

Far North Coast Bromeliad Study Group N.S.W.

Edition: November 2020

Agenda: General Discussion

Venue: PineGrove Bromeliad Nursery
114 Pine Street Wardell 2477
Phone (02) 6683 4188

Study Group meets the third Thursday of each month

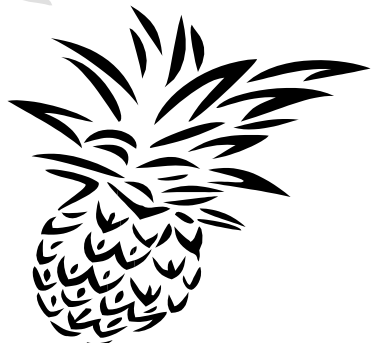
Next meeting 17th December 2020 at 11 a.m.

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Meeting 15th October 2020

The meeting was opened at approximately 11.00 am
The 13 members present were welcomed.
One apology was received.

Well what a great comeback from Covid 19, it was very clear that those present at the meeting have been missing their Bromeliad fix. All were excited to be back amongst friends and very interested to share some experiences from the past eight months. There were many plants, some large inflorescences tabled and many questions for **Show, Tell and Ask!**, Drew sent an **S,T and A!** via e-mail.

Jean, a friend of Kayelene, was introduced to the Group, Jean has a general interest in gardening and has now found Bromeliads, we hope to see her on a regular basis. A thank you has been forwarded to the Group for making Jean feel so welcome, she had a great time and is very interested in continuing to participate in the meetings.

Also introduced to the Group was Mitch who has had an interest in Bromeliads for several years and is hoping to learn more by getting involved in our Study Group. Welcome to our Group Mitch, we hope to see you regularly also. Read more about Mitch in his **bio** on pages 10 and 11.

Correspondence from the past eight months was tabled with Newsletters from around the country being placed in our library.

The use of our library was offered to members explaining the conditions required to borrow books etc. on a monthly basis. Many of the books in our library are almost irreplaceable so great care needs to be taken when handling some of the more fragile books. Report any damage so it can be repaired promptly. Much of the information contained in older books is still relevant today so are still well worth reading. For up to date plant name changes refer to Drew's "Layman's Guide to the Sub Families and Genera" and also refer to p.16 of this Newsletter for relevant web sites.

It's that time of year - Christmas is near and we need to plan our Christmas party albeit a smaller affair this year with no Popular Vote Competition presentations. It was agreed that there will be no trophies awarded this year since there has only been two competition months plus our Covid restart of October and a November meeting before our December 17th Christmas get together.

Our Christmas party always brings the joy of 'Gift Swapping' which we will have again this season however instead of being run as an attendance draw (most months attended draws first) we may just do a hat draw this year as nearly all of us will have attended the same number of meetings.

Show, Tell and Ask!

When summarising last month's Newsletter we discussed the following excerpt from the article **BROMELIADS IN AUSTRALIA** by Chas. G. Hodgson:

[A gentleman once remarked to me that he could not understand why some of his plants were thriving, while others were not. He said, "They all get the same treatment."

I said, "Yes, that is the trouble. You have plants collected from various parts of the world, from various conditions, all requiring different treatment; here you expect them to thrive under one condition."

I then suggested that he divide his house into three sections and to vary the heat and shade in each section, which he did with marked results.]

A question raised was "how do you know if your plant is in the right position"?

In all fairness the answer is trial and error as 'sun tolerance/hardiness' will vary depending on your location. Are you close to water which will help in regards to humidity, those who live further from the coast will find it drier and therefore have a greater need for shade protection to the plants. Wind can dry plants very quickly so be prepared to mist spray these more often if in a windy location.

Many Aechmea, Alcantarea, Ananas, Billbergia, Bromelia, Dyckia, Hectia, Hohenbergia, Neoregelia, Portea, Quesnelia, Tillandsia and more can be grown in full all day sun but may bleach in the hottest part of the day in mid summer. Your observations are the best way of understanding the needs of a particular plant, get to know what your plant should look like when in its 'prime'.

Before selecting a location try and do some research on preferred growing conditions for your plant e.g. Guzmania, Nidularium, green leaf Tillandsia and Vriesea generally prefer a more shaded location, some early morning and late afternoon sun is fine for these soft leaved plants. There again your location and microclimate could allow you to give some of these greater sun tolerance.

