

# ***Far North Coast Bromeliad Study Group N.S.W.***

Study Group meets the third Thursday of each month  
Next meeting 15th November 2012 at 11 a.m.

Venue: PineGrove Bromeliad Nursery  
114 Pine Street Wardell 2477  
Phone (02) 6683 4188

Discussion: October 2012

General show & tell

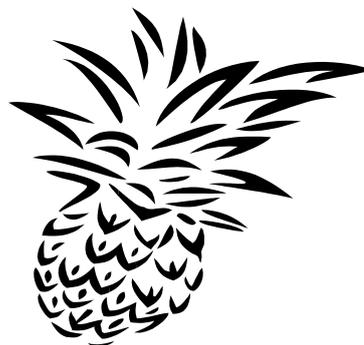
Photosynthesis 3

Editorial Team:

Don Beard

Ross Little & Helen Clewett

[pinegrovebromeliads@bigpond.com](mailto:pinegrovebromeliads@bigpond.com)



## **Meeting 20th September 2012**

The meeting commenced at 11:23am, with all being welcomed by Ross and Trish including 35 members together with a number of newcomers and a visitor. Apologies were received from seven members. On this day, Bill Morris celebrated his 85th birthday. Congratulations again Bill, however this time, it is in relation to your longevity.

### **General Business**

Trish spoke of Ross's attendance at the Bromeliad Society of N.S.W.'s dispersal sale of some of its library books, newsletters, journals, and various odds and ends. Ross was able to acquire on behalf of the FNCBSG(NSW) a wonderful collection of these items, which of course is a valuable asset, with many of the documents out of print and unavailable. Documents acquired include newsletters and journals from societies all over the place such as, The Central Coast, The Hunter District, Gold Coast, Cairns, Queensland, Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast, and the BSI. Of special interest is a collection of 'Bromeletter' starting at Vol.1, No.1, May-June, 1963. Please note in Vol.1, No.2 there is an article on *Billbergia distachia* by Bill Morris.

Some of the newsletters/journals are incomplete, but with the help of a few friends of Ross's and the group, it is feasible that the newsletters etc. can be made all but complete. This then makes the resource even more valuable. Examples of the books obtained include 'Blooming Bromeliads', 'Grande' magazine, Kramer's book 'The Horticulturists Guide to a Houseplant of Unparalleled Beauty', three books by Victoria Padilla etc.

Odds and ends include boxes of photographs, satchels of newspaper clippings, and attention grabbers such as a gavel and a bell, something which won't go astray with this lot.

Once the documents are catalogued, stamped, repaired etc., they will be available to the general membership, from the library. To this end, assistance will be sought from the membership.

The membership voted unanimously to reimburse Ross for his excellent purchases and to express its thanks by way of acclamation. Well done Ross.

Some discussion was held as to whether or not the 2012 Christmas party should be held at the December 20th meeting. It would appear that the general consensus was to do so, however it was not altogether clear and maybe more discussion is needed and a final decision taken at the October meeting.

Ross mentioned that the FNCBSG(NSW) would supply and pay for the barbecue meat and soft drinks for the Christmas party, and that members would be required to bring a plate of nibbles. Please check the list to see what sort of food members are bringing.

It was also decided that funding would be available for PineGrove to supply a number of quality broms for the Christmas draw. Members can supplement the draw with their plants if they wish. Please ensure any plant you bring is one of sufficient quality, that you would be happy to keep it and show it yourself.

Decisions were made on the timing for sales of plants, potting mix, fertilizer, pots etc., for the borrowing of library books, voting in competitions and judging, and also the meeting starting time and luncheon break (see separate sheet). Members should take their turn in assisting with the above sales etc. as well as cleaning and tidying the kitchen and meeting areas at the end of each meeting.

Thank you to all members who brought plants and participated in the raffle. It made \$143 this month.

Bank balance prior to the meeting was \$848.

Ross suggested the FNCBSG(NSW) join the Australian Bromeliad Society at a cost of approximately \$20 per annum. This will give the group six newsletters per year. Members agreed.

### **Members' Show and Tell**

Dawn introduced a plant from Norma's garden for identification. The leaves were pinkish brown with white bands on the outside, and spotted yellow green inside. Flowers with blue petals and pink bracts. The plant was a *Billbergia*, but even Bill Morris could take the identification no further. The plant grows under dry conditions and in full sun.

