

# BROMELETTER

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### **CONTENTS**

Management Details	Page	2,3,9,12,22,23,24
Vale John Noonan		3
July Meeting - Billbergias		4,5
Watch Spring Billbergias		6
Pollination Temperature for Tillandsias - BSV Lloyd Goodman		7
BSA's First Judging School session		8,9
Plant of the Month - July - Awards		10,11
BCR - New Registrations		12,13
BSD Part 2		14,15
Plant of the Month - August Separating Difficult Bromeliads		16,17,18,19
Orthophytum eddie-estevesii - Doug Binns		20,21

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Show coordinators	Ian Hook / Terry Davis	Photo by Ian Hook
Publicity Officer	Di Tulloch	
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# Vale

# John Frederick Noonan

15th April 1942 - 9th September 2022

It is with sadness that we announce to members the passing of John.

John was a member of the BSA, NSW and Illawarra Societies for over 30 years and a Committee Member of our Society since 2016. He was also an accredited RSA judge of bromeliads at the Easter Show until that section closed due to lack of entries.



John celebrating his 80th Birthday Rest in Peace

John was always a worker 'in the background' taking

on anything that needed to be done and took on Committee work as a matter of course. Like us all, John grew 'a few' bromeliads possibly enjoying the companionship of meetings just as much as the plants themselves.

He began to slow down a little a few years ago, as we all seem to do, but kept on doing what he could. Unfortunately he was overcome by his illness and, after a rapid decline in health, succumbed after being hospitalised.

We send our regards to all of his family and friends who will miss him in their daily lives.

## Afternoon Tea is back Please bring a plate of delights

(or a small donation can be made) and your favourite mug for coffee or tea

### <u>ERATA</u>

Bromeletter no3: P9 Monthly Trading Ac. Report 'Opening Balance May 30/04/2022 ' should read: Opening Balance May 1/05/2022 and 'Closing Balance May 30/04/2022 ' should read: 'Closing Balance May 30/05/2022 '

### Life Members:

Allan Beard Carolyn Bunnell Terence Davis Ron Farrugia Ian Hook Graham McFarlane Kerry McNicol Bill Morris David Scott

# July Meeting - Billbergias !

*Billbergia* is 1 of the 40 genera of bromeliads. It is comprised of about sixty species that are primarily native to Brazil. While *Billbergia* are most commonly found in Brazil, their range extends from central Mexico to northern Argentina. **Subgenera:** The genus is divided into two subgenera *helicodea* and *billbergia*. The subgenera *billbergia* is most commonly found in cultivation. The difference between the two subgenera can be seen in their flowers. *Helicodea* petals coil back like a spring and *billbergia* petals bend back slightly at the tips.

**Epiphytes:** *Billbergia* are primarily epiphytic species (attached to trees) or saxicolous (grow attached to rocks). They grow naturally attached to trees and shrubs; they will also grow terrestrially or in containers.

**Containers:** *Billbergia* can be planted in small pots with well draining, slightly acidic mix. Drainage and stability can be helped by stones or such in the bottom of the pot.

*Billbergia* range in size from 20 cm up to 1metre tall depending on the species. *Billbergia* are prolific producers of pups or offshoots. These pups can be repotted or allowed to clump.

**Temperature:** *Billbergia* will tolerate a wider range of temperature than many other bromeliads. This makes them an ideal choice for outdoor landscapes in climates but don't be fooled, if your area regularly experience frosts or temperatures in excess of 30°C, you will need to provide the same protection as for other bromeliads.

Water and humidity: *Billbergia* do not require much water, but they do like high humidity. The tanks should have water in them and also be regularly flushed and rinsed to avoid stagnate water. Stagnate water can result in pests and disease.

**Fertiliser:** If fertiliser is added to the potting medium, no other feeding should be necessary. Too much will cause loss of colour and elongated leaves.

**Shape and Form:** *Billbergia* are have fewer leaves than other bromeliads and often form into a 'tube' shape. Some will flare to form an elongated vase effect. Their leaves have spines on the margins and can vary in colour, pattern and variegation as much as other Genus of bromeliads.

*Billbergia* flowers are particularly showy, often pendant and usually relatively short lived.

Our July meeting was a feast for the eyes, with members bringing in their favourite billbergia to show off. Ian had great information and tips to share



with the members'

Oldies but goodies Billbergia pyramidalis Billbergia 'Hallelujah' Billbergia 'Afterglow'



Billbergia sanderiana



*Bill.* 'Domingos Martins'

*Billbergia* 'Ralph Graham French'







Two varieties of *Billbergia nutans*, the more common 'pink bracted' variety, and the not so common 'red bracted' variety



Billbergia 'Golden Joy'

AND THE FAVOURITE WAS: Billbergia 'Etty Bat Outlaw' A relatively new hybrid brought in by Allan Beard Photo by Marie Giddins the plant hybridizer.



