



# East London Bromeliad Society

## South Africa

NEWS LETTER  
October  
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



Dudley opening the meeting with the new bell donated by Gordon Murray!

Our September gathering at Mark Bradfield's Gift Garden was another memorable occasion. Forty three folk were in attendance to witness an impressive display of artistic creations at our Artistic Expressions with Bromeliads meeting. A big thank you to all who contributed to the wonderful displays of bromeliads, tillandsias and related subjects. Clearly a lot of thought and hard work went into all the items on display. It was such a resounding success that we have decided to do it on an annual basis. I am sure that it will be a popular category in our future bromeliad shows.

With only one meeting between now and our end of the year Bring and Braai and auction, one wonders how fast the months and years go by. It is quite scary, especially for us who are in twilight years.

Well, with Spring here and hopefully good rains to come I am sure that most of us are pottering amongst our bromeliads. What a lovely place to be. Enjoy it and happy bromming.



## September Meeting at The Gift Garden

Our host for the afternoon was Mark Bradfield who really pulled out all the stops to turn the nursery into a wonderful oasis of creative vibes and displays for all to enjoy, plus loads of super plants in stock to buy. He told us a bit about how he got involved with plants! Mark was born in East London but did not grow up here. After doing his stint in the Air Force



**Next Meeting: Sunday, 27th October at 2.00 for 2.30 pm. To be hosted by Br Boots and Alison Horsfall at 22 Vincent Gardens Rd, Vincent Heights. Don't forget to bring your chair!**

for 2 years he needed to find a job! Mark applied to the SA Railways Horticultural Department which at the time had the largest horticultural department in the country together with Eskom. Mark studied Horticulture in Cape Town for three years and then got involved in the more creative side of plants! This enabled him to travel all over SA and Namibia doing displays for SAR and SAA and the Blue Train. Then he joined Flora Farm in Boksburg, one of the largest nurseries in SA at that time. There were lots of fabulous opportunities there and he travelled a lot in Asia sourcing goods for stock. Eventually he ended up in East London! He visited the nursery one day and thought it looked a bit drab. He got hold of Glenda Taylor who owns the property and the outcome was that Mark took over the nursery four years ago in August and has really made a huge difference to the little plant shop we all knew from the old days and turned it into a vibrant and creative space not only to buy plants but also to get ideas for your own garden. Mark also takes photos for the society and posts them on our facebook page after every meeting, check them out as well as The Gift Garden! Thanks so much Mark for being the perfect host, we all appreciated the effort and wonderful ambiance that went towards ensuring a super September meeting.



## Artistic Expression with Bromeliads!!!!

I am sure many of us were not entirely sure what to expect for the topic of this meeting, so it was awesome that so many members came along with their very own creations using bromeliads as the theme. Enjoy the photos of just some of the entries and you will find more photos on our facebook page.

Hopefully this will encourage members to start planning, sewing, painting, mosaic-ing and growing for next year when we hold our show in March and another Artistic Expression with Bromeliads meeting later in the year.



Dr Pete Pfister's 'Breakfast in Bed'!



Maureen Eybers.



Gail Allner's pineapple tea cozy !



Xenia Winther's painted fabric bag, commissioned by Lyn Wegner.



Brenda Wegner's fabulous displays.



Lyn Wegner's arrangements.



One of Lyn Odendaal's



Lorraine Parathyras's mounted tillies.



Lynn Friend



Barbara Black



Dudley Reynolds



Right: Mavis Downey's mounted arrangement.



Above: Dudley Reynolds found this stunning piece of wood at Hogsback, mounted with *Tillandsia filifolia*.



Right: Dudley's daughter Lindell painted this for him.



Left: Danie Conradie brought along a frame he made out of metal fencing poles and mounted with *Tillandsia schiedeana*.



