



East London Bromeliad Society

South Africa

NEWS LETTER
September
2019

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 SA is an Affiliated Society  of Bromeliad Society International

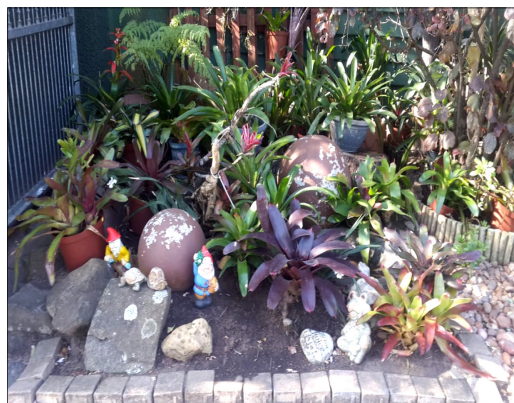
From the Chairman



Well done Brenda on your wonderful presentation at the August meeting. Our topic next month is going to be an interesting one on Artistic Expression involving bromeliads and/or Tillandsia. I'm sure you are all letting your imaginations run away with you. I have certainly been putting a lot of thought into it and hopefully will be able to show something creative on the day.

Having bromeliads in our lives makes it so easy to create beautiful areas in our gardens. For those of us who are obsessed, they take over our whole garden. The colours, shapes and forms of them make it so easy. I use many bromeliads in landscaping people's gardens for a living, which is always a huge success with happy customers. This is my way of spreading the good news about cultivating bromeliads.

Well Spring has sprung and there are many signs which tell us it is here. Hopefully the rains will come soon. Until next time, happy bromming.



August Meeting

I was not at the August meeting (sad face) hosted by Dave and Irene Manthe in Nahoon Valley. But by all accounts it was certainly a wonderful meeting with stunning weather for an outdoor



Members enjoying the gorgeous Spring afternoon and Irene's lovely garden. Below, Sue Pema with Irene Manthe, our host for the meeting.



Next Meeting: Sunday, 29th September at 2.00 for 2.30 pm. To be hosted by Mark Bradfield at the Gift Garden in Frere Road. Don't forget to bring your bromeliad creation and chair!

meeting with thirty four folks arriving for the meeting and to enjoy Irene's lovely garden plus Brenda Wegner's talk on whether to allow your bromeliads to grow into nice clumps or to separate as specimen plants.

To Divide your Bromeliads or Let them form a Clump presented by Brenda Wegner

It is always exciting when you buy or get given a new bromeliad, take it home and find a special place in the garden to show it off. I keep constant watch to see if it's going to flower or pup. How quickly this process occurs and how many pups are produced depends very much on the variety of bromeliad and the growing conditions it's kept in. It begins to grow and multiply and then we have to decide whether to separate the pups from the mother bromeliad or to keep them as a clump which can continue to grow happily together with the old mother plant removed from the centre.

There are several points that we need to consider:

- Is the container large enough to contain the clump?
- The pups could become squashed and distorted if there is no place to grow.
- The stoloniferous varieties creep over the sides of the container as they multiply and can look very attractive.
- Plants grown in large clumps, which will lead to lack of air movement, as well as dry conditions, are ideal for the development of scale.
- Moving the clumps to a larger container allows for more space and stability.

If it is a mounted bromeliad or Tillandsia, is the mount large enough to support a clump?

- If the mount is not large enough and the clump not properly attached it will become heavy and fall off.

If planted in the garden will you be able to groom or move a huge clump?

- Are you able to get into the centre of the huge clump to remove dead leaves and the dead mother plants so that the clump looks its best? It's a daunting task to work with large clumps, especially if they are large and very spiky, so keep the clumps to a manageable size.

Will the blooming plant be more spectacular in a clump?

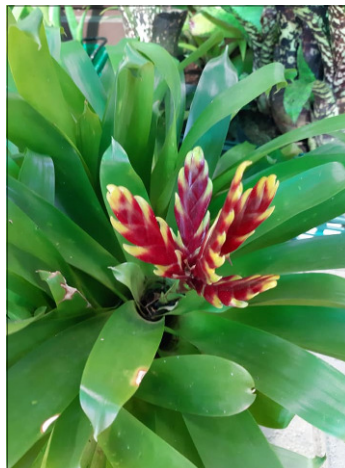
- The tubular forms like *Billbergia* and *Quesnelia* are the best for growing in clumps. Smaller species make a strong statement when grown in a mass. *Tillandsia* are also spectacular grown in a clump.

