



The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the
San Diego
Bromeliad Society

January 2018

VOLUME LIII

NUMBER 1

President's Corner

By Scott Sandel

Let's all hope for rain, right? Thus far, weather forecasters are warning of a dry winter here in San Diego. If you are without water filtration like me, natural rainfall allows for leaching of accumulating salts and other crud that we get in our municipal water supply. At this point, I am seriously looking into a filtration system, both for the bromeliad collection, but also for the home. I don't need a reverse-osmosis (RO) system; I am looking for a filter or a simple filtering system that removes the bulk of the salts and other nasties. Most Tillandsias are not bothered by the poor water quality, but my favorites, the Vrieseas, get burned, necrotic tissue on the leaves with our salty municipal water. Maybe at the February meeting we can have a brief open discussion on experiences and successes?

In January, I will be in New Zealand, traveling around and going south-to-north, from Christchurch to

Auckland. Nearly all of the bromeliad growers are in Auckland, on the warmer North Island. I will be hosted by the Bromeliad Society of New Zealand at their January



23rd meeting where I will be giving a travelogue slide show on our 2016 trip to bromeliad-rich Northern Peru. I hope to see some wonderful gardens and to observe cool-climate growing conditions that make Kiwis famous (for their Vrieseas in particular). I plan on sharing a little of what we see in next month's Bulletin.

At the January meeting in Balboa Park, y'all will be lucky to hear a presentation by none other than Jeffrey Kent of Kent's Bromeliads. Thanks Dave Kennedy

— for filling in for me to lead the meeting while I am in New Zealand!

Let's all keep our fingers crossed this month for benign winter temperatures and for regular rainfall.

Editor's Notes

By Juliana Raposo

Happy 2018 to all of us! Let's hope for all the usual good stuff and also make a serious wish for a more stable weather in the new year. 2017 was a rough year for bromeliad growers in the US. Let's not forget it started with water: Hurricane Irma put Michael's Bromeliads in Florida under water in early September.

Then, in one of the longest fire seasons ever, a wildfire breaks in San Diego County in the second week of December. Many of our club members who live in North County were evacuated, some had the fire reach a few yards away from their homes. It was a crazy weekend with many emails being sent to try to account for everyone... That all happened in the eve of the club's holiday party which I did not attend

due to “extreme fire risk” in my area! So, my apologies, no pictures of the jolly reunion this time. But the party went on as expected and I bet it was fun.

Obviously, by now we all know that the greatest victim of the wildfire was the Rainforest Flora growing grounds in Bonsall. We bromelians admire Paul Isley’s beautiful work and seeing the devastation there is heartbreaking. The fundraiser organized by Kim Isley to help the nursery met the \$25,000 target thanks in part to donations by several SDBS members, many of whom also contributed their time and effort by participating in the ongoing plant rescue operation. It’s amazing how many plants were salvaged! And most importantly, the families of the nursery employees who lost everything got some relief.

So, we start the new year with generosity in our hearts and a strong sense of community. Best wishes!

Still interested in donating?

Visit the fundraiser:

<https://www.gofundme.com>

[/lilacnursery](https://www.gofundme.com/lilacnursery)



Rainforest Flora ravaged by fire in December.



Michael's Bromeliads in Florida underwater in September.

January Meeting

Our January program will be presented by Jeffrey Kent of Kent Bromeliads. His presentation, *Filling in the Gaps ... Extending the Range of Andean Bromeliads*, will be one not to be missed. From his first collecting trip in 1978, six years of collecting in Colombia, 36 years of collecting in Ecuador and Peru, and including more than 70 trips to South America, his overview of the biodiversity of Colombian bromeliads from a bromeliad breeder's standpoint will show plants and places that most of us have never seen before. Join us to learn more about these incredible plants and Jeffrey's adventures collecting them.



Plant table

By Al Evans

This month's plant table will feature mostly plants from the collection of Dallas Bradford. There are a number of unique plants and superbly mounted Tillandsias. Up for auction will be a really nice grouping of vriesias and 3 mounted tillandsias. The mounted tillandsias include a grouping of *T. tectorum*, (caulescent form?) mounted on wood and recently bloomed.



Robert Kopfstein once said that with bromeliads, you are paying for the time involved in caring for and growing the plants. If that is the case, Dallas has a *fasciculata* that was mounted on 02/14/2004 and is gorgeous and should be worth a significant bid! There are also 2 other mounted Tillandsias without IDs. Plants that will be available on the table include (but not limited to) *Neo. spectabilis*, *Hohenbergia correia-araujoi*, *Neo. Phits* (Mo Peppa please x Norman Bates'), *Neo Kahala Dawn* (*Rufus* x *Meyendorffii*), *Neo Takamura Grande* (*carcharodon* x *concentrica*?) and many others with and without IDs. Hope to see you at the meeting!



