/Family):	Australia	A\$25
Overseas Membership:	Asia/Pacific Zone	A\$40.
	Rest of the World	A\$45.

New Membership requires a \$5 joining fee, plus Annual Subscription.

(Those joining after our spring Show are covered for the following year.)

Note: Un-financial members must add \$5 rejoining fee when re-applying for membership.

MAIL ORDER PAYMENTS BY MASTERCARD/VISA.

(Subject to A\$10.00 minimum.)

Members using Mastercard or Visa mail order facility should provide the following details, printed clearly in block letters, on a separate sheet of paper:

- Name and address of **MEMBER**.
- **TYPE of card** (Visa, Mastercard)
- **CARDHOLDER** name details, as shown on card.
- Mastercard/Visa **number** and **expiry date**.
- **CARDHOLDER** signature (essential).
- Payment details (membership renewal, book purchase, postage, etc.)

LITERATURE for Sale

<http://www.bromeliad.org.au/Contacts/BSALibrarian.htm>

TITLE	AUTHOR	PRICE
Bromeliads for the Contemporary Garden	Andrew Steens	\$20.00
Bromeliads: A Cultural Manual (Rev. ed. 2007)	BSI	\$ 6.00
Bromeliad Hybrids 1: Neoregelias	Margaret Paterson	\$25.00
Bromeliads Under the Mango Tree	John Catlan	\$10.00
Bromeliad Cultivation Notes	Lyn Hudson	\$10.00
Growing Bromeliads – 3rd Ed. by BSA IS BACK!		\$20.00 (member price)



SEED BANK

Seeds cost 50¢ per packet (plus postage) for Members and Seed Bank supporters
or \$1 per packet (plus postage) for all other enquiries:

Enquiries for seeds should be directed to

Terry Davis

(02) 9636 6114 or 0439 343 809

Below is the list of seeds in our Seed Bank.

For a full list please go to bromeliad.org.au

Puya mirabilis

24.07.18

Ross Hutton

Seed has been moving quickly, especially the more recent additions.

SO if you have seed to donate please send it in or bring it to our next meeting.

What's ON

14th September - BSA Meeting - George Bell Pavilion (please bring your show table applications)

12th October - BSA Meeting - George Bell Pavilion

17th-20th October - 'Golden Broms' National Conference, Gold Coast Qld

26th & 27th October - Spring Show & Sales (setup Friday 3pm)

9th November - BSA Meeting - George Bell Pavilion

14th December - BSA meeting and Christmas Party - back in Federation Pavilion

Report from Treasurer Alan Mathew for July 2019

Opening balance at bank 1.7.19	\$15,498.52
Income:	\$1033.15
Less Expenses:	\$1586.28
Closing balance	<u>\$14945.39</u>

COLLECTORS' CORNER

BROMELIADS – a large colourful range of Bromeliads, both species and hybrids of many genera. Includes a very large range of Tillandsias. A mail order list of Tillandsias is available upon request.

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