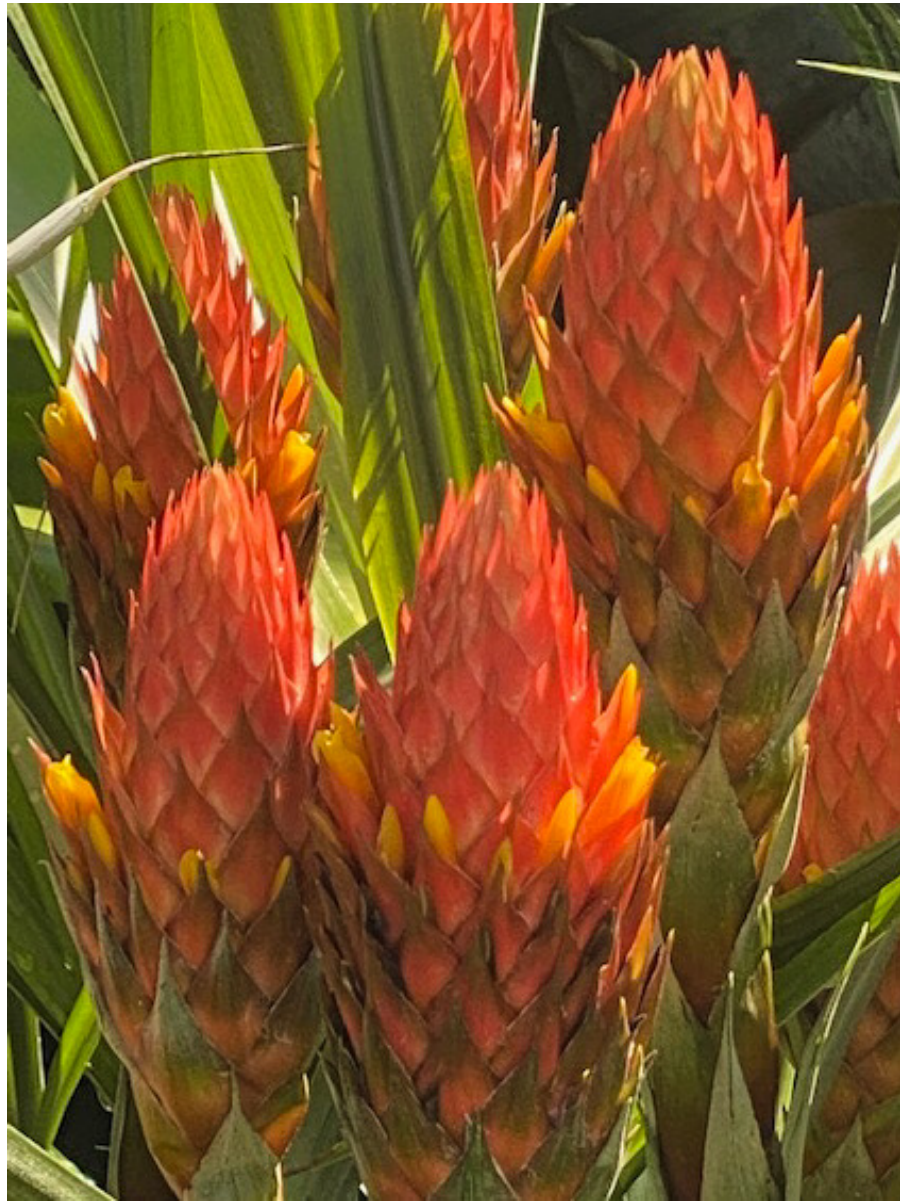




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Sarasota Bromeliad Society *Newsletter*

March 2021



Pitcairnia smithiorium Photo by Richard Poole

Officers for 2021

President Ray Lemieux

Vice President Marian Kennell

Secretary David Bates

Treasurer Dianne Cantalamessa

Membership Bob Stickney and Nancy Abramson

Historian position available

Newsletter Editor Marian Kennell

Workshop position available

Refreshments Nancy Abramson and Barbara Wetzel

FCBS Representatives Jason Mellica, Terrie Bert (alternate)

Facebook Betty Gundlach and Marian Kennell

Raffle Bob Cantalamessa

Door Prize Ray Lemieux

Librarian Marian Kennell

Shop Mark Kennell

April Zoom Meeting

Date: Wednesday, April 7, 2021

Time: Presentation begins at 7 P.M. (opens at 6:45 P.M.)

Subject: Pitcairnia

Speakers: Richard Poole and Ray Lemieux will co-present the program via Zoom. Richard Poole will moderate the Zoom meeting.

Note: We are not currently able to conduct meetings in the Great Room at Selby. We are looking forward to having live meetings again once it is safe to do so.

FWCBS & SBS will cohost the Zoom meeting on April 7, 2021. Richard Poole will moderate the Zoom meeting. Richard Poole and Ray Lemieux present a BSI program on Pitcairnia and answer your questions on cultivating this unique genus within

the bromeliad family. I would like to acknowledge and thank Keith Smith for making this presentation available to BSI members.

