



East London Bromeliad Society

South Africa

NEWS
LETTER
April
2018

Established: 25 July 2009

Our aim is to promote and encourage awareness and interest in Bromeliads in East London and all of South Africa!

ELBS is an Affiliated Society of  Bromeliad Society International

A revisit to Miriam's Garden!

This was by all accounts a jam packed meeting with 36 folks attending and with a full programme of interesting items to appeal to everyone. Miriam Kennard was the host for the March meeting and told everyone about her garden, she has also written about her garden journey which you can read further on in the newsletter. Her garden has been on the Pam Golding Show Gardens of East London three times and I personally love it for its tranquility and sprawling shady layout. I went to visit Miriam this week and was surprised



at all the changes she has made since the last time I was there. It is hard work and with her trusty gardener Michael, gets the jobs done. Multiplying *Bromeliads* have gone a long way to creating new beds and changing others, with pools of colour. The cycads still stand proud with lots of ground covers. Miriam your garden is delightful!



Miriam Kennard, host for the meeting in her beautiful garden and holding her hostess plant, *Neoregelia carolinae* (Hendrix).

Brenda Wegner, ably assisted by Dr Pete Pfister and Lyn Wegner did a demonstration of splitting *Bromeliads*, a topic that has come up often, but it is important for newer members to see how it's done so they can go home and split their own to get the best out of them.

Splitting Bromeliads presented by Brenda Wegner

Splitting is one of my favourite things to do. I find it therapeutic, relaxing and so rewarding. *Bromeliads* can start forming pups, (also called-shoots or offsets) at any time, some even before

Brenda and Pete showing how best to separate a clump of *Vriesea erythrodactylon*.



Next Meeting: Sunday 29th April at 2 for 2.30pm. Hosted by Les Dry at 27 Hillcrest Drive, Beacon Bay. Don't forget to bring your chair if you want a seat.

flowering. Most pups grow off the side of the mother plant at the base or on long woody stolons. By removing pups you speed up the process of the mother plant producing more pups. Pups are ready to be separated when they reach about a third to half the size of the parent plant. You can always see when it's time to re-pot when the pot becomes overcrowded and the pot gets out of shape and the pups start growing over the sides. In the garden the clumps get scruffy with the dead mother plants between the new growth. These need to be removed as this can also lead to scale forming between the tightly compacted leaves.

Before I start splitting to put into pots, I prepare by having the following handy: pots, potting soil, secateurs, loppers, sharp knife, scissors, labels and a permanent marker. Each pup you split from its mother needs to be labelled. This is important. For your own purposes it is good to know what you have in your collection of *Bromeliads* in case you want to swap or sell plants one day, or learn more about that particular plant.

Some pups can be easily pulled away from the mother by hand but others may need secateurs, loppers or a sharp knife to remove the pup as close to the mother plant as possible. The bigger varieties may need tree loppers or a small saw to cut through the woody stem. The long handles of the loppers keep your hands and arms away from the sharp spines on some *Bromeliad's* leaves and gives better leverage. Try not to damage the mother plant. Stoloniferous pups can be separated by cutting the woody stolon, leaving a bit next to the base of the plant. These are handy for mounting using for example, fencing staples to hold the stolon in place on the mount. If by accident you do break off a pup that looks like it might not make it, place it in a cup of another bromeliad and chances are that it might form roots.

The longer you leave the pups on the mother plant the quicker they will reach maturity (taking nourishment from mom). Leave the pup on the mother till at least two thirds the size of the mother plant. Trim back the leaves of the mother plant if they start interfering with the growth of a new pup. Position the plant with the pups facing towards the light, especially if a pup is variegated and you want to encourage more variegated pups. Alternatively, removing the pups a bit smaller will encourage the mother plant to grow more pups sooner. Just remember that pups removed when they are too small struggle to develop and could result in inferior plants.

Once pups are separated you can leave them for a few days in a shady spot for the 'wound' to heal or pot them up straight away but don't water them. It's best to keep them on the drier side till roots form. Remember that *Bromeliads* take in moisture and nutrients through their leaves and most can survive as epiphytes (mounted). The roots are mainly to anchor the plant to a host. REMEMBER when mounting: Silicon, copper and treated timber will kill *Bromeliads*.

