

S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

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The Bromeliad Society of South Australia Inc

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Born 1977 and still offsetting!

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One of Adam's 1st prize winners @ Royal show

MEETING & SALES 2017 DATES

15/10/2017, (3rd Sunday) Getting ready for Spring, [21/10/2017](#) & [22/10/2017](#) Sales, 12/11/2017 130PM start, pup exchange, special afternoon tea – bring a plate of finger food to share, plant auction.

Applications for membership always welcome – Subs \$15 single \$25 Dual : Now Due 2017

Meetings Venue:

Maltese Cultural Centre,
6 Jeanes Street,
Beverley

Time: 2.00pm.

Second Sunday of each month
Exceptions – 1st Sunday in May, June
& 3rd Sunday January, March,
September-, October no meeting in
December or unless advised
otherwise

**VISITORS & NEW MEMBERS
WELCOME.**

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Roving Reporter July 2017-There was no meeting

Christmas in July. 40 year celebration,

Our 40th birthday milestone in April 2017 was a significant event and opportunity to reflect and acknowledge the strong and creative leadership through its early office-bearers. Two of the founding members Derek and Margaret Butcher, have continued to make significant contributions to the successes. Other significant contributors have included Ede Scheaffer, Len Colgan who served as President for 20 years, Adam Bodzioch (current President), Maggie Hick, Bill Treloar, Keith Bradtberg and many past & current members. The highly successful meetings and activities that we enjoy today are the result of their enthusiasm, endeavors and accomplishments.

The celebration in July was a momentous occasion, sadly Margaret & Derek, also Peter Hall were unable to attend due to ill health. The fully catered lunch funded for current member with Society funds was enjoyed by all.

It was with a great deal of pleasure that Adam released The Bromeliad Society of South Australia book of our Society history to celebrate the legacy of our 40 years.

Every Endeavour was made to provide an accurate condensed overview of these years, and there was a diverse and interesting (at times entertaining) history to be proud of. For those proof readers & recipients please note that Len Colgan is not much good at antidotes but is a wag with anecdotes!

After the tasty meal a version of ‘kris kringle’ motivated the majority of members participating into a feeling of light heartedness. The fun of either keeping or swapping (Stealing) a preferred unwrapped or a replacement present kept the friendly banter and goodwill flowing smoothly. *Bev*

Guess who chatted to channel 7 weather reporter?



Bob, Tim & Pam

Channel 7 presented the weekend weather report at a recent SAROC fair held at the parade grounds.

This created a lot of interest from all present especially from Bob who was not only keen to learn about the production of this segment but also to make sure all went smoothly for Tim. The amount of time and effort put into this production was surprising resulting in a short, professional and informative report.



Roving Reporter Aug 2017

It is not often I see something exciting on the Raffle table but this time I saw several bits of *Billbergia amoena* large form which made memories come flooding back. You see, in the 1990’s when Elton Leme in Brazil was still a young man he used to send me seed he had collected in the wild. Yes, I was always growing from seed that had wild connections, never man-made hybrids. *Billbergia amoena* comes in a great range – small plants, big plants, green leaves, red leaves, spotted, not spotted, with long stolons or short stolons. Some will be difficult to acquire because the trend is with new hybrids. But such is not always the case which recent detective work has revealed. Most of you will have heard of Huntington Gardens in Los Angeles which concentrates on Cactus and Bromeliads. If you are ever in Los Angeles it is certainly worth a visit. Currently we have a keen Bromeliad grower who seems to spend most weekends at Huntington and a keen Bromeliad curator who are solving years’ old problems. In 1998 we knew about a *Billbergia* ‘Huntington’ when the BCR record told us it was a typical ‘amoena’ but what is typical! The plant is still growing at Huntington Gardens but could well have died out in private collections in California. We now have photos on file to give a more accurate idea of what it looks like.

Those at the meeting will have heard that Hans Wallfried is after *Billbergia* 'Bill's Baby' even though he is a self-confessed 'species' man. The following may have influenced him

***Billbergia* 'Bill's Baby'** by Derek Butcher in Bromeliaceae Nov/Dec 1998

There was great excitement in the Butcher household in July which is surprising because usually this is a quiet month with Bromeliads, just waiting for Spring. JG 29002 was coming into flower and what a magnificent inflorescence it was with many large bright red scape bracts contrasting with a white farinose scape. It stayed like this for days with us waiting for the petals to open so that we could get a photograph or two and dissect a little bit. John Catlan and Genny Vauhkonen had previously flowered this plant and their photograph of its inflorescence meant we just had to have one plant too. In trying to name it from the photograph I toyed with the idea of it being *Billbergia oxysepala* or even *violacea* because John had said the plant had come from a very old collection in northern NSW. I thought it just had to be a species in the *Helicodea* group.