## Species Talk - Lyn Wegner



*Billbergia horrida*: This *Billbergia* is found growing in the forests in Brazil. The foliage is a light green with grey banding. It has a slightly flared form and it is fairly short in height. The inflorescence is rather unusual and not particularly striking, pale green and white but I find it rather attractive. Of course as with all *Billbergia* the inflorescence is unfortunately short lived

It grows with my other *Billbergia* in a sunny spot and I don't water them often.



*Billbergia horrida*.  
Below, *Tillandsia bulbosa* hybrid.

## Show and Tell

**Lyn Wegner:** *Tillandsia bulbosa* hybrid

I imported this plant a while ago, with this name. Who knows what hybrid it is or maybe it is a species? *Tillandsia bulbosa* is a myrmecophytic (ants live in the base!) bulbous species found across Central America, parts of the Northern and Eastern South America, the West Indies, and Mexico.

It is an ageotropic plant which means they grow in all directions. They don't have many leaves and the plants come in all sizes. It grows as an epiphyte at sea level.

It is what we would refer to as a green *Tillandsia*, which is an indication that this plant needs to be grown in bright shade. It likes high humidity and water. It's a beauty when it flowers. The top portion of the plant flushes red with lavender flowers. This hybrid is growing in a wire basket in a shady spot. It is flushing an eye catching luminous bright pink but has the same lavender flowers. I love it!



**Barbara Black:**

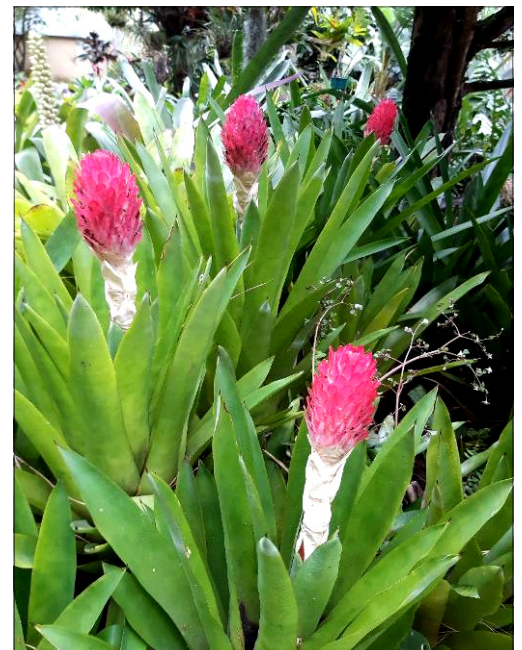
*Quesnelia quesneliana* is a great landscaping bromeliad with a bright pink inflorescence with tiny blue flowers which appear in spring. The genus *Quesnelia* includes 18 species, which occur mainly near the east coast of Brazil from the states of Rio de Janeiro to Bahia. Three cultivars are listed.

They multiply well, as a result I have a big patch of them that needs whittling down. The leaves have finely serrated edges and a vicious sharp point on the end which give you a good stabbing when working with them but the compensation is the stunning shocking pink inflorescence that appears in spring. Very eye catching! It is a cold tolerant bromeliad. Mine are about 60cm tall with an upright growth form, grown in afternoon sun.

I was not sure if mine was *Q. quesneliana* or *Q. testudo* as the inflorescences are very similar, shocking pink with tiny blue flowers. There appears to be a red form of *Q. quesneliana*. I looked it up and apparently each has very different scape bracts. *Q. testudo* has bracts that develop tightly around the stem and are serrated. *Q. quesneliana* has crinkly, papery, spineless bracts as you can see in my photo. If anyone can shed more light on this, do e-mail me.



A true *Q. testudo* will have spines on the bracts like the ones in the photo.



*Quesnelia quesneliana*

## Member News

- A big welcome to Trevor and Vinette Klug, we hope you have a long and happy association with all of us at ELBSSA!
- Congratulations to Dudley and Albie Reynolds on the marriage of their daughter Amy to Keith Wiggett in Hogsback recently.

