



The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the
San Diego
Bromeliad Society

December 2017

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President's Corner

By Scott Sandel

I missed last month's meeting, but I heard that the meeting went well, including the vote of next year's officers and board of directors. Thanks, Dave Kennedy, for filling in for me! And kudos to Andrew Wilson for an interesting talk on Argentina bromeliads. I was on a brief vacation in tropical Nicaragua. Some brief trip notes and photos are below.

December's meeting in Balboa Park will start an hour later, at 11:00 for our holiday pot-luck party. Robert Kopfstein will prepare the main course. Please bring a side dish and your appetites. The gift exchange is described a bit later in the newsletter. Since we have a full agenda in December with the gift exchange, we'll not have a speaker. In addition to the gift exchange, we will have a great plant opportunity table and we'll auction off our holiday tree and all its plants. Plus, we may have a special plant auction.



Thanks Al Evans, Nancy Groves, and all who helped decorate our Christmas tree!

Holiday Party

The party starts at 11am (one hour later than the monthly meeting). The club provides drinks, plates, utensils, and the meat (ham, turkey). Members should bring either a salad, a vegetable, bread of some sort, or appetizers.

Gift Exchange

If you wish to participate you need to

buy a gift related to bromeliads or to gardening. You may choose to gift one of your better bromeliads as well. The present should be worth around \$20, give or take. Be sure to wrap the present. When you get to the meeting, we will collect all of the presents.

Schedule

After our meal, we will auction the Christmas tree, and then do the raffle table (Each person gets a raffle ticket, courtesy of the club.) Then we will arrange the chairs in a circle and place all of the presents in the middle of the circle. Each person who brought a gift will be given a raffle ticket. When your number is called, you may choose any gift that is in the center of the circle. Be sure to keep your raffle ticket. Once all of the gifts are chosen, we will go through the ticket numbers one more time. At this time, when your number is called, you may take any gift that the other people in the circle have in front of them--or you may choose to keep what you have. Once we have gone through the ticket numbers a second time, the gift exchange is over, and you may open the gift that is in front of you. Merry Christmas.

November in Nicaragua

For the first few days, we visited areas on Lake Managua – Las Isletas de Grenada (off the shores of the colonial city of Grenada) and island of Ometepe with its twin volcanoes Volcán Concepción and Volcán Maderas. For the last few days, we stayed on the Pacific Coast. Most of the areas we visited were tropical dry forests that have a dry season, and the bromeliads were relatively sparsely represented by Tillandsias and terrestrial Bromelia stands. However, the volcanos are high enough to support a cloud forest ecology with more variety (Pitcairnia, Vrieseas, Guzmanias and Tillandsias).



Tillandsias on a roof (*balbisiana*?), *T. ionantha* wreaths in roadside nursery, *Pitcairnia imbricata* at Mombacho Volcano Nature Reserve



November Meeting

Elections

All officers and directors were reelected with one exception for the membership chair, that went from Al Evans to Tammy Harmon.

Talk

Andrew Wilson delighted us with the dry-growing bromeliads of Argentina. The excellent habitat shots and clever observations made the case that these are plants we should be trying to grow in San Diego. It's great to see how some tillandsias grow in the wild, and especially, be introduced to a few stunning puyas.

Show & Tell



O. navoioides

Bob Wright – *Aechmea leptantha*, *Orthophytum benzingii*

Dave Kennedy – *Tillandsia capitata* hybrid (Isley), *Tillandsia purpurea* x *caerulea*,

Andrew Wilson – *Lymania azurea*

Sandra Reus – *Vriesea* 'Milagro Negro' (Arden)

Dan K & Eloise Lau – *Tillandsia ionantha* x *schiedeana*, *Pitcairnia staminea*

Nancy Groves – *Tillandsia jalisco-monticola*

Robert Kopfstein – *Orthophytum navoioides*



SDBS 2018

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Upcoming Events

SDBS Meetings

December 9, 2017 @ 11 AM
SDBS Holiday Party
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, room 104
www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org

January 13, 2018 @ 10 AM
SDBS Monthly Meeting
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, room 104
www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org

**World Bromeliad
Conference 2018**
San Diego



May 29 - June 3, 2018
fiesta de las bromelias

Price drop: Now only \$290!
Register at:
<http://www.bsi.org/new/conference->

Monthly Meetings

1st Tuesday, 6:30 PM
San Diego Orchid Society
Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101
www.sdorchids.com

2nd Saturday, 10 AM
San Diego Bromeliad Society
Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 104
www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org

2nd Saturday, 1 PM
San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society
Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101
www.sdcss.net

2nd Monday, 5:45 PM
San Diego Horticultural Society
Congregation Beth Israel (CBI)
9001 Towne Centre Drive
San Diego, CA 92122
sdhort.org

December Plant Table and January Preview

By Al Evans



The plant table for December will include the following plants remaining from our Wholesale Tillandsia purchase last month ([plus a few not listed). X Redy, filifolia, ionantha 'Fuego', butzii, capitata 'Peach', ionantha 'Huamelula', andreana, ionantha clumps, straminea, tectorum caulescent, palacea, streptophylla, xerographica, purpurea spiral select, fasciculata, capitata coral?, and an assortment of mini neos. Each member at the December meeting will get one raffle ticket good for one plant. The Holiday tree we decorated for December Nights will be offered on a separate "opportunity table".