The amount of watering one does can also have an affect on growing conditions, if in a very dry area you may need to install misters/foggers on timers that come on when the humidity drops below a set level. One may need to move plants in under cover away from frost prone locations in the cooler months or have a need of heated houses.

Moisture and air flow are two very important factors to consider when growing Bromeliads as they don't like to be stuffy. With a little experience and some trial and error improvements can be made. If sun burn occurs move it to a shadier location, if leaves become elongated/strap-like move it to a slightly brighter light location.

John brought along quite an array of plants with pendulous inflorescences e.g: *Aechmea filicaulis* (photo centre p.5) which grows as an epiphyte in the cloud forests of Venezuela at 1000-1600 m altitude.

Aechmea racinae var. *tubiformis*, as the name implies the leaf sheaths form a cylindrical/tubular tank. This is an epiphyte from Espirito Santo, Brazil.

Aechmea weilbachii forma *pendula* from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil is one of five very attractive forms and varieties of *Ae. weilbachii* to collect, they grow either in the ground or as an epiphyte which makes this a popular species among collectors.

Billbergia viridiflora, an epiphytic and saxicolous plant that grows from near sea level to 150 m alt. in southern Mexico, Belize, Guatemala and British Honduras. Green leaves, the scape is suberect to arching and about equalling the leaves. The inflorescence is simple and laxly racemose. The sepals and petals are green. The mature fruit is orange.

He was also showing some inflorescences from plants too large to bring along so he cut the spikes off to be able to show them to the Group. One can only fit so many potted plants in a car plus a passenger! Photo top right p.5 left to right: *Hohenbergia stellata*, *Aechmea* 'Flame', *Vriesea* 'Ladd's Elation' (centre) is an unregistered Alan Ladd hybrid, *Pitcairnia* 'Rhubarb' and *Guzvriesea* 'Happa'.

A very fine example of *Tillandsia seleriana* in flower was also shown. It grows as an epiphyte in *Pinus* and *Quercus* woods, 270-2100 m alt. in Chiapas southern Mexico to Honduras.

Keryn and Dave showed us a *Tillandsia streptocarpa* photos p.5 lower left and centre which is one of the many fragrant Tillandsias available to the collectors. It's saxicolous in sun or epiphytic in forest, 60-2300 m alt. in Peru to Paraguay and Brazil.

Keryn brought a plant along tagged as *Tillandsia* 'Cotton Candy' that clearly had an identity problem. Keeping good records certainly helps to back track to the original purchase source and hopefully solve the problem. The correct name for Keryn's plant is: *Tillandsia flavoviola* 'Moonlight' which has creamy whitish/ yellow flowers - with a purple base fade to purple??? Problem solved.

Another gem from Keryn and Dave was a striated *Neoregelia* 'Lorena Lector', one to be added to the wish list by a few Group members. The photographer of the day missed capturing this beauty, hopefully Keryn will bring it along again.

A favourite with many growers is *Aechmea* 'Roberto Menescal', this one grown by Keryn and Dave is shaping up very nicely. This *Aechmea* is a tissue cultured sport of a dark form of *Aechmea chantinii* created in a lab in Brazil in 2000.



Kayelene asked: Can I cut off my Vriesea flower spikes once they have died off?

Answer yes BUT.....

There are several reasons to remove/cut off flower spike/s young or old.

Young: As an inflorescence is beginning to grow (young) it is using up a lot of mum's stored energy, this energy could best be used for offset/pup production. In other words if you want more pups quicker cut the inflorescence off early.

In our nursery situation we will often cut the young inflorescence off plants we don't wish to sell for two reasons:

1. If it's not seen, it's not wanted, no flower spike, no pretty looking plant.
2. For greater pup production, energy goes to pups not flowers.

Old: Removal of old/aged/post floral inflorescences is OK for garden or shade house tidy up, or for same reason as above, energy goes to pup production.

BUT..... you may wish to increase your productivity by growing from seed, a much slower method, for this, the old inflorescence is required for seed maturity. When the pods ripen, often this is when they turn brown, they split open and release the parachute type seed. Now you can cut it off after collecting the seed, the fluff with the little black dots.

Refer FNCBSG Newsletter August 2020 p.11,

Seed Raising - Step by Step.