- Congratulations to our international member Andrea Oldrini and Francesca on their marriage in Italy.
- We are very sad to be saying goodbye to Sandy and Dennis Wegner. They are moving to Cape Town and taking all their broms with them! We will miss you.



Welcome to new members Trevor and Vinette Klug!



We are very sad to say goodbye to Sandy and Dennis Wegner.

## Thanks

- Mark Bradfield of the Gift Garden for hosting us in such a lovely setting!
- Irene Manthe and 'Toast Deli' for the use of their outdoor dining area for the meeting.
- Members who brought their creative bromeliad masterpieces to the meeting.
- Gordon Murray for donating a big brass bell to the society!
- Dr Pete Pfister, Barbara Black and Lyn Wegner for lucky draw plants.
- Marianne Hillstead and Dr Pete Pfister for lugging the heavy tea crate, urn, eats and everything else needed to cater for tea and eats at every meeting.
- Lyn Odendaal, Eddie and Barbs Black, Brenda Wegner, Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead and Lyn Wegner for donating plants to the Durban Botanical Gardens which Lyn is boxing up and sending to them to add to their bromeliad displays.



Lorraine Parathyras, right, brought Carol Gregory along to the meeting.



Nice to see Danie Conradie, a past member, far right with Dr Pete Pfister and Eddie Black.

## Congratulations to the September Raffle Winners

- Val Nel chose *Neoregelia* 'Harpo'.
- Betty Heunis chose *Neoregelia* 'Red Bull'.
- Glen Reynolds chose *Neoregelia* 'Savoy Truffle'.
- Dr Boots Horsfall is still to choose a plant.
- Danie Taljard and Jean Lombard from Cape Town chose *Neoregelia* 'Stars 'n Bars'.
- Graham Watts from Durban chose *Neoregelia* 'Balboa'.
- Christo van Wijk from Pretoria chose *Neoregelia* 'Life Force'.
- Philip Visagie from Pretoria chose *Tillandsia* 'Ed Doherty'.

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 many lucky winners this month!



Raffle winners, Val Nel, Betty Heunis and Glen Reynolds.

## Upcoming Society Events

**27th October:** To be hosted by Dr Boots and Alison Horsfall at 22 Vincent Gardens Road, Vincent Heights. We meet at 2.00pm for a prompt start at 2.30pm. 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.

**Topic:** Bromeliads Seldom Seen in East London. You are all invited to bring along a bromeliad or Tillandsia that is not commonly grown in our area.

Visitors are always welcome at our meetings!

## 24th November: Annual Bring and Braai

End of year Christmas Bring and Braai, Auction and BBB Surprise to be hosted by Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead at 29 Bonza Bay Road, Beacon Bay. We will meet at 12 o'clock, not our usual 2pm. The fires will be ready to braai after the auction. More about this in the next newsletter, in the meantime you can start getting items ready for the fun auction to raise funds for the society.

If anyone is interested in hosting a meeting in 2020, please contact Lyn Wegner.

January:

February:

March: ELBSSA Show at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School.

April:

June:

July: 11th Birthday Celebrations at 'Bromeliads for Africa'.

August:

September: Artistic Expressions at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School.

October: Hosts Michael and Zena McClaren

November: Annual Bring and Braai, Auction and BBB Surprise.

## Upcoming International Conferences

We wish the Gold Coast Succulent and Bromeliad Society Inc and our Australian friends a successful 'Golden Broms' Conference held this month.

**2020:** 9 to 13 June, **70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary WBC2020** will be held in Sarasota, Florida, USA. For exciting information and pictures go to [bsi.org](http://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. **'Kiwī Broms'** April 8 - 11 2021, venue, Waipuna Hotel. Start saving now!

## BSI News

BSI Journals – are you aware.....

Journals from 1951 to 2013 are on the BSI website and you can access them!

Go into [bsi.org](http://bsi.org), Publications, BSI Journal Archives. Anyone may access these journals.