Don't plant them too deep as the base can rot. Alternatively, if you have a number of pups around the mother, you may choose to just cut away the mother plant and let the pups form an attractive specimen group of that particular *Bromeliad*.

Some, like *Neoregelia*, look better separated, so that the rosette form of the plant can be appreciated. Other genera eg: *Billbergia* and *Tillandsia* look attractive when allowed to grow as a clump of specimen plants. Don't be in a hurry to throw out your mother plant either, especially if it is a special one, the most exhausted looking plants can still surprise you and send out another pup! HAPPY SPLITTING !

Show and Tell

Sowing *Tillandsia* Seed - Robert Moss

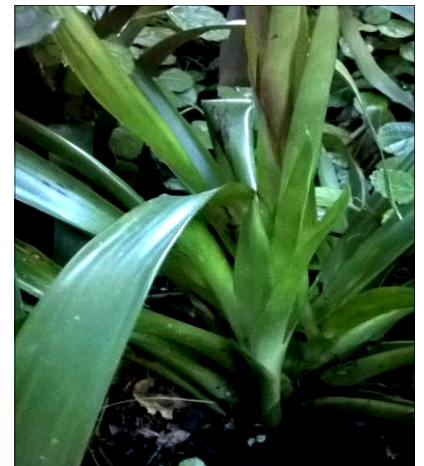
- *Tillandsia* seed needs to be sown asap after harvesting as they remain viable for only a short period of time.
- As *Tillandsia* is such a large and varied genus, no one sowing method will suit all species.



A pup big enough to be removed from the basal root area on *Neoregelia* 'De Rolf'.

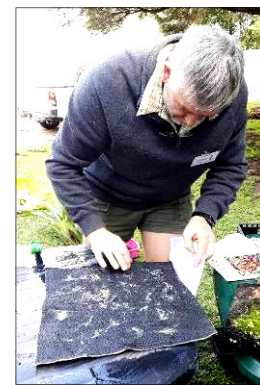


A nice example of a stolon on a *Neoregelia*.



A soft leaved *Guzmania* with a pup not quite big enough to remove. These can easily be pulled away from the mother plant.

- *Tillandsia* seed needs: moisture, light, and good air circulation for germination.
- Seed sown on shade cloth and placed in an open flat perforated tray then suspended in the air, placed in my shade-house, has worked well for me for quite a number of species.
- Other substrate options for sewing seed on to: branches/bark slabs, tree fern fibre, shade cloth pillows, peat or sphagnum moss in sowing trays.
- Any airy substrate that will not decay for at least 3 years should be satisfactory.
- Avoid using a substrate which remains too wet and could develop algae growth which can quickly suffocate young seedlings.



Seed sown thinly on bark and on one of the shade-cloth pillows that Robert's sister makes for him.

Tillandsia Seed Sowing Demonstration:

- Spread seeds as thinly as possible on the substrate, avoid sowing in clumps.
- The more widely the seeds are spread out, the more space young plants will have to grow before having to be disturbed. Space between plants also



Tillandsia babies growing on shade-cloth and on tree fern fibre stuffed inside a plastic mesh cylinder shape and in bark chips and on a piece of wood.



- ensures they don't stay wet for too long which could lead to fungal problems, particularly in winter.
- Spray seeds well with water in a spray bottle to settle them and help them adhere to the shade cloth. It is always preferable to use rain water.
- Keep seed moist by spraying 3 - 4 times a week depending on weather conditions.
- Seedlings will respond well to regular applications of a balanced fertiliser. Use at ¼ the strength of the manufacturer's recommendations.
- *Tillandsia* seedlings grow very slowly for the first 2 years. Thereafter their growth rate accelerates.

- For more information, refer to an excellent article in the BSI Journal of Jan-March 2015 Vol. 65(1) for more information. This journal, plus many others, are in the library. You can access older journals on the BSI website: bsi.org



Eddie Black showed one of his blooming guzzies, *Guzmania* 'Lollipop' which is a hybrid between *Guzmania* 'Fortuna' and *Guzmania* *conifera*.



Val Nel showed an ugly duckling *Billbergia* which she got as a give-away and it is now a beauty with a pup.



Robert Moss brought a lovely selection of his blooming broms to show! One of which was a stunning example of a species *Bromeliad*, *Guzmania* *sanguinea*.

