



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

# THE BSGC NEWS

JULY, 2017

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Lori Weigerding

We had a very small but lively group at the July meeting. Martha and Steve did a presentation of the Sunny Broms Conferance and the Australian Zoo. Anne was very interested in some of the ways they displayed the tillandsias at a few of the garden visits. She always comes up with great tillandsia displays. She shared the following with us.



Anne is googly eyes over Tillandsias.



Anne's Caged Tillandsias  
They are trying to escape!



Jack Reilly's Frogs and Tillandsia creations

#### *President's Column*

*We weren't able to attend the last meeting due to a family conflict, but I heard it went well.*

*During this upcoming meeting we need to discuss having our next show with The Daylily Society whose show is scheduled to take place July 14-15, 2018. We need to check to see if we can have the show with them at this time.*

*Virginia from the Iris & Daylily Society will be giving a program on Madagascar at our August meeting. Look forward to seeing you there.*

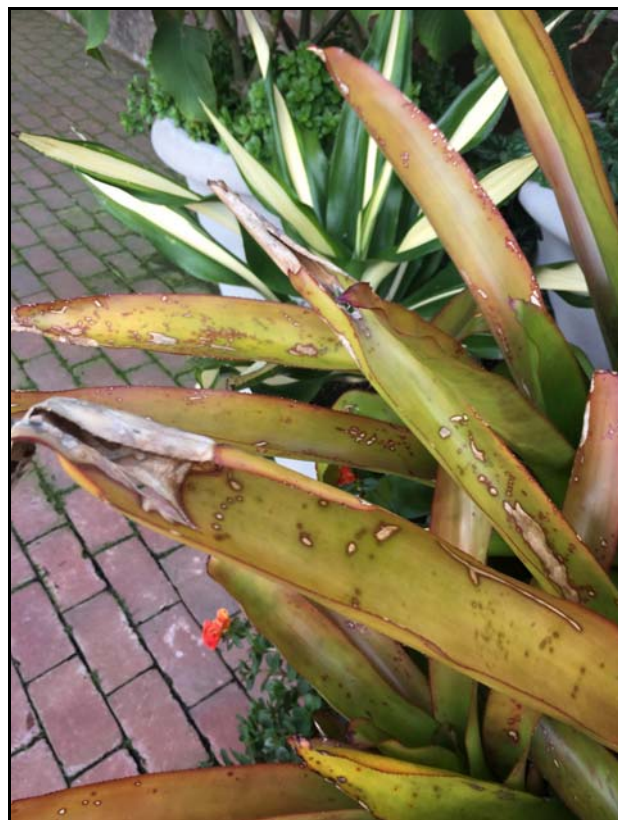
*Lori Weigerding*

Our August 13<sup>th</sup> meeting is at 2pm and will be in the Lakeside Room which is in the Visitor Center at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Virginia Winkler from the Iris and Daylily Society will present a program on Madagascar. It is a very interesting country. We will also be raffling off some of the leftover Tillandsias from our show.

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, I attended a seminar, “Designing with Tropicals” at the Chicago Botanic Garden by Andrew Bunting. He is the Assistant Director and the Director of plant collections at the Garden. The first hour was a walking tour of the Garden. The second hour was photos of many of the tropical plants in other gardens including the Missouri Botanic Garden, Chanticleer near Philadelphia, Michigan Avenue and some private gardens. The Bromeliads in the Garden were purchased from Bullis Nursery which is located in Princeton, FL. A few of the bromeliads seemed to have been damaged by cold when they were shipped. I asked what they would be doing with the bromeliads after the Brazil in the Garden Exhibition ends. Andrew said that because of the logistics, they wouldn’t be selling them. They will use some in the greenhouse and others they will donate to other institutions and conservatories, etc.



Damaged by the Cold



More damaged leaves.

The focus of the seminar was on the use of tropicals outside in your garden in the summer instead of the usual plants such as petunias and geraniums. They have many large planters which most homeowners could do. Some of the companion plants used were colocasia, alocasia, canna, musa and pennisetums. Tropicals like being planted in warm soil so he suggested waiting until the middle to the end of May before planting.