### Watch Spring Billbergias in Cultivation

By Lyman B. Smith, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Reprinted in part from: The Journal of the Bromeliad Society, January/February 1983, Vol. XXXIII(1) This article appeared in the FNCBSG bulletin in response to an identification request for the plant seen below.

'One of the easiest groups of bromeliads to distinguish is that of the watch spring or helicoid billbergias, because their tightly recoiled petals are unique in the family. In fact some botanists have favoured separating them as a genus, Helicodea, but intermediates with true Billbergia, like Billbergia brasiliensis, make this separation appear undesira-Besides their curious petals, the helible.

coid billbergias have a number of other characteristics in common. Their

few leaves form a long, tubular rosette, their scape bracts are very large and a beautiful shade of rose, and their inflorescence is always simple and usually pendant. In fact there are so many similarities, that we have little left to distinguish the species from each other except the shape of the sepals and the ovary. However, as a sort of compensation, these vary more than in most other bromeliad genera. In Billbergia porteana the lower part of the flower has an hourglass figure because of the large epigynous tube: (epi, upon, and gynous, ovary) between the ovary and the unusually short broad sepals. This is another species described by Beer in 1857. It is a native to eastern Brazil and is well known both in the wild and in cultivation.

Billbergia porteana



lf:	Go to:
1 Ovary verrucose (warty)	2
1 Ovary NOT verrucose	porteana
2 Sepals rounded tips	zebrina
2 Sepals pointed	rosea

Note the warty 'verrucose' bits on Billbergia zebrina on the left and 'NOT verrucose' warty on our plant on the right which makes it a better fit to the description for Billbergia porteana.





## POLLINATION TEMPERATURE FOR TILLANDSIAS LLOYD GODMAN

### From: Bromeliad Society of Victoria Inc. VOL 39 No 4 August-September 2022

# *Editor's note:* though this article refers to growing conditions in Melbourne we can clearly relate the information to conditions further north.

**Pollination** in many plants, including tillandsias, is more likely to occur when the temperature is above 20°C and ideally between 22°C and 34°C.

In climates with cooler winters, lower temperatures can mean the plant flowers but pollination is not viable. Outside in Melbourne, a cold winter day temperature may not even reach above 10°C, so the flowers will never pollinate successfully. In fact some tillandsias can form flowers that sit for months without opening because the temperatures are too low. Frustratingly some plants can even abort their flowers during a long winter, so they never open at all. There is nothing more disappointing than to have a tillandsia finally form an inflorescence as the days of autumn grow colder and darker, only to have the flowers never properly form, or not open.

However, by bringing flowering tillandsias into a heated living area during winter, allowing them to acclimatize for a few hours and then hand pollinating, one can lift



pollination viability to a point where pollination occurs and eventually seed is produced. Flowers that would normally "wither on the vine" can spring to life and grow again once warm. The added bonus is you have a great excuse to have the plants indoors, and get to enjoy your plants in comfort. Bringing self-pollinating plants into a warmer environment will also help raise pollination levels.

During spring, temperatures might reach 20°C around mid-morning, so any time after then will work for pollination.

In the height of summer when temperatures might reach over 40°C, hand pollinating at night when the air is cooler may be an option. Actually, some plants that are pollinated by night flying insects respond better to pollination at this time.

My understanding is that wet pollen is much less viable than dry pollen and also lasts for a shorter time, so only hand pollinate when the plant is dry.

# **Judging School**

### Thanks to Edwina Wain for the report.

The Bromeliad Society of Australia's first Judges School was held on 12th June 2022 at the home of our president and trainee judge, Ian Hook. It was attended by Narelle & Greg Aizelwood, Ian Hook, Amal Eid, Judy Hunt,

Warwick Varley, Nina Woodcock & Edwina Wain, with apologies from Harold Kuan. Once registration & introductions were completed the B.S.I. Handbook for Judges, Affiliates & Exhibitors was provided to participants. Narelle explained Bromeliad judge require-



ments. These are outlined in the document emailed to us titled:

'Requirements student judges need to fulfil to become a B.S.I. accredited judge' and on pages 63 – 65 of the Judges handbook. All participants are to keep a diary of Bromeliad judging activities: this includes Judging classes, Bromeliad shows (plants entered and ribbons won and show activities such as registration, judging etc), details of book/journals/articles that have been read from the reading list, or related to Bromeliads, garden visits etc.