- * Update on the Australian seed from Robert Moss: He says the *Tillandsia variabilis* seed he got is germinating!

What species is that? - Lyn Wegner

Vriesea erythrodactylon

The word, erythrodactylon, is derived from erythros – red, dactylus – fingered, due to the red, finger-like floral bracts. This is a *Vriesea* species which is endemic (found only) to Brazil where it grows as a terrestrial (in the ground) and an epiphyte (mounted) in the shade of the rainforest. It is a small or medium sized plant,

depending on the soil, humidity and light conditions. Soft green leaves, ligulate, broadly acute and apiculate (ending suddenly in a point), 30-40cm long, 2-3cm wide, brownish towards the base and dark purple towards the apex. Scape is short with imbricate, thin, pale green bracts. The inflorescence is about 30cm high, simple, distichous (2 rows opposite each other), strongly compressed (flat), in the form of a spike, green at the base, turning red in the upper tips. The floral bracts are densely imbricate (overlapping), always covering the rachis and sepals, red. Petals are erect, emerging on one side of the separated bracts, yellow. A very variable and attractive plant.

I agree! The flower spike is striking! I have brought the large form to the meeting with its 2 glorious inflorescences. I have also brought the other form which is very much smaller and unfortunately not blooming simultaneously so we could compare differences if any.

I notice the foliage of the large form doesn't have the beautiful purple at the base of the leaves. The leaves are broader and much longer and are a different colour green. They are growing in pots in different shady spots so the light conditions probably vary and hence the different colour green foliage.

I have purposely not given the meaning of all the terms in this article to encourage you to go into the site mentioned below!

Bromeliad Dictionary

I am sure you struggle to find the meaning of words used in bromeliad articles. I asked Eric Gouda if there was a website for a 'Bromeliad Dictionary'. Eric is my 'go to' person when I need to know anything! Thank you Eric! And here it is: The Glossary of *Bromeliaceae* terms compiled in 2016 by another great person in the brom world, Derek Butcher. Google: <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/brom-l/> The list of Brom-L pages (features) second last option.



Large form of *Vriesea erythroactylon* at the back and the smaller version in the front showing the lovely purple markings around the base.

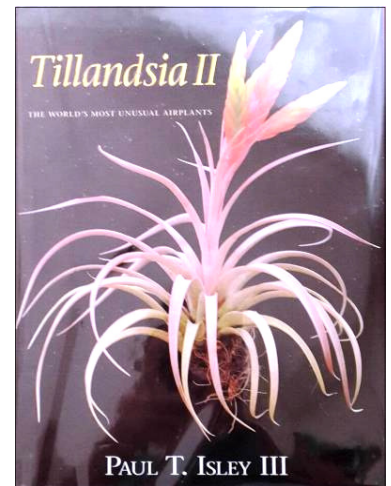
Library Book Review - Brenda Wegner

Tillandsia 11 The World's Most Unusual Airplants by Paul T. Isley 111

I am so thrilled to finally have this book in our ELBS library with its stunning *Tillandsia* photographs and information. The content covers, Introduction to *Tillandsia*, The Species, The Hybrids, Additional Photographs, *Tillandsia* Biographical History, Botanical Nomenclature, Taxonomy and *Tillandsia* Evolution and Biology.

Paul is a native Californian. He attended UCLA where his friend Mark Dimmitt introduced him to *Tillandsia* and ignited his passion and his subsequent professional career in growing and distributing the plants, starting in 1974. Paul and business partner, Jerry Robinson own 'RainForest Flora' with growing facilities in Torrance and Bonsall, California.

He is married with three daughters. During December 2017 California was ravaged by wildfires, fueled by nature's blowtorch, the Santa Ana winds. And when the Lilac Fire in San Diego County took aim at Paul Isley's Bonsall 8.34-acre plant nursery, the battle was already lost. He lost hundreds of rare plants that had been cultivated, in some cases, over decades and estimates plant inventory losses in the millions of dollars. Fortunately there are still plenty of plants at the Torrance branch. They lost three of their 4 cars, 151 buildings and damage to 56 others. By the time it was over, the fire had burned 4100 acres in its path. About 5 percent of the plants actually survived. Just how tragic is that
Information from: *Tillandsia 11 The World's Most Unusual Airplants* by Paul T. Isley 111 and the Daily Breeze Newspaper.