Tillandsia flexuosa

BUT BUT..... you need to know your plant's method of reproduction before you cut that inflorescence off, it may reproduce via the viviparous method often seen in Orthophytum, Ananas (pineapples) and some Tillandsia e.g. *Tillandsia flexuosa* and *Tillandsia secunda*. Vivipary means it produces pups along the stem/peduncle of the inflorescence. Refer FNCBSG Newsletter June 2013 p.10, **Vivipary and Bromeliads.**

Another method mentioned was 'stabbing' - this is driving a screwdriver or similar through the central growing tip (apical or apex growing tip), most Bromeliads have a single growing tip, when this is destroyed the plant reverts to vegetative or pup production in place of seed production.

Photos by Ross Little

The history of Kayelene's beautiful plant brought in for **Show, Tell and Ask!** started at our last meeting prior to the Covid break on the 20th February 2020.

"I chose a little pup from the raffle table which would have only been about 15cm in length at most.



I remember thinking that it's appearance at the time was quite 'ordinary' - however, I felt that there was 'something about the plant'. At the meeting Michelle was able to advise the name of the plant as *Neoregelia* 'Cane Fire' and I remember being rather excited as I had actually grown up on a cane farm down river!

During my childhood the cane fire was such a big part of my life - and to watch and be a part of each fire was a wonderful experience. Cane fires are spectacular to watch - the colours are intense and with most fires occurring at night, they were particularly special.

I came home with the plant and promptly planted her in an appropriate potting mix and placed her in a warm well lit area under the eaves on the northern side of my house which receives the morning sun. The plant grew so quickly and the colour developed beautifully.

I believe that there is now a flower emerging - and I do hope that I get some pups!

Of all my bromeliads - and I have many - this one is my favourite.

So thank you Michelle - who I believe donated this one to the raffle table.

<p>Bromeliaceae A Layman's Guide to the Sub Families and Genera Compiled by Drew Hayward Edited by Ross Little Edition 1 March 2020</p>	<p>A4 36 pages, with binding. Cost \$26.00 inc. postage within Australia. \$24 ex postage.</p>	<p>Bromeliaceae A Layman's Guide to the Sub Families and Genera Compiled by Drew Hayward Edited by Ross Little Edition 1 March 2020</p>	<p>A5 36 pages stapled. Cost \$16.00 inc. postage within Australia. \$14 ex postage.</p>
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Drew's query this month: As I cannot make it tomorrow I have a contribution for **Show and Tell**. I have attached two photos of a *Billbergia* that has come into flower. The marginated foliage is quite pale but I think that is because it has been in a hot but shaded spot. I bought this plant at the Gold Coast Bromeliad Society early last year as an *Aechmea* and it has finally flowered with beautiful purply-blue flowers which are quite outstanding against the pink bracts on the inflorescence.



Billbergia 'Foster's Striate'

My item for **Show and Tell** is: As an *Aechmea* it makes a great *Billbergia*, but does anybody know what the name of this *Billbergia* is?

The answer to Drew's query is:

The following taken in part from:

***Billbergia pyramidalis* - Or the Search for the Totally Red Petalled Form**
by Derek Butcher in J Brom Soc. 52(4): 172-178. 2002

M B Foster (1960) described a *Billbergia pyramidalis* var. *striata* from a variegated seedling obtained from a batch of what he termed a winter flowering form of *B. pyramidalis*. At that time *B. pyramidalis* was considered to have red petals with bluish tips but not only did Foster's plant flower at a different time but it had a total petal blade of a violet hue and a claw whitish. In fact it was closer to *Billbergia pyramidalis* var. *bicolor* Lindley than to *B. pyramidalis* (Sims) Lindley. The naming of *B. pyramidalis* var. *striata* was ignored by Smith & Downs in 1979 in their monograph and was only reintroduced in DeRebus 1 in 1994 without any comment. Foster's *B. pyramidalis* var. *striata* will be covered under the ICNCP rules by renaming it *Billbergia* 'Foster's Striate'.

ICNCP = International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants

Also known as the Cultivated Plant Code, is a guide to the rules and regulations for naming cultigens, plants whose origin or selection is primarily due to intentional human activity.

A Note from Wendy and Ian

Just had to send you a photo of this beautiful specimen which obviously loves the position where I planted it nearly 6 years ago. It is on the north - east side of our home right at the front door.

