



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

# THE BSGC NEWS

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Lori Weigerding

It was nice almost everyone could make it to the luncheon at Hackneys for our get together luncheon. We want to welcome back Rao Subbarao who renewed his membership at the luncheon.

## *President's Column*

*For those of you who joined us for the luncheon at Hackney's. I was happy to see so many of you attend. I hope that you all enjoyed the food and comradery. I certainly did. We got the good news from Priscilla that next year we will be joining the Northshore Iris and Daylily Society to have our show in 2017. I hope that you all are as excited as I am that we have a chance to have a show again. I hope you all are staying warm, Jeff and I are a little cold because our furnace decided to stop working, so we have to get it fixed! So have great and safe holidays.*

*Lori Weigerding*

We were happy to hear the Daylily and Iris Society will be sharing Burnstein Hall with us for a Show. The date is earlier than we usually have our Show so many of the Bromeliads won't have the nice coloring. Please mark your calendar for May 26<sup>th</sup> which is the set up date and May 27&28 which are the dates we will be selling. Since our first meeting is in March, be thinking about where and what you think we should order to sell. We will also need to come up with a layout plan that needs to be approved by the Garden and accepted by the Daylily and Iris.Society.

We hope you aren't crabby from the election results. Steve found the following article. It was from FEE Foundation for Economic Education.

## **Crabs and Communists: How Envy Politics Drags Us All Down**

José Azel

Saturday, October 29, 2016

It is a funny thing about crabs; when a single crab is placed in a bucket, it will surely seek to climb up and escape. However, in a bucket full of crabs, none can escape as the crabs pull each other down preventing any crab from climbing the bucket and escaping to freedom.

Crab mentality is not limited to individuals. It can be observed in the behavior of groups, communities and nations.

Sociologists use the term "crab mentality" or "crabs in a bucket" in metaphorical reference to anyone who is trying to better his or her circumstances, but is prevented by others who do not want them to be successful and drag them down to share the collective fate of the group.

Crab mentality expresses the "if I can't have it neither can you" idea when members of a group seek to negate or diminish the accomplishments of any member who achieves success above others in the group. I have no idea why the crabs do it, but in the analogy to human behavior, envy and jealousy are the usual suspects for crab mentality.

The crabs in a bucket syndrome is the negative attitude people have toward the success of others. Many of us can relate to efforts to start a business, to improve our education, to begin exercising or dieting, only to be dissuaded by some around us telling us that it is not worth the effort.

We should find inspiration in the success of those that have escaped the bucket and we should mentor others to climb the sides of the bucket. Perhaps, if we climb together, we can tilt the bucket and we can all get out.

Republished from PanamPost. If you would like to read the rest of the article, go to the following

link:<https://fee.org/articles/crabs-and-communists-how-envy-politics-drags-us-all-down/>



Source: Wikimedia Commons  
*Metasesarma rubripes*

That article reminded me of what I found in the August 2016 Bromeliad Society of New Zealand's Newsletter.

**An unusual discovery...a crab that dines out exclusively on broms!**

Extract of information from the Bulletin of the Brazilian Bromeliad Society,  
May, 1997

A small crab only 3cm (a little over one inch-Ed.note) long that climbs 4 metres (13 feet) up a tree just to feed on bromeliads was discovered by researchers

from the University of Campinas (Unicamp) at Juréia on the southern coast of São Paulo state. This crab has a special taste for bromeliad leaves in contrast to its relatives who prefer the leaves of mangrove trees or organic detritus.

Certain species are becoming endangered because this voracious animal eats only bromeliad leaves. Population numbers are falling due to this factor and also because of habitat destruction. Eric Fischer, Andrea Araùjo and Luiz Duarte made this unusual discovery and are studying the effect of this crab on plant reproduction. Scientifically known as *Metasesarma rubripes*, it prefers the flower petals, stigma and pollen and feeds for an average of 40 minutes.

We must note here, that we did a couple of stories on the Jamaican Bromeliad Crab which keeps the tank of the bromeliad clean a number of years ago.

Another thing to be crabby about is the change in the names of many of the bromeliads. Back in January, 1998, Gene McKenzie had this to say in the *Caloosahatchae Meristem*.

### **The Editor's Edict by Gene McKenzie**

As there is a lot of huffing and puffing, lumping and splitting going on now, we might as well dig in our heels and get ready for the onslaught. Most of the serious bromeliad lovers are quaking in their boots. We have just learned to pronounce some of the genera and species names and how to identify those in our collections. Now some in the upper halls have decided that populations of bromeliads must move from the farm to a different location. Technology has advanced in the study of the Bromeliaceae. Taxonomists can now study thousands of living plants rather than rely on the dried herbarium specimens of the past. They have discovered enough difference in many species that the plants must be separated to a new species name or even moved to a new or different genera. (Abridged, January, 1998)

Here is what Eric Gouda from the Netherlands had to say about why there will be changes now.

Due to the molecular research; Bromeliaceae subfamily and genera will be revised, causing many name changes and new combinations. An example is the just published revision: Barfuss, M.H.J.; Till, W.; Leme, E.J.C.; Pinzon, J.P. ;

Manzanares, J.M;Halbritter,H;Samuel,R. & Brown,G.K. (2016) *Taxonomic revision of Bromeliaceae subfam. Tillandsioideae based on a multi-locus DNA sequence phylogeny and morphology*. 279 (I): 97pp.

Additionally about 40 new Bromeliad species are described yearly.

To keep track of the changes two new lists are available:

1. Accepted Bromeliaceae names :  
<http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/data/bromNames.php>
2. Bromeliaceae names and synonyms: <http://taxonlist.florapix.nl/>

Both lists based on the Encyclopaedia of Bromeliads database which is continuously updated, and links can be found on the BSI site under the “Bromeliads->taxonomy” menu.

Now it is time to focus on some positive things. In the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies latest Newsletter, Carol Wolfe had this picture from the Chicago Botanic Garden.



Carol Wolfe's picture

Before going to Hackney's luncheon, we stopped at the Barnes and Noble bookshop at the Old Orchard Mall. We found the book Air Plant Care and Design by Ryan and Meriel Lesseig. I thought they did a good job on discussing growing and caring for tillandsias.

It was geared for the beginner to intermediate knowledge person. They had a pretty good listing of the different species and hybrids and their particular care. I especially liked their suggestions on ways to use them, such as in a frame, adding them to a floral arrangement, using them as centerpieces when you entertain and for decorating for the holidays. They also suggested displaying them in a terrarium

but said to take them out to water them. They mention two artists, Megan George who has the Zen Succulent business and Justine Moody who displays them in her fiber art. You can see some of Justine's work by going to [etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com/search/made-by/justine) and in the search box put in made by justine. Lastly, they show how to use them in your wedding. It was interesting to see tillandsia xerographica used as the bridal bouquet.



Martha's Neo.



Anne Coughlan's Crypt. 'Pink Floyd'

Here are a few pictures. One is of a neoregelia that I got at an auction and grew it for a couple of years. Since it was blooming and we were going to Arizona, I gave it to my Mom to enjoy. This picture was taken by Anne Coughlan. She got a Cryptanthus at one of the auctions we had at our meetings. I was happy to hear that she is out of the hospital and recovering. If you have any pictures to share please send them in.



Anne's Tillandsia harrisii



Anne's Tillandsia white ionantha  
Druid

I am looking forward to our January Cactus Society meeting. Andy Siekkinen will be talking about the terrestrial bromeliads, mainly dyckias and hechtias. Mine have been doing well here. I just divided some up to give out at our Cactus Club meeting. I actually managed to come out without getting bloodied.

In the 2000 issue of the Journal of the Bromeliad Society, v.50 pp. 153-154 It lists some factors that impact the cold sensitivity of bromeliads. A high nitrogen level has a negative impact by producing lush growth with low resistance. Low nutrient levels other than nitrogen has a negative impact by producing poor resistance to cold. Low light levels have a negative impact by producing weak, thin leaves. An overly wet soil has a negative impact because it produces poor root growth. Poor air movement has a negative impact since cold wet air is trapped around plants. A lengthy cold period causes the plant resistance to deteriorate with time.

Barb, the editor of the South African Society had this to say in April,2016. (Their seasons are reverse to ours.)

As we enjoy the autumn weather, here are some chores you can undertake to encourage healthy growth through the winter months. Not that it gets that cold here in East London. But elsewhere in South Africa I know it is not the case. You should be removing all the dead leaves from the base of your bromeliads to prevent bacteria growing in rotting leaf matter over the winter months. A good opportunity for a clear out, preventing over crowding as your broms need air to circulate to prevent them getting infestations of scale. Also ensure that your bromeliads especially your softer leaf varieties like Guzmania, Nidularium and Vriesea do not sit in water logged soil as the temperatures drop. This is an open invitation to infection, rotting plants and maybe sad losses. I speak from experience! Move those plants that you put in shadier spots to protect from the harsh summer sun out onto the open for the next few months; they will reward your efforts. If you live in areas of South Africa where there is frost remember to water your plants early in the day so that their cups are not left with water in them overnight.

Hope you had a great Thanksgiving and had lots to be thankful for. We hope your Christmas is Merry. A Bromeliad makes a good gift. If you give one why don't you go online and find care instructions and print them up and give them along with your plant. (How about a Gift Membership to the Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago?)