Member News

Welcome back to local members Mavis and Terence Downey and country member Dr. Chris Myburgh from Pretoria. We hope that you will all have a long and rewarding relationship with the society and the members.

Thanks

- Miriam Kennard for hosting the March meeting.
- Robert Moss for giving a presentation on Growing Tillandsia from Seed.
- Ladies who helped with tea: Sue Pema, Irene Manthe and Bev Reynolds.
- Lucky Draw plants: Dr Pete Pfister, Lyn Wegner, Brenda Wegner, Eddie Black and Dudley Reynolds
- Give-away plants, Dr Pete Pfister and Brenda Wegner.
- Rob Murray and all the members of Bromeliad Society of Queensland Inc. Australia, who donated *Tillandsia* seed to our society, which has been disseminated to interested growers. Please convey our thanks to all who donated seed. We appreciate the gesture!

Congratulations to the March Raffle Winners

- Robert Moss chose *Neoregelia* 'Gee Whiz'.
- Andre Eybers chose *Aechmea bromeliifolia* var *albobracteata*.
- Sue Pema chose *Vriesea rodigasiana* x 'Eva'.
- Brenda Wegner chose *Vriesea* 'Sunset'.
- Richard King from Darling chose *Neoregelia* 'Painted Lady x Painted Delight'.
- Christo van Wijk from Pretoria won 2 raffles and chose *Neoregelia* 'Gee Whiz' x *pauciflora* and *Neoregelia* 'Klingito'.
- Johan Bouwer from Graaff-Reinet chose *Neoregelia* 'Vallenato'.

Lucky draw winners:

- There were numerous lucky draws on offer.

From the Chairman

Greetings to all you *Bromeliad* growers. Now that the season is changing, one must focus on those broms that do battle during the colder months of the year.

We are very fortunate to be able to grow *Cryptanthus* here in East London with moderate success. They like our sub tropical climate. However I have found a few cold sensitive species and hybrids do suffer in our relatively mild winters. Over the years I have found that if the temperature drops under 10 degrees C* there is a lot of leaf dieback on the more sensitive plants. Therefore steps should be taken to move these plants to warmer areas in the garden. One idea is to surround them with rocks that will retain a little more heat from the sun than the soil does. This is of course if your plants are in pots as mine are. As for those of you folk who have frost in winter, more extreme steps should be taken to protect your *Cryptanthus*. Fortunately they will not suffer if placed on a windowsill for a period of time providing that a humid environment is maintained. Why I enjoy *Cryptanthus* so much is the different colour effects one attains in different light situations. If anyone has any comments or needs advice on growing this genus, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail. I am by no means an expert. We all learn from our mistakes and from good communication. That's all for this month. Until we chat again, happy bromming!

From the Committee

- There is an emerging demand for short videos on topics or plants presented at some of the meetings. Is there a member who is good at this and would be willing to do it on odd occasions? I should imagine it could be done with a Smartphone with a good camera. These videos would be available on flash stick from the library. Contact Lyn or Brenda if you are able and willing.
- Have you ever considered giving a friend or someone you know, who loves bromeliads a years sponsored membership to the ELBS. It could be for a birthday present or Christmas!!! Contact Lyn Wegner if you are interested.
- We were having a 'forward thinking moment' at the last committee meeting about one day holding a BSI World Bromeliad Conference in East London!!! Yes, you read that right! One



Local raffle winners, Sue Pema, Andre Eybers, Brenda Wegner and Robert Moss.



Lovely dappled shade on Miriam's lawn for Dudley Reynolds to open the meeting.



Lyn Odendaal, Gerald Vogt and Sue Pema enjoying Miriam's garden.

day.... Would country members support this idea and attend? We can get exposure for what is happening in South Africa with regard to *Bromeliads*, even though we are new on the block in terms of the age of our society and membership of the BSI. There is a lot going on around the country. We have some spectacular South African hybrids too! We have stunning *Bromeliad* collections and bromeliad gardens which can be visited in East London by attendees. Overseas BSI members could make a reasonably priced package holiday with all there is to see and experience in SA. I am sure that this would attract some big names in the brom world to come to SA as speakers too. We are keen, love broms and realise the financial implications of such a venture, plus we have Lyn, the BSI President to guide us! Do contact Lyn if you have some thoughts on this topic. We want to hear from you.

