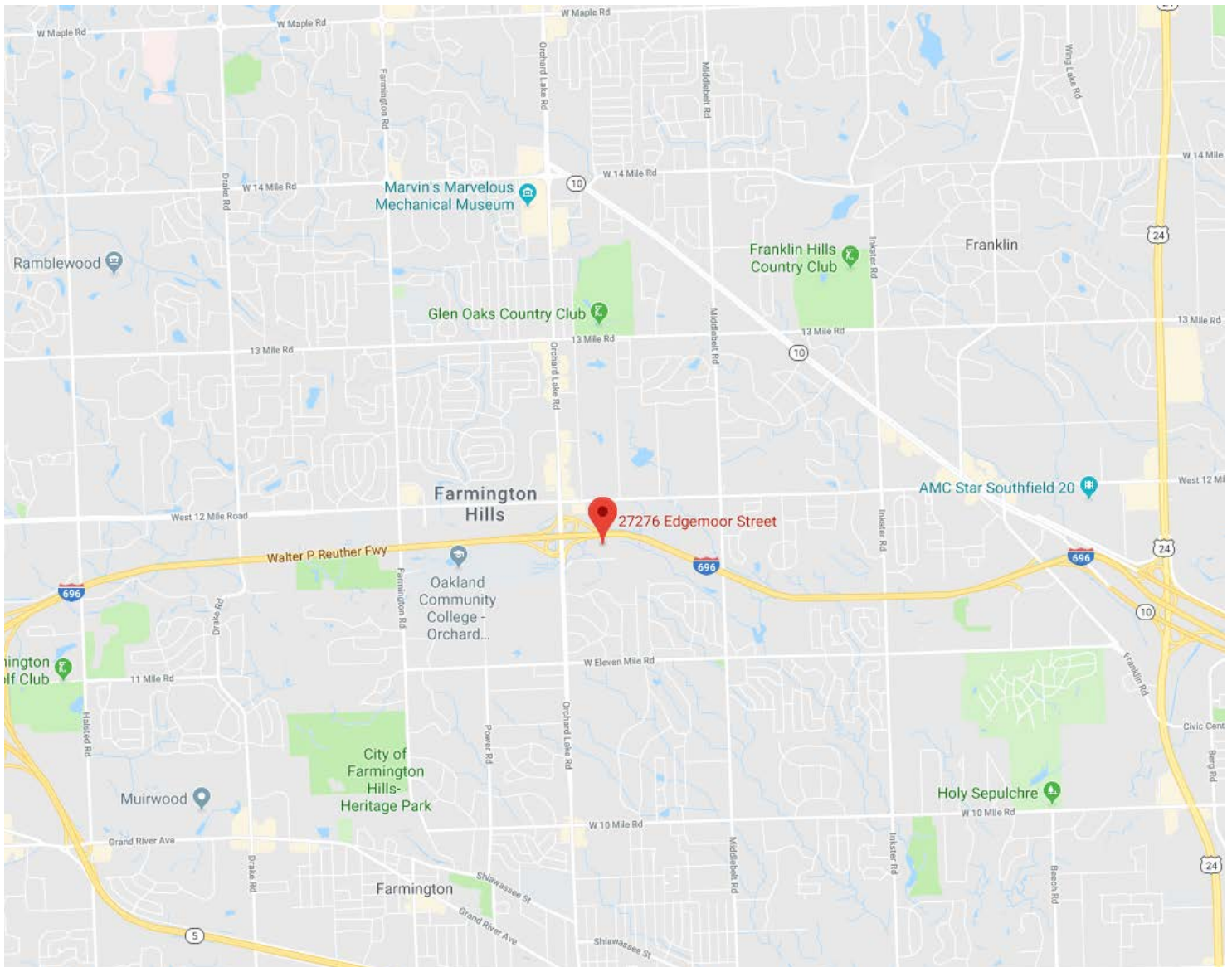


July Meeting

The July meeting take place on **Saturday, July 20, 2:00 PM** at the home of Paul and Karen Wingert.