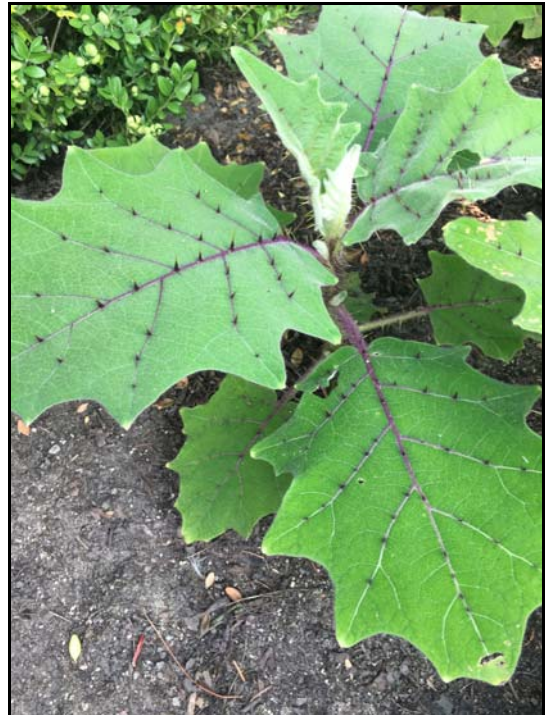


Plants in containers at Chicago Botanic Garden



Andrew said that you should use half foliage plants in your container since many of your flowering plants won't flower all summer long. The three things to make up a container planting are: focal point, fillers and spillers.

In front of the visitor center are some palms planted in the beds with bromeliads. Andrew said that since many of the bromeliads they planted have serrated edges, they advised people to wear long sleeves and gloves. Another plant that looks even more difficult to plant is *Solanum quitense* with its spines coming out of the leaves.



*Solanum quitense*  
Note the spines in the leaves



One thing to consider is the combination of plants as far as color and texture. Some combinations they used were *Quesnelia marmorata* next to *Tradescantia* “Purple Heart”, *Neoregelia* ‘Elwood’ next to *Zamia furfuracea*, and *Melianthus major* which is from South Africa.



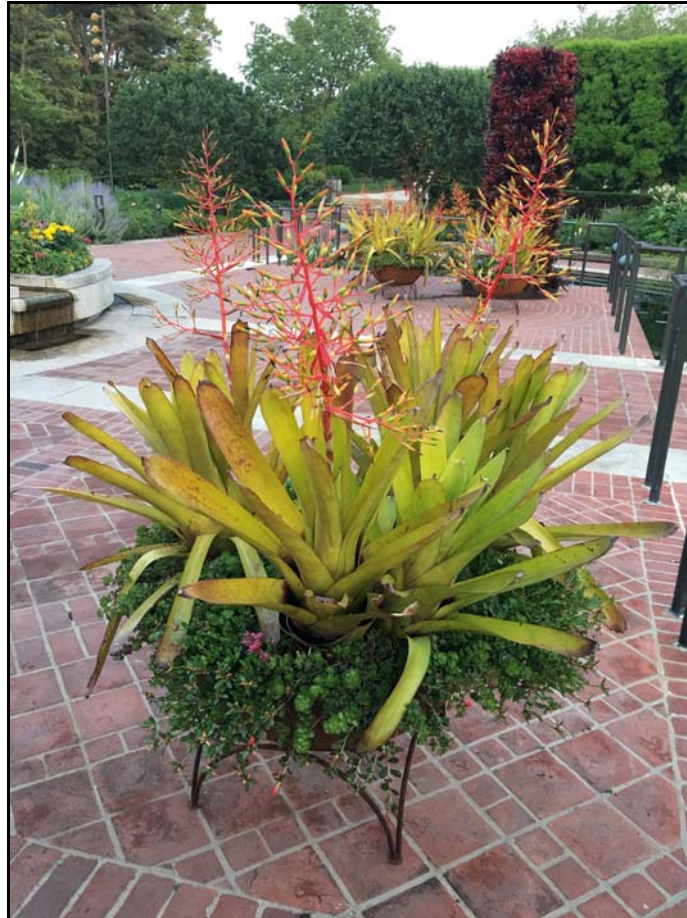
Drowned Neo. Fireball



The Tower

When you head to the Regenstein Center you see towers of bromeliads. These metal frames were built in house and have a drip irrigation system. They each hold 450 neoregelias. They are filled with Neo. "Fireball", Elwood; and Guacamole'. If you compare the Neo.'Fireballs' on the tower with those in the crescent Garden you will notice a big difference. Those in the Crescent Garden were submerged for 2-3 hours when we had the big rainstorm. We will see how they do over the summer.

At the base of the towers are pots that were fire pits that are planted with Aechmea 'Yellow Berries' and portulaca.



Aechmea "Yellow Berries"

In the Circle Garden which is located behind the Regenstein Center were many more tropical plants including Portea 'Tambora', Neoregelia 'Royal Burgundy', Aechmea 'Dean', Canna Tropicana, Cyperus involucratus 'Baby Tut' and Colocasia 'Coal Miner'. Be sure you go through the arbor so you don't miss the various Tillandsia and other Bromeliads which are mounted. I was surprised to see the Cryptanthus mounted since they are known as terrestrial bromeliads and are native to the forest floor in Brazil. We will see how they do over the summer.



I definitely thought this seminar was worthwhile. I invited those in attendance to our September meeting where I mentioned we would be raffling off some tillandsias.

Chicago Botanic Garden pictures taken by Martha Goode with her iPhone6.