- The increase in Vat charges will affect the cost of bank charges and membership fees that are paid over the counter at the bank or Post Office. You will need to include these bank charges please when paying your fees. EFT payments incur no charges.

Upcoming Society Events

29th April: Our hosts will be Les and Andre Dry at 27 Hillcrest Drive, Beacon Bay. We meet at 2.00 for 2.30pm. Don't forget your chair if you want a seat and a mug if you prefer not to use a styrofoam cup.

Topic: : Dr Pete Pfister will be our presenter, it will be the topic of his choice which I am sure we will all enjoy!

27th May: Our host will be Brenda Wegner at 19 Putney Avenue, Nahoon Valley.

24th June: TBA

29th July: ELBS SA 9th Birthday celebration hosted by Lyn and Trevor Wegner in Sunnyridge.

26th August: Mike and Mandy Godfrey in Beacon Bay.

30th September: Travelling meeting, Paul Webb and David Gower both in Beacon Bay.

28th October: Michael and Zena McClaren in Vincent.

25 November: End of year Christmas Auction, BBB Surprise and Bring and Braai.

We are looking for hosts for this event please!

Upcoming International Conferences

2018: World Bromeliad Conference to be held in San Diego, California from 29 May to 3 June 2018. This will be the third WBC that will be held in San Diego, California. For more info go to bsi.org, WBC2018.

2019: 'Golden Broms' 17-20 October 2019 Hosted by the Gold Coast Succulent and Bromeliad Society Inc. at the Sea World Resort on the Gold Coast. This will be the 20th Australasian Bromeliad Conference. For contact information go to the conference website at www.goldenbroms.com

2021: This bi-annual **Australasian Bromeliad Conference** will again be hosted by The New Zealand Bromeliad Society. **'Kiwi Broms'** April 8th to 11th 2021, venue Waipuna Hotel. Start saving now!

From the Members

Miriam Kennard, East London: My husband and I bought 43 Grace Crescent in October 1989, just on 30 years ago. Prior to that, we had lived in Salisbury, Rhodesia. I was a born and bred Northern Rhodesian. John and I met and married in Lusaka and we moved to Salisbury a few years later. John is a Kentish man - his hometown is Tunbridge Wells. We both loved Rhodesia with a passion, a wonderful country, and spent many very happy years there. Such a great pity it was totally ruined by Mad Dog Bob. We left with great sadness once he came into power and we fled to South Africa, a kind country which opened its arms and welcomed many Rhodesians We spent a few years in Durban before coming to the Eastern Cape and fell in love with East London.



Miriam in her garden about 5 years ago and below, how the gardens used to look full of Busy Lizzies and not a brom in sight!



We started house-hunting. I wanted a house with a large garden, similar to the one we had had in Salisbury. 43 Grace Crescent was up for sale. It was just the size I wanted, but John took one look at the garden and emphatically said "NO, the garden is a nightmare, you'll never be able to do anything with it." It WAS a nightmare but it was what I wanted and I visualised what it could look like. We bought it, moved in and I

employed two garden labourers. It took 6 months to clear it of rubbish, landscape it, lay out beds, plant lawn, put in a water system, which was later discarded as the flower beds kept getting bigger. We had to import a ton of soil to fill in large empty gaps around the pool. It was hard work but I have the garden I visualised and with the *Bromeliads*, I love it.

My Salisbury garden had consisted of many aloes, an area of flame lilies, roses and lots of annuals, sweetpeas in particular, a bog garden with a large pond with waterfalls. So I did more or less the same thing here, but without the water garden. Busy Lizzies were a great success here, but worms destroyed 50 *clivia*, the soil was too clay-like for the annuals, but for years I battled on. Then my back started complaining. A friend suggested I plant *Bromeliads* and gave me 5 from her garden about 15 years ago. *Bromeliads* were new to me. They grew and spread like mad, and then I heard about a *Bromeliad* nursery on the way to the airport. Well, to cut a long story short, I found 'Bromeliads for Africa'!!!

I was totally transfixed with Lyn Wegner's exquisite nursery. I had never seen anything more beautiful than her magnificent *Bromeliads*, their dazzling colours and fascinating shapes. I fell in love that day, so many years ago, with *Bromeliads* and with lovely Lyn.