Richard Poole - Richard's interest in bromeliads began at an early age, as he was enthralled of tales of jungle explorations and collecting by his godfather, Mr. John Henry Bogie of New Orleans who was an early member of the New Orleans Bromeliad Society. Although growing tropical plants and bromeliads most of his life, it was not until his retirement that he could devote time to study and begin his collection. He volunteers at the Marie Selby Botanical Garden in the Botany Department under Bruce Holst in a variety of work on the herbarium, cataloging, and georeferencing of locations of orchid and bromeliad collection sites in Ecuador, Peru, and Brazil.

Richard is Vice President of the Florida West Coast Bromeliad Society, council representative to the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, and member of both the Sarasota Bromeliad Society and the Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay. He was recently elected as a Board Member of the BSI for the Southern US area, and is an advisor to the BSI Library and the Luther-Padilla Scholarship Fund. He is also looking forward to being the Tour Director for the upcoming World Conference in Sarasota in June 2022.

Ray Lemieux - Ray Lemieux is Tropiflora's expert on terrestrial bromeliads and succulent plants. He has traveled to Mexico, Venezuela, Madagascar and Singapore to acquire plants for Tropiflora. He has been active in the Sarasota Bromeliad Society as well as a member of the Central Florida Cactus & Succulent Society, Bromeliad Society International, and the Cactus & Succulent Society of America. Some of Ray's registered hybrids include *Dyckia* 'Milky Way', *Dyckia* 'Sidewinder', *Hechtia* 'Carter', *Neoregelia* 'Clemson Tiger', *Neoregelia* 'Rosanna',

Neoregelia 'Silver Tiger', Neoregelia 'Sun Devil', xDyckcohnia 'Bones Mahogany', xDyckcohnia 'Cherry Bomb', xDyckcohnia 'July', xEnchotia 'Ruby', xOrthoglaziovia 'Rosita', xPulirium Quicksilver. Ray Lemieux is currently the President of the SBS.

Ray is the Tom Brady of SBS. He currently holds the record for number of times being being President (5 times) and Vice President (4 times) for the SBS.



Pitcairnia atrorubens photographed at Selby by Marian Kennell



Pitcairnia andreana photo by David Vitolo at Selby



Shirley Evans passed away this month in Michigan. Shirley was an active and beloved member of SBS. She will be greatly missed. Shirley initially became involved with SBS in order to help her neighbor and friend Dorothy Berg with refreshments, but one thing led to another. In 2001, 2002, and 2018 Shirley was elected Vice President. She was elected President in 2003 and 2004. By 2000, Shirley chaired the Show Awards. She acted as Sunshine Lady in 2006-2012, Secretary in 2009. Shirley took over the role as Historian from Patsy Worley in 2012 and remained in that post until 2019. In addition to the above roles, Shirley has worked on the Show Awards, as a clerk in Shows, the By-law Committee, and Audits. Her warmth, generosity and smile will be missed. Our condolences to her family.



Bud and Shirley Evans at a Sarasota Bromeliad Show taken in 1994. Shirley passed away earlier this month. Bud passed away in October of 2019.



Alcantarea imperialis in bloom. The photo was taken at Shirley and Bud Evans' house in 2019. This is an offset from a small offset given to Bud Evans by Wally Berg. Wally told Bud he wanted to see what kind of grower Bud he was. Bromeliad enthusiasts traveled from all over Florida to see it in full bloom!

Photo by Marian Kennell

Thanks Terrie for sharing the following article on Alcantarea.

Living Large with Alcantarea

By Theresa M. Bert

Species of the genus *Alcantarea* are native to eastern Brazil where they grow as terrestrials in open places. Most species grow in full sun on massive granitic rock outcrops at medium elevations (500-1500 m) in cracks where water percolates through the granite. The genus *Alcantarea* was formerly recognized as a subgenus of *Vriesea*. Most species are very large—3--5 ft. in diameter at full size. They have brightly colored to lightly colored and green flower clusters that are often spectacular, and up to 7-8 ft. tall. The flower cluster can have multiple branches with sometimes colorful bracts, and lovely, three-petaled, yellow or white flowers with long, protruding stamens. Many of the species have flowers with long petals that curve backward and sideways, like lovely curls at the ends. Don't hold your breath waiting for these plants to flower, though—they can be 10 or more years old before they flower—but it's worth the wait!

