



East London Bromeliad Society

South Africa

NEWS
LETTER

May
2021

Established: 25 July 2009

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

ELBSSA is an Affiliated Society  of Bromeliad Society International

From the Chairman - Dudley Reynolds



Our Bromeliad Magic Show was well attended and was a resounding success. A very warm welcome to our six new members who joined our society over the weekend. We hope your association with us will be a long and happy one. The weekend was a good opportunity to get to know a few of our members who helped, on a more personal basis. A big thank you to the contributors who brought bromeliads and Tillandsia for the show, also those who helped with the planning and setting up of the magnificent display

and the members who volunteered their services to assist over the weekend. The lovely art pieces which Nancy and Roy brought certainly added a delightfully different dimension to the show. What I found very encouraging was the positive comments from many visitors, many of whom supported our vendors and bought good quality bromeliads and other plants. Generally, a very good weekend was had by most of the vendors as well.

Back to my garden, I have just completed the awful task of removing burnt leaves from about 80 percent of my bromeliad collection, caused by that extremely hot day about 2 months ago. The end result was twelve refuse bags full of dead leaves to discard. Have a wonderful month of May in your garden. Until we chat again, happy bromming.

So good to see members of the public browsing and asking questions.....



April - Bromeliad Magic Show

On Friday 23rd April we were open for setup and arrival of plants and vendors. Dudley Reynolds and Dr Pete Pfister set up a lovely display at the entrance to the hall, which was a real eye catcher. Members began arriving with their plants throughout the day which were arranged on the show tables, grouping genera together. Ten



Next meeting: Sunday 30th May at 2 for 2.30pm as usual. To be hosted by Colleen and Karl Swartz in Amalinda. More details later. Bring your mug, a plant and a friend!

members (nine local and one country!) brought plants to show, (next time we are hoping for LOTS more members to show off their plants!). There were 202 gorgeous specimens on show and quite a wide variety of artistic expression examples on display too from hand painted cushions, bags, lovely mounted displays of Tillandsia and mini bromeliads in a Tooth Fairy display.

The thirteen vendors participating over the weekend also arrived on Friday to set up their stalls in the outdoor area at the back of the hall selling/promoting bromeliads, tillandsia, orchids, succulents, lithops, vegetable seedlings, other plants, homemade chilli relish/olives etc, concrete products and bonsai. It was a wonderful sight with all ready for the arrival of the public on Saturday morning at 9am. Due to the late decision to hold the show while we are currently on Level 1 Lockdown and the new infection figures are low, especially here in the Eastern Cape, the committee decided that it would be a non-judged show this time round, to encourage members to participate and just enjoy the event. A lovely atmosphere prevailed over the entire weekend with good sales,

Right: There was a lot of interest shown by visitors in the Cryptanthus on display.



Below, Dudley and Pete's display at the entrance. More plants were added after this photo was taken and it looked really stunning.



Much admired Vriesea hybrids on show.



Country member Richard Johnstone, chairman Dudley Reynolds, country member Maggie Prins-Vergottini and one of our vendors Ruth Mathias .



many, many visitors asking loads of questions and lots of networking done, plus we gained six new members as well.

Our vendors put on a grand show for all to enjoy, learn something new and buy plants. It was awesome to welcome Ruth Mathias, one of our country members and owner of Rare & Air Plants & Gifts, who came all the way from Munster in Kwazulu-Natal as one of our vendors. The contribution of the vendors to our show cannot be underestimated, if you see amazing plants and exciting products you definitely want to take some home! Thank you to all of you that participated.

We were also so pleased to welcome some country members who visited over the weekend as well, Maggie Prins-Vergottini who travelled all the way from Mossel Bay and Richard Johnstone and his family and Dawid and Scherine Botha from Port Elizabeth.

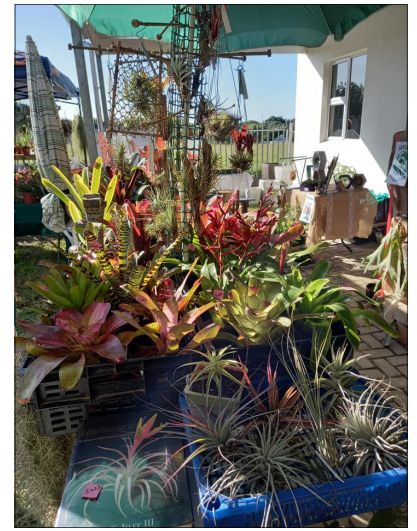
Our Show raffles were won by Kevin Aereboe and Betty Heunis. The succulent, orchid and bonsai vendors also had raffles.

We could not have undertaken the event without our dedicated committee of stalwarts who pulled out all the stops in planning, co-ordinating and manning the event over the entire weekend. Also some of our wonderful members who brought their plants to show, pitched in on the Friday to accept the show entries, assist with setting up, assisted on the floor, and on Saturday and Sunday, welcoming the public, taking door money, selling raffle tickets and seeing that everyone sanitised and filled in the necessary Covid register, assisted with the many questions from the many astounded visitors and generally made everyone feel so welcome, directing them to the vendors outside too. Then the not so nice job on Sunday afternoon and Monday to help with carting plants and the big clean up. The committee thank you from the bottom of our hearts. You know who you are and your community spirit is wonderful and we are so grateful for all the help we received.