Bromeliad enthusiasts all seem to be such special and generous people, and I can never thank Peter Pfister enough for the many, many hundreds of *Bromeliads* he has given me over the years, and Dudley Reynolds for the special broms he has spoilt me with and for all the help and advice both men have given me on caring for *Bromeliads*. Peter, please keep the Squatter Camp going!

Oh, one last thing about gardening in South Africa. I have even come to like cycads, something I had never seen before coming to South Africa and wasn't impressed when I first saw them in Durban. I now appreciate the various species and their historic value and I fight fiercely with those ghastly yellow and black moths which lay eggs all over new leaves and those horrible little worms which hatch from the eggs and eat a year's growth overnight.

Pat Mitchell, Houston Texas: Your long lost Texas member checking in! We have had a horrible Winter here in Houston but this is the first week of Spring with spirits picking up and this is a letter to my fellow East London Bromeliad Society members. When I visited East London last year in late May, I didn't go with any plan except to visit some *Bromeliad* gardens, tour the East London Museum and see the world famous *Coelacanth*, and meet members of the ELBS. WOW! What a trip and I think about it every day and what took place in a few short days. I want to thank Lyn and Trevor Wegner for starting my adventure and the following members for sharing their time and beautifully maintained gardens; Brenda and Bryan Wegner, Lorraine Parathyras, Dr. Peter Pfister, Barbara Black, Lynn Friend, Miriam Kennard and Dudley Reynolds who inspired me with the way he mounts his *Neoregelias* on drift wood branches and my dear Helena van der Ham.

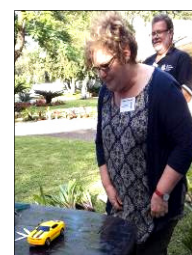
Starting in 2017 and continuing this new year of 2018, I have created in my garden a special section devoted to you all and to let it remind me each day how special you made my trip. The garden includes *Alcantarea imperialis* as the center piece and surrounding it in a certain order are *Encholirium horridum*, *Aechmea magdalenae* var. *quadricolor*, *Sincoraea burlemarxii*, *Tillandsia fasciculata*, *Lymania azurea*, *Qchagavia carnea*, *Neoregelia* 'Fairy Paint', *Deuterochonia brevifolia*, *Orthophytum fosterianum*, *Nidularium innocentii* var *lineatum*, *Sincoraea albopicta*, *Orthophytum maracasense*, *Ursulaea tuitensis*, *Tillandsia hildae*, *Hechtia texensis*, *Araeococcus flagellus*, *Fernseea bocainensis*, *Ronnbergia allenii*, *T. ionantha**, *Canistrum fosteriana* and *Ananas comosus*. *We have no genera beginning with "I" so I have used *Tillandsia ionantha*.

When we had our floods last year, our Theatre was shut down for almost two months and our entire work force was relocated around the city. Across the street from my new location was a store which had items from around the world, including *Tillandsia ionantha*; they were dehydrated and had no root and needed a home. The 15 saved from an uncertain future are thriving and putting on color, thus creating the "I" in the garden. It is a labor of love for all of you and if I have forgotten someone, please forgive me. Speaking of my second love, theatre, I urge you all to support The Guild Theatre and the wonderful programmes they do with young people. Brenda Wegner and I attended a working rehearsal on my visit and it too was a moving experience. Until we meet again, Baie Danke, Pat Mitchell, Houston

Helena van der Ham hosted Pat at her B & B 'Tu Casa' while he was on his visit to East London and he always had 'Ruby the Robot' with him wherever



Dear Pat Mitchell and the 'robot' time piece 'Ruby' who travelled all the way to SA with him.



Helena showing off the Transformer car from Pat.

he went, even to Nahoon Beach with all of us! So he recently sent Helena a car!!! If any of you are familiar with the movies you will know what it is! Only Pat could think of something so special!