I have given it no special treatment, having thrown some Dynamic Lifter around all the gardens each Spring, and have used sugar cane mulch once. Ian helped me put in a watering system when we made this garden, and it is timed to come on for 15 minutes on Mon, Wed, and Friday mornings at 7.30.



Alcantarea 'Silver Plum'

Amazing as it seems, if anyone wants to know anything about Bromeliads in their gardens, they come to me! I have been able to help with simple questions about where to place a particular specimen, but residents here just want colour in their small gardens and aren't at all interested in knowing names or species.

Ian's Tillandsia collection has grown enormously and he has each carefully identified on a spreadsheet on his computer. I have a wonderful collection of photographs of the various broms we have in our small garden here, as well as the garden we had at Gulmarrad. Our thanks go to you and the FNCBSG for the many wonderful meetings we attended there, and the lessons we learned. Just proves one is never too old to learn something new and give added pleasure to living.

I have included some of the best of my brom specimens for your information and for general news for the group.

Cheers to all in the FNCBSG.

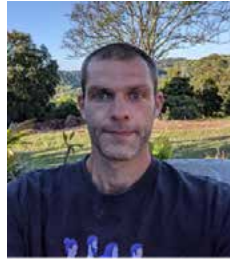
Wendy Buddle



Thank you Wendy and Ian it's always good to hear from members who have moved interstate and aren't able to attend our meetings on a regular basis.

Introducing a New Member to Our Group

Hi Everyone, my name is Mitch Jones and I am looking forward to joining the FNCBSG NSW to learn more in the bromeliad world, especially cultivation in the local region, make connections in the local community and love listening to people's insights, experience and stories. How I look at life is that it is too short to not keep learning and expanding the knowledge banks of the mind.



I am an avid grower and collector of Alcantarea and expanding my collections of Dyckia, Hohenbergia and xHohemea alongside all things sun hardy, spikey and tropical feel. Aside from Bromeliads I love collecting Alocasia, Palms, Euphorbia, Pachypodiums, Succulents, Gingers, Heliconia and tropical foliage plants as well as anything unique and interesting to create my own relaxing paradise in Alstonville/Uralba on 5 acres in my spare time and after work.

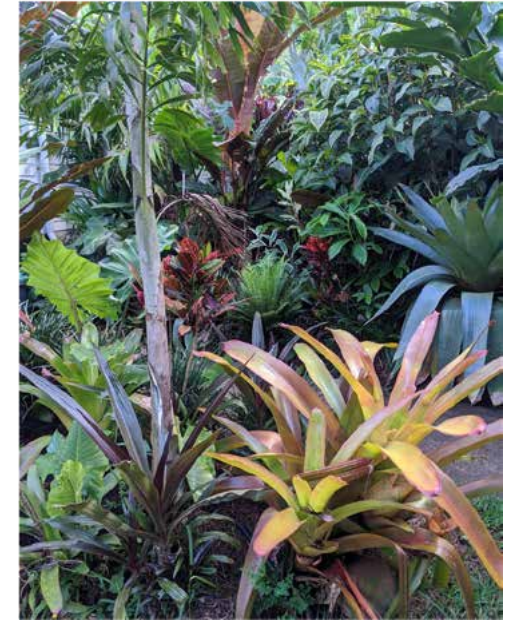


My end goal is to create a mini botanical gardens and exsitu collections of Alcantarea and other interesting species of bromeliads and tropical plants.



I love growing things the hard way, by seed, cuttings and propagation.

Below are some pictures of the current ever evolving gardens on my property that where stage 1 and stage 2. Stage 3 is connecting to the both gardens to create an oasis for the wildlife and me to relax after work.



Looking forward to meeting everyone in October 2020.
Regards, Mitch

Billbergia 'Springtime'

by Drew Maywald August 2020

Billbergia 'Springtime' is a 1981 cultivar by Bernard Stoner. It is a cross between *Billbergia sanderiana* (seed parent) and *Billbergia* 'Leodiensis' (pollen parent).

Billbergia 'Springtime' has shiny green leaves with the odd white spot on them. The leaves are 45mm wide at the base tapering to a point at the tip. Each leaf is armed with upward facing spines that are reasonably firm. The spines vary in size from around 3 mm tall at the base of the leaf and 20 mm apart, to less than 1 mm tall at the tip and only 10 mm apart. The spines at the base of each leaf are stiff and very sharp.

