

S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

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The Bromeliad Society of South Australia Inc

Born 1977 and still offsetting!

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Web site: <http://www.bromeliad.org.au>

Meetings Venue:

Maltese Cultural Centre,
6 Jeanes Street,
Beverley

Time: 2.00pm.

Second Sunday of each month
Exceptions – 1st Sunday in May, &
August & no meeting in December
or unless advised otherwise

**VISITORS & NEW MEMBERS
WELCOME**



Tillandsia pfeufferi

Pots, Labels & Hangers - Small quantities available all meetings.

For special orders/ larger quantities call Ron Masters on 83514876

Dates for 2010

Meeting dates:- Jan 10th - Len's Ecuador trip, Feb 14th - AGM and Aechmea fasciata forms and hybrids,
March 14, Apl 11th, May 2nd, June 13th, July 11th, Aug 1st, Sept 12th, Oct 10th, Nov 14th

Special Events:- March Show 27th & 28th. Nov 13 –Sales day

Applications for membership always welcome.

Subscriptions \$10.00 per year Feb to Feb.

Several reference photos courtesy of "fcbs.org"

Morphettville Home & garden show overview.



The weekend weather was perfect for a home & garden expo and although there was another similar event being held over this weekend, the attendances were good. There was a great deal of interest in the Bromeliad plants on show in spite of the competition from the colourful orchid display next door.

The star of the display was *Tillandsia. aeranthos* (photo and discussion in Gazette-Vol 33 no 6) There was HUGE interest in George's "tree", several naming it "cousin it" Many thought it was plastic and one person offered \$2000.

Many visitors turned away disappointed that there were no plants for sale, but were reassured that at our November sales day there would be a large range of plants available and it appeared that there was a lot of interest in the event, in fact we hoped that George had enough offsets (*T. aeranthos*) to meet demands.



November sales day from the front desk.

When you are up-front you can see how things develop – Customers coming in and customers going out. Those coming out looking sheepish usually haven't paid for their plants so are sent back in again. If they don't look sheepish they usually get a comment about their purchases.

While raffle ticket purchasing is only a guide we can get an idea of how many couples come in. It is interesting how few singles come through. We would ascertain that about 100 with purchasing power came along. This seems to be about the same number as last November and yet because we had to cancel sales in March last year you would have thought more would have come. To get a more accurate idea of the number of customers we could charge an entry fee of \$1 give them a ticket and treat the Raffle as a sort of Door Prize.

Was it the heat? More and more get added to the mailing list which now stands at over 400 and yet less and less in proportion come along. The response in October at the Morphettville racecourse was fantastic but they must have been polite because I felt we would not have been able to supply the number of *Tillandsia aeranthos* that all wanted to buy from George's artwork. Alas, I only noticed one customer that came to the sales day after all that work. This can be increased to several after reports from the sellers but is still disappointing.

The flow of customers seemed the same as last year with very few in the afternoon. The only difference was that we had 4 times the plants from 14 or so sellers. This was a knee-jerk reaction to the 'lack' of plants in the afternoon in 2008. Our sales then would not have increased because we did not have the customers. It was just that we felt that if the customers did arrive they would see lots of choices of plants to buy.

To balance customers with plant access for the duration of a sales day is an impossible dream but I would not want a reverse knee jerk reaction to plant sale availability in March with a sharp reduction in the number of sellers.

Just as we have a mad rush of customers at the start of the 'Sales' day so too do we have the same problem when plants brought in for sale exceed the sales area allocated. We try to allocate 40 plants per person as a **start** hoping we have space left for those who arrive late. This time we fell in a hole with 2 members missing out on getting their plants on the table and one having to have a separate area. If there had not been a display area I would have suggested a bigger sales area and this might be considered by the Committee. But a larger sales area does not mean increased sales. Increased sales come from increase in number of customers. Having a separate room for Display could also help with security.