If you are a member of BSI then you may access every Journal, even if it has been mailed from the US and you are waiting for your copy to arrive!

Go into [bsi.org](http://bsi.org), Members; Member Only Content; Recent Journals.

You will find the Journals from 2014 up to 68(3) which is on it's way to you!

As an affiliated society our librarian also has access to the latest journals.

## BSI Membership

Exciting news! New membership options and rates as from November:

If you would like to become a member of the Bromeliad Society International for the very first time there will be a special membership rate for one year's electronic membership for only \$15! Renewals thereafter will be \$25.

If you have been a member in the past and wish to rejoin as an electronic member it will cost you \$25 per year. An electronic membership means you will be able to access the Journal on the [bsi](http://bsi.org) website.

You will not receive a mailed copy.

If you wish to have a hard copy the membership will cost you \$60 per year. You will have access to the electronic journal as well!

Of course if you are already a member you can change to an electronic membership once your subs are due for renewal,

East London members society members have access to the Journals in our library.

## From the Members

Lyn Wegner's ever growing, awesome *Alcantarea imperialis* Purple.

## From the Editor



"I began to realize how important it was to be an enthusiast in life. He taught me that if you are interested in something, no matter what it is, go at it at full speed ahead. Embrace it with both arms, hug it, love it and above all become passionate about it. Lukewarm is no good. Hot is no good either. White hot and passionate is the only thing to be." Roald Dahl

Haha! I think that describes many bromeliad collectors! It's that cursed or blessed collectors gene at work!

I went to visit Lyn and her *Alcantarea imperialis* Purple a few Saturdays ago, WOW! It is absolutely amazing! I am besotted with our *Alcantarea nahoumii* too, it has developed rather rapidly since last month, much taller than me now and developed paddles in 3 days which we can now see peeping out this morning. The main stem has turned very red. The first time a brom blooms is just the most exciting event! I am sure you will agree.

I have found our *Alcantarea imperialis* in the front garden has also started pushing a flower spike. I was not expecting this as it is not as big as I thought it would be before flowering.

There is a lot happening in October to celebrate Spring!

**Hogsback Spring Garden Show** is on this month and always promises a worthwhile visit.

12-13 October: **Spring Clivia Show** is to be held at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School. This show will include displays of bromeliads, succulents and orchids plus sales tables as well.

9-10 November: We have the **Pam Golding Show Gardens of East London** to look forward to. There are no members showing their gardens this year but I am sure you will see bromeliads scattered in gardens as the word has spread about how versatile and water wise they are.

30 October - 3 November: **Johannesburg International Flower Show**. There are a few ELBSSA members who are going to see this show. Sounds very exciting.

See you all at the next meeting which should be interesting as we highlight some bromeliads we don't see very often in East London. Do bring your gems along to show.

Happy bromming to all of you, as we welcome longer hours of daylight to spend with our broms. We were very lucky to welcome +- 36mm of extremely welcome Spring rain in our area over the last week = happy heart and plants!

Barbs .



Lyn with her *Alcantarea imperialis* Purple. It is an amazing sight!



Look at me now!!!!!!!!!!!!!! My *Alcantarea imperialis* is growing by the day. A month ago the crown of the flower spike was just peeping over the leaves, now the paddles are emerging.

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 facts and information, including spelling, is checked and accurate.

**ELBS SA is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.**

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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.*



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.



**In South Africa,  
every year we celebrate**

## **Garden Day**

Most of the year we plant, water, weed and mulch – work, in other words in our gardens.

Garden Day is a time to toss down that spade, invite family and friends around, kick back and celebrate your garden with them.

Sit back and just enjoy and appreciate the wonderful world of bromeliads in your collection or garden on Sunday 20th October!

### **Committee Members**

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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](http://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](http://bsi.org)

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: [fcbs.org](http://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://bromeliad.nl/encyclopedia/> (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!