Last week, Scott Sandel, Nancy Groves and I were invited to Dallas Bradford's home by his nephew,

Dennie Bradford to see Dallas' extensive bromeliad collection. Dennie is the executor of Dallas' estate and allowed us to choose from the collection to provide plants for our January plant table. Many of the plants that will be available on the January table are extraordinary and we also selected a number of mounted tillandsias. Some of those will be available for auction as they have been mounted and growing for many years on various types of rock and are also extraordinary. Attend the January meeting and see some of Dallas Bradford's bromeliad collection that he accumulated over many years and maybe pick up few for your collection.

Now Blooming!



Robert Kopfstein – *Ursulaea mcvaughii* (above) and the *Orthophytum navioides* (below) that was in the November meeting



Tillandsia Ponderosa

By Andrew Wilson

This plant came into bloom here five months ago. It had been acquired as a seedling five years before then. Its image, taken today, shows it at



Andrew Wilson - *Tillandsia ponderosa*

almost three feet tall including an inflorescence which has not yet reached maximum height.

It has been grown epiphytically ever since in the same location on a branch of a small tree. It

gets water once or twice a week from moisture that drips down after upper levels of the tree are hosed. Other than from whatever nutrients are washed down from leaves above, it receives next to no added fertilizer. The plant is in light shade all day apart from short periods in the morning and late afternoon.

This species comes from oak forests in central America (southern Mexico, Guatemala and Honduras). Most sources say the species is monocarpic, which means that the plant dies after flowering and replacements must come from seed. This specimen appears to be following that behavior, with no hair pups appearing yet.

The Tillandsias and Racineas

A Review

By Andrew Wilson

Many of the books on bromeliads, whether in our library or elsewhere, deal with topics such as how to grow, display and show them, all of them, with perhaps just a few examples of species in each genus. Fewer books deal in greater detail with just one or two of these genera, the tillandsias, for instance. This book, published in French as 'Les Tillandsia et les Racinea' by Albert Roguenant, does fill that gap. Monographs on the tillandsia species do exist but they are produced with few, if any diagrams or drawings. None provide quality color images of every species, at least not until this book appeared. As such, it becomes an invaluable addition to the resources of anyone with even a moderate-size collection.

The book is based on the 1977 monograph on Tillandsias and Racineas by Lyman Smith and Jack Downs. Roguenant, years later, included species discovered after 1977 and provided the images of almost 700 species. The result is an attractive and useful volume of more than 800 pages. That sounds great; has it any defects?

The most obvious one is that it is written in French. That would seem to reduce its utility for many. However, the format of each species description is fixed and the description does not use a large number of terms. Once you understand the simple format you can soon translate a species description with the help of the short French-English (also

French-German, etc.) dictionary of plant terms. The sections on plant growing, propagation and history may be less amenable. For them, a small portion of the book, a translation will be needed.

The other defect is that, even with its nearly 700 species the book is not fully up to date. It was so on the date of publication but since then some new species have been added and, more important, the Tillandsia family (including Tillandsia, Vriesea, Racinea etc.) has been broken up into a larger number of genera. Some species (fortunately, not too many) have become members of other genera, for example. Since no book on bromeliads is complete these days without recourse to an updated list of 'old' and 'new' names this one, with its fine collection of species images remains a practical and useful guide. As an example of that use, if I had read it before acquiring *T. ponderosa* I would have learnt that the plant (see image) was monocarpic and was not to be expected to throw off pups after flowering. Perhaps I would have declined the acquisition. A simpler example of its use resulted from just a quick reading of the differences between species like *T. baileyi* and *T. pseudobaileyi*. Aided by a comparative table and the presence of images those differences became clear right away, which they never had after readings of words-only plant descriptions.

The book is now in our library. It contains a lot of good material. Take a look, borrow it and see if you need your own copy.

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Newsletter of the San Diego Bromeliad Society

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Make sure to submit your contribution before the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next newsletter.

SDBS MEETING

The club meets on the second Saturday of the month at 10am in Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, room 104.

SDBS WEBPAGE

www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org

Pre-Conference Tour in Oaxaca-Chiapas, Mexico

A testimony

By Nancy Groves

May 15 May 28, 2018
(tentative)

What better way to kick off the 2018 World bromeliad conference than visiting bromeliads in nature? Join Jeff Chemnick from Mexico nature tours and our own Pamela Koide-Hyatt, a world-renowned tillandsia expert, in a journey into the most amazing bromeliad habitats of Mexico. The 14 days/ 13 nights excursion starts in Oaxaca City ending in Chiapas.

I can give you a testimonial: I went on this tour last January, and I can testify that it was one of the best plant tours I have ever been on. Jeff surely knows every plant in Mexico including cacti, succulents, cycads, orchids, salvias, beaucarnea and many more! In addition, he knows all the short cuts, road stops, and eateries. And hey, this tour cost includes all expenses, including beers with dinner! He now also knows the bromeliads since he was schooled on the trip by Pam Hyatt who was the perfect person to have on this wonderful Tillandsia Eco Tour. Over the years, Pam has researched Tillandsias in this region and between Pam's bromeliad expertise and Jeff's knowledge of this entire area of Mexico and all its plants, it was a wonderful experience.



More amazing photos of past tours and details on the [SDBS website](#).

Contact Jeff for reservations at jeffchemnick@cox.net or 805-705-3397.



Bromeliad Displays at the Frankfurt Botanical Garden, Germany

Shared by Don Patterson and Kay Quijada.

It's nice to see how bromeliads are displayed all over the world!

Puya glabrasen and *Aechmea fasciata*, an *alcantarea*, and an explosion of *tillandsias*, all properly tagged.