Lastly our visitors! We have had great feedback, so hope that they all found it inspiring, saw and bought some unusual plants and got their fingers tingling to get back home and work with their plants at this most beautiful time of the year when the weather is just perfect to be in your garden. Everyone's commitment to helping us make it a bumper event was most appreciated, firstly by our visitors who benefited from the stimulating show, (some were seeing bromeliads for the first time, believe it or not!?) the lovely atmosphere, the vendors who had bumper sales



Annatjie and Kobus Venter were selling various succulents as well as Annatjie's bowl creations which are so popular.



Dudley Reynolds, Dr Pete Pfister, Lyn Wegner and Brenda Wegner had member plants sales which did very well.



Annette Brown of the Gonubie Orchid Society set up a stunning and highly perfumed display of orchids, with her is their president Lynette Kleynhyans.



One of our vendors, Charlotte Schoeman selling very collectable and appealing Lithops.



Desire Korff of LIBIGEN Concrete Creations provided an interesting and popular display of their wares.



New member Cornelia du Plessis with her husband Willie who served up the most delicious jaffles the entire weekend.



New members, Leon and Elzette van Niekerk enjoying the show.

and opportunities to network with like minded folks. It was a great platform to show off these amazing and diverse plants and hopefully whet some appetites and encourage more awareness and interest in growing/collecting bromeliads.

Thank you to the catering folks out front, 'an army marches on its stomach' and so we really did enjoy the delights that our food vendors had on offer for everyone to be able to grab a bite to eat over the weekend.

If you have not already done so, please check out our facebook page for more super photos and comments from the weekend.

Now that the event is behind us and we have had time to reflect and meet as a committee to discuss what can be improved on and what worked well, we are planning the way forward to holding the next show around the same time next year. Watch this space!!!!

Text and photos Barbara Black and Brenda Wegner



Another one of our vendors, member, Xenia Winther .



Ruth Mathias with our Vice Chairman, Dr Pete Pfister in her tent full of tilly and other interesting plant delights!



Nadia Radcliff and Caryl-Anne Parathyras with their stall Spitiko, selling chilli and pickle and olive delights.

Species of the Month - Lyn Wegner



Neoregelia maculata is a species endemic to Brazil. This means it is only found in Brazil.

The upright stoloniferous growth flares out slightly and reaches about 19cm in height.

The overall colouring of the foliage is hard to describe, in shades of yellow and pinky red with some dark speckles on the top of the leaf and some silver banding underneath.

I grow mine potted in a stand just above head height where it is exposed to harsh conditions, wind and plenty of sunshine. This causes the foliage to colour up beautifully. It has made a gorgeous clump separated by short stolons. I have a mounted clump, also doing well, but the colour is not as exciting as it receives less sunlight.

Neoregelia maculata is very definitely one of my favourites!

Text and photo L. Wegner



Neoregelia maculata

Member News

- A very big welcome to new members gained over the show weekend: locals, Helga Jackson, Sandra Tidbury, Leon and Elzette van Niekerk, Cornelia du Plessis and Wyndham Whitfield who many of you will know as the 'orchid man' in Dorchester Heights who has recently moved to Grahamstown. We hope that you will all enjoy many years of rewarding membership, spreading the enjoyment, knowledge and love of growing bromeliads and Tillandsia with all of us.
- Sincere condolences to Ray and the family of our member Elna Weyer who has passed away recently after a long struggle with cancer. Also to Glen and Bev Reynolds and family on the loss of Bev's brother recently. Our thoughts are with you all at this sad time.

Thanks

- All the members who contributed in so many ways to make the Bromeliad Magic Show a huge success.
- Members who brought plants to show.
- Our wonderful members who assisted with the preparation, manning and pack up of the show.
- The vendors: Annatjie and Kobus Venter; Charlotte and Bruce Schoeman; Caryl-Ann Parathyras (Spitiko); Cornelia and Willie du Plessis;

East London Established July 2009
Bromeliad Society
South Africa

BROMELIAD

Magic

R10 Entry Fee

Bromeliad & Tillandsia
 Displays & Sales
 Plus Many Other
 Exciting
 Plant Vendors too!



Sherilee Steinberg; Gonubie Orchid Society; Rare and Air; LIBIGEN Concrete Creations, PJ; Border Bonsai Society; Dudley Reynolds; Dr Pete Pfister; Xenia Winther; Brenda Wegner and Bromeliads for Africa.

- Our country members, always so good to welcome you, Peter Johnstone, Dawid and Scherine Botha and Maggie Prins-Vergottini who travelled to East London for the event.