A sampling of the action plants from the estate of Dallas Bradford.

Upcoming Events

SDBS Meetings

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

February 9, 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

2018 SDBS Membership

It's that time of year again! Please renew your membership with the San Diego Bromeliad Society by March 1st to insure you are included in the 2017 membership directory. You may send in your renewal fees to The San Diego Bromeliad Society, PO Box 83996, San Diego, Ca 92138-3996 or to the treasurer, Kerry Nelson, 1725 Myrtle Avenue, San Diego, Ca 92103 The 2018 directory will be sent to all current members via email before the March meeting. Some printed copies will be available at the meeting.

Renewal Fees		
	1 year	2 years
Email Membership		
Single email	\$13	\$22
Dual email	\$17	\$30
Print Membership		
Single USPS	\$28	\$52
Dual USPS	\$32	\$60

Please note that due to the high cost and extra labor involved in USPS memberships, they are no longer being offered to new members and are only available to those who are grandfathered in with a "P" associated with their name in the 2016 directory. Thanks for your understanding!

SDBS 2018

Officers

- President
 Scott Sandel
sandel-marich@cox.net
 619-325-1990 x 110
- Vice-President
 Al Evans, Jr.
alevansoo1@earthlink.net
 858-492-9866
- Secretary
 Ruth Contino
ruth.contino1@gmail.com
 619-303-2144
- Treasurer
 Kerry Nelson
kanelsondesign@cox.net
 619- 574-0987
- Newsletter Editor
 Juliana Raposo
julianadraposo@gmail.com
 858-349-1405
- Past President
 Robert Kopfstein
rwkopfstein@gmail.com
 760-726-8300

Board Members

- Charles Oelsen (2018-19)
cdoelsen@yahoo.com
 310-925-6229
- Stephen Zolezzi (2018-19)
fbsd@foodnbeverage.org
- Don Nelson (2017-18)
dannelson12@msn.com
 760- 207-1569
- Morlane O'Donnell (2017-18)
Morlane.odonnell@att.net
 619) 422-8168

Lilac Fire Tragedy

By David Kennedy

Amidst the rubble and ruin that was once the Bonsall growing grounds of RainforestFlora, there is hope and determination. December's Lilac Fire devastated much of that North County community, including the greenhouses of Paul Isley and partner Jerry Robinson where over 4 million plants were being propagated.

I first visited the place in 2010, and have enjoyed many excursions there in the subsequent years, and gotten to know Paul very well through our numerous chats. My wonderful tillandsia collection consists of a great many species and hybrids purchased there, as Paul is unquestionably one of the finest hybridists in the history of bromeliads.

So it was heartbreaking to witness the site firsthand less than a week after the fire and lend a hand in the massive cleanup job, even while smoky smolders still could be seen mere feet from the 65,000 sq. ft. main greenhouse, where so many fine (and in some cases irreplaceable) tillies were lost. The contrast in seeing the burned-out facility as compared to its former glory will always stick with me. And speaking with stalwart Maria, one of the caretakers who lost all the earthly possessions of her family (including those of her children) was even more hurtful.

Yet all was not lost, in terms of broms. Many plants appeared to have been unaffected, and even those that initially looked roasted

have enough life in them to make salvage well worthwhile. Those of us who could make the trek up there helped Paul and his small staff sort, clean and organize the thousands of tillandsias with a chance of survival, some of which were removed to various locations, while others were left under quickly-installed greenhouse plastic and doused regularly to instigate new growth. Many bromeliads can survive even such extreme mistreatment as fire, often by putting out offsets rather than trying to regrow themselves.

While working, I chatted briefly (it's challenging to communicate in a smoky environment wearing a particulate mask and eye covering) with Paul's daughter Kimberly Isley, who was there the day after the fire and most days thereafter. She has developed a keen interest in tillandsias, and she started the GoFundMe page to aid and help re-establish residences for the caretakers who lived onsite. I had to ask if she'd ever brought her namesake plant (*T. usneoides* x *T. recurvata*, a Mark Dimmitt cross) to school when she was younger, and she told me a funny story from a fourth grade class involving her dad, a big clump of *T. 'Kimberly'*, and a live bat.

Hard work lies ahead for the folks at RainforestFlora but there was never any doubt about their commitment and perseverance. If you can, make plans to visit or drop a line of encouragement to these fine people who deserved a better fate.

Paul Isley pti@rainforestflora.com

THE BROMELIAD BLADE



Newsletter of the San Diego
Bromeliad Society

Juliana Raposo, Editor

Ph: 858-349-1405

To send material for publication,
please contact Juliana at
julianadraposo@gmail.com

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