So July saw me filling in my worksheet and the wandering through Lyman Smith's key, time and again, getting almost matches but not quite. While looking at the petals I noticed pale blue lines in the upper part of the predominantly yellow-green petals and I remembered seeing similar colouring in *Billbergia macrocalyx*. I was now convinced that I had a hybrid in front of me, and one done some 30 years ago by Bill Morris when he crossed *B. macrocalyx* with *B. rosea* (then *venezuelana*). Its name came into being only 20 years ago when Grace Goode and Olwen Ferris felt the plant needed a name. Not wanting others to go through the traumas of tracing the identity of this plant, I would like to take this opportunity of describing this rather large 'Baby'.

Plant- tubular, to 1 metre high with about 8 leaves.

Leaf Sheath - large, up to 25cm long and 10cm wide.

Leaf Blade- to 75cm, 5cm wide, green with pale green spots in the upper half, sparsely spined, with irregular farinose bands predominantly in the lower half.

Scape- 1 cm thick, farinose, semi-pendent.

Scape Bracts- mainly clustered below the inflorescence, 17cm to 10cm long, 12mm to 4mm wide, shiny red #26 with lepidote covering on the outside.

Inflorescence-simple, ovoid, 15cm long, 5cm wide, with 25-30 flowers.

Floral Bracts- similar to upper scape bracts for the first 3 or 4 flowers (first exceeding the flower, the last exceeding sepal) reducing drastically to a 3mm by 3mm triangle red-brown in colour.

Sepal- lanceolate, 23mm long, 11 mm wide, green with pinkish overlay.

Petal- ligulate, 65mm long, 6mm wide, greenish-yellow #81 with light blue tip #58, pale blue veined in top 3rd, becoming coiled almost like a watch spring in Queensland, but straight in Adelaide!

Pistil- 5cm long, including green spiral stigma.

Ovary- top-shaped, 12mm long, 8mm wide, lightly ribbed, farinose covering.

***Billbergia* 'Bill's Baby'** (*Billbergia* JG 29002) by John Catlan

The story for me begins on the 9th of January 1996. I'm at Mike Symmons' place and I find a large unnamed *Billbergia*, it's like nothing I've ever seen before. No, he has none to spare, but he throws all the old mothers on the compost heap. So, I'm in the compost heap, up to my arm pits sorting through while Mike stands surveying his kingdom he pronounces "You know, you're welcome to anything I haven't got".

Anyway, I find the old mother with a dead flower bract. This plant was in an old collection Mike acquired many years ago.

Later I forwarded a plant to Derek Butcher for identification. He has to grow and flower the plant but in the meantime Neville Ryan tentatively identifies the plant as *Billbergia* 'Bill's Baby' and at a later date Bill Morris identifies a non-flowering plant as *Billbergia* 'Bill's Baby'. I didn't tell Derek any of this because I try not to influence his decisions and prefer he comes to his own independent conclusion. It also helps to stretch his abilities and is good for character development.

Off the cuff identification of hybrid bromeliads is fraught with disaster, but we now have three people whose opinion I value, independently identify this *Billbergia* and it is not fair to the people concerned to ask for an off the cuff opinion and then quote it as a fact, there is a difference.

From now on, *Billbergia* JG 29002 is *Billbergia* 'Bill's Baby' and anyone who disagrees has to prove it is not. It should be remembered, plants vary among themselves because of environmental differences.

The plant is approximately 1 metre tall, foliage is straight and green, banded, with a few not very obvious white spots. The inflorescence is 22cm long (9"), 20cm wide (8") and the scape is 64cm (2'2"). The scape bracts extend back along the scape giving the impression that the inflorescence is 40cm (18") long. Each individual flower is 7.5cm (3") long.

The quality of the scape bracts lasted from the 2nd of April (when it emerged) for 28 days. It looks like a *Helicodea* type, but a characteristic of this plant is that one of the three flower petals never recoils correctly. The plant is a pleasure to grow, the scape bracts have size, colour and lasting abilities. Another quality Australian hybrid.

It is understood that one plant is lurking in Kadina!

And so to the exciting part of the meeting – Winter Brag - where Bill Treloar did most of the talking.

