

The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the
San Diego
Bromeliad Society

July 2018

VOLUME LIII

NUMBER 7

President's Message

By Scott Sandel

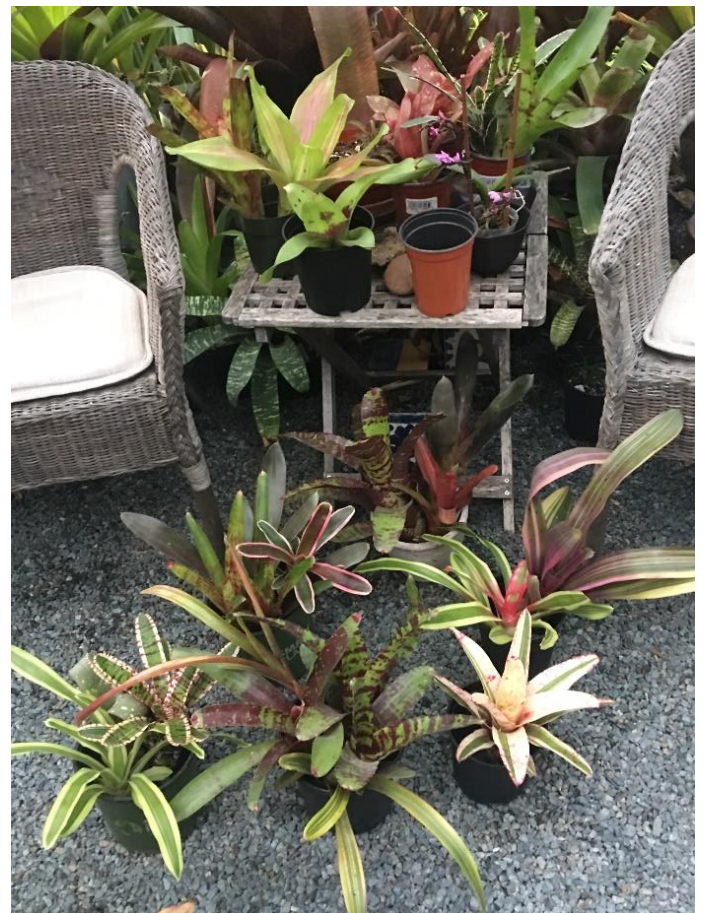
This month, I am turning my attention to potting-up a gang of Neoregelia offsets that have been growing in my collection. So I thought – why not incorporate this into July's *Blade*? This is basic stuff – cutting off offsets, mixing up potting media and planting them. I do not pretend to have the best techniques or recipes, but I've had a lot of fun with this particularly rewarding genus of the bromeliad family. Why rewarding? Well, they grow relatively fast, going through their life cycle often in just 2-3 years from small offset, to adulthood, to blooming and to then producing the next generation of offsets. More often than not, your Neoregelia, or Neo, will produce several offsets that can be easily propagated, as I will discuss here. July is a good time to bounce around some propagation topics, as many Neo's have pups on them large enough to remove now and in the next few weeks. Maybe you'll join me in bringing some bare-

root offsets of your favorites for the raffle table!

When and How to Remove Neo Offsets

When my favorite Neo hybrids have bloomed and have begun production of offsets, I impatiently keep an eye out to see how many offsets I'm going to get. And then I keep watch to monitor the size of the offsets, because once they're about one-third of the mature size, it is time to propagate. Not to worry if they stay attached and get bigger; you can cut them off the "mother" plant even when they approach maturity! In these cases, keep only actively growing roots, not the old roots from the 'mother', which could rot in the new pot. If you remove the offset(s) earlier, your mother plant may produce more

pups. Some hearty, slow-dying plants can produce a second and sometimes even a third round of offsets. For me, this is typical of x Sincoregelia 'Galactic Warrior' and other bigeneric hybrids made with a Neoregelia crossed with Sincoraea (formerly Orthophytum) naviodes. It is not uncommon with a well-grown Galactic Warrior to get another



offset or two after removing the first 3-4. Use a sharp knife or your Felco pruners to get below the soil line where the offset is attached to the mother plant. Be sure to cut as close to the attachment point as possible so that when you remove your offset, you get all of the offset, especially the base where roots will later emerge and grow. One removed, you will find that the offset with quite a bit of roots, just a few emerging rootlets or none at all. After removal, I dust the cut end with Rootone, a powder with rooting hormones and (more importantly) fungicide. Then, before potting them, I place them upright in an empty plastic pot for a couple of days for the cut end to dry up a bit.



Potting Your Neo Offsets

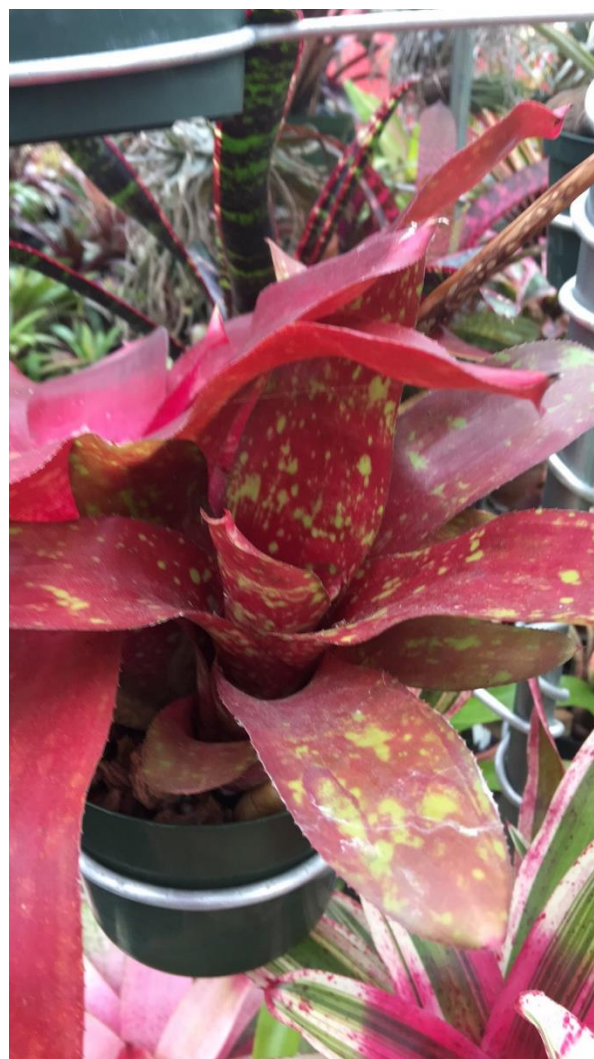
Most Neo's are not too particular about their potting media as long as it is free-draining. While many Neo's will grow an extensive root system, they often grow in their habitat attached to a substrate rather than on the ground in soil. As epiphytes growing attached to trees, their substrate is free-draining. Most of us have favorite recipes for growing media, and we'll vary it to suit the particular species or hybrid in question. And eventual plant size matters. So-called Mini Neo's are small and don't want to be in a huge pot, and I find that smaller pots dry out more easily, so I add more water-



holding media like peