



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

THE BSGC NEWS

February/March, 2010

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<http://bromeliad-chicago.org>

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Lori Weigerding

The Schmidts have invited our Society to their house for the March 14th meeting at 2 pm. They will show us their tillandsias as well as their minerals. Their address is 177 Blackhawk in Highland Park. Their phone number is (847) 433-2413. Please call so they will know you are coming. They also wanted you to know that they're having a Mineral Open House on March 6th from 12 pm-6pm and March 7th from 12 pm-5 pm.

President's Column

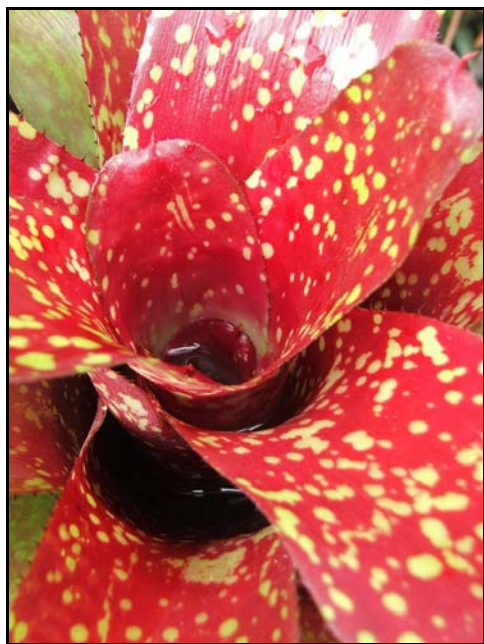
I hope that everyone has made it thru the snow storms this winter. I know that many places had much more snow than we did in Aurora. We seemed to have been lucky this season. Priscilla, Paula, Roberta Torossy and myself met at Priscilla's house to have our January meeting. It was a very pleasant afternoon, where we discussed what things we could do during the year. I explained that an error was brought to our attention about reducing the dues, which Martha and I are correcting as we need to notify everyone first and then take a vote. We apologize for the error, it was made honestly. We did discuss getting together and going to Navy Pier. At this writing I'm not sure if we're still doing that. I'm sorry that I didn't follow up on this. There's been a lot going on with Jeff and me. If we're still interested in doing this (show is 3/6-14/10) we need to figure out what and how we're doing this. I forgot which week end it is that Priscilla isn't working (sorry). Maybe if there's enough of us we can get a group discount.

We're meeting this month at Patsy & Henry's house - the "Mineral Place"!!! It's always fun to meet there, as we get to see such beautiful specimens and lovely jewelry. If you have any plant problems or successes, please bring your concerns or triumphs along. We'll try to help you out or bask in admiration for being so successful. Hope to see you at the Schmidt's house!! I can't wait until Spring is sprung so the plants can go outside again!!

Lori Weigerding

This article and pictures by Andrew Devonshire appeared in the June issue of the Bromeliad Society of New Zealand's newsletter. Many of us love the different variegations in the bromeliads.

Bromeliad Leaf Patterns, an Ever Changing Art



Have you ever stopped to wonder what it is about Bromeliads that is just so appealing? Is it their colour, pattern, size, or form? Or perhaps it's the endless variety and combination of these traits that make this family of plants so collectable?

In this article I want to delve into the fascinating range of leaf patterns or markings that are to be found within this amazing family of plants. Variegation, zonation, marmoration, tessellation, fenestration are just some of the words used to describe the eye candy of leaf patterns we find in Bromeliads. Vriesea are well known for their tessellations, fenestrations & hieroglyphics, but here I will focus on one genus that makes an art form of leaf patterns...the Neoregelia.

There are many features that can combine to create a desirable neo, features such as spines, stolons, leaf colour, leaf shape, leaf tips, leaf patterns and of course cup colour can all combine in various degrees to give us such a diverse range of

plants. Here we will have a look at just some of the most recognisable leaf patterns to be found in neo's.

The eye catching pattern of yellow / green circular spots on a red leaf creates the stunning colour contrast known as marmoration. This would have to be one of the most recognized patterns, probably due to the fact that one of the most prolific & widespread bromeliads to be found in NZ gardens is one regularly called Neo. marmorata hybrid. This plant, as its name indicates displays a fine example of marmoration. Incidentally, the true Neo. marmorata is a species, identified by its white flowers, & is not frequently seen in collections. Classic plants like 'Bobby Dazzler', 'Manoa Beauty', 'Gold Fever', & 'Wild Tiger' are always in demand, and are all good examples of the marmoration pattern.



Another familiar pattern found in plants like Neo. concentrica and its hybrids, is often termed the concentrica trait. Plants with this trait will show a number of dark blotches, that will occasionally form into bands. Plants like 'Gee Whiz' and 'Takemura Grande' show this trait, with 'Kawika' a good example of how the banding can develop. A distinguishing characteristic is that these markings typically have a bumpy or sunken appearance which you can often feel with your finger. So the next time you see this type of pattern, try it out, and run your finger over the marks. They don't come through on the underside of the leaf, so just feel the top, & if you can feel the texture of the pattern, then it's the concentrica trait for sure.

Spotting and banding is widespread in neo's, and while these markings can all appear similar to the concentrica trait, if the markings are smooth, then they will often belong to the closely related traits described as maculation, and zonation.

