

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

Study Group meets the third Thursday of each month

Next meeting March 21st 2019 at 11 a.m.

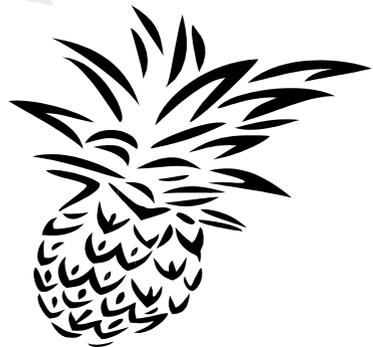
Venue: PineGrove Bromeliad Nursery
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Discussion: February 2019
General Discussion

Editorial Team:

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Meeting 17th January 2019

The meeting was opened at approximately 11.00 am
The 14 members were welcomed.
A total of one apology was received.

General Business

The Newsletter was handed out by Ross and reviewed which gave rise to a discussion about our Popular Vote sections of 2018 which we would like to think has been resolved. Hopefully we can move forward this year 2019, with more involvement from all our members in each section and show us what you can grow and also your flare with some inspirational decorative displays. Several topics for the year were discussed which we will endeavour to attract some guest speakers for.

The following is reprinted from FNCBSG NSW February 2013 p.3 to remind one and all how the points tally is arrived at at the end of the voting year:

“For the last few years the competitions have been run on a points system of 1st (3pts), 2nd (2pts), and 3rd (1pt). The membership voted a new change, with 1pt being awarded for entry into the competition. The new system being 1st (4pts), 2nd (3pts), 3rd (2pts), and not placed but competing (1pt). Remember frequency of competing is important to the overall result.”

Our member attendance has dwindled over recent years and we need to work at attracting more members. This decline is partly due to natural attrition of people moving on to other interests having learnt as much as they needed from our Group e.g. how to remove pups, type of potting mix, where to grow - sun, shade etc. 2019 is to be Membership drive year, Ross has been handing out flyers at the Markets, Keryn has offered to hang a poster on her local Notice Board, by doing this hopefully we can encourage more people to join our Group. We would also like to see many of our past members attending again being back on their feet after health and family loss issues.

Everyone is welcome to our meetings and join in the discussions, and even though we are all different, we are all Bromeliad enthusiasts - nothing more, nothing less.

Enjoy your meetings remembering correct identification and naming of your plants is important. However these are not everyone's ideals and we are not here to enforce our ideals of any kind or any matter onto everyone, we are here to help each other learn.

Show, Tell and Ask!

John led a discussion on Bromeliad seeds explaining his preferred methods to store them being in cloth bags or paper bags and not foil or plastic sealed bags. He explained that seeds will attract moisture when stored in plastic bags due to condensation. Ross spoke of how many people had said that Bromeliad seed only lasted 3 months and that after this time germination was low to unlikely. However it has been found that some fresh seed will keep for up to 12 months and longer if kept in a dark, dry place.

John spoke of some wild collected seed that has had several rain fall periods or heavy dew on them that when this happens it lowers the protein level each time in the seed thus weakening the seed for possible germination. Therefore seed collecting can have unknowns, is it new/fresh seed or older, the sooner seed is sown the better the chances are of success. Ross mentioned that if the seed looks fresh (no mould) it may still be okay and worth trying, you never know your luck.

John also discussed some *Puya raimondii* seed he collected in Peru which was heavily infested with weevils. After carefully cleaning it he brought some of the seed home but only got 10 to germinate all of which died after a short time – possibly because it is too humid in our climate. John told us that in their natural habitat *P. raimondii* only grow above the tree line that is 4200 mts to 4400 mts. Being much cooler at this altitude it is understandable that John's seedlings most likely died from heat stress and our high humidity.

John also brought along to show us a clump of *Billbergia portearia* which are siblings of the *Billbergia* Ross showed us at our December meeting with its spectacular watch spring, green petals. (notes FNCBSG Newsletter Jan. 2019). John said that he had thrown out several of these plants because they had not flowered for him and therefore didn't realize just how spectacular they are. What a bummer!!!

John showed us the stump of *Neoregelia* 'Shelldance' which he told the Group he had laid on its side because it was not pupping and had flowered, it now has some 20 pups on it. When laid on its side, the plant thinks it is about to die and will pup like mad. John also advised that if you fertilise 'Shelldance' it will lose its colour and go green. However, Ross also told us that by fertilising it, it will also pup quite well having removed up to 45 pups from one plant, a good mother. Larger pup reproduction from *Neo*. 'Shelldance' has been heard of too.

John had a busy day today as he also brought in a small green leaf, brown spotted plant and asked the Group what type of Bromeliad it was. He wanted to show the group how the leaves curled up once they died but Ross was busy cleaning it up for him by pulling off the dried leaves while John was talking. Ooops!! Luckily Ross identified it for him as *Vriesea racinae*. (photo p.5)

Sue and Dave both brought in a *Neoregelia* each for identification, no one knew to any certainty what each was so the advice was tag as Neo. hybrid unknown.

Keryn also brought in a *Neoregelia* for identification, which she thought was 'The Governor's Plea' or 'Hannibal Lector'. It is too large to be Hannibal Lector, so is more likely to be 'Governor's Plea', however, it could also be something else as it's quite large and dark for 'Governor's Plea' so is possibly Neo. 'Norman Bates'. As we often say if possible retrace the supply trail, ask the person the plant was acquired from. This is an issue we often hear of due to look-a-like plants being sold with-out name tags, guessing names isn't the best option either.

Ross showed us a plant that has been grown in too much shade and did not get enough sunlight. Instead of the plant being short and stout it was quite long and lanky with leaves stretching for light. When acquiring "new" to our collection Bromeliads we should ask:

Is the plant true to form?

Has it been growing in good light?

Buyer beware as sometimes a "new" plant may look totally different to one that already exists in ones collection. Poor growing or excess shade conditions can affect a plants appearance severely, note photo of *Aechmea recurvata* p.5. ►

Ross showed us *Neoregelia* 'Mad Allan', this was grown from seedlings he got from Alan Ladd. The inflorescence has lots of branching when it flowers rather than the normal *Neoregelia* simple, non branched inflorescence. Very few *Neoregelias* have a compound or branching inflorescence, which, in this case has probably/possibly been caused by having some *Aechmea fasciata* in its genes. This plant has spines whereas others from the same grex have entire leaves, no spines, which indicates the use of *Neoregelia* 'Deroose's Medusa' in its parentage, a spineless form of 'Meyendorffii'. The other parent was indicated to be *Neoregelia* 'Lila'. Ross was asking whether we thought this plant should be considered worthy of registration in the near future as what - ??? 'Mad Allan'. Should it be *Neoregelia* or *Neomea*, what do you think ? (article p.10)

Ross and John also said that Medusa (a green *Neoregelia* with a red centre) can be a problem plant because it gets cracking and splitting along the edges of the leaves and some piping/fluting/wrinkles often seen in *Ae. fasciata* is noted also.

Ross thanked Coral for the quick response to rewrite her article lost thanks to a computer crash. Also to Michelle for coming to the rescue with the new photos for Coral and e-mailing them through. Many of our members live considerable distances apart, approximately an hours drive from Coral's to the editors desk. So it was really appreciated when these two ladies who live near to each other didn't hesitate to help get Coral's article to print last month. Thank-you both.



'Alpie Alpaca'
by Helen Clewett



'Brommy Christmas'
by Drew Maywald



Aechmea recurvata grown in excess shade, causing its pups to stretch for light as mentioned on page 4. (discussion paragraph 3)



Tillandsia brachycaulos
grown by Helen Clewett



Vriesea racinae
shown by John Crawford

I Am New to Bromeliads

by Drew Maywald Dec. 2018

I got my first one in December 2017 when a friend gave me one. He had no idea what it was other than it was a Bromeliad. It was an *Aechmea fasciata*. In January 2018, my neighbour, Sonya, took me to a friend who breeds Bromeliads and to the Gold Coast Bromeliad Society. When I saw the wonderful range of colours and plants I was hooked. Originally I put all my Bromeliads in my front yard which improved it enormously. However, I was not content as my best bromeliads could only be enjoyed from the street, so I started to put Bromeliads in my back yard where I could enjoy them more every day. I decided to see if I could put Bromeliads on the retaining wall at the eastern end of my back patio. I built the retaining wall from Besser retaining blocks like the ones illustrated here.



The retaining wall is 7 metres long and 8 bricks high and not the prettiest thing to look at when you are having breakfast or entertaining.

I discovered that the big green shed (Bunnings) and the Orchid Den on the Gold Coast, had all sorts of brackets that I could use to display my Bromeliads. With



the outstanding help and advice that I have received from John Crawford, the rest is history, and I have transformed the wall into something my wife and I can enjoy every time we go out the back door.

Here are some photos of what the wall looked like today.

I keep moving and adding plants to the wall, and I have started to plant mini Bromeliads in the blocks as well, so it may look very different next week. At last count there were 65 Bromeliads on the wall, not counting the mini's, (over 25) but that could change tomorrow! The area gets the morning sun until around 11:00 am, and if a Bromeliad looks like it is not coping with that much sun I move it to another place on the wall.



My Bromeliad collection has grown and I have even set up a Bromeliad register so that I can record the names of all my Bromeliads, where and when I got them, how much they cost, where they are in my garden plus a photo of each one when I acquired it. I have very limited space in my yard so I have decided to add Bromeliads that add colour and character to the garden, but are attractive to me and include some not so well-known Bromeliads that can be difficult to come by, but give me great joy.



If anyone has any suggestions of lovely Bromeliads that can be added to my collection I would love to hear from you, or if you want more details about the Bromeliads on the retaining wall or in my collection send me an email.

My next project is to but that's another story!



Goudaea 'Sons of Tiger Tim'
1st Open John Crawford



Sincoraea 'Galactic Warrior'
1st Novice Drew Maywald



Tillandsia 'Corsa Corner'
1st Judges Choice Helen Clewett



Tillandsia leiboldiana
grown by John Crawford



'Too Hot to Handle'
1st Decorative John Crawford



Tillandsia straminea
1st tillandsioidea
Sue Mackay-Davidson



Neoregelia 'Gold Medal'
grown by Coral McAteer



Neoregelia 'Naomi Ceniza'
grown by Sue Mackay-Davidson



'A Cushion - Do Not Sit On'
shown by Trish Kelly



Tillandsia fasciculata
grown by Trish Kelly



Tillandsia inopinata
grown by Gary McAteer

What is a mule ?

by Derek Butcher July 2009

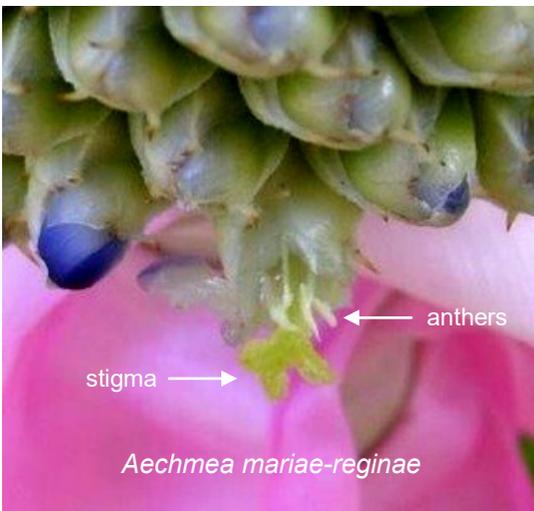
In the Journal of The Brom Soc International 55(2): 54-6. 2005 I wrote about bigeneric plants being mules but nobody took me up on the challenge in writing. I did receive anecdotal evidence but I was after something more 'scientific' The latest problem shows I must go into print again.

First let us look at the scenario. We know that an animal Mule or Hinny can have either non-functional male or non-functional female parts. In Bromeliaceae, things are a bit more complicated because most plants are monoecious (both sexes in the same floral bed!).

But there are exceptions. Let us take *Catopsis* which Lyman Smith treated as either monoecious **or** dioecious (functionally separate sexes) but Palaci has shown us that some species can be trioecious (monoecious **and** dioecious!). This had me asking questions which have so far gone unanswered. If the seed producer was dioecious would the seedlings be 50/50 male/female or 1/3 : 1/3 : 1/3 male/female/perfect? Let us also look at *Aechmea mariae-reginae* which is said to be dioecious and yet in the mid 1800's it seems a 'perfect' plant was painted and described! This is the sort of thing hybridists should be noting and commenting on.



Let us now look at bigenerics. We know that a generic hybrid has a lower pollen count which means that in the wild there is a greater chance of back-crossing with parental species in the vicinity. This does not happen with human intervention! A bigeneric hybrid would have even less pollen count and in many cases the sex parts are deformed. BUT are they functional either as ovule producers or pollen producers? This is also an area where hybridists seem shy to divulge findings. I have a feeling that even with a very low pollen count, fertilization can take place by backcrossing with parents involved in the same nothogenus.



Back to reality. In May 2009 when at PineGrove Nursery in northern New South Wales, I was shown a plant that had *Neoregelia* 'Lila' x *Neoregelia* 'Medusa' on the label with the quaint note that this plant had bigeneric traits – AND it did. There was no intention of the hybridist Allan Ladd, to register his creation although willing to put plants on to the market. This attitude is prevalent amongst hybridists around the world, not just Australia, but a problem for the Cultivar Registrar. Many times has a discarded hybrid been considered a good plant and grown by many Bromeliad growers and had to be 'grandfathered' into the system. Anyway, I was called in to adjudicate on a problem plant where the locals considered foreign pollen could well have been involved. The inflorescence was strongly compound. Why was it so?

Luckily there was also a N. 'Scarlet Charlotte' x N. 'Medusa' which meant that the common denominator was N. 'Medusa' and luckily there was a plant of this name handy for me to butcher the inflorescence. I must now mention there are two sorts of *Neoregelia* 'Medusa' – one by Hendrix which has spines and one sold by Deroose that does not have spines. The plant was typical *Neoregelia* but the alleged non-spined form. It had the leaf deformity of piping you often see in the spineless *Aechmea fasciata* whose origin is shrouded in mystery, which suggested it was involved somewhere.



This called for investigation: First Dennis Cathcart was able to advise that in their experience at Tropiflora this hybrid, when used as a parent, most times produced spineless progeny but never with compound inflorescence. The only real downside was the cracks and piping of the leaves which is exactly the problem with the spineless *Aechmea fasciata*. I suggested the possible involvement of this at bigeneric level to Reginald Deroose and his view was it was highly unlikely because, in his experience, bigenerics had malformed genitalia and could not be easily used in any further hybridising program. He said that

they had first obtained the spineless 'Meyendorffii' from Germany from the Orchid people, Gunther Gemmel. Because the Orchid hybrid system is based on greges obtained from the quoting of true parentage I was optimistic in getting some positive reply. Alas, they do not keep records from that long ago. So we are left to conjecture. Was this oddity caused by mutation at seed level, mutation as a mericlone, or just plain sporting, or a hybrid with a compound inflorescence *Neoregelia*, OR WAS it a bigeneric and then backcrossed. Because *Neoregelia* does contain both compound and simple inflorescence species I tried to get some opinion from *Neoregelia* taxonomists. We know that some *Aechmea* species can flower either simple or compound so why not *Neoregelia*. No one was prepared to make a comment.

Clearly *Neoregelia* 'Medusa' (Deroose) has genes that link to piping and entire leaves but where does the compound inflorescence come from.

Because of the typical x*Neomea* inflorescence we are calling:

(*Neoregelia* 'Lila' x *Neoregelia* 'Medusa') = x*Neomea* 'Mad Allan' (unreg)

(*N.* 'Scarlet Charlotte' x *N.* 'Medusa') = x*Neomea* 'Scarlet Ladd' (unreg)

Hybridist Allan Ladd and named by Ross Little.

By looking at the photos, both plants would be grown purely on the grounds of curiosity and would not constitute being in general circulation under the ICNCP rules. As such they will not be formally registered but strange happenings such as this should always be recorded.

If anyone is aware of similar happenings would you please advise the Registrar – Geoff Lawn – so that corrections can be made to the records.

Are there any other 'hidden' x*Neomea* out there ?



Ed: After 10 years of selections the colour has improved greatly since 2009.

BUT is it worth registering and what as, *Neoregelia* or *Neomea* or??

The naming of this hybrid 'Mad Allan' comes from the hybridiser going mad at the suggestion of foreign pollen being involved not his suggested parents.

Some Tips on Preparing Plants for Show

by Olive Trevor

Start now to select and groom your plants for the next show. Always select fairly mature plants with good shape, colour and markings. Select more than you intend to exhibit. You can reject those that don't reach a certain standard by the time the show arrives. Perhaps the rejects could be used for display plants.

Start by elevating those selected plants on upturned pots, bricks or other suitable stands above the other plants on the benches. They will get maximum light and will not be touched or shaded by other plants on the bench. In this position you can watch them closely. It will be easy for you to give them a quarter turn every few days to help them improve their shape or conformation. Examine the pot and re-pot in a similar size if it is marked or scruffy. Sometimes a different coloured pot can blend or contrast with the colour of the plant to some advantage. Pot into a larger pot if the plant is top heavy or out of proportion with the pot. Never do this at the last minute or your plant could be unstable. While you are re-potting the plant, remove any bottom leaves that are yellowing or marked. Sometimes the plant can be buried a little deeper to cover part of the stem or trunk, after you have removed leaves. Even if you are not re-potting, but just removing old leaves, a "top up" to cover the stem may be beneficial to the appearance of the plant. Trim the leaves if you wish, but this will have to be done again at the last minute to remove dead edges of the trim. Always copy the shape of one of the good leaves. A pair of very sharp scissors will be needed to do a good job. I have been told that Aloe vera rubbed on the cut will stop it from drying and leaving those tell-tale edges.

Last but not least is cleaning the plant. So many beautiful plants lose points because they are dirty. A good flushing from a hose to remove debris and grime is a start, but a soft brush will be needed to clean high water marks and markings from salts that collect in the plant's cup. You must be very careful, especially if your plant has a lot of silvery trichomes or scales. Clean your plants well in advance by all means, but a last minute cleaning on the day of the show will always be necessary. Make sure all water is emptied from the cups and dry them out with tissues or other soft material.

Finally, you must prepare the plant for transporting. Be careful when packing as damage in transit can ruin any show plant. Turn a box upside-down and cut a hole in the base. This makes a good stand to carry a plant. Space plants so they do not touch while travelling to prevent leaf damage. Make sure you have extra labels, in case you lose some in transit and, of course, don't forget your entry forms and schedule.

Reprinted in part from Bromeliaceae, 27(3), Journal of the Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc.

Cultivar Nomenclature

Derek Butcher, Fulham South Australia.

At one time all plants were covered by the same code that is now known as the ICBN (International Code of Botanical Nomenclature). In 1953 we saw the introduction of the ICNCP (International Code of Nomenclature of Cultivated Plants) and each succeeding review saw it move further and further away from the ICBN rules. The latest in 1995 shows quite radical differences! In 1998 we saw the issue of a monumental work by Don Beadle, namely the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry, where Don followed the 1995 ICNCP rules.

As far as I can trace, the new approach to writing the names of cultivars has not been formally advised to bromeliad growers. From what I have seen in various affiliate society's newsletters, and information on web sites, these changes have gone unnoticed even though they have the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry at hand. This is a plea for a standard approach so that bromeliad growers, especially newcomers are not too confused. So, if you follow what Don Beadle has done in the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry this is how you would be writing cultivar (and hybrid!) names. The genus or nothogenus (bigeneric combinations — or beyond) name is written exactly the same as it has been done. The cultivar name is written in single quotes with a capital letter starting each word.

Thus - *Neoregelia* 'Charm'

The use of the multiplication sign is OUT even for Latinized cultivar names.

Thus - *Billbergia* 'Windii'

If anyone is worried about this, please check article 17.8 of the ICNCP.

The use of grex is also OUT and is replaced by cultivar groups that contain similar looking plants irrespective of their parentage. (Note that grex will persist in the orchid world AND is the only exception in the whole of the plant kingdom!). So cultivar groups must be in our planning for the future. For example there is currently no way to answer a request for a *Neoregelia* that has a bluish centre and looks like a *Neoregelia concentrica*. But currently if you wanted a white rose that had a scent and only grew one metre high you can easily be told "Try this, or this, or this!"

Choosing cultivars to be named is a very difficult task as advised in the notes supplied with the official registration form. I would like to expand on the comments made because it is important how we look at cultivar names. In the early years of this society most hybrids were F1 - that is species crossed with species. An F1 generation would result in similar looking plants in a grex, for example, *Billbergia* 'Catherine Wilson', and I have no worries of accepting this as a cultivar name, but as soon as we get into F2 generation grexes (plural of grex!), hybrid

crossed species or even F3 generations (hybrid crossed hybrid) the problem starts. Because there is usually much variation, individual plants will need names. Therefore ruthless culling is necessary. Perhaps I should mention here that it is proposed to call these plants "Culton" in place of the wild "Taxon" so perhaps horticultural taxonomists will now be called "Cultonomists"!

This explosion of variability at F2 level can be controlled by selection which is why the likes of Cornelius Bak can produce thousands of *Vriesea* hybrids under one cultivar name from seed! The same applies to that packet of flower seed for Annuals with the glossy picture on the front! These plants are not clones and neither are they all F1 hybrids but they look very similar indeed. Cultivar names should be able to stand alone. *Aechmea lueddemanniana* 'Mend' is not necessary because it would be preferable to be writing *Aechmea* 'Mend'. This will restrict the usage of "variegata" etc. because for obvious reasons it does not convey much on its own. If you want to use "variegata" then you will have to follow the ICBN code, learn Latin and write up a description! It is much easier to use an "Anglicised" name such as *Billbergia* 'Kyoto'.

It may be said by some that they want to know if their plant is a hybrid or a variation on a natural species. The more you write on the label the more chance of error and IF you are really serious you can refer to the (BCR) Bromeliad Cultivar Registry for the answer. What you will never know is whether the hybridizer used the correct names in the parentage in the first place!

There is just one area in the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry that I am uneasy with. It is the inclusion of natural hybrids such as *Tillandsia* x *rectifolia* and *Tillandsia* x *smalliana* etc. I am fully aware that non-horticultural taxonomists are not particularly interested in these but there are many so called natural species so described which are certainly natural hybrids but no one has acted to correct the names. Secondly they come under the ICBN rules.

Finally, what do we do when plants have been found in the wild and botanists have been too slow in giving them a Latinized name? While I would prefer them to have a collection number and who collected it, it is better that they be given a cultivar name because they can at least be identified. This is preferable to blatant misidentification with an existing taxon. So we have *Neoregelia* 'Fireball' and *Neoregelia* 'Robert Read', clearly species plants but with botanists unwilling to name them "properly" because of lack of collection data. On the other hand we have the likes of *Aechmea callichroma* very widespread in cultivation but not yet found in the wild!

Remember that if the plant is of garden origin the ICNCP rules apply but if wild then the ICBN. Isn't it a pity there is a grey area in between?

Novice Popular Vote

1st	Drew Maywald	<i>Sincoregelia</i> 'Galactic Warrior'
2nd	Sue Mackay-Davidson	<i>Neoregelia</i> 'Naomi Ceniza'
3rd	-----	-----

Open Popular Vote

1st	John Crawford	<i>Goudaea</i> 'Sons of Tiger Tim'
2nd	Coral McAteer	<i>Neoregelia</i> 'Gold Medal'
3rd	-----	

Tillandsioideae

1st	Sue Mackay-Davidson	<i>Tillandsia straminea</i>
2nd	Gary McAteer	<i>Tillandsia inopinata</i>
2nd	Helen Clewett	<i>Tillandsia</i> 'Corsa Corner'

Decorative

1st	John Crawford	'Too Hot to Handle'
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Judges Choice

1st	Helen Clewett	<i>Tillandsia</i> 'Corsa Corner'
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Web Links for Checking Correct Identification and Spelling ?

Bromeliad Cultivar Register (BCR): <http://registry.bsi.org/>
Refer to this site for correct identification and spelling of your hybrid or cultivar.

New Bromeliad Taxon List : <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php>
Refer to this site for latest species name changes and correct spelling.

Bromeliads in Australia (BinA) <http://bromeliad.org.au/>
Refer to this site for its Photo Index, Club Newsletters, Detective Derek Articles.

Keep these web sites set as desktop icons for quick reference access.

Where do I Find the Dates ?

www.bromeliad.org.au then click "Diary".
Check this site for regular updates of times, dates and addresses of meetings and shows in your area and around the country.