### Enjoy your homework guys!

A 'Bromeliad Glossary' has been ordered these for participants and Ian stated there is an online glossary on the Bromeliads in Australia website www.bromeliad.org.au/ - on the Indexed/Journals tab, for all members to access.

Greg Aizelwood discussed nomenclature for Bromeliads, an activity which needs to be understood well, to get right

Judging points and all its components will keep participants busy reading pages 1-36 of the Judges Handbook.

Narelle gave presentations regarding: Hybrids & Bi-generics and Bromeliads formerly in the subfamily *Pitcairnioideae* with examples provided by participants.

Point scoring was completed by all on six bromeliads. Narelle collected the score sheets and will provide feedback once she has reviewed them. The next two Judging School date were set:

Sunday 16th October 2022

Sunday 5th February 2023 , both at different participants' homes/gardens.



#### MONTHLY TRADING ACCOUNT REPORTS

for June & July 2022-Maureen Johns

Opening Balance June Add Income Less Expenses	01/06/2022	\$ 19,022.07 \$    772.55 \$  3,936.18
Closing Balance	30/06/2022	\$ 15,858.44
Opening Balance July Add Income Less Expenses	01/07/2022	\$15,858.44 \$340.44 \$1,961.31
Closing Balance	31/07/2022	\$ 14,237.57

## Plant of the Month Competition July

#### **Open Judge's Choice** 1st Till, 'Erik the Red' Till. brachycaulos x streptophylla Harold Kuan 2nd Bill. 'Domingos Martins' x 'Gorgia' 3rd Member's Choice Till, 'Erik the Red' 1st

- 2nd Till. brachycaulos x streptophylla
- Wallisia duvalii (was lindenii) 3rd



Tillandsia brachycaulos x streptophylla



- Carolyn Bunnell
- Carolyn Bunnell

Carolyn Bunnell

Harold Kuan

Harold Kuan

### Billbergia 'Domingos Martins' x 'Georgia





10

### **Margaret Draddy Artistic Competition**

1st 'Fireworks'



Janet Kuan

### **Awarding of Trophies**

Harold and Janet were not present at our last meeting when trophies from our Autumn Show wee presented. Ian took the opportunity to do so at this meeting.

- Janet was awarded 'Novice Champion' ... and Harold won
- the Species Award



# **BCR - New Registrations**

If you are a regular user of the **Bromeliad Cultivar Register** you would, no doubt know about the 'new Registrations' tab. Which list the 50 or so most recent registrations of hybrid Bromeliads from all over the world. However importation of bromeliads has been made very difficult and the process, convoluted, to say the least. Fortunately, we have some extremely talented growers in Australia who have taken on hybridisation with some very pleasing results. Below are a few Australian hybrids for your perusal.



Billbergia 'Stormy Humdinger' Upright vase shaped rosette to 45cm Bill. 'Chocolate Milkshake' x Bill 'Talbot Eve' Hybridiser and Photo: Amanda Barbe

Neoregelia 'Rangeview Night Devil' large rosette to 65cm. Neo.'Black Opal' x Neo 'Persian Carpet' Hybridiser : Peter Kilpatrick Photo: Dot Kilpatrick





*Tillandsia* 'Tammy' *Till* streptophylla x *Till* pruinosa bulbous based rosette to 30cm *Hybridiser:* Nev Ryan *Photo* Ross Little

## FOR YOUR diary - 2022

September 10th Meeting — Federation Pavilion September 24th, 25th —Spring show Federation Pavilion Saturday 9-4 pm Sunday 10-3 pm October 15th Meeting (Note: 3rd Saturday) - Fed. Pavilion November 19th Meeting - to be discussed December 10th CHRISTMAS Meeting - Fed Pavilion



xHohenmea 'Koah Black Galaxy ' Aechmea chantini forma amazonica X Hohenbergia leopoldo-horsti Large open upright rosette 70cm across x 50cm high





Neoregelia 'Ladds Eruption' - Neo 'Lila' x Neo 'Derooses Medusa' Open rosette to 50cm. At blooming the central crown extends and turns brilliant red. Hybridiser: Allan Ladd Photo: Ross Little

We would like to welcome our recent bromeliad enthusiasts.

Renate KrolTegan PryceEffy PiperKevin CaoLinda MolloyPaul CassarJenny RushforthPrianta Kariawasam



14





A typical BSD Photo Gallery page, in this case for *Tillandsia* ionantha.

The photos can be clicked on to view larger size images, see the author's name and any notes or discussion comments that are added to the images. Note the two grey **'Description & Resource Files'** and **'Upload'** buttons, which allow easy access to the file archive section for *T. ionantha* and the instant uploading of new images by users.