Indeed, a mere be nine weeks have elapsed since the May meeting there...but it's amazing how much the plants can develop in that time! Plenty of Neoregelias are blooming, along with a few Aechmeas, Orthophytums, Hohenbergias, and perhaps a couple of Tillandsias and Vrieseas. The newest crop of Paul's bromeliad hybrids are also beginning to distinguish themselves; it's a great opportunity to share in the process of evaluating potential new cultivars!

27276 Edgemoor St., Farmington Hills MI 48334



Events

Summer Picnic

The August meeting will feature our annual summer picnic. This popular event will take place at the home of Lynne and Pat Echlin on **Saturday, August 10, at 1:00 PM**. As usual our hosts have offered to provide an assortment of meat, prepared by Grillmaster Pat Echlin. Bring a dish to share, and **RSVP to Lynne Echlin (248)-651-9521 by July 31** to allow them time to make proper arrangements. We will enjoy the afternoon in the Echlins' beautiful yard. Lynne takes full advantage to incorporate bromeliads and other tropical plants into the summer landscape!



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Summertime, and the growin' is easy!

by Paul Wingert

The weather has finally taken a turn, and the bromeliads are loving it! It seemed like summer would never make an appearance this year; April and May were extraordinarily chilly and wet, and while there were no hard freezes, a few bromeliads definitely didn't enjoy the combination. Most of the warmth-loving broms didn't get moved out to the shade house until late May—a good 1-2 weeks later than normal.

On the upside: watering is generally a time-consuming chore, but not so far this year! A brief dry spell in late June provided an opportunity to use my abundant store of rainwater, and to do some long overdue fertilizing. Now as July arrives the long days are triggering numerous bromeliads to flower, and the summer sun is developing maximum color in most of the others. The summer heat increases growth rates, and at this time of year it seems there is something new to see every week (if not every day)!

Read: take advantage of these ideal conditions to feed your bromeliads, as the increased light and warmth allow the plants to metabolize nutrients very rapidly. I have been using Schultz Cactus Plus Liquid Plant Food for several years now, and am pleased with the results; it's relatively low in nitrogen (only 2%), so vegetative growth is not excessively lush—particularly important with Billbergias, Aechmeas, and Neoregelias. Phosphorous (7%) and potassium (7%) help promote overall plant health and more vigorous flowering.

There is also a specialty Bromeliad/Tillandsia fertilizer manufactured by Grow More which offers an N-P-K ratio of 17-8-22. This is suitable for Tillandsias certainly, but also for Guzmanias and Vrieseas. Proper feeding of these genera is critical if you want to replicate the results of the plants that you buy from Florida (or via a local garden center). An appropriate feeding regimen can also dramatically shorten the time that it takes for pups or seedlings to mature and bloom!

One word of warning for those growing bromeliads outdoors, particularly under the shade of trees: be mindful of the changing position of the sun! There's nothing more frustrating than to have a plant grow perfectly for most of the summer, to suddenly finding sun-burned leaves appear after a few hot, dry mid-August days. There are some exceptions; many bromeliads can adapt to our full, summer sun, particularly those in the following genera: Dyckia, Hechtia, Encholirium, Deuterocohnia, Sincorea, Orthophytum, and some of the Aechmea spp. However, the majority of bromeliads will appreciate some protection from the hottest midday sun. Those familiar with my shade house set up have seen that I grow most of my bromeliads under 40% shade cloth with very satisfying results...

Members attending our July and August meetings are guaranteed to see extraordinarily colorful displays of bromeliads. Hope to see everyone soon!



Clockwise from top-left: *Sincoraea burle-marxii rubra*;
Neoregelia hybrid; *Tillandsia edithae*; more Neo hybrids;
and an assortment of broms coloring up nicely in the shadehouse