Ross showed a brom which had been incorrectly labelled as *Aechmea nudicaulis*. On flowering the plant proved to be a *Quesnelia imbricata*. Because of the similar flower spikes this plant is sometimes confused with *Quesnelia humilis*, and *Quesnelia indecora*, but the totally different leaves separate them. *Q. indecora* has longer more serrated leaves, *Q. imbricata* has shorter fatter finely spinose leaves in a sub-cylindric rosette, and *Q. humilis* has even shorter and broader leaves. All three can display the typical *Ae. nudicaulis* thumb print and all three can handle sun or shade.

Dave showed a Tillandsia bought in the Ballina markets for \$3.00 which needed identification. Generally the thinking was that it was a *Tillandsia bergeri*, even though this plant had darker blue flowers than *Till. bergeri* normally has. In addition *Till. bergeri* usually needs the temperature to fall below 5°C in order for it to bloom. The plant is definitely in the *Till. tenuifolia / aeranθος / bergeri* group and it may well be a *Till. bergeri* hybrid.

Meg on her trip to Queensland has spotted an interesting product called Crown 225 SL. This is a systemic insecticide which works well on scale, and appears not to kill frogs. Mixed with water only a small amount is required. It is sold by Garden City Plastics in Queensland, but it is relatively expensive.

Ross mentioned that last weekend was the Woodburn Orchid Show with a section for bromeliads. Of interest was the fact that Laurie took out first prize for Tillandsias with a *Till. aeranθος* clump, Helen was runner up with *Till. 'Cotton Candy'*. Ross took out first prize with his own hybrid, *Vr. 'Broadway'*, Laurie was runner up with a *Vr. fosteriana*. Congratulations to all involved.

Ross gave a closely watched demonstration on how to pup and plant offshoots from a variety of broms. He started with a *Orthophytum vagans* showing, after superfluous leaves have been removed, how they can be cut into sections and re-potted. Be sure to add fertilizer and a label. Please keep the cuttings the right way up, and note the cut off stumps will re-shoot. Even dead looking branches can be made into cuttings along with the healthy trunk section. Keep the cuttings with some leaves attached. Some cuttings can be laid on the ground as there is a chance they will also shoot.

A slightly nastier specimen was pupped next...*Orthophytum* 'Blaze' (*O. vagans* X *O. navoides*). This can be done relatively easily for the pups break off readily when at a suitable size for removal. When they are worked from underneath easy access is obtained. The pups can then be potted, fertilized, watered and labelled. The question was asked of Ross as to why the fertilizer is not pre-added to his potting mix. He replied that different broms had different needs and hence feeding requirements, and also if mixed with his 6m<sup>3</sup> bulk mix the fertilizer would wash out with rain as it takes him quite some time to use all this mix.

A clump of *Neoregelias* containing an old mother with two nice young plants was the next in line. The clump was taken from the pot with the old mother (not required for more pups) being twisted off or cut off. The two young plants were then cleaned up and cut between the two, each keeping a very good root base for maximum growth. Both were potted, fed, watered and labelled.

Ross next demonstrated an 'upper pupper' which he had originally as a seed batch labelled as *Vriesea elata*. Another incorrect name as the plant after flowering was clearly a hybrid. This was one of the few mothers which had two pups, the majority of mothers produced only a single pup. For this plant, all pups occur high in the plant axils, near the flower spike. Firstly Ross took the plant from the pot and stripped the dead leaves and the basal leaves until the pups were exposed. This doesn't leave much mother, but enabled Ross to cut down through the mother without snapping off the pups and still retain some good roots.

Some of these plants' flower spikes have been removed early in an attempt to encourage more pupping in these reluctant puppers. Ross also pointed out that *Vr. elata* types, were continuous flowerers and after about eight or nine generations of flowers, a trunk starts to develop. This trunk can also develop pups.

The demonstration plant showed sign of root mealy which would be treated with Disulfoton, Rogor or Malathion.

For pups with long or moderate size stolons, the pup can be cut off leaving sufficient stolon for potting or mounting. Little or no damage can be done to the plant. This is the easiest pup removal of all.

Some months ago Dawn had brought in a *Tillandsia inopinata* to have the pups removed. At the time the pups were considered too small. Now they were a good size too remove without too much difficulty. With a sharp knife the plants were pried out and cut at the same time, these were now suitable for potting or could be mounted. As with all newly potted pups and plants for that matter, don't forget to feed, water and label.

## **Wally Berg Award of Excellence to Derek Butcher - 2012**

Congratulations to Derek Butcher the 2012 recipient of the Wally Berg Award. We should also consider some congratulations to Derek's wife Margaret for all her assistance she has afforded him over the many years. As they say "behind every man there is a good woman".



This award is presented at the Bromeliad Society International Conference held every two years. It was formulated in 1999 to honour the late Wally Berg (1927 - 2000) of Sarasota, Florida, USA. A ad hoc committee was formed to define the criteria to be used in selecting potential recipients of the award. A set of seven criteria were approved by the BSI Board with a minimum of four needing to be met by the recipient. Wally Berg died on 26th, March, 2000. The BSI Board considered that a fitting tribute at the imminent World Bromeliad Conference in San Francisco would be to present the first Award posthumously and also to Dorothy Berg for her team support in Wally's achievements.

Taken from: [www.bsi.org/bsi\\_info/awards/wally\\_berg.html](http://www.bsi.org/bsi_info/awards/wally_berg.html)



### *Vriesea elata* (Baker) L.B. Smith

Photo — J. Kent

This elegant *Vriesea*, growing as an epiphyte in the rainforests of Colombia, may be found in various locations ranging in altitudes from 3800 to 7500 feet.

It is a large plant, as its name implies, with an inflorescence reaching up to 3 feet and green, strap-shaped leaves measuring 2½ to 3 feet in length and 2 inches broad at the middle. The foliage is thin, flexible, and subglabrous.

*Vriesea elata* was first named by Baker in 1888, who classified it as a tillandsia, as did Mez, and it was not until 1955 that it was rightly put into the genus *Vriesea* by Dr. Lyman B. Smith.

Although it is rarely found in collections, it has been brought home by collectors and is listed in the trade.

(VP, BSI Journal 1978 V28(2) p96)

**x Biltanthus** by Derek Butcher 9 / 2012

Some may say they have never heard of this nothogenus and yet it has been around since 1947 but nobody alerted the Bromeliad Cultivar Registrar. Recently Alan Herndon of Florida and myself have been discussing the advantage of having many of the old catalogues in digital form and perhaps be part of the BSI archives. These days it is easy to do via a scanner and pdf. Ever since the Bromeliad Cultivar Register was published in 1998 I have pondered over the references quoted because I never believed I would ever be able to actually see these when they were old catalogues. When they referred to botanical publications I was able to research and translate many only to find in some cases wrong information had been interpreted and in others it only referred to a plant being in a certain exhibition and thus worthless!

My contribution to the cause was mainly catalogues from Australia whereas Alan was able to supply some of Roehrs Catalogues from New Jersey, USA. We have grown *Neoregelia* 'Roehr's Best' for many years in Australia so I was curious to find out something about its origins. We did not find this plant but did find out that its spelling should be 'Roehrs's Best'.

Anyway, my wife, Margaret, was looking over my shoulder and said "What is a Biltanthus?"

First I contacted Jason Grant who was one of the authors of 'An Annotated catalogue of generic names of the Bromeliaceae' in Selbyana 19(1): 1998 and he said 'Argh'. I contacted the IPNI (International Plant Names Index) and they said 'Valid'!

This was what all the fuss was about, because under ICBN (International Code of Botanical Nomenclature) Rules, the first validly-published new bigeneric genus name must be accepted.

"*Biltanthus beuckeri* (*Billbergia* and *Cryptanthus* hybrid) green mottled bronze, narrow pointed foliage. \$1.00 to \$1.50"

This means that the following disappears:

**x*Cryptbergia*** Anon., Bull. Bromeliad Soc. 2: 72. 1952.

Parent genera: *Cryptanthus* Otto & A. Dietr., Allg. Gartenzeitung 4: 298. 17 Sep 1836 and *Billbergia* Thunb., Pl. bras. 3: 30. 5 Jun 1821.