Does the natural form of the bromeliad allow for close growth?

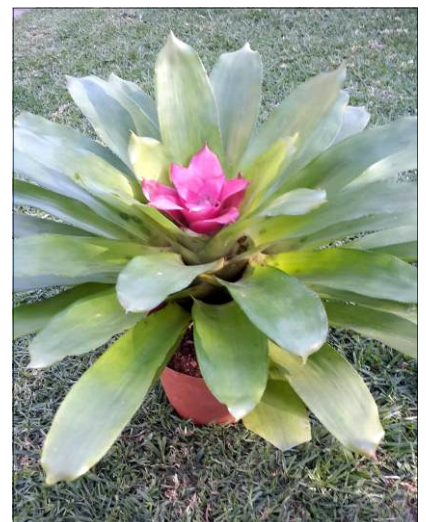
- The rosette or vase



Lyn Wegner and Brenda Wegner discussing the merits of splitting or allowing *Aechmea covata* to clump.



A single *Vriesea* 'Vogue' with its branched inflorescence.



A single *Nidularium* grown to show off its form and central rosette.



A single *Billbergia* variety and a multiple *Billbergia nutans* 'Minima' x 'Afterglow'.



A very attractive clump of a *Vriesea* variety.

shape bromeliads like Neoregelia, Hohenbergia and Aechmea will distort if not separated as their leaves and form will be distorted by being grown too closely together. Planted separately they will look spectacular growing to their full potential as a specimen plant and showing all the characteristics the plant is admired for.



Examples of single and multiple clumps of Tillandsia brought along to the meeting.



Examples of an Aechmea orlandiana variety and an Aechmea covata that have been left to form clumps.

Does the plant have spacing capabilities of its own?

- Many plants have stolons which provide natural separation from the mother plant. These can be divided by cutting off some of the stoloniferous growth if it becomes difficult to handle, display or maintain.

Reference: Kenneth Stokes - Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. Vol. 32 Issue 2, May 2012

Species Talk - Lyn Wegner



Quesnelia seideliana :

The genus or family of Quesnelia is small, consisting of about 30 species (varieties). They are indigenous to Eastern Brazil where most grow terrestrially (in the ground) in the forests and coastal areas. The smaller tubular varieties which can be confused with *Billbergia* are found growing epiphytically low down on trees or scrambling over rocks.

The main attraction of these plants are their flower spikes which come in spectacular colours. They are unfortunately short lived. They are easy to grow and attach easily to trees and rocks due to their stoloniferous growth habit. Most are very spiny and some have a vicious spike on their leaf tip. They like bright light growing conditions and will tolerate full sun and shade too. They don't like cold temperatures which causes ugly marking of the foliage. They like warmth, moderate watering and good drainage. Less water is required during the colder months.



Photo: fchs.org



Quesnelia seideliana

My first encounter of a *Quesnelia seideliana* was in the March-April 2006 Volume 56(2) BSI Journal! Eric Gouda wrote an article on two lesser known *Quesnelia* species and one was *Q. seideliana*. After seeing the photo of the inflorescence I just had to import one! These are only found in the Atlantic forests in the state of Rio de Janeiro in S.E. Brazil where they grow on rocks (rupicolous) or as epiphytes on trees.

I must say mine are rather neglected but still grow and bloom. The foliage is rather ordinary. It has a slightly flared form consisting of a few green leaves, not heavily spined, but they end with a vicious spike. But who needs foliage when the flower colour is a really gorgeous and unusual turquoise! I plan to mount some, maybe try some on rocks too. A blooming clump will be spectacular!

Show and Tell

Lyn Wegner: This is again just to show how light conditions affect our bromeliads.

This is a bowl of the cute mini *Neoregelia* 'Chiquita Linda' (*lilliputiana* x 'Fireball') which is a Chester Skotak hybrid.



Neoregelia 'Chiquita Linda' (*lilliputiana* x 'Fireball')

I have this bowl growing in too much shade and then a mixed mini mounting in a sunny spot which includes Neo. 'Chiquita Linda' and just look at the colour difference! Of course I will move the bowl!