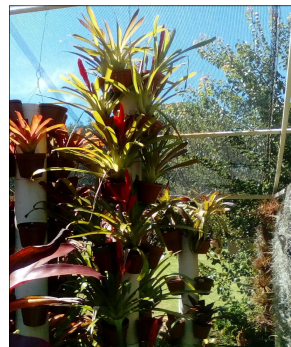
Charles Barrett from Rynfield: I grow my bromeliads on vertical pipes so I can get +- 24 plants per M2 of ground space instead of say 4 planted in the ground. I use the 'pot in a pot' method so it's easy to move plants around. A pebble in the fixed pot helps to prevent the other pot sticking. I use 2 X American wafer screws which prevents top heavy plants from tilting.



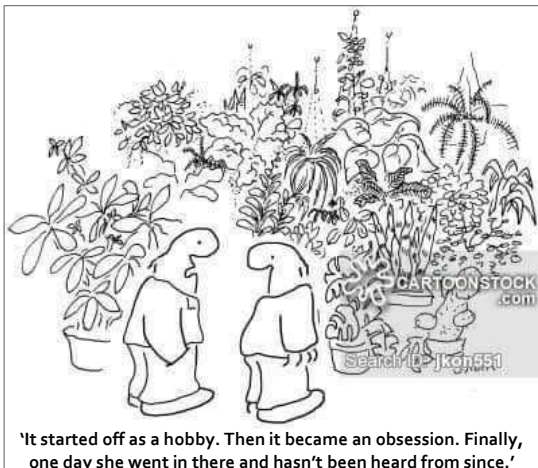
In Benoni we get frost/cold for about 8 weeks in Winter. My shade/hot house is 6m X 12m with 20% black shade cloth. I find my broms are on the smaller side but the colouring is good. I get very little burning of leaves even on soft leaved varieties. In Winter I cover with 60 micron plastic which perishes with the sun by Spring. Then I rip it off and into the bin it goes.

Charles Barrett with his innovative poles with pots attached designed to save space and enabling him to grow more Bromeliads!

I have 15 or so different types of broms growing in the garden which winter well and soon will plant others out. Anne, my wife appreciates broms but doesn't really get involved. My columns run north/south so they are sunny all day.



Charles's poles filling up with broms.



'It started off as a hobby. Then it became an obsession. Finally, one day she went in there and hasn't been heard from since.'

The humidity on the Highveld tends to be low so my plants get ample water to compensate .

Geoff Lawn to Lyn Wegner: When I read that you had just received another 350 bromeliads from Nigel, thought the attached cartoon is really about YOU ! Ho, ho.

Lyn: I got to know Geoff a little in Hawaii and then we met again at Sunnybroms Conference last year.

Barbs: Hehe!!! Highly appropriate for Lyn !!!! and a few other brommy folks I can think of in the society!!!

Danie Conradie, East London:

An idea I had to assist bromeliad fanatics to 'know their plants' and 'know more about' their plants basically covers two areas. Plant DNA Barcoding.

Power Point video online download: <http://slideplayer.com/slide/3822425/#.Wr8T4qU845A.gmail>

Firstly, this is to assist with the ability to look at a plant and identify it as a specific type. This is a topic (Taxonomy of all living things) that is well documented and researched and one can find tons of information on the internet. With this science it is possible to use DNA sampling to identify the type of species and then to create a barcode that one can print on a plastic plant identification tag and place next to the plant.

Secondly, once the plant has been identified, is to use a mobile Smartphone to capture information about the plant onto a free Smartphone application (app) like 'airtable'. This free database that is hosted in the cloud allows one to configure it (adding as many data fields as you like) according to one's own needs, and to collect data either via taking a picture, scanning a barcode (using the Smartphone's camera) or typing information in or selecting information from a drop-down list. This means you could be in your garden with only your Smartphone, and you can collect the mentioned data about the plant. Below are some thoughts on the types of information that one would like to have about one's collection of Bromeliads.

- Picture of the plant.
- Position in the garden (documented as a GPS coordinate).

- Is this position full sun, morning and afternoon, shady, etc...
- How did you obtain it? (gift, lucky draw, purchase, swap).
- From whom did you get/buy it?
- Price paid for it.
- Generation of plant.
 - * A1 being the original mother plant, with A being the first generation, and you obtained one plant.
 - * When the original mother plant has pups they would be numbered B1, being the second generation, pup number 1 and B2 also a second generation plant pup number 2 etc...