Upcoming Society Events

- 30th May: Sunday 30th May The meeting will be hosted by Colleen and Karl Swartz in Amalinda. (This was the property of Mr Hempel who sold vegetable seedlings some years ago.) We will meet as usual at 2.00 for 2.30pm. You do not need to bring a chair with you this time, just bring your mug in an effort to be sanitary and help cut back on waste and washing up! Please bring along any bromeliads or Tillandsia you wish to share with the group for Show and Tell. Remember you get a free raffle ticket if you do a 'Show and Tell'! We look forward to a bumper meeting. Lyn will e-mail detailed directions to the venue closer to the time.
- 27th June: Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead in Beacon Bay
- 25th July: **ELBSSA AGM and 12th Birthday Celebrations, Annual Quiz and Fizz Ananas** hosted by Lyn and Trevor Wegner at 'Bromeliads for Africa', Wentworth Road, Sunnyridge.
- 29th August: Irene Manthe in Nahoon Valley
- 26th September: Would you like to host a meeting in September or October? Please contact Lyn Wegner.
- 31st October: Venue tba
- 28th November: **Christmas Bring and Braai**, Auction, BBB and loads of fun!!!!!!!!!!!!!! To be hosted by Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead in Beacon Bay.

Upcoming International Conferences

2021: The 70th Anniversary WBC2020 Due to the global Covid 19 pandemic this conference has been rescheduled. It will now take place on the 8 - 12 June 2022 in Sarasota, Florida, USA.

The following conference has now been postponed to **7 to 10 April 2022** due to the Covid 19 Pandemic.

This biennial **Australasian Bromeliad Conference** will again be hosted by The New Zealand Bromeliad Society. **'Kiwi Broms'**. To be held at, Waipuna Hotel. Exciting news! 5 of our members have already registered for this conference! Plenty time to get saving!

From Our Members

Lyn Wegner: I was surprised to make this discovery! If you look carefully you will notice another single flower spike developing! It is *xVriecantarea* 'Fever Dream', a Lisa Vinzant bigeneric hybrid, what a beautifully coloured inflorescence.

Bigeneric meaning; the parents are from 2 different genera. Seed parent - *Vriesea* Hill 96-6 and pollen parent - *Alcantarea* *vinicolor*.



Guzmania monostachia

The flowers are just about ready to open and I guess they will be yellow.

Photos and text L. Wegner

Barbara Black: *Guzmania monostachia* variegated, you also get a non variegated variety. Monostachia means 'one spike'. I

love this soft, smooth leaved little *Guzmania* species that we grow on the bench that gets late afternoon sun. We have had it for a long time and it has bloomed a few times now. Quite suddenly you see the red, domed inflorescence peeping out from the leaves then the white flowers appear on the trunk. I think it is very attractive and dainty.

Its natural habitat is Florida, West Indies, Mexico, Central America to northern Peru and Brazil. Before the Mexican bromeliad weevil did so much damage, large, dense, localized populations could be found in deep swamp habitat,



xVriecantarea 'Fever Dream'

where water holding capacity of the peat soils, and canopy provided good growing conditions on trees as an epiphyte, but they are also terrestrial. Now, these populations are being destroyed by the weevil, it is an endangered species and it is illegal to collect this plant in its natural environment. Aren't we lucky, thanks to plant collectors and propagators from long ago that we can continue to grow them in our collections?

Photos and text BK Black

From the Editor



Just like Dudley, I am still trimming back burnt leaves plus the dead leaves of the bromeliads in general as a tidy up before the weather really turns chilly. I have also been pruning big trees to get more light into our garden beds where bromeliads grow. We cannot complain about cold here in East London, with our subtropical climate, but serious lack of rainfall over the last few summers has made our tank water indispensable. We have been blessed with the most fabulous Autumn days, typical of this time of the year, and NO WIND!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Bromeliad Magic Show is now behind us, it was such a super success and I hope that next time more members get involved, bring their plants, it's your chance to show off your love of gardening with bromeliads and Tillandsia. So start mounting and nurturing any potential plants, sewing, knitting, doing mosaic, ceramics, painting and making things now that tickle your fancy and have something to do with bromeliads or Tillandsia for the Artistic Expression category. I don't think I have talked as much as I did that weekend and it was all good, so nice to meet new people and nurture their hopefully new found interest or like some of us... obsession!

From a non bromeliad person who has not been exposed to bromeliads: I asked a friend to smell the perfume coming from the *Tillandsia crocata* on display, "Such a tiny plant that a person could overlook it, but then you are asked to smell the flowers, wow! Just shows you don't have to be big and awesome to make an impact on the world." What an amazing little tilly!

See you all soon!

Barbs.



My sweet little *Tillandsia crocata* blooming outside the back door.

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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.


ELBSSA 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		079 478 2338	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		0715315146	
Events Co-ordinator:	Brenda Wegner		082 743 2141	brendawegner@gmail.com
Sound System	Xenia Winter	043 726 2978	083 981 1312	winther@telkomsa.net
Member Badges:	Betty Heunis		073 226 1610	bettyheunis@gmail.com
Web Master	Danie Taljaard		079 563 7725	danie@tillandsias.co.za

 You will find ELBSSA 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 and bromeliads is found at bsi.org

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: fcb.org This is another very useful site where you can also reference many bromeliads, 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/bromeliadencyclopedia> Just type in 'Encyclopedia 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!