Member News

- We are all very sad to have to say goodbye to Miriam Kennard who is moving to Johannesburg at the end of September to be closer to her family. She has been a stalwart and gracious member of the society for many years and host of quite a few ELBSSA meetings in her lovely garden in Beacon Bay which I am sure you will all remember as it was also on the Pam Golding Gardens of East London Show twice as well. We wish you great happiness and contentment in your new home Miriam and an exciting adventure as you create a 'new garden' including your cycads and bromeliads that will be going along with you to your new garden. Keep in touch, we shall all miss you.
- Our sincere condolences to the families of Lisa Voges, Helena van de Ham and Dr Geoff Howes who passed away recently. We are thinking of you all at this sad time.

Thanks

- Irene and Dave Manthe for hosting us and so soon after Irene arrived back from her overseas holiday too!
- Members who brought plants to the meeting as examples for the topic.
- Dr Pete Pfister, Brenda Wegner and Lyn Wegner for lucky draw plants.
- Marianne Hillstead and Dr Pete Pfister for catering tea and eats.
- Everyone who assisted in the kitchen for tea.
- Lyn Wegner for give away plants.

Congratulations to the August Raffle Winners

- Irene Manthe chose *Neoregelia* 'Milagro'.
- Terrence Reynolds chose *Neoregelia* 'Justin's Song'.
- Dr Boots Horsfall chose *Neoregelia* 'Flama'.
- Gale Allner chose *Neoregelia* 'Camp Fire'.
- Christo van Wijk from Pretoria chose 24 Raffle tickets in lieu of the value of the raffle win.
- Alan and Jolanda Nel from Pretoria chose *Tillandsia tectorum* 'Enano'.
- Clint Gordon from Johannesburg chose *Tillandsia leonamiana*.
- Avikar Chunilall from Durban chose *Tillandsia stricta* 'Paul's Book Cover'.

If you don't see a plant that you would like to choose as your raffle win you can choose to take a Raffle Voucher for R120.00, save them up and buy a nice plant from one of the society members.

Attendance Lucky Draw Winners:

There were a few lucky winners this month!



Local raffle winners for August, above, Irene Manthe, Gale Allner, Terrence Reynolds and right, Dr Boots Horsfall.



From the Committee

- We would like to donate some bromeliads to the Durban Botanical Garden, who are country members of ELBSSA. They have a continuous display where they create awareness of bromeliads plus have an area in the gardens dedicated to bromeliads, we have an opportunity to augment that collection. You might have extra, colourful bromeliads that are named that you would like to donate. Please bring them along to our next meeting as we would like to courier them to Durban in one batch as soon as possible. If/they should not be potted and the name should be written on the underside of a leaf or a label securely fixed to the plant.
- If any of our country members would like to also donate colourful and named bromeliads, especially those of you who live in the Durban area, please drop them off at the Durban Botanical Gardens for the attention of Hendrelien Peters. Many thanks to all of you who are able to donate a plant or two!
- Brenda has compiled a list of the contents in our Resource Library so you can see what is available. You will find it at the back of the newsletter. Please give Brenda a call if there is anything you would like her to bring to the meeting for you to take out on loan.

- We were very sad to learn this week that Herb Plever, who was in his nineties, passed away on the 9th September. Herb was Editor of the excellent New York Bromeliada Newsletter from its inception over 50 years ago. ELBSSA exchanged newsletters with Herb and he was always willing to provide commentary, guidance and assist us with all things bromeliad related. Herb was an Honorary Trustee of the BSI and is the only person who has attended every World Conference! An unbreakable record! Herb Plever, what a special person in the bromeliad world! We all send our heartfelt condolences to Herb's family and friends from all over the world. We will miss you dear Herb.



This photo from FCBS.org of a younger Herb Plever at the BSI Chicago World Conference in 2004. You will find an article on "How to grow Bromeliads in a skyscraper in New York by Collector Extraordinaire Herb Plever" on the FCBS .org site.

Upcoming Society Events

29th September: To be hosted by Mark Bradfield, 2.00 for 2.30pm at The Gift Garden, Frere Road, Selborne, (located opposite Selborne Primary School Entrance.

Please bring along any bromeliads or Tillandsia you wish to share with the group for Show and Tell. Please don't forget your chair if you want a seat plus your mug if you don't like our styrofoam variety.