With this data you will have a complete database of your collection, but also other very interesting facts about the collection. This will allow you to know what you actually already have. One will then also be able to create a graphical overview of the location of the various plants based on GPS positions captured when the picture was taken. Recording of a GPS position when a picture is taken is nowadays a standard function on our Smartphones.

I trust this overview is sufficient to describe the general idea that I had. I am still doing research to determine exactly how one should go about tackling this. I am more familiar with the second part of the task, and need to understand more about the first part.

From the Editor

As we enjoy the Autumn weather, thanks to all the rain we have been receiving everything is still growing great guns, which means things still need to be kept ship shape, clearing out dead leaves from your broms too and taking off pups before Winter arrives so they can get established before it gets cold. Enjoy the jewel like colours of your *Neoregelia* like you saw in Miriam's garden. There is always something blooming when you grow bromeliads, aren't we lucky?

I must thank those who pitched in and sent me information and photos from the March meeting to be included in this month's newsletter. A hearty BIG thanks to those who did, I am very thankful. Also to those who have contributed news items in the members section this month, GREAT!!! thank you for sharing with the members of the society, we love to get to know you and what is happening with your *Bromeliads* wherever you are in the world.

As you can see it's a bumper newsletter after what was clearly a busy meeting! So, happy bromming to you all and see you at the next meeting at the home of Les and Andre Dry in Beacon Bay. We have not met there before so thank you to both of you in advance for hosting our April meeting.

Barbs.



Earth Day 2018 is on **Sunday, 22nd April**. Worldwide support of the environment and to raise awareness for the environmental protection and care of our amazing planet earth.

This is a publication for the **East London Bromeliad Society, South Africa** for the interest of its members. Articles may be used by non profit societies with acknowledgement to the author where applicable and East London Bromeliad Society South Africa. Please use the photos that accompany the article used. If you require higher resolution photos please request them from the Editor.

Any opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Society.

When submitting items for inclusion in this newsletter, please ensure that all information, including spelling is checked and accurate.

ELBS is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

Photo Credits: Brenda Wegner, Miriam Kennard, Lyn Wegner, Charles Barrett

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We meet on the last Sunday of every month at 2.00 for 2.30pm, January to November, at various venues around East London. We have a topic for each meeting and Show and Tell where members are encouraged to bring along their brag or problem plants. There are member raffles, lucky draws for those present, tea time, library and member plant sales, plus a monthly newsletter sent out via e-mail only. Visitors are always welcome and can attend three meetings before they will need to join the society in order to continue attending. Annual subs are R120.00 for individuals/families and R60 for students.

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Peter Cook from Sunnybroms (Australia) has very kindly created a link to ELBS SA newsletters on their web page: <https://bromeliadnewsletters.wordpress.com/east-london-south-africa/>

- You can access all the back copies from 2016 of the ELBS SA Newsletters
- The first of the BSI BCR genus changes and cultivar changes generated via DNA studies compiled by Derek Butcher the BSI Cultivar Registrar.

You will find ELBS on Facebook: [eastlondonbssa@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/eastlondonbssa@groups.facebook.com) or type 'East London Bromeliad Society' into the fb search bar. You can request to join the group and will then be able to upload your photos and comments on the wall. The ELBS SA page and other bromeliad related sites are a useful and informative forum to share and 'meet up' with other like-minded bromeliad folks. There are also many other bromeliad related sites that you can join and become part of a world wide online sharing environment.

You can view most of all the bromeliads mentioned in meetings or in the newsletter at the following websites:

The BSI's official Bromeliad Cultivar Registry www.registry.bsi.org which is maintained by Geoff Lawn, the BSI Cultivar Registrar. Plus other information regarding the Bromeliad Society International is found at bsi.org

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: fcb.org This is a very useful site to reference many bromeliads where you can clarify identification or just trawl through the site and add to your wish list!

Encyclopedia of Bromeliads - <http://bromelia.club> (Bromeliad Taxonomists and Growers Society) has photographs. It also now has keys for the genera and sub-genera. If you like to be informed what is happening, just follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bromeliadsencyclopedia> Just type in 'Encyclopediadia of Bromeliads' into the Facebook search bar.

For internet resources you can also go to TAXON (The New Bromeliad List) for the most authoritative and right up to date list of genera and species, accepted and new names and taxonomic keys - <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php> or just type in 'New Bromeliad Taxon List', it's much easier!