To be replaced by:

**x*Biltanthus*** Exotics, Catalogue of Julius Roehrs Company, March 1, 1947

Parent genera: *Billbergia* Thunb., Pl. bras. 3: 30. 5 Jun 1821. and *Cryptanthus* Otto & A. Dietr., Allg. Gartenzeitung 4: 298. 17 Sep 1836.

Now for the name changes that will affect you when writing labels or writing articles. The first one is undoubtedly x*Cryptbergia* 'Mead' which will become x*Biltanthus* 'Beucker' because 'beuckeri' was the first name used! Are we talking

about the same plant? I think so, because by the name it would suggest one of the parents was *Cryptanthus beuckeri* and the favourite *Billbergia* of Theodore Mead was *Billbergia nutans*. There is a very long article in *Phytologia* 30(5): 292-295. 1975 by L B Smith and R W Read where they discussed the nothogenus *xCryptbergia*. To me it is a very surprising article to be in *Phytologia* because it was correcting misnomers in the Bromeliad Society Bulletin and was directed at bromeliad growers, not botanists. If you are interested in what was said this is on the Bromeliad Cultivar Register (<http://registry.bsi.org/>) under *xCryptbergia* Notes. What is interesting is that in the book 'Bromeliads in Cultivation' by R G and C Wilson (1963) we see "Billtanthus" (sic) mentioned, but nothing more. Perhaps they were aware that an opposition nursery, Roehrs Company, were using this name but did not disclose it. In any event L B Smith and R W Read did not follow up on this reference. As for identity, I leave you to decide whether the photo of *xCryptbergia* 'Mead' in *J Brom Soc.*27(5): 217. 1977 is correct. To give an idea of shape and size I show a copy taken from the Exotics catalogue 1947 – see B30. Thanks to Donald Beard, of New South Wales, Australia we are able to show, for the first time, what this bigeneric looks like.

Other changes are:

*xCryptbergia* 'Curly Locks' now *xBiltanthus* 'Curly Locks'

*xCryptbergia* 'Fantasy' now *xBiltanthus* 'Fantasy'

*xCryptbergia* 'Goodale' now *xBiltanthus* 'Goodale'

*xCryptbergia* 'Hazel Quilhot' now *xBiltanthus* 'Hazel Quihot'

*xCryptbergia* 'Hombre' now *xBiltanthus* 'Hombre'

*xCryptbergia* 'Pinkie' now *xBiltanthus* 'Pinkie'

*xCryptbergia* 'Pinkinskie' now *xBiltanthus* 'Pinkinskie'

*xCryptbergia* 'Red Burst' now *xBiltanthus* 'Red Burst'

*xCryptbergia* 'Resplendent' now *xBiltanthus* 'Resplendent'

*xCryptbergia* 'Tiger Eye' now *xBiltanthus* 'Tiger Eye'

*xCryptbergia* 'Topaz' now *xBiltanthus* 'Topaz'

**Breaking News** – Paul Butler of Florida who is doing a biography of Theodore L. Mead has just sent me a copy of a page from Mead's notebooks of April 1926. We read *B. nutans* x *C. beuckeri* germinated and survived.  
(*B. nutans* x *B. zebrina*) x *C. beuckeri* germinated and survived.  
The only problem here is to decide which of the two crossings survived to become *xBiltanthus* 'Beucker'.

You may also note that *Billbergia nutans* x *B. zebrina* has never been registered and I wonder whether this is the origin of 'Theodore L Mead' when you consider what would distinguish it from *Billbergia nutans* x *B. decora*, the said parents of *B. Windii*'.



Ques. ??? - Marie Essery  
1st Open and Judges Choice



Guzmania 'Sunnytime'



*Tillandsia tectorum*  
1st Novice - Jeanette Henwood



*Acanthostachys strobilacea*



*Billbergia 'Murial Waterman'*



*Aechmea maculata*



*Aechmea lamarchei*



*Aechmea* 'Brillig'



*Acanthostachys pitcairnioides*



*Aechmea* 'Red Bands'



*Aechmea triangularis*



*Biltanthus* 'Beucker' and floral detail/petal colour



*Ques. edmundoi* var. *rubrobracteata*

Photo's supplied by: Ross Little, Don Beard, Jan Mountford and Derek Butcher.

## ***Aechmea bromeliifolia*, 'Brillig', 'Red Bands' & allied hybrids**

OR

### **Get to know your *Aechmea maculata*!**

by Derek Butcher

In 1986 Geoff Lawn attended the Bromeliad Conference in New Orleans. In Bromeleter 25(2):15. 1987 we read, "Depending on the source, another winner is variously labelled *Ae. triangularis* 'Red Bands' or *Ae. maculata* or *Ae. triangularis* x *maculata*, its crossbanding more pronounced towards the rosette base."

We know that the plants that resemble *Aechmea bromeliifolia* or the *Aechmea* sub-genus *Macrochordion* are difficult to identify. One has only to read Harry Luther's comments in J. Brom. Soc. 48(6): 244-5. 1998 to find out why!

*Aechmea triangularis* has blue flowers and *Ae. maculata* has yellow flowers so why the various linking to 'Red Bands'. Since 1986 we have had the Bromeliad Cultivar Register published and we find that *Ae. 'Red Bands'* seems to be a Seaborn hybrid of *maculata* and *triangularis*. I quote from the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry 1998: "cv of *maculata* x *triangularis* – formula from verbal commentary and diagnosis by Harry Luther in 1996 – sometimes known as 'Seaborn's Red Bands' – Medium upright rosette with sharply tapered pale grey green leaves distinctly marked on outer leaf surface with red maroon thin cross bands – originally thought to be a form of *Ae. triangularis* – Thelma O'Reilly attributes the cultivar to a sport of *triangularis* for Alice Quiros which was refined and given to Seaborn – the cultivar is listed in 1977 Kent as *triangularis* (banded leaves) and Belton in 1983 as *triangularis* (red bands) – Bromeliad Treasury 1983 said, "New hybrid adds a touch of color to *triangularis* – inflorescence is same as *triangularis* except flowers are blue-green."

We know that a yellow petalled plant crossed with a blue petalled plant can give odd coloured petals in the progeny. In this case blue-green is quoted but in my experience the plants I have seen seem to vary between a dirty yellow to blue green to what I call a dirty grey. BUT never the bright yellow you associate with a true *Ae. maculata*.

In about the same period as the catalogues quoted above, namely 1984, I saw in California what I thought to be an "*Ae. bromeliifolia*" but with beautiful cross banding. Paul Isley said he thought it was *Ae. maculata* and this name remained on the tag until Harry Luther's article in 1998 as above. The plant keys out to be an *Ae. bromeliifolia* with its very short flowers – in fact the sepals are usually only 5mm long - except for the leaf markings. This sort of leaf markings is not mentioned in any of the descriptions of any of the species in this group! Even if we look at *Ae. maculata* we find that only spots on the leaf sheath are mentioned! Because of its unique banding it should have a cultivar name and I'll be calling it *Ae. 'Crossbands'*.

Could this plant have been a parent to 'Red Bands' and supplied the leaf markings?

Now to the mid 1990's in Australia when Peter Franklin and I discussed a plant we had each got at separate times from Bill Morris. It had *Ae. maculata*? on the label but Peter and I could not get past the greyish flowers. We were almost going

to call the plant 'The Old Grey Mare' but we chanced upon *Ae.* 'Red Bands'. We wondered what colour of the petals were on the *Ae.* 'Red Bands' in Bird Rock Tropicals Catalogue in 2001 because ours were not really blue green. Pam Koide could not remember so we were not much more forward. No other similar hybrids had been reported with *Ae. triangularis* as a parent so we felt we must be looking at 'Red Bands'. If there is anyone in California that has this plant we would like to hear more about it because of the confusion about its creation!

Now to another hybrid from this group namely 'Brillig' which seems to had a similar stormy past and similar identity problems. Peter Franklin got a plant (PAF1105) called 'Brillig' from Bill Morris and which luckily still had CJ 3/84 2/86 suggesting it came from Carol Johnson of Pineapple Place Florida. Reference to the Bromeliad Cultivar Register shows its parents to be *maculata* x *bromeliifolia* var. *albobracteata*. On page 207 in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society Vol 33 No.5. 1983 we read "has strongly banded foliage which is apple green and red brown (in other words apple green foliage with red brown bands). The pink scape bracts are banded as on the foliage. The inflorescence is cylindrical and stands 20-25cm above the foliage. The yellow flowers turn black as they age."

Alas, the scape bracts are not banded as expected. Peter also obtained an *Ae. maculata* (PAF 1229) from another source in New South Wales and this turned out to be the same as the 'Brillig'! But where do the leaf markings come from? We do know that Pineapple Place did grow an *Ae. bromeliifolia* (Banded form). Could it be the case of foreign pollen?! By the way, you do not identify *Ae. maculata* just by the spotting on the leaf sheath but rather on the bright yellow petals, the sepals at least 8mm long and the retuse floral bracts ( a 'v' cut at the tip). It is also interesting that on the very page in Bromeleter where Geoff Lawn was expounding the virtues of 'Red Bands' in 1987 'Brillig' was on offer in the Seed bank! 'Brillig' is an alleged F1 hybrid and its F2 generation would have produced a motley crew including throwbacks to *Ae. maculata*!! Is anyone still growing seedlings from 1987 that do NOT have banding?! Did they wonder if they were wrongly named?

Alas there are no original photographs in the Bromeliad Register for either 'Red Bands' where the detail was gleaned well after the event with conflicting information or 'Brillig' where the photo has been lost.

We know that *Ae. maculata* is in Australia because it was grown for years as *Ae. lamarchei* 'Rubra'. Harry Luther's article in 1998 prompted me to this. It may also be grown in its non-rubra form! Remember it has notched floral bracts not long papery ones as in *Ae. lamarchei* and has bright yellow petals.

We think that *Ae.* 'Red Bands' is in Australia – just look for an odd coloured petal. If your plant has this then please change the name.

We surmise *Ae.* 'Brillig' is in Australia but there will also be seedlings around to cloud the issue.

Editors Note:

Most species in this group are difficult to identify even at the best of times, we know even the experts have differing opinions finding it hard to agree. Add in the hybrids created within this group and the confusion could be compounded. Best practice: always retain your label regardless, until proven wrong.

## **HOW FAR DO YOU GO** by Joy Clark

I've been a bromeliad grower for around 25 years and have acquired quite a variety of plants through my obsessive buying during that time. About four years ago I made the big decision to downsize to more manageable numbers and concentrate mainly on Tillandsias. The "must have" bug once again took hold and I have been steadily acquiring a good collection.

Recently, whilst scrolling through e-bay Tills, I was taken by the sheer loveliness of *Tillandsia andreana*. I bought two with only a moment's hesitation and THEN decided to look up the growing conditions for this plant. We live north west of Sydney where we can have temperature ranges from -7° in winter, to +45° in summer has presented problems for me in growing many bromeliads and this tillandsia which comes from the Columbian cloud forests with a range in temps around 4° to 35°, was clearly going to be a challenge.

A visit to Bunning's secured their home, a seed raising box, with a handful of sphagnum moss, a small mount and a decorative frog they now reside in various sunny places in my house for winter and will live outside in summer with some judicious misting during the hotter days. I am hoping they will acclimatise a little but I can't see them ever living permanently in the protected houses with the rest of my collection.

They require a bit more of my time, but...

So far so good!



## **Bromeliads Indoors** by W. B. Charley

The constantly increasing vogue to bring outdoor plants indoors has its faults! Nature never intended plants of any kind to live in a sunless, artificial position. Many so called indoor plants are grown for a start in a hothouse and become frail and miserable when brought, with great hope, into a room and folk are disappointed and sometimes folk give up the idea. 90% of such 'would-be' gardeners know little, or nothing, about the care of different kinds of plants which they buy.

It is natural for a flat dweller to want something green and growing: the soil and growing things are so closely related with our nature. How, then, can such people be successful ?

Bromeliads are the answer, for no plant will take so much for so little care. But even these, we must admit, will not be happy if they are to be continually cooped up in a room. How then can we help them to give of their best ?