Maculation describes the defined spotting seen in plants like *olens*, *pauciflora*, & *smithii*, while zonation describes the defined banding seen in plants like 'Hannibal Lector', *zonata*, & 'Blushing Tiger'. As these two leaf patterns are so closely related, they will often occur together, as can be seen in plants like *pascoliana*, *lilliputiana*, and many types of *ampullacea*. It's interesting that in hybridising maculation appears to be the "default setting", as most hybrids will turn out to be spotted, with good strong, and clear zonation much harder to achieve. This results in the very high demand for the few well defined zoned hybrids .

When the term variegation is applied to neos, it is usually defined as plants showing longitudinal stripes of contrasting colours. However, this definition tends to combine both the red striated plants and the white variegated plants, which are in fact quite different patterns in their own right.

The red striated plants, or radial reds as they are sometimes referred to are firm favorites of mine, and we are fortunate to have a wide range available here with many new striated hybrids being introduced over the last few years. The radial reds are plants with a series of fine red lines running along the length of each leaf, typically seen in 'Rosea Striata', some clones of 'Exotica Velvet', & a similar pattern is found in the classic Grace Goode hybrid, 'Amazing Grace'. At times these fine lines will merge to form attractive wide red stripes, as we see in 'Red Romance', adding a real sense of drama to the plant.



There is no doubt that white variegation is the most sought after pattern in neo's. This type of variegation certainly adds eye catching appeal to any neo, but really comes alive when it is found on neo's with strong colour to the leaves, as we see in fosprior 'Perfection', and 'Pemento'. The most popular forms of white variegation are albomargination, where the leaves are edged in white, like 'Yin', and medio-picta where the variegation seems to be painted down the middle as in 'Yang'. White variegation can be found in a range of different forms, and many articles have been written on this type of leaf pattern alone.

The fascination I have with leaf patterns in *Neoregelia* is how they are able to be combined. For example, take a standard *Neo. carolinae*, a plant that has



proven its popularity over many years, & one that is attractive enough in its own right with the vivid red centre flush on flowering offset by a rosette of fresh green leaves. Add white variegation into the mix, & we get a whole range of well know plants like the popular carolinae ‘Tricolor’, ‘Inferno’, & ‘Flandria’. We can however go further still, by adding to this an overlay of marmoration, then we have the eye candy of plants like ‘Milagro’, ‘Kahala Dawn’, & ‘Garnish’.

With this ever changing art of combining bromeliad leaf patterns, and the limitless variety of traits these plants possess, we can look forward to a never ending supply of new plants

to keep our interest alive.

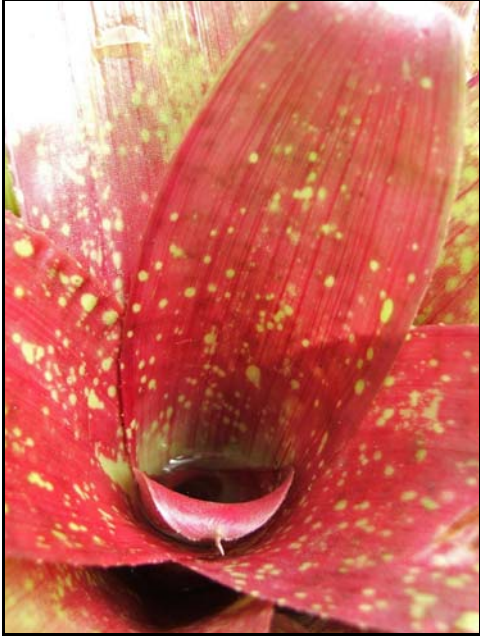
We received notification that Harry Luther, the bromeliad identification expert at the Selby Botanical Gardens has left to join the Garden by the Bay in Singapore. Those on the other side of the world will be happy to have his expertise. To read the article from the Florida Herald-Tribune go to <http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20100207//ARTICLE/2071028?tc=ar>

I saw two items online that were interesting. In the December 2009, National Geographic issue, they showed a picture of a pollen grain from *Tillandsia maxima*. To see it, go to: <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/12/pollen/oeggerli-photography> It is the eighth picture from the left. (They also have pollen from the Venus Fly Trap!)

If you want to try something different, this year, you can go to www.floragrubb.com, click on to Vertical Gardens and then click onto “Wally One” to look at the wall pocket garden. To see some other vertical gardens, go to www.eltlivingwalls.com

It was pointed out to us that in order to change the amount of our dues, we need to change it in our by-laws. We now need everyone to vote either at the March meeting or before. You can vote by phone, email or in person to an officer. You can’t vote the Chicago way, though. (more than once and after you passed

away.) Do you want the dues to stay at \$12 for an individual and \$15 for dual membership or be changed to \$5 for an individual and \$8 for dual annual membership?



Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago

Membership Application

New Member Renewal

Chose one below

Individual \$5.00 Annually Dual \$8.00 Annually

Name _____

Phone Number (_____) _____ - _____

Address _____

City _____, State _____ Zip _____

Email address _____

Birthday (mm/dd/yyyy) _____

Make your check or money order out to the Bromeliad Society of
Greater Chicago

Simply fill this form out and mail with payment to:

Paula Dering
Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago
44 Atteridge Road
Lake Forest, IL
60045