The plants brought in were all in good condition and well presented which showed good husbandry. Generally speaking the winter weather in South Australia has not been extreme but it showed that growers were seeking the better parts of their gardens in which to place their plants. It was great to see Keith Bradtberg at the meeting, all the way from Two Wells. He brought in some of his plants for display and even won the popular plant competition with his *Neoregelia* 'Pink Passion'. What I find intriguing is that it is an unrecorded name but has the flavour of Grant Groves, a Florida hybridist who is reluctant to register his names. However a search of the BCR reveals there is a high probability that it is N. 'Groves Passion'.



Neoregelia 'Pink Passion' (Photo J. Batty)



B. 'Moon Tiger' (Photo J. Batty)

Talking of unrecorded names we saw an impressive *Billbergia* by the name of B. 'Moon Tiger' with 'Hallelujah' in its parentage somewhere. It is interesting how the current trend with billbergias is with coloured leaves rather than impressive flowers. Some will say that the flowers do not last long enough and yet even a Rose grower will concede that an individual rose blossom does not stay long at its best. To think that 'Halleujah' was created in 1988 and since that time there has been 117 attempts to better it by using it as a parent. Lose the label and all you can say that that is 'Hallelujah' hybrid!

It is interesting how you often see the use of the Latin term 'var. variegata' after a species name and yet these days it is a term rarely used by Botanists because it is a trait that is perpetuated solely by cultivation in the form of offsets or asexual reproduction. One such plant was *Neoregelia cruenta* var *variegata* as known by Brazilian growers. When we were at John Catlan and Jenny's place at Jacob's Well in Queensland, Margaret saw this stunning plant and suggested it needed a better name like 'Goldilocks' which stuck. In similar fashion we all know *Neoregelia* 'Derolf' instead of *N. johannis* var *variegata*. So it was great to see 'Goldilocks' on display in healthy conditions thanks to Keith. Who else grows this variegata?

What was a surprise as to see a thriving, well grown specimen of *Androlepis skinneri* which much prefers to grow in Townsville. If you are worried about the name androlepis do not despair. When the owner of the plant flowers it, not only will he have to decide what sex it is but look for the unique hornlike appendix on the side of the anther which is its trademark.

Wasn't there a lot of flowering *Tillandsia stricta* or its relatives on display? This species must like Adelaide winters. One clump that really caught the eye had 9 inflorescences but wait a minute the petals were white and floral bracts red/pink. Most *T. stricta* have violet-blue petals except for Elton Leme's *T. stricta* forma *nivea* where everything is white. Usually when you see a 'Stricta' like inflorescence with white petals you think of the many hybrids created with *T. recurvifolia*. But here I could see no hybrid influence. There are several forms of *T. stricta* that have been given cultivar names and one that could be considered is 'Strawberry Ice'. You must have noticed the *T. stricta* with the colourful flower bud waiting to open which had 'Hard Leaf' on the label. This would originally have been used by the seller to distinguish what he had in stock as 'Soft Leaf' but if you don't have both forms, how do you tell the difference. I am reminded of 1813 when a new *Tillandsia stricta* was described as a frosted stiff leaved Tillandsia.



T stricta 'Hard Leaf'



Tillandsia stricta ?

In all an outstanding display showing that you can grow Bromeliads through Adelaide winters if you put them the right position in your backyard. So many plants had been brought in that it took Bill over the hour to mention them all.

Aechmea fasciata (Lindley) Baker by Derek Butcher June 2017

This plant has been in demand since it was first named in 1828 and was a great interest to botanists in the 1800s as shown by the number of synonyms below:



Aechmea fasciata var. **fasciata**

Aechmea fasciata var. **fasciata** *Billbergia fasciata* Lindley, Bot. Reg. 13: pl. 1130. 1828. *Hohenbergia fasciata* (Lindley) Schultes filius in Roemer & Schultes, Syst. 7(2): 1253. 1830. *Billbergia rhodocyanea* Lemaire, Fl. Serres 3: pl. 207. 1847. Type. *Van Houtte Hortus ex Van der Maelen Hortus* (no known specimen, so the original plate). *Hoplophytum fasciatum* (Lindley) Beer, Bromel. 129. 1856. *Billbergia glaziovii* Regel, Gartenflora 34:260, pl. 1203. 1885. Type. *Glaziou* in Petrograd Hortus s n (holotype, LE n v). *Aechmea leopoldii* hortus ex Baker, Handb. Bromel. 58. 1889; nomen. *Aechmea hamata* Mez, Mart. Fl. Bras. 3(3): 347. 1892. Type. *Berlin Hortus s n* (holotype. B: photo F 11314). *Aechmea rhodocyanea* Wawra ex Mez, DC. Monogr. Phan. 9:255. 1896; nomen *Quesnelia rhodocyanea* Wawra ex Mez, DC. Monogr. Phan. 9:255.1896; nomen