The answer is simple:

Several colourful broms are purchased from a reliable grower, where they have been strengthened by good feeding, correct potting mix and with freedom from vermin. We are told that, sooner or later, they will bear a lovely flower spike. These plants are not just left in one place, but are moved from a window sill in strong light to a filtered light position, they are put out in light rain whenever possible so that dust may be washed off to brighten up the foliage and also that the pores in the leaves can be freed and to allow Nature's watering to do its work which cannot be done by hand watering. The potting mix is to be kept moist, but not soggy, the tanks in the plants to be kept full of water and once a week, in warmer weather, a weak soluble fertilizer sprayed over the entire plant some into the tanks and into the soil.

Soluble fertilizer is procurable at any store, use at half recommended strength.

The ideal way to have happy plants indoors is to have several plants in a bush house, or outside under trees and to move one or more of the choicest plants indoors for short periods, thus getting healthy plants always available for display, later these can be changed over for others in spike.

If a little care is used, no disappointing die back will occur and plants will be happy.

With most plants other than Bromeliads, one cannot leave them for long periods unwatered while the owner is away - these must be put in a bath, or some other convenient method used for their care. Broms, if thoroughly wet and their tanks filled with water can be left for a couple of weeks unattended. This is why Broms are the most desirable plants of all, apart from their amazing beauty, for indoor growing.

Reprinted from: Bromeletter Vol.1, No. 3, September - October 1963.

**Acanthostachys** by Carol M. Johnson, Florida, U.S.A.

The genus *Acanthostachys* (a - cantho - steak - is, meaning thorny spike) was described by Klotzsch in 1840 and amended by W. Rauh & W. Barthlott (1982).

There are two species only: *strobilacea* (corn like fruit)  
*pitcairnioides* (resembling pitcairnia)

With the impressive--sounding name *Acanthostachys strobilacea*, this plant should be an outstanding beauty in form and size. It is none of these. The long, often to three-foot long leaves can be made to turn rosy red in full sun, but with ordinary culture they remain a dull grey - green. The blooms appear in the leaf axils. They are approximately the size and shape of a small pine cone and have orange bracts and small yellow blooms. This plant is nearly always self-fertile and the relatively large seed germinates readily. It is best grown in a hanging basket and allowed to clump, which it does freely.

Careful ! The leaves are well armed and the long, thin leaves tend to tangle.

The plant is native to eastern Brazil, Paraguay and northern Argentina and has been in cultivation since before 1850. It withstands extremely rigorous conditions including drought, cold, low light and full sun. It does not sound like a winner, but it maintains a steady popularity with collectors and exhibitors. I recall several bromeliad shows where it has appeared on the head table.

I use a sandy, fairly heavy potting mix including pebbles or turkey grit, keep the plant under-potted and grow it in full sun for best colour. It grows with little or no water. Fertilizer would make the leaves greener and longer so I don't apply any.

*Acanthostachys pitcairnioides* was first described by Mez, and in 1982 W. Rauh & W. Barthlott amended the description of the genus and the two species. The newer species is being seen more often in collections and in shows. It was pictured on the back cover of the Journal (1989), but the picture does not do the plant justice. In our Florida full sun, the leaves turn dark red with a lacquered shine. The prominent black teeth and small, brilliant blue flowers at the base of the leaves make a striking and beautiful contrast.

This species forms clumps very easily, it is about 15" tall and is a desirable addition to any bromeliad collection. Culture is the same as for *Acan. Strobilacea*. It is a shame they could not have simplified the names of both members of the genus, although they are descriptive.

(The type location is not known but Dr. Rauh's description was based on a specimen collected in Domingos Martins, Espirito Santo, Brazil. In his table of comparative characters the obvious differences are in the upright nature of the leaves of *Acan. pitcairnioides* and the short--stemmed inflorescence. - Ed.)

Reprinted from: Journal of the Bromeliad Society Inc. Jan / Feb 1991.

## **From Around the Shade House**

### ***Neoregelia concentrica* not acanthocrater**

Keeping up to date with name changes is always difficult unless you regularly receive Newsletters etc. with current information. Recently I have seen another very old name surface for the second time in as many years, unfortunately it seems to take some people a very long time to fall into line with these changes, this change being 'Neo. acanthocrater' which never was a recognized name. Originally described and named in 1831 as *Tillandsia concentrica* by Vellozo, it changed in 1884 to *Nidularium concentricum* then to *Karatas acanthocrater* later in 1884, finally as we know it today to *Neoregelia concentrica* L.B. Smith 1934. Therefore if you have a plant with 'Neo. acanthocrater' on it's label PLEASE change it to *Neoregelia concentrica*.