Topic: Something we haven't done before, **Artistic Expression with Bromeliads!!!!**

What is Artistic Expression? A bromeliad/s and or Tillandsia used in a creative way, in an unusual container, a dish garden or mounted decoratively. Bromeliads used in ceramics, appliqué/sewing, painting, fabric painting or mosaic, wood carving, the sky is the limit, have fun with this topic! Maybe you already have items you have made/created and small enough to bring along to the meeting, or you can bring along a photo or send one to me to include in the next newsletter. Go for it !!!!!

NB: There will be no members sales at this meeting as The Gift Garden will be open for business.

Visitors are always welcome at our meetings!

27th October: To be hosted by Dr Boots and Alison Horsfall in Vincent Gardens Road. Topic: Bromeliads Seldom Seen.

24th November: Save the date:

End of year Bring and Braai, Auction and fun to be hosted by Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead in Beacon Bay.

Upcoming International Conferences

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

2020: 9 to 13 June, **70th Anniversary WBC2020** will be held in Sarasota, Florida, USA. For exciting information and pictures go to bsi.org, Conference Corner! It would be great to have a group of South Africans at this World Conference!

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

From the Members

Dr Pete Pfister sent some photos of his tillies growing in clumps that are doing well at the moment in his spring garden, a *Tillandsia ionantha* variety and a lovely ball of *T. schiedeana* and if you know Pete's garden this is just the tip of the iceberg of what you can see in terms of blooming Tillandsia!



Tillandsia ionantha variety and *T. schiedeana* on the right.



David Gowers's *Alcantarea* 'Ensign' F1 is looking awesome now it has sent out its flower spike which is still to develop further. David has been growing it since 2017. It currently has one grass pup at the base. This variety of *Alcantarea* should produce normal pups after blooming is finished. Some *Alcantarea* varieties only produce grass pups and no others. It is planted in a 40cm terracotta pot with normal potting soil and no fertiliser, very little to no extra watering. It is growing out in the open in full light. Colours and form are looking great!

For those of you who have not seen the progress of **Lyn Wegner's** *Alcantarea imperialis* Purple since the birthday meeting or on Facebook, check this out below!



David's *Alcantarea* 'Ensign' F1 .



Left: Lyn standing behind her magnificent *Alcantarea imperialis* Purple. The forming inflorescence we saw at the last meeting has now skyrocketed! First photo was taken on 24 July showing the emerging flower spike forming and then 44 days later!. Wow!



From the Editor



I re-read this tidbit below from one of our old newsletters and thought it worth repeating for a thought provoking chuckle.

"I never thought of bromeliads being that addictive: "Proceed with caution with bromeliads. These (mostly) treetop-dwelling rainforest plants are the designer shoes of the plant kingdom — and there are almost 10,000 species and cultivars available, with exotic flowers and foliage in every color imaginable."" (Steve Asbell) (October 2014 - The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society Newsletter)

I think it takes many years of collecting bromeliads to finally hone in on the ones that really grab your interest and you come to prefer above all the others, for their growth habits, colours, inflorescences, who can say. All I know is none of us will like the same genera or species that is for sure. Even in our own household Eddie and I have our own defined preferences. But I have brow beaten him (over years!) into finally admitting that *Neoregelia* really are quite fantastic! But we share a passion for these plants and that is what is so good. Now to turn him into a gardener when he retires..... haha!

The other issue is of course, running out of space, somehow, we always find more to collect, just one more or three... if you run out of garden, there are always the trees, where many bromeliads are naturally very happy, if you lucky enough to have trees in your garden, and then you can also use stands to stake between

those at ground level, ha! There are no excuses for having that extra one you drooling over and have to have! Good luck on trying to hold back!

Now we find ourselves at the start of Spring which I always feel brings with it a wonderful sense of new beginnings and renewal. I think we are all looking forward to longer days, more sunshine, colour and growth. There is lots happening in our garden and yours too, I am sure. We have lots of soft leaved Vriesea blooming and a few foliage variety sending out their 'snake charmer' flower spikes! We are also about to have a Guzmania explosion of colour, lots are starting to form their flowers deep in the centres and guess what, it must be Alcantarea blooming season? My *Alcantarea nahoumii* at the back door is also starting to form its inflorescence! We are so excited! We have had it for many, many years since it was a tiny little plant and have another of the same variety but slightly younger. I have grown grass pups on from them, the two biggest have been passed on to our families in Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth. Such magnificent form plants that they can also enjoy for a good few years to come.



