ILLAWARRA BROMELIAD SOCIETY INCORPORATED

NEWSLINK

APRIL 2024

***Quesnelia* 'Tim Plowman'**
Photograph by Ann Kennon

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- The Society is, by the holding of meetings, displays and competitions, to provide a forum for the people of the Illawarra region who are interested in the culture and collection of bromeliads.
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BANK DETAILS FOR FEE PAYMENT, ETC: GREAT SOUTHERN BANK; BSB No. 814 282; Account No. 50997160

MEETINGS - The Society meets from 12.00 noon to 4.00 pm on the first Saturday of each month (February to November) at the Berkeley Neighborhood Centre, Winnima Way, Berkeley

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS - Due 30th June each year: $20 single/$30 family + $2 joining fee/rejoining fee.

NEWSLINK ISSUED QUARTERLY - January, April, July, and October and at http://www.bromeliad.org.au

NEWSLINK: After June 30, 2023 a copy of Newslink will be emailed to members; however, after that date should you like to receive a hard copy then there will be an additional cost of $10/year.

NEW MEMBER: A very warm welcome to our new member, Bill Homer, who joined at our February meeting. We wish you a long and happy association with our Society.

MONTHLY RAFFLE PRIZE ROSTER: Each rostered member is asked to bring up to five bromeliad plants--or goods related to the cultivation of bromeliads--for the raffle. The quality of plants should comply with the requirements of 'Plants for Sale' and should you be unable to provide items for the raffle on your rostered day please contact the Program Officer (Bob Stephens 04 1283 4985) so that appropriate re-arrangements can be made:

April	-	Noel Kennon, Barbara Jones-Beverstock, Christine Stephens, Maadi McKenna
May	-	John Toolan, John Boyd, Isabella Chambers, Pam Townsend
June	-	Michael Drury, Nina Woodcock, Heather Thain
July	-	Carol Burgdorf, Sandra Carnie, Fay Crozier
August	-	Steve Wain, Eileen Killingley, Dawn Harvey, Katie Chin'
September	-	Bob Stephens, Julie Stringer, Val Miller, Romina Di Noro
October	-	Cheryl Mathews, Anne Mobbs, Sandra Southwell, Dianne Ljubovic
November	-	Suzanne Burrows, Ana Mallon, Edwina Wain

CLEANING ROSTER: We have decided to reintroduce a cleaning roster so that the same people are not left to do a final tidy-up after each meeting. While our members are very good with helping to stack and store all of the tables and chairs, it's just the last-minute chores of making sure that the floor is clean, etc. before we lock up for the day.

April	-	Freda Kennedy, Maadi McKenna, Christine Stephens
May	-	John Toolan, John Boyd, Faye Crozier
June	-	Michael Drury, Nina Woodcock, Heather Thain
July	-	Sandra Carnie, Jenny Starling, Isabella Chambers
August	-	Dawn Harvey, Steve Wain, Val Miller
September	-	Belinda Drury, Brian Smith, Bob Stephens

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 2024 – COACH TRIP TO COLLECTORS' PLANT FAIR, CLARENDON: This should be a lot of fun as Bob has booked a 57 seater Executive Coach which will have plenty of room for our plants—but please bring boxes for your purchases. We expect to arrive at the Fair around 10.00 am, and leave for home at 3.00 pm. Cost is $50 per person which covers entry into the Fair--last date for bookings is April 6th. For any further information please contact Bob Stephens on 0412 834 985.

Pickup times are as follows:

7.00 am – Depart from Oak Flats Railway Station
7.15 am - Pickup at Dapto Railway Station
Pickup time at Waterfall yet to be determined.

SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024 - PLANT SALES DAY AT BERKELEY: The hall will be open at 7.00 am for setup and will be open to the public from 9.00 am to 2.30 pm. Cake and slices would be welcome for sale to the public, Tea/coffee/lunch/snacks will be provided to workers, but it has been decided that sellers pay $5 towards their food for the day.

OUR CHRISTMAS IN JULY MEETING – SATURDAY, 6TH JULY, 2024: A little closer to time members will be asked if they can help supply soup and desserts for this fun day. We usually have four soups and four desserts and so if anyone can help out with this it would be very much appreciated. The hall will be available to us from 12 noon until 4.00 pm—details regarding setup, etc. will come later. The raffle and monthly plant competition will be on, but no sales plants.

February 3, 2024 – Competition Plant Results

Open:

1st	Edwina and Steve Wain	*Guzmania sanguinea* var. *brevipedicellata*
2nd	Cheryl Mathews	*Neoregelia* Lorena Lector
3rd	Heather Thain	*Vriesea* Kent's Sunset
3rd	Bob Stephens	*Neoregelia* Heat Wave
3rd	Graham Bevan	*Puya mirabilis*

Novice

1st	Nina Woodcock	*Neoregelia* Pink on the Inside
2nd	Nina Woodcock	*Neoregelia* MacAwesome
3rd	David Hastings	*Billbergia* Sixpence

Tillandsioideae

1st	Edwina and Steve Wain	*Tillandsia streptophylla*
2nd	Suzanne Burrows	*Tillandsia tenuifolia*
3rd	Suzanne Burrows	*Tillandsia tricolor*
3rd	Ann Kennon	*Tillandsia ixioides*

March 2, 2024 – Competition Plant Results

Open:

1st	Edwina and Steve Wain	*Vriesea simplex*
2nd	Graham Bevan	Orthophytum garden
2nd	Bob Stephens	*Vriesea* Draco
2nd	Graham Bevan	*Orthophytum gurkenii*
3rd	Bob Stephens	*Puya mirabilis*

Novice

1st	Nina Woodcock	*Neoregelia* White Walker
2nd	Nina Woodcock	*Vriesea* Strawberry Treasure
3rd	Nina Woodcock	*Neoregelia* Radiant Rachel

Tillandsioideae

1st	Edwina and Steve Wain	*Tillandsia fasciculata* #14
2nd	Nina Woodcock	*Tillandsia*

A happy group at Garden Visits No. 1 for 2024 at Ann and Noel Kennon's Home

CULTURAL TIPS: PLANTS AND LIGHT

(From Rick and Carole Richtmyer, Bromeliad Soc. Houston Bulletin, July 2023 Vol. 56(7) who state that this article is reprinted courtesy of *Bromeliad Cultivation Notes*, a publication prepared by Lynn Hudson of Cairns.

The air around us has dust pollutants carried by gases that we cannot see. These gases are 21% oxygen, 78% nitrogen and 1% other gases—this ratio does not change much around the world. Of the 1%, carbon dioxide is only .03% yet is the most essential nutrient to life on our planet.

Photosynthesis means "putting together with light". In green plants, photosynthesis is the food-making process and the chief function of leaves.

Chlorophyll, the green pigment in leaves, absorbs light. When light is absorbed by chlorophyll it makes carbon dioxide (CO_2) combine with the hydrogen (H) atoms of water-forming sugar, and during this process oxygen is given off. Sugar then combines with nitrogen, sulphur and phosphorus and makes starch, fat, protein and vitamins. So, green plants convert CO_2 and H_2O to food and oxygen. Humans and animals get energy by eating food and use oxygen from the air to 'burn' food.

The CO_2 and H_2O is returned to the atmosphere and the carbon and oxygen balance on earth is maintained. All of our plants need good airflow to capture the CO_2 to grow, or we will starve.

Bromeliads use their leaves to catch the sun's rays to pass energy to manufacture the food they need. Those with many leaves (or multi-layered) can have problems collecting sufficient energy. Let us look at what Mother Nature has designed and we will understand where to place our plants.

Plants That Need High Light

- **Open rosette-shaped plants**—e.g., neoregelias, where the water evaporates quickly. Keep water in the centre of the plant.
- **Tubular-shaped plants**—e.g., billbergias which have a few thick leaves. Water does not evaporate as quickly and there is a lens effect.
- **Narrow rounded leaves**—are designed to shut out the sun's rays without burning or scalding the leaves. The stomata open at night when it is coolest. The sun's rays reflect the water onto the inner leaves At midday, in the fullest heat of the day, the plant is upright and the outside is not overexposed to the sun's rays.
- **Epiphytic Plants** - They grow upside down and sideways and cope with high light because they have few leaves and have reflective scales or hairs called "trichomes".
- **Dry habitat plants**—e.g., tillandsias—have scales to collect moisture and reflect the sun's rays. The more silver the plant looks the more trichomes it has to be better able to survive in arid habitats. These plants should not be wet at night as when they are wet they stick firmly flat on the plant; the trichomes are deactivated and the plant cannot respire.

Plants That Need Shade

- **Discolor Leaves—**green on top, red underneath [example *Aechmea fulgens* var. *discolor]*—are designed to capture as much light as possible for photosynthesis. Light passes through the leaf and is reflected back by the red pigment so they fully exploit light to their best advantage. They prefer to live in deep shade, but in too much shade your plant will grow lanky.
- **Multi-Layered Leaves—**light green leaves—allow some light to penetrate the top leaves and be collected by the lower ones. They prefer reasonably deep shade but not too dark or you could get a plant with few leaves.
- **Mono-Layered Leaves—**e.g., cryptanthus—every leaf blade can be viewed from the top and there is little overlap so that each leaf can intercept the bulk of overhead light to use. Medium shade plants.
- **Thin, Light-Coloured Leaves—**e.g., guzmanias—are used to warm and moist areas so they need less sunlight. They will grow well in reasonably deep shade but not too dark or the inflorescence will lean out, looking for light.
- **Fenestrations—**These are the markings on leaves like *Vriesea fosteriana* and *V. fenestralis*. They are windows that allow light to pass through to others underneath--more prevalent on younger leaves and on the lower sections of older leaves. The windows allow light to pass through and be reflected back off the water that accumulated in the plant. They are plants that grow in moderate shade.

Quesnelia *arvensis*

Quesnelia *quesneliana*

Quesnelia *testudo*

Use spines to identify *Q. testudo*: the true *testudo* will have spines on its lower scape leaves (see arrow in picture). If those spines are not present, it is not *testudo*. It may be *Q. quesneliana*." Extracted www.bromeliad.org.au March 3, 2014. Photo originally from Michael Andreas. Text and permission to use from Karen Anderson. From **"Quesnelia for your Landscape"** by Karen Anderson in Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Vol..34(1) Issue

***Quesnelia testudo* 'Farro'**

Tropiflora.com tells us that this is a variegated form of one of the standards in Florida landscapes. Spiky, green foliage, slightly silver banded, in a full rosette, with broad, creamy white marginal variegation. Beds of this species can be seen in many Florida gardens, often climbing the trunks of trees. The variegated form was first imported [into the USA] by Wally Berg after he obtained it from a Brazilian collector. Allegedly it was discovered as a variegated plant in the wild.

***QUESNELIA* FOR YOUR LANDSCAPE**

By Karen Andreas (Reprinted from FCBS newsletter Vol. 34(1) February 2014)

Quesnelia is a great bromeliad for the Florida landscape. Its various sizes, variation in inflorescences, and stoloniferous growth add interest to a collection even when the bromeliad is not in bloom. There are approximately 25 species in this genus; *Quesnelia* is definitely a bromeliad that deserves a closer look.

This genus was named for M. Quesnel, the French consul to French Guiana who first introduced this bromeliad to Europe [France in 1840]. It is found in the central coastal regions of Brazil where it grows up to the ocean, on rocks, in pasture land and in coastal mountains. Coastal quesnelias tend to be medium to large in size with brilliant pink inflorescences. Species that grow epiphytically (as air plants) in coastal mountains tend to be small, tubular species that often resemble billbergias. The inflorescence is short-lived—about two weeks. While quesnelias grow best in bright light to full sun, they can tolerate lower light conditions.

Generally members of this genus have spiny leaves, although the severity of those spines varies. Use spines to identify *Quesnelia testudo*: the true *testudo* will have spines on its lower scape leaves and if those spines are not present, it is not *testudo*. It may be *Q. quesneliana*.

Give the larger varieties such as *Q. testudo* plenty of room. They grow vigorously and you will have a clump in no time. The smaller quesnelias do quite well mounted, growing in baskets, or planted at the base of a tree, which it will climb.

Quesnelia humilis is a small member of this genus (8-10 inches high). Its bright red inflorescence holds flowers that Andrew Steens describes as "orange at the base, shading to bright red and then tipped with purple." It is a vigorous grower, growing stoloniferously (the new pup is on a stem-like growth—or stolon).

Quesnelia liboniana grows on trees and rocks. Its flowers are dramatic—navy blue and orange-red.

Quesnelia marmorata pups with short stolons, making it ideal for mounting or cascading out of a pot. Its leaves are green with brown or deep maroon blotches. Victoria Padilla reported a fruity scent emanating from the centre of the plant prior to it blooming.

Quesnelia quesneliana grows mainly as a terrestrial bromeliad in sand by the edge of the ocean but is also found on trees in open pastureland. Grow in bright filtered light for compact growth. Williams reports that it is one of those bromeliads that needs to throw a couple of pups before it will bloom, so do not remove the pups right away.

Quesnelia 'Tim Plowman' is a popular cultivar of *Q. marmorata*. It is known for its tall, upright leaves that curl at the top. Do not overwater this quesnelia and make sure it is not in wet or soggy soil--its curls will straighten!

Some additional notes from Jan Townsend in the Hunter District Bromeliad Society Inc. newsletter, October 2006: "Quoting Victoria Padilla: *Bromeliads* (1986) Crown Publishers NY"

	Q. arvensis	**Q. quesneliana**	**Q. testudo**
Habitat	Swampy forests; shady and humid	Coastal edge—sandy	Epiphytic in virgin forests
Leaves	Leathery deep green, faintly banded silver (up to 60 cm long/ 5 cm wide), spines	Lettuce green, soft Banded grey underneath Spines	Plain green, banded grey underneath (45-60 cm long, 3-5 cm wide Small spines
Inflorescence	White stalk, 30-60 cm dense head, salmon pink bracts—blue petals 30-60 cm dense head, salmon pink bracts—blue petals, hidden	Grey stalk up to 90 cm Cone-shaped head of Crepe paper-like rose bracts with white edges (Like a torch)	Stalk 30 cm Bract shape oblong and erect 10-20 cm, rosy red. Petals white or violet.

QUESNELIA ARVENSIS

By Victoria Padilla, Editor (Los Angeles, California)

(Reprinted from *The Bromeliad Society Bulletin,* July-August, 1966 Vol. XVI No. 4)

Quesnelias, of which *Q. arvensis* is probably the best known, are an interesting group of plants. According to Dr Lyman B. Smith, they are endemic to Brazil, records of their being in other countries being highly questionable. He lists 32 species in *The Bromeliaceae of Brazil*, of which, unfortunately, only about a half dozen are seen to any extent in bromeliad collections.

The genus was named for M. Quesnel, a French consul at Cayenne, French Guiana, who was responsible for introducing Q*uesnelia* into cultivation. This was probably *Q. arvensis*, which is the earliest listed of the species, the date being 1835, at which time it was called *Bromelia*. Its present name was given to it by Mez in 1892.

The most commonly noted quesnelias are *Q. arvensis, Q. testudo, Q. quesneliana, Q. humilis, Q. liboniana, Q. lateralis, and Q. marmorata. Quesnelia arvensis, Q. testudo* and *Q. quesneliana* are alike in a number of ways. They are coastal plants, have similar inflorescences, and are notoriously difficult to bring into bloom. This last is due no doubt to the fact that it is hard for the average grower to simulate their natural growing conditions. Mulford B. Foster writes of seeing *Q. quesneliana* growing in the sand right along the ocean front and near the tide land areas where fiddler crabs were found in the shade of these plants. Ralph Spencer, a member who resides in Sao Paulo, describes the habitat of *Quesnelia arvensis* as follows:

*"*You ask about the habitat of *Quesnelia arvensis. I have never seen one grow in a field as the name arvensis* implies*.* It grows freely in the swampy forests; in fact, in places stepping on the plants is unavoidable. However, they are not free bloomers, and there will be a hundred plants to one in flower. Nearly all are terrestrials; they grow in a thick layer of moss and organic matter overlaying white dune sand. Fresh water is usually within a foot of the surface, and much of the time there are pools of brown peaty water between the trees which are usually covered with moss and lichen. Rainfall amounts to about 75 inches and is fairly well distributed through the year. The humidity is always high in such forests. Summers are hot and humid, and winters are cool and nearly as humid as the summers. Mostly the quesnelias are in the shade of large trees, but at times they are in full sun. *Quesnelia arvensis* is associated with numbers of neoregelias, aechmeas, and several other spiny terrestrials, like *Bromelia balansae.* There are also a large number of epiphytic bromeliads in the same area, including many vrieseas, although most of these are some distance back from the beach, for they do not like the salt spray."

Q. arvensis is perfectly at home in this writer's garden, growing in a semi-shaded rockery without any care whatsoever. Although it took several years to put out its first flower, the clump has become a good-sized one and it has flowered every year since. This plant gets periodic fogs that move in from the ocean about two miles away. Mulford Foster has never been able to get *Q. quesneliana* to bloom for him, although he has had the plant for over twenty years. It has bloomed twice for the writer. However, these quesnelias are well worth the effort to grow, especially now that chemicals to induce blooming have become available. These species have breathtaking watermelon-pink flower heads with blue and white flowers. The bract stays in brilliant colour for some time. *Quesnelia arvensis* is a robust-appearing plant with firm leathery leaves that are edged with stiff spines. The leaves are a pale green and faintly banded on the underside. The leaves of *Q. quesneliana* are a softer shade of green; this plant tends to grow tall, almost forming a stalk.

Quesnelia humilis, Q. liboniana, and *Q. lateralis* are all very small plants and take well to cultivation, 8 to 10 inches in height with plain green leaves; its clusters of flowers are a glowing cerise.

Q. liboniana, which was called a billbergia until recently because it strongly resembles this genus, is also a stiff, tubular type. The flower stem hangs gracefully down, having tubular dark purple flowers on bright orange bracts. There is a variety of this species, much smaller in size and very graceful. The blue-green leaves are sharply recurved. As it is stoloniferous, it can be used for hanging baskets. The small flowers are deep blue and bright red. *Quesnelia liboniana* has been crossed with *Billbergia nutans*, the cross being known as *Billbergia perringiana* (1889).

Quesnelia lateralis is a gay little plant found in the mountains near Rio de Janeiro. From its bright green leaves about a foot in length, comes a brilliant little panicle of blue and red. Mulford B. Foster in his *Brazil, Orchid of the Tropics*, has this to say of this species:

"The plant was first found with the lower stem coming out of the base of the tubular plant, so it was named *Quesnelia lateralis*. This quesnelia, by the way, has ethereal marine-blue flowers held by flame-coloured bracts which makes it one of the loveliest bromeliad flowers we have ever seen. A few years later some collector found another plant similar in form and inflorescence to *Q. lateralis*, but this inflorescence was emerging from the centre of the tube, so it was named *Q. centralis*."

"We happened to find both of these plants the same day but unaware of their previous records. The flowers upon examination seemed to be identical. When our own plants came into bloom we found that first they bloomed from the base, then two or three months later they bloomed from the centre, a peculiar phenomenon, not observed in any other bromeliad. It is now called *Quesnelia lateralis* since that was its original name and since it records the peculiarity of its lateral inflorescence."

Quesnelia marmorata was until recently known as *Aechmea marmorata*, or the "Grecian Urn Plant". Its leaves are stiff and mottled, resembling those of a billbergia. The inflorescence, which although of firm substance, tends to droop slightly, is branched with colourful pink bracts and blue and red flowers. It makes a stunning specimen for containers.

Quesnelia seideliana

Quesnelia lateralis

Quesnelia liboniana

Quesnelia marmorata

***Quesnelia* 'Rafael Oliveira'**

***Quesnelia* 'Tim Plowman'**
Photograph by Birgit Rhode (Australasian Conference, Auckland, 2013)

***QUESNELIA* 'TIM PLOWMAN' AND *QUESNELIA* 'RAFAEL OLIVEIRA'**

Adapted from *Bromeliad*, J. Bromeliad Society NZ, January 2014/March 2015

These plants are both cultivars of the species *Quesnelia marmorata*, one of the most popular early cultivated bromeliads, with its tubular shape and highly 'marmorated'—or mottled—markings. Until around 1965 it was known as *Aechmea marmorata* until learned people decided it fitted into the genus *Quesnelia*, because of its flower. The curly cultivar, *Quesnelia* 'Tim Plowman' was collected from the wild in the 1970s in the Rio de Janeiro state. It is differentiated solely by the recurved leaf tips of each sheath, making it a very striking feature plant, especially in a colony. It is surprisingly easy to grow in filtered bright light to full morning sun year round (if your 'curls' droop, you may need to be a bit tougher, giving it more light and less water and/or fertiliser). It grows well as an epiphyte on chunky bark, scoria or rocks, where it can gain a firm foothold. A single plant potted or mounted in early spring with slow release fertiliser will push the plant to send out pups in the warmer months. Once a good clump is well-established, cut back on the fertiliser.

Quesnelia 'Rafael Oliveira' is a variegated clone of *Quesnelia* 'Tim Plowman'.
A
This form was wild collected in 1995 by Rafael Oliveira de Faria in Rio de Janeiro state, Brazil. This plant grows similarly to 'Tim Plowman' but a little slower due to the lesser amount of chlorophyll in the leaves.

Again, water and fertiliser should be used carefully with these quesnelias as too much can cause the leaves to lose their 'curl' and look washed out, diminishing their marmoration.

Another little story (Ed.) – Reprinted from <bromeliad.org.au> 25 February, 2024

Notes from Chester George Skotak 11/21

"Years ago, maybe 1992, a man traveling from Brazil showed up at my nursery here in Costa Rica He had innocently carried a suitcase load of special bromeliads from Rio to Miami, and walked through customs without anyone stopping him to check his luggage. Plants without papers, yikes! The guys at agriculture must have been at lunch or asleep. Anyway, he walked outside where people were waiting for lost passengers, such as him, and the collector who was to pick him up and receive the bromeliads, was not there.

Now what? The Brazilian had no way to communicate with the collector. As a last minute harebrained idea, he took a flight to Costa Rica and once again innocently walked through customs with his suitcase full of 'no papers' Brazilian plants and left them with me. It was a surprise visit.

I put the dehydrated plants on the bench and he showed up a week later and repacked his plants. He was going back to Miami. Proper papers and such were not mentioned. I was left with two small pups of a variegated quesnelia and slowly multiplied them

The Brazilian? I never heard from him again about these plants and I assume he got caught by the USDS because *Quesnelia* 'Raphael Oliveira', correctly named RAFAEL, never showed up in cultivation anywhere in the USA. I knew the plant and went ahead and gave my Brazilian friend, Rafael, credit deserved for his highly ornamental discovery. I slowly released the new quesnelia and it began to spread in collections. As far as I know this is how it came into cultivation.

Anyway, that's my story."

VALE - JIM BEVERSTOCK - MARCH 3, 2024

Barbara and Jim joined our Society in 2010 where Jim especially enjoyed the friendly chats over cups of tea at our monthly meetings. As you know, Barbara served as President for nine years and whenever I had occasion to call her in her capacity as President, it was often that Jim would be the one to answer the phone and in spite of any health problems that he might be having he was always so friendly and upbeat and we had many a lovely chat. A dear and brave man who will be sadly missed by Barbara, his family and friends. Our condolences and best wishes to them.

Quesnelia *augusto-coburgii*
Photographs by Edwina Wain