I have had my *Billbergia* 'Springtime' for more than 12 months now and I was thinking of giving it away because of its lack of colour and distinguishing marks on the leaves. However, I have decided to keep it as it has just come into flower. The inflorescence is quite pendulant and hangs down at least 500 mm below the top of the pot, but this is due to the weight of the inflorescence pulling my plant down so that it is almost falling out of the pot! I have rescued it and propped it up. Nevertheless, the inflorescence still hangs down 400 mm below the top of the pot.



The inflorescence consists of long rosy-red bracts and the flowers resemble those of *Billbergia nutans*, except the green on the petals on *Billbergia* 'Springtime' is quite muted in comparison. Each flower also has pale pink bracts, which adds to the beauty of the inflorescence.

Upon doing further research I was able to establish that the seed parent of *Billbergia* 'Leodiensis' is *Billbergia nutans* and the pollen parent is *Billbergia vittata*, which explains the colour of the flowers and bracts in *Billbergia* 'Springtime', as well as the pendulant like inflorescence which is similar to both *Bill. nutans* and *Bill. vittata*.

Unfortunately, the rosy red bracts fade to a pale pink colour after a few days and, like all *Billbergias*, the flowers do not last very long. *Billbergia* 'Springtime' maybe an ordinary looking plant but when it flowers it becomes an outstanding feature in the garden and a great addition to your Bromeliad collection.

Why Latin is used to Name Plants

by Drew Maywald

Latin is the universal language used to describe scientific works and botanical names even in these modern times. This is because, in times past, when people did not have the ease of communication and transportation that we enjoy, scientists were much more isolated and Latin was the common language in Europe that they used to communicate.

Today Latin is still used to apply names to plants and animals.

The advantages of using Latin in Botany are:

- Latin names are the same the world over.
- Common names differ from place to place and even plant to plant.
- A common name may apply to several plants, but each plant has only one Botanical name.
- The best gardening reference books and internet sites list plants by Botanical Name.
- Latin Names reveal many plant, flower or leaf characteristics. For example, *marginata* or *marginatus* means a leaf where the central part is green but the leaf margins are white or yellow, Thus *cryptanthus marginatus*.

- Latin has rules which makes it relatively easy to learn and use for Botanical Names. For example, Latin adjectives ending in -i, -ii, -er, -us, or ius are likely to be masculine.

Thus, *Billbergia saundersii* is named after Sir Charles James Renault Saunders.

Nouns and adjectives ending in -a, -ia, -iae or -ae are likely to be feminine. Thus, *Neoregelia carolinae* is named after Caroline, wife of Edward Morren.

- Even though a plant description is written in the native language of the author, Botanical Latin adjectives accurately and consistently describe the attributes of the plant. For example, *brevi-* means short, *foli-* refers to foliage. Thus *Deuterocohnia brevifolia* means a *Deuterocohnia* with short foliage.

References:

Franklin, Peter, "Why Latin?", FNCBSG Newsletter October 2011.

Franklin, Peter, "An Elementary Latin Lesson", Bromelletter Vol. 31, No.1, 1993.

Bromeliad Journal Indexes

by Drew Maywald

I have now finished indexes for the following Journals:

- Far North Coast Bromeliad Study Group NSW (FNCBSG) Newsletter.
- Bromeliad Society of Australia (BSA), Bromeleter Journal.
- Illawarra Bromeliad Society, Newslink Journal.
- Bromeliad Society of Queensland (BSQ), Bromeliaceae Journal.

All of these indexes are now complete and up to date, and I recommend all Bromeliad enthusiasts access them to see the scope of what is available in the four (4) indexes.

Anyone who has access to the internet can access the indexes. The easiest way to access an index is to go to the Bromeliad Society of Australia's web page, Bromeliads in Australia (BinA) bromeliad.org.au and scroll down to the index link. ***Index Journals*** (it's in green type).

Double clicking on this link will take you to the home or contents page of the BSA Bromeleter Index. You can then navigate around the various folders and conduct searches by following the instructions in the index. On the Bromeleter home page there are links to the other three indexes in the lower right corner of the page. Each journal index contains links to the other three Societies indexes.