As I write this, the ground is still damp from some much longed for spring rain, 12mm in our area, not much but so welcome. I hope it's the beginning of more to come after an incredibly dry Eastern Cape Winter, where many areas are still in the grip of a serious drought situation.



Many thanks to all who keep in contact sending videos I can post on our Facebook page and to those of you who sent in items for the newsletter this last month, it is good to share! Keep it coming. Thanks Mark, Brenda, Lyn, David and Pete for the photos. Do check out the Facebook page after the meetings for the social and garden photos.

Happy bromming everyone and here's to fresh new awakenings of the kind YOU personally need most at this time of year. See you at the next meeting hosted by Mark Bradfield at the Gift Garden!!!

Barbs.

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

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

ELBS SA is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

Address: c/o 18 Wentworth Road, Sunnyridge, East London 5201 South Africa, brommiesfa@telkomsa.net

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.

Committee Members

Chairman:	Dudley Reynolds		079 488 2360	dudleyreynolds1@gmail.com
Vice- Chairman:	Dr Peter Pfister		082 625 5533	tanuki@mweb.co.za
PRO & Secretary:	Lyn Wegner	043 736 1737	082 970 2293	brommiesfa@telkomsa.net
Treasurer:	Lynn Friend	043 748 2271	083 318 1179	lynnfriend1@gmail.com
Editor & Publisher:	Barbara Black	043 7212775	072 1787 421	blacket@telkomsa.net
Proof Reader:	Lyn Wegner	043 736 1737	082 970 2293	brommiesfa@telkomsa.net
Raffles:	Lyn Odendaal	043 726 1075	083 441 6813	lyngerald.vogt@gmail.com
Librarian:	Brenda Wegner		082 743 2141	brendawegner@gmail.com
Catering:	Marianne Hillstead		071 531 5146	tanuki@mweb.co.za
Events Co-ordinator:	Brenda Wegner		082 743 2141	brendawegner@gmail.com
Sound System	Xenia Winter	043 726 2978	083 981 1312	winther@telkomsa.net
Webmaster	Danie Taljaard		079 563 7725	danie@tillandsias.co.za
Member Badges:	Betty Heunis		073 226 1610	bettyheunis@gmail.com



You will find ELBS on Facebook: 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.

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: fcbs.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!

East London Bromeliad Society - Library Resources List

Please contact Brenda Wegner before the next meeting should you wish to take any items out on loan.
082 743 2141 brendawegner@gmail.com

- Bromeliads Under the Mango Tree by John Catlan
- Bromeliad Cultivation Notes by Lynn Hudson
- Bromeliads for Modern Living
- Bromeliads a Cultural Manual by BSI
- Bromeliads by Walter Richter
- Bromeliads by Bill Seaborn
- Bromeliads by Victoria Padilla
- Bromeliads for the Contemporary Garden by Andrew Steens
- Growing Bromeliads by the Bromeliad Society of Australia
- A Bromeliad Glossary (BSI)
- In Search of Flowers of the Amazon Forests by Margaret Mee
- Nidularium: Bromeliads of the Atlantic Forest
- International Checklist of Bromeliad Hybrids (BSI)
- Checklist of Australian Bromeliads, Hybrids & Cultivars including Notes for the Hybridist – compiled by Derek Butcher (5th edition)
- Journals of the Bromeliad Society International
- Journals of the Bromeliad Society New Zealand Inc.
- Backyard Bromeliads (24 issues)
- Grande (4 copies)
- Tropiflora Cargo Report by Dennis Cathcart (57 issues)
- Genus Tillandsia by Paul Isley
- Tillandsia II by Paul Isley
- Cryptanthus Journals
- Bromeliads in the Big Easy 19th WBC 2010 Conference booklet
- The 20th BSI World Bromeliad Conference 2012 booklet
- Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc.
- Cool Brooms - Auckland 2013 Bromeliad Conference booklet
- Sunny Brooms - 19th Australasian Bromeliad Conference 2017 – Proceedings Book
- 3 x DVD'S – Bromeliad Conference - Cool Brooms Auckland 2013
- 1 x USB – Christo van Wijk's Garden Tour, Fernhaven walkabout, Growing Bromeliads in San Diego
- 1 x USB – Bromeliad Conference – Cool Brooms Auckland 2013
- 1 x USB – Bromeliad Conference – San Diego, California 2018 (Lyn Wegner photos)