A number of other useful features are also included in the BSD. One is the **"Show Synonyms"** button that is located on each genus page. Clicking this button will show all "old" synonym names in black type-face within the taxon list menu on the left. Clicking on a black name will then link to a page listing the currently accepted name in blue, which can then also be clicked on to go to that current species page. This means locating old names and linking to new names is now a very quick and easy task, a must-have tool these days with so many recent reclassifications – and many more to come.



The *Tillandsia* genus page after the **"Show Synonyms"** button has been clicked. Note the old synonym names in black that have now appeared and can be clicked on to link to the currently accepted name.

### How can you help the BSD grow?

We have purposely designed the BSD as a collaborative platform to encourage participation in building the database. As you will see, while every species has resource files loaded against them, there are still many that do not yet have gallery photos. This is where we need help, especially from members with extensive photo collections and knowledge of species, to start uploading and sharing images. Uploading is very simple and can be done at any time, there are no approvals or waiting times involved to see your photos in the BSD Galleries, they will appear instantly. The website will also remember your required upload details for the future, making multiple uploads quick and easy. So this is your invitation!

Please give uploading a go whenever you have a nice species photo, particularly those that are rare or with few or no images loaded.

## Graeme Barclay BSD Manager, BSI Director New Zealand

# Plant of the Month Competition August

Open	Judge's Choice	
1st	Tillandsia 'Leon'	Carolyn Bunnell
2nd	<i>Neo.</i> 'White Hot Embers'	Kerry McNicol
3rd	Till. ortgieseana	Helga Nitschke
	Members' Choice	
1st	<i>Neo.</i> 'White Hot Embers'	Kerry McNicol
2nd	Tillandsia 'Leon'	Carolyn Bunnell
3rd	Neoregelia 'Tess'	Kerry McNicol





Neoregelia 'White Hot Embers'

Tillandsia 'Leon'

Tillandsia ortgieseana



Neoregelia 'Tess'

16

## Plant of the Month Competition August cont.

### Novice Judge's and Members' Choice

1st

Tillandsia duratii Warrill Evans

#### **SPECIMEN v COLONY**

When we first get a plant, we are often impatient for it to grow pups, so we can split it and have more. What do you do when you have a few 'specimens' of the same plant? The next logical step is to grow a colony!

But what happens when your colonies have become to big for their space?



Some of the longer term growers may very possibly have this problem, especially if space is at a premium.

The colonies on the previous page are just such an example. You can be lucky (I say, luck, as very few of us can train pups to grow where we want), and have a well behaved plant which grows pups in a symmetrical, radial pattern around it, but usually not. If the stolon is short e.g. *Neo.* 'White Hot Embers' (previous page), it will steadily radiate out from the centre at somewhat uneven intervals, but being so prolific, the plant multiplies, it 'looks' to have grown symmetrically.

However, with the example of *Neo.* 'Tess', by the time it starts to radiate, it will do so at its own compass points. The only thing we can do as growers it to remove any stolons/pups which are too close or crossing over others, if you really find it not to your liking.

You now need to ensure each colony has enough space and even lighting. In the

case of *Neo.* 'Tess' (see left), there is one complete 'arm' which had apparently been covered by a larger leaf (or object) which decreased the light level dramatically and so has failed to 'colour up' as would be expected.

Another problem with colonies is the 'sudden death' of a key plant in the colony affecting its 'conformity', creating 'gaps'.



# Members' Meeting August

# Separating Tricky Plants short stolons/ long stolons.

Many questions are always being asked about the best way to go about separating plants with short stolons. At this meeting we tackled a few tricky ones.

The first thing discussed was the basic tools needed to make the job easier.

Firstly, a clean sharp pair of secateurs, for snipping not so hard to get at stolons.

A pair of scissors to trim damaged leaves.

Next, a pair of long forceps or tweezers for clean up from deep down in the leaves as well as for removal of lower more stubborn, or hard to reach, leaf parts.

By grasping the difficult leaf and curling it around the tweezers, the leaf can easily be removed





A gyprock or hole saw. This is strong enough for tougher jobs as well as having a slim pointed blade to get between the mother and pup without damaging either. Spare blades can be purchased.

... And lastly, perhaps a large pair of sharp loppers, or my weapon of choice, a battery powered reciprocating saw for the thicker stolons too tough for secateurs.



#### Removing Tricky Pups



<u>*Tinlandsias*</u> with a short stolon. Gently prise the pup away from the mum and



then, grasping its base, pull away and down include the roots that were within the 'trunk' of the mother.