Aechmea fasciata var. **purpurea** (Guillon) Mez, Pflanzenreich IV. 32:152. 1934. *Billbergia rhodocyanea* [var.] *purpurea* Guillon, Rev. Hortic. 55:453. 1883. What is interesting to me is that there are no herbarium specimens in REFLORA but 28 of var. *fasciata*. As Adda Abendroth says, see below, this variety is probably more common than the Type but then how do you discern leaf colour in a herbarium specimen.

Not only were botanists interested in this species but the nurserymen in Europe started to cross and back cross seeking plants with larger inflorescences. I quote from a letter from Adda Abendroth in Brazil to Olwen Ferris in Australia on June 17th 1968 "Years ago Dr. Oeser sent me some *Ae. fasciata* seed from Germany. Several plants raised from it flowered and put their wild sisters to shame. Mature plants are about twice as big, clad in a real snow-dress in winter, and have a larger and richer spike and more simultaneous flowers. The flower bracts are slightly curled. It is our light-green variety plus a successful beauty treatment. Our light-green form is faithful as to shape and size and habits. It blooms in early Spring, or a little later, sparingly. The plants grow on tree trunks or branches in virgin forest. The colonies are not large, to 3-5 shoots. Another variety has dark green leaves, sometimes tinged with red. Size about the same as the light-green form but not so even, colonies somewhat larger. Habitat the same.



Aechmea fasciata var. **purpurea**

The third form appears growing on nearly naked branches of old trees, mostly single rosettes 20-30cm in diameter. The colour is rosy, shape nice and even. This form, when planted in shade (tied to a branch or a trunk) has darker and longer leaves. The rosy pink seems to develop only high up in the trees, ex-posed to sun and wind. The fourth is the variety *purpurea* which has wine-red leaves. Habit like the dark-green form. In deep shade the leaves get very long and fall over. The red is al-most black making a striking contrast with the white bands. This is more common than the total of the other three."



Aechmea fasciata var. *pruinosa*

It was not until 1981 that we see Adda involved in a new variety: *Aechmea fasciata* var. *pruinosa* Reitz, Sellowia 33: 55. 1981 Leaves, scape bracts, and flowers white farinose; densely covered in scales forming a white skin. Type: Brasil, Santa Catarina: Ipanema plant cultivated in the State of Rio de Janeiro, collected *Adda Abendroth s.n.* 14 Feb. 1981. Holotype HBR.

In 'Bromeliaceae' by Reitz 393-397, 1983 we read: "Variety, so far, is only known by the type, from the interior of the forests of the State of Rio de Janeiro and possibly very rare; collected in State of cultivation, in Itapema, Santa Catarina by R. Reitz." This indicates it is rare in the wild but actively cultivated in Brazil and it seems strange that a plant with this name has not been quoted outside Brazil. According to REFLOA no further herbarium specimens have been lodged. However, it does seem to link to the cultivar 'Silver King' which is shrouded in mystery but emerged in this period.

Variegations have been reported in Seidel's Catalogue in 1976 but nothing has been described botanically other than the following: *Aechmea fasciata* var. *flavi-vittata* Reitz, Sellowia 33:55. 1981. Leaves with longitudinal lines alternately green and yellow. Type: Brasil, Santa Catarina: Brusque, cultivated in the State of Rio de Janeiro, leg *J. Pehnck s. n.* (15.2. 1981), Holotype HBR.

Again we read in 'Bromeliaceae' by Reitz 393-397, 1983: "The variety, so far, is only known by the type, from the interior of the forests of the State of Rio de Janeiro; collected in State of cultivation, in Brusque, Santa Catarina, by R. Reitz." This indicates it is rare in the wild but actively cultivated in Brazil and it seems strange that a plant with this name has been rarely quoted outside Brazil. According to



REFLOA no further herbarium specimens have been lodged. In any event, variegated plants do not reproduce from seed and should be treated as cultivars. As such I will be adding *Aechmea* 'Flavi-vittata' to the BCR. Most variegations in cultivation have white stripes not yellow and we find reference to this in Seidel's Catalogue in 1976. Interestingly, they are not mentioned in DeLeon's article on variegates in Journal Brom Soc 35(1): 34-37, 1985. In fact nobody seems to have given them a proper cultivar name.



For want of a term I will use *Aechmea* 'Albo-vittata'. Variegation is most likely to occur in cultivation via 'sporting' or mutation in seed raising so it's highly possible that this happened to one of the many infra-specific cultivars rather than a 'wild' species.

The list and photo's of infra-specific *Aechmea fasciata* cultivars follows

'Aton', 'Auslese', 'Big Mama Fasciata', 'Canvey Pink Surprise', 'Checkers', 'Clara', 'DeLeon', 'Frost', 'Ghost', 'Ivory', 'Kiwi', 'Leucadia', 'Mackerel', 'Morgana', 'Primera', 'Sangria', 'Sangria Blanco', 'Silver King', 'Silver Queen', 'Smoothie', 'Snaakse Ding', 'Stalker', 'Supernova', 'Supreme', 'White Head'.





◀ 'Supreme'

'Supernova' ▶

Photos supplied by: Derek Butcher and the BCR



Roving reporter Sept 2017

A meeting with a difference - we started 30 minutes early to cater for a Guest Speaker, all the way from Victoria by the name of Dr. Randall Robinson. He has loads of experience in Orchids and gave us a different way to look at *Dyckia*.

First let us look at the plants brought in for general display. The most popular plant was *Dyckia* 'Arizona' brought in by Julie Batty. The name was registered in 2015 but done posthumously with both parents unknown. The hybridist was Bill Baker, known in California for producing many hybrids of the terrestrial kind without keeping records (Perhaps it is better to say without divulging details). In the 1980's California was known as the centre of the *Dyckia* world with Huntington Gardens being the leader regarding species but others being busy hybridising as soon as plants arrived from Brazil. Very few records were kept.



Dyckia 'Arizona'

We do not have photos of what 'Arizona' looked like some 30 years when it was created and we do not know if it has a clonal link or seed raised link. Whatever it is, it is a striking plant AND seedlings from it do not show much variation. Thus those with F2 etc on the label can look very similar. F2 etc means seed obtained from such a plant BUT this can mean self set OR unknown Father, so parentage becomes murky. Looking at what species were available in the period I keep looking at *Dyckia dawsonii* which is very rare indeed in private collections of *Dyckia*. It is just another example of priority paid to hybrids rather than trying to conserve species.

It was great to hear that some of our members had exhibited at the Adelaide Royal Show trying to lift the standard of the Bromeliads in the competitions. I well remember the same problems occurring 30 years ago where the biggest problem was that The Royal Show was just too early in the Spring. This leads me to a plant that does well in our colder weather, *Vriesea elata* which Peter Hall had got in full flower. Doubts were expressed as to whether it was still a *Vriesea* after the revelations in Barfuss et al 2016. But there it is, still a *Vriesea*!!

Do not despair because they did promise us that the 2016 paper was not the be-all and end-all. Instead of waiting until I get home to try to solve these queries perhaps we can prevail on those members who have smart phones to find out the answer on the spot.



Vriesea elata

One plant that caught Margaret's eye was *Vriesea* 'Mirror Image' which is another F2 hybrid but different to our *Dyckia* 'Arizona' mentioned earlier. We know that seed from a hybrid is called F2 and you expect the seedling batch to be a motley crew. Some years ago Cheryl Basic in Queensland, got a batch of seed from Shigii's 'Royal Hawaiian' hybrid. The resultant seedlings were very variable and I do not know if she kept the name the same or called them Royal Hawaiian F2. In any event the F2 could easily be dropped off the label and it would have been better to select and give them their own names. In this case Alan Phythian considered his purchase was worthy of a name and 'Mirror Image' came into being. For the observant ones, you may have looked at its photo in the BCR and said "But it does not look the same!" Do not despair but so many of these 'Glyph' hybrids change colour as they age to maturity.

And so to the two talks that Randall entertained us with. Yes, one on *Dyckia* generally and the other on *Dyckia* hybrids in particular. He too pointed out the problems with the many differences encountered with F2 seedlings. It was great to listen to someone with an Orchid background giving his views on *Dyckia* and the problems with hybridising.

I will now talk about a few of the *Dyckia* plants that were brought in to supplement the talk. As Randall said, *Dyckias* in the open garden make a great show, but you soon use up spare space making them more suitable for Botanical Gardens. Some of us have to rely on pot culture.

If you have a strawberry plant with yellow leaves you ring up Jon Lamb in a panic. Bromeliad growers are different. We had Len Cork have this happen to a *Billbergia pyramidalis* and he called it 'Gloria' after his wife.