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For those of you who collect the nasty Bromelia genus your variegated form of *Bromelia pinguin* formerly known as *Bromelia serra forma variegata* is registered on the BCR as *Bromelia* 'Que Sera'.

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Another query that surfaced this week was a plant called Vr. Pinegrove Giant. If you have a plant tagged as such change it to Vr. *fosteriana* with a notation of 'Pinegrove Giant'. This plant was grown from seed by Bruce Dunstan and also by PineGrove from seed collected several years ago off a rather large form of Vr. *fosteriana* to which Bruce simply added the notation 'Pinegrove Giant' to his labels only to indicate which form the Vr. *fosteriana* seedlings were from. At this stage this is not a registered name and should remain on your label only as a reminder notation, not as a part of the official name.

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Yet again Vr. Slow Lane has surfaced, this one first came to our attention with Meg querying an e-bay listing with the seller offering no better explanation to this naming other than to quote parentage which was that of Vr. 'RoRo'. After much discussion over several years, examination of living material comparing plants and inflorescences both here in Australia and the U.S. agreement was reached as to the accepted cultivars of the Vr. 'RoRo' and Vr. 'Highway Beauty' group. It's been decided, two names in use but not registered, these being 'Slow Lane' and 'Laser' should be investigated, if anybody has photos of either plant can they forward to our editors or to Geoff Lawn at [grlcomosus@bigpond.com](mailto:grlcomosus@bigpond.com)

The *Vriesea* 'Highway Beauty' and *Vriesea* 'RoRo' article was printed in: FNCBSG NSW Newsletter, May 2012 with accompanying photo's on page 9. Journal of The Bromeliad Society (BSI) Vol 62 (1): Jan - Feb 2012.

### **Novice Popular Vote**

1st	Jeanette Henwood	<i>Tillandsia tectorum</i>
2nd	Kay Daniels	<i>Aechmea recurvata</i>

### **Open Popular Vote**

1st	Marie Essery	<i>Quesnelia edmundoi</i> var. <i>rubrobracteata</i> ???
2nd	Shane Weston	<i>Vriesea</i> 'Manoa Valley'
3rd	Carol Buckman	<i>Acanthostachys strobilacea</i>
	David Lewis-Hughes	<i>Vriesea</i> 'Forrest'

### **Judge's Choice**

1st	Marie Essery	<i>Quesnelia edmundoi</i> var. <i>rubrobracteata</i> ???
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### **Comments from the growers:**

Marie's rather unusual *Ques. edmundoi* var. *rubrobracteata* was grown under 70% shade cloth. This is an eye-catching plant which may in fact be a hybrid. Shane's *Vr.* 'Manoa Valley' is a David Shiigi hybrid from Hawaii, this attractive hybrid is not common in Australia. The colours are lighter and closer to the base of the leaves than is normal, and the plant likes high light.

Jeanette's *Till. tectorum* has recently flowered for the first time in 10 years after trimming and being relocated to Wardell from Brisbane. The plant is not particularly furry as most *Till. tectorum* are usually densely trichomed.

Kay's *Ae. recurvata* had past its best in recent days, but the pink colouration was still present. These grow well in full all day sun which intensifies the colour.

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Marie's plant was a show stopper, however, something didn't quite seem right with it, the name that was on the tag is of a plant with red bracts and flowers with blue petals (photo p.9). This odd looking plant of Marie's has orange bracts and flowers with yellow petals, it is a much taller grower than *Ques. edmundoi* var. *rubrobracteata*. So far all investigations into the origins of this plant have drawn a blank at this stage with only suggestions as to a possible hybridiser, this lead as yet to be followed. Another similar looking plant turned up this past week on Planet Bromeliad now offering another lead to follow.

Hopefully somebody may recognise this beautiful plant and offer some further information of it's identity and give some clues to it's origin and parentage. Is there a possible link to *Ques. edmundoi* var. *intermedia* ?

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