You will need space to grow these plants. *Alcantarea* species can be grown in a loose mix of potting soil, a little charcoal, and perlite. It is best to increase pot size as they grow. They eventually become so heavy that the bases lean and press against the edge of the pot. At this time, they'll fall over when loaded with water unless some preventative measure is taken. I usually pot them in plastic pots and then put those into heavy clay pots. Sometimes I also need to counterbalance the base of the plant by putting a brick or two in the plastic pot on the side opposite the plant base. Some species and cultivars (e.g., *A. imperialis* 'Red') tend to rot at the base; to guard against this, grow those plants in pure perlite and a porous rock such as commercially available lava rock. Use lots of time-released fertilizer, but avoid placing the fertilizer so that it touches the plant base. *Alcantareas* respond well to time-released fertilizer, such as 6-month, time-released Nutricote® (available under the brand-name

“Dynamite”). They also do well in the ground. They survive light frosts without damage if covered with frost-cloth or sheets. I grow them in my yard in full sun or partial shade. Plant or place them in locations where you won't need to move them after they're full-grown. An alcantarea holding even a little water can weigh 80-100 lbs.

The pups on alcantareas grow from the trunk. Small “grass pups” with thin leaves can appear beneath the leaves when the plant is anywhere from small through full-sized. These can be removed when they're about 4-5 in. long and grown in pots. They are not easily removed because the base is curved into the trunk of the parent plant. To remove them, dig the potting mix away from the plant, grasp the pup by the base, and wiggle it from side to side while simultaneously pulling the pup a bit away from the mother plant.

Very robust pups frequently appear after the plant has bloomed if time-released fertilizer pellets are placed between the leaves. Cut off the inflorescence after flowering for best results.

Sometimes it is possible to get a dozen or more pups by using this method. To harvest the pups, I remove all leaves below them and use the same technique described above for the grass pups. The best way to get them to root is to insert them between the parent plant's trunk and a big remaining leaf until they develop roots. This may take a few months, but for me, this works better than potting them.

Alcantareas can tolerate some leaf litter accumulation, but not acorns or rotting leaves left in their centers for months. Several large species available for cultivation are cold-tolerant, easy to grow, and quite spectacular, especially *Alcantarea imperialis*, *A. odorata*, *A. extensa*, *A. brasiliana*, *A. vinicolor*, and *A. heloisae*. *Alcantarea imperialis*, the most popular species, can be found with leaves that are green above and green or various shades of red or purple beneath. *Alcantarea odorata* can be purchased with varying degrees of trichome (scale, or scurf) coverage.

Those with thick trichome coverings (e.g., cultivar 'Silver') are fuzzy- or snowy-looking and beautiful. If you want unique, interesting landscape bromeliads, try plants of this genus, but beware, they can grow quite large!

A photos of Alcantareas growing in the area:



Counterclockwise from upper left: Alcantarea 'P.I.T.A.'; 'Aurora'; brasiliensis; 'Merlot'; and a group of Alcantareas. Photos taken at Michael's Bromeliads by Marian Kennell



Photos taken at Tropiflora.

Top to bottom on left: *Alcantarea* 'Merlot'; *Alcantarea* 'Moray'; *Alcantarea brasiliensis*; *Alcantarea* 'Mellow Yellow' Right photo: *Alcantarea odorata*

Thanks to Scott and Brian at Tropiflora and to Michael, David, and Donna at Michael's Bromeliads for the opportunity to share your beautiful bromeliads with our members with these photos.



Alcantarea grass pups safely growing inserted between the leaves of the parent plant where they grow roots.

Photo by Marian Kennell



Alcantarea 'John Stoddart'
Photo taken at Michael's Bromeliads last year.

A few bromeliads blooming this month....



Billbergia stenopetala Ecuadorian form is in the subgenus *Helicodea* which have flower petals that coil up like a spring when open. In this photo the top few petals have coiled.



Forzzaea leopoldi-horsrtii, formerly *Cryptanthus leopoldi-Horstii* grows in cracks in rocks in Minas Gerais, Brazil.



Hechtia rosea x marnier lapostollei cross from Ray Lemieux. Hechtias have separate male and female forms. In the male form the pistil is not fully developed, whereas in the female, like this plant, the stamens are not functional.



Cryptanthus 'Absolute Zero' is a Jim Irvin hybrid.

Local Events:

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens: Roy Lichtenstein: Monet's Garden Goes Pop! Feb 13-Jun 27, 2021, 10 am to 5 pm. 1534 Mound Street, Sarasota, FL 34236. While the meeting rooms are closed, the gardens are open.

The SBTPS Annual Spring Plant Sale is [April 17-18, 2021](#), 9 to 4 each day, at the Sanford Garden Club, [200 Fairmont Dr., Sanford, FL 32773](#). The Facebook events listing has more information at <https://www.facebook.com/events/956375764902432>. The online auction/presale runs [from March 27th at 9 AM to April 12th](#) at PM and is at <https://www.32auctions.com/annualspringplantsale2021>. Many plants are expected to be listed by the time it starts on March 27th.

BSCF 46th Annual Mother's Day Show and Sale – May 7-9, 2021 at the Fashion Square Mall 3201 E Colonial Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

If you know of any events that your fellow bromeliad enthusiasts would be interested in please send the information to Marian Kennell at sarasotabromeliad@gmail.com