Here we saw a yellow leaved *Dyckia* that looked like *D. brevifolia* and which Sarka thought had spent too much time in the sun. But was it a mutation/sport? In the BCR we see *Dyckia* 'Yellow Glow' which happened in California. Is this a similar happening? The things plants do to survive.

We saw Len's pride and joy *D. lindevaldae* that he had got from Heidelberg Bot Gdn which seems to have increased in number but still no flower. Perhaps we may convince him for the sake of Science to sacrifice one plant to Ross Little in Far North NSW to see if it would trigger flowering and the hope for self-set seed

We did notice a *D. 'Ruby Ryde'* which had green leaves and did not seem to link with the dark leaved plant as registered in the BCR. Could this be a case of misnaming or a seedling from 'Ruby Ryde' or even a plant that had been labelled ex Ruby Ryde (From Ruby).

Dyckia montevidensis had Randall stumped. If he had been around in 1874 he would have known but this is now known as *Dyckia remotiflora* var *montevidensis*. You may be interested to know that the last var *montevidensis* I investigated flowering in Australia turned out to be *Dyckia remotiflora* var *remotiflora* so I still have not found this elusive variety. So when this plant flowers it should be checked which I am willing to do. All I need is a photo of the flower!



D. brevifolia ?



D. lindevaldae



Dyckia montevidensis

Brief overview of Dr Randall Robinson's presentations.

DYCKIA

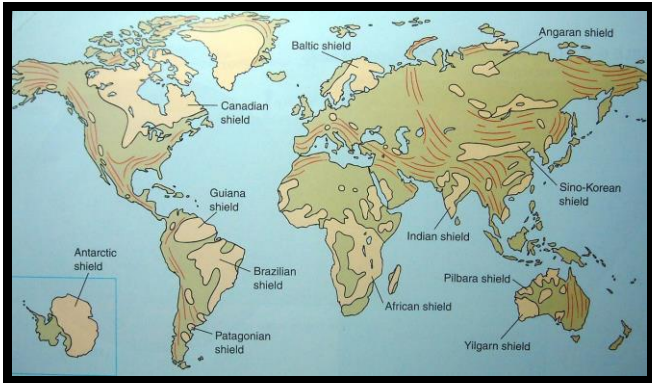
Family
Bromeliadaceae

Subfamily
Pitcairnioideae

146 taxa
(species and varieties)



DYCKIA DISTRIBUTION



A **shield** is generally a large area of exposed Precambrian crystalline igneous and high-grade metamorphic rocks that form tectonically stable areas.



Dyckia brevifolia



Constantino Gastaldi

Photographer



A glimpse of some of Randall's collection

Hybridising- Why Hybridize?

- Novelty,
- Combine desirable traits,
- Improve growth traits,
- Widen choices,
- Personal satisfaction



Types of Hybridizing styles

- Give it a try
- Goal Oriented
- Careful and specific
- Discovery

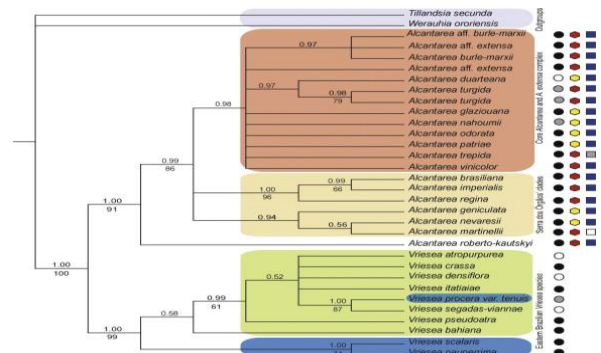
What are your goals?

- Foliage properties?
- Flowers?
- Outdoor use?
- Hardiness?
- Drought tolerant?
- Sun Tolerant?



Getting the best results?

- Close relatives
- Ploidy
- Dioecious
- Self Sterility/Fertility
- Bigeneric and multigeneric



2017 Adelaide Royal Show

Our Society again participated in the Royal show with a water feature in the garden themed display. After many years absence there were Bromeliads for judging & our President was awarded a number of 1st, 2nd & third prizes. There were many compliments given especially the range of shapes, sizes & colour variations on show. A large number of sales flyers were distributed and it will be interesting to see how many maintain their enthusiasm and come along to our sales weekend. There were numerous questions from those already growing 'hooked' on Bromeliads with some relieved to have details on where they can purchase more. Many thanks to the dedicated volunteers supporting this. *Bev*



Our display