<u>Alcantarea</u> grass pups can be removed once around pencil thickness, however the larger the better. Again, these can

be prised away gently then as the pup begins to show movement, try to grasp the roots and gently coax it

from old leaf axles of the mother.

<u>Goudaea</u>: It is common for goudaea, as they age, to grow a 'trunk' and in turn grow 'grass pups' along it. It is simply a matter of waiting till they are of enough maturity to grow independently to separate them. Often, mature pups will 'fall' into your hand







Stalk of old flower spike

if they are ready to leave the mother.

However, they can also grow leaf axle pups, often from the last sets of leaves on the mother, usually after flowering. In these cases you will often have to virtually destroy the mother by pulling away the leaves from around it. But make



sure the pup is mature enough to survive. In the case of the *Goudaea ospinae var gruberi*, it was left to grow until big enough to survive independently.

The emerging pup is circled, growing beside the stalk of the old inflorescence.

# Orthophytum eddie-estevesii

From GNCBSG Nov 2021 written by Doug Binns 2021 Orthophytum eddie-estevesii was described in 2000. It is known only from a small area in the vicinity of the town of Monte Azul, in the northern part of the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil. With its compact habit, and reddish-orange sepals which contrast with the green flowers and white-scaled leaves, it is among the most attractive of all species of Orthophytum.

Although I have identified my plant as *Orthophytum eddieestevesii*, it differs from the description and associated image in the protologue in several respects. My plant has sepals which are orange rather than reddish-orange, the leaves are shorter, thicker and less strongly channelled and the leaf marginal spines are shorter. Despite these differences, other characteristics are a good match. The protologue description is based on a single plant which flowered in cultivation and is unlikely to encompass the range of variability of the species.



I attribute the discrepancies between my plant and the type specimen to within-species variability and possibly, differences due to cultivation.

20



Orthophytum eddieestevesii belongs to the subgenus Clavanthus, which comprises species informally referred to as the Orth. mellobarretoi group. These differ from the most commonly grown species of orthophytums (which belong to subgenus Orthophytum) in a number of characters, most notably that the petals are hooded with incurved tips, in contrast to the petals of subgenus Orthophytum, which have spreading tips. Members

of subgenus *Clavanthus* also differ because they very rarely produce adventitious offsets in the inflorescence. *Orthophytum eddie-estevesii* is the most northerly occurring member of its subgenus. Although the names may be confusing, it is a very different plant to *Orth. estevesii*, which was originally described as *Orth. fosterianum* subsp. *estevesii* and belongs to subgenus *Orthophytum*. I have found my plant easy to grow and it offsets readily, but has taken a few years to develop to the clump pictured.

Photos by Ross Little

### **SEED BANK**

#### If you have seed to donate please contact Terry.

#### Below is the list of seeds in our Seed Bank.

Al. imperialis rubra	04.10.21	Beverley Irvine
Tillandsia juncea	01.02.22	Werner Raff
Tillandsia leiboldiana (purple bracts)	04.04.22	Kerry McNicol
Catopsis floribunda	2.06.2022	Greg Aizlewood
Vriesea 'Nova Pink'	late June '22	Amanda Barbe
Tillandsia capillaris was var. incana	06/06/2022	Kerry McNicol
Till. Fasciculata 'Jim Hyde'	late June'22	Amanda Barbe
Till. Utriculate	late June'22	Amanda Barbe
Till, fasciculata var densispica	late June'22	Amanda Barbe
Till. x floridiana	late June'22	Amanda Barbe
Till fasciculata var fasciculata	late June'22	Amanda Barbe

S0.50¢ per packet (plus postage) Members or \$1 per packet (plus postage) for all other Contact *Terry Davis (02) 9636 6114 or 0439 343 809* 



### LITERATURE for Sale

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

#### TITLE

Bromeliads for the Contemporary Garden Bromeliads: A Cultural Manual (Rev. ed. 2007) Bromeliad Hybrids 1: Neoregelias Bromeliads Under the Mango Tree Bromeliad Cultivation Notes Growing Bromeliads – 3rd Ed. by BSA

AUTHOR	PRICE
Andrew Steens	\$20.00
BSI	\$ 6.00
Margaret Paterson	\$25.00
John Catlan	\$10.00
Lyn Hudson	\$10.00
	\$20.00

(member price)

# 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

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### <u>'Albino' Pups</u>

Many of us have seen this at least once in our collections. It can be a curiosity but will rarely thrive. Here *Billbergias* 'Louise' and 'Ralph Graham French' have very broad white variegations and lost most of their chlorophyll. Whilst kept



on the mother plant they may grow and even flower, but because of the lack of chlorophyll, they will likely not survive if removed from the mother plant.