What with the high prices we paid at the Conference for plants I was sure that even though our sales total was on a par with last year we would have sold less plants. Bill soon put me straight in that the most popular price seemed to be \$8. To think if we all sold at this price there would be no price tag swapping suggesting that high-priced plants should perhaps have their price securely attached to the pot.



November meeting from the Secretary's desk

It seems that Darwin is girding up their loins ready for the Australian Bromeliad Conference to be held in April 2011. Such was the success of our Conference in April we decided to send them \$1500 to help them on their way.

While the hot weather may have kept customers away from our Sales day there was a good roll up for our end of year meeting. Covetous eyes did stray to the afternoon tea tables.

It was pleasing to see the number of members who had bought the book by Sophie Thompson called 'From the ground up' which includes advice on Bromeliads and included photos of plants from our very own 'The Halls'.

Afternoon tea went down a treat. Somehow there was wide range of things to eat brought in by all and sundry. Even those of us as Diabetics were satisfied!

There were a few display plants brought in which were kept clear from those plants that would be involved with the bidding frenzy scheduled for later in the afternoon.

George brought in 'Ivy's Root', which he periodically strips down and replants. This time he had most named except for a delightful *T. schusteri* in flower and a *T. olmosana* var *pachamamae* that was offsetting like mad. Len pointed out that Wayne Schuster had found the plant named after him and must have collected lots because Len was on hand to scrounge a plant to bring home to Australia. Everyone knows that Pachamama is a high pass between two mountain ranges in north Peru. BUT they may not know there are two roads. If you take the low road you can drive and not see a plant in sight. Or you can take the high road and walk in the mountain mist and find var. *pachamamae*.

Another of interest was a *Tillandsia pfeufferi* with a silent 'p' as in swimming. It was in spike and clumping well. There is only one clone in existence. Apparently Herr Pfeuffer had ordered in a supply of *T. lorentziana* from Bolivia and found one oddity that he showed to Prof Werner Rauh who described it as *T. pfeufferi*. Note just the one plant that Len scrounged an offset when at Heidelberg even though it is undoubtedly a natural hybrid. See how lucky we are, with Len's ability to scrounge. Taxonomists are an odd lot. Here Werner decided on one plant and yet when you speak to Renate Ehlers about Werner you get a different story. Renate says to Werner that she has found a new species and he says, bring me 10 different clones with similar habit and we will look at the problem again. Needless to say, with German precision, Renate would collect the required 9.



And so to the plant swap proceeded with participants patiently waiting for their turn to check what was on offer. As I explained to the really new members their turn would come next year when they would surely be able to bring in two offsets and be part of the draw.

It was then the Colin and Len Show with Sue Schrabai as the bag lady. Overall, the prices gained for the plants being auctioned was much less than at the sales day but all profit here went to the Society. AND we had fun with some getting caught with plants they didn't really want. The Auctioneer made one blunder where one plant called Neo 'Fever' went for a song to Sue, but there was a roar of approval from attendees. We dare not tell her that she would not get far on Channel 10 talent time.

The Treasurer tells me we made about \$500. So everyone went home happy.

Tillandsia duratii and Tillandsia streptocarpa

Most keen Tillandsia collectors would be familiar with *Tillandsia duratii* and *Tillandsia streptocarpa*, as both species are readily available through nurseries in the USA. Their natural habitats involve Bolivia, Brasil, Argentina and Paraguay. Depending upon where you draw the line between *Tillandsia paleacea* and *Tillandsia streptocarpa*, the latter species also occurs in Peru.

T. streptocarpa is mainly found growing in trees and on cacti, whereas *T. duratii* is also found growing on the ground. In fact, I found a giant form of *T. duratii* in the Yungas, Bolivia, which was two metres long and a metre across, spread along the ground. In some cases it is difficult to decide which of the two species correctly describes a collected plant because there are specimens that seem to key out midway between. In general, both of these species have blue-purple flowers, which are distinctly fragrant. *T. streptocarpa* is usually a smaller plant with the spikes on the inflorescence closer together. *T. duratii* is usually a larger plant with the spikes spread out along the inflorescence, and with curling leaves.