The four indexes contain a host of information, articles, description and photographs about Bromeliads, as well as a Glossary of Terms that contains more than 2,540 definitions and growing.

The four indexes contain more than 25,200 entries between them, and every entry has a link to the relevant journal, giving users direct access to more than 820 journals about Bromeliads.

Each index contains plant specific folders that contain articles, photographs, descriptions, etc, related to a genera, enabling users to look up an entry specific to a genera, or view a photograph, or read a description of a plant, through the link to the specific journal.

There is also a folder titled Descriptions which contains a list of descriptions of specific plants. This is in addition to the folder containing copies of all plant specific articles in the journals. The description folder was created because many articles contain descriptions of specific Bromeliads. For example, an article in the Bromeliaceae index on Guzmanias contains descriptions of 17 individual Guzmanias.

Bromeliads in Australia Web Site - explained by Ian Hook

BinA as it is affectionately known is a whole lot more than just the photo index. The Bromeliad Society of Australia nominally owns the web site and ISP account and web name bromeliad.org.au. Under "Club News" we give a chunk to any other Bromeliad club that wants space. Originally web pages were rare and clubs could put up their events and Newsletters. There are many Newsletters from many clubs, resulting in a lifetimes worth of reading if you want.

Under "DIARY" I have tried to keep a diary of ALL bromeliad related events in the HOPE that when you/clubs are setting your clubs bookings for shows etc, we don't get embarrassing clashes. Unfortunately I don't always get told when something is on.

If you have an event, **please tell me** and I'll put it in the "DIARY".

"CONTACTS" - I try to keep a list of all bromeliad clubs, meetings, and brief contacts (NZ should be there somewhere).

We have a list of other interesting bromeliad web sites and also listed are some bromeliad nurseries. There are links to our everyday references such as: BSI Cultivar Registry, FCBS, Taxon List, What's New etc.

If your favourite is not listed, it would help everyone if it was ! Let Ian know.

"DETECTIVE" - Uncle Derek often writes articles trying to round-off a topic and give it closure. Or just summary articles of where we are at for newsletters around the world to use. EVERYONE with sufficient talent should be doing the same - i.e. sticking your neck out. But it is NOT just Uncles mouthpiece, there are other's contributions. Another life-time's worth of bromeliad readings.

"INDEXED JOURNALS" - Drew Maywald has compiled ALL Newsletters from many other clubs AND cross indexed every word uttered for last 50 years !!!! So this is a link to that other source. He has also compiled a list and explanation of all(?) Botanical Latin terms.

If it's not in there - let Drew know as he would love to research it and add it.

Derek's old book is the only other source I know of, and that is very rare now to get hands on.

"NAME CHANGES" - an attempt to list all the genera switches that have gone on.

Of course, within everything mentioned above each has it's own multiple levels of sub-links and cross references.

Owning the web site also gives access to as many email addresses as could be thought of and any could be set to redirect to elsewhere. All unused email addresses get forwarded to me, which is fun when a spammer goes through a dictionary !

Did you know....

There is a list of EVERY modification done. "What's New" will show how busy I have been per month.

"List all" is a searchable list for every plant on our web.

On the front page there is a hidden mystery "spot". Clicking on it goes to the shadow, non-public, copy of the web site where all the extra crappy, not used pics are added in etc etc.

Can you find the philately page, giving pics and details of all stamps featuring bromeliads ?

Ian Hook - President of The Bromeliad Society of Australia.

Note: FNCBSG NSW Popular Vote Competition will resume in January 2021.

Where to Find Bromeliad Groups & Societies Meeting Dates

www.bromeliad.org.au then click "Diary".

Check this site for regular updates of times, dates and addresses of meetings and shows in your area and around the country.

Web Links for Checking Correct Identification and Spelling

Bromeliad Cultivar Register (BCR): <http://registry.bsi.org/>

Refer to this site for correct identification and spelling of your hybrid or cultivar.

New Bromeliad Taxon List: <http://bromeliad.nl/taxonlist>

Refer to this site for latest species name changes and correct spelling.

Bromeliads in Australia (BinA): <http://bromeliad.org.au/>

Refer to this site for its Photo Index, Club Newsletters, Detective Derek Articles.

Keep these web sites set as desktop icons for quick reference access.