The authoritative references also list a desirable form of *T. streptocarpa* with yellow flowers as *T. streptocarpa* var. *aureiflora*.

The habitat is listed as between Comarapa and Santa Cruz in Bolivia. As these towns are a considerable distance apart, this hardly provides useful information for anyone wishing to collect this variety.

There has been some speculation as to whether this might even be a yellow flowering form of *T. duratii* rather than *T. streptocarpa*.

In July 2004, I undertook my third expedition to Bolivia, this time venturing to some less-visited places between Santa Cruz and La Paz. My companions were a botanist and a student from Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza (FAN). A more thorough account can be found in pages 206-211 of Volume 54(5), 2004, of the BSI Journal.

The dominant tillandsias along our route were *T. sphaerocephala*, *T. lorentziana* (both white and blue flowered forms), *T. tenuifolia*, *T. cardenasii*, as well as the typical blue-purple flowering forms of *T. streptocarpa* and *T. duratii*.

Len's Article on Tillandsia duratii and Tillandsia streptocarpa cont:

In Moro Moro, we were directed to follow a new track down towards the Rio Mizque to seek a mysterious large purple-leaved tillandsia, with funnel-shaped offsets on stolons, growing in a tree. I could not identify it. But this general location yielded a much more amazing surprise. We collected three flowering plants of *T. streptocarpa* (and/or *T. duratii* ?) from a single tree. At first, I thought that the different coloured petals merely indicated that the three plants were at different stages of the flowering process. But then I realized that all three were at anthesis. The plants had, respectively, pure white petals, dark violet petals, and peach coloured petals. Moreover, on the neighbouring tree, other plants of the same species had petals with even further colour variations. All were fragrant.



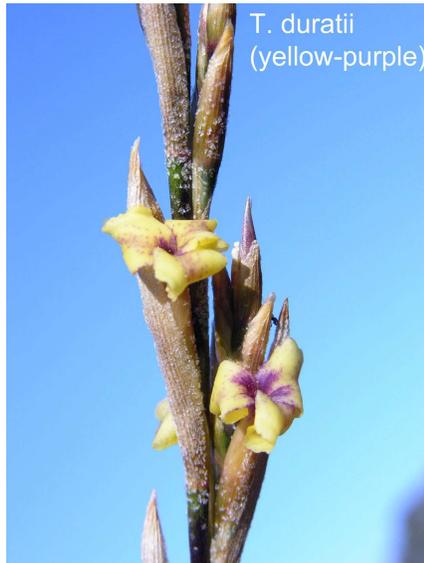
Who can explain such an amazing discovery? I will let the experts argue whether they are *T. streptocarpa* or *T. duratii*.

Later in our expedition, on the way to Comarapa, we set out to see if we could find the location of *T. streptocarpa* var *aureiflora*. Fortunately, we had been given fairly accurate information of a place of interest. But, again, this turned out to be beyond my wildest dreams. There were a number of separate plants having flowers with petal colours in the yellow-orange-brown range.



Some plants from this location later flowered in my collection in Adelaide, South Australia, Shown on next page are four examples of different coloured petals.

Len's Article on Tillandsia duratii and Tillandsia streptocarpa cont:



The colours are, respectively, orange, yellow, yellow and brown, and yellow with a purple centre. The last one, in particular, is quite beautiful. All are fragrant. These two locations in Bolivia have certainly expanded the common views of what *T. streptocarpa* and *T. duratii* should look like.

**For sale
at meetings**

Standard pots	100mm	125mm	140mm	150mm	175mm (out of stock)	200mm
Squat pots	125mm	140mm	150mm	175mm	200mm	
Labels	Small X 40	Large With hole				
Pot Hangers	Black X 4 clasp	Universal	Green X 3 clasp	Heavy duty		

Please note that special or larger orders can be delivered to meetings by prior arrangement or collected from Plympton.(phone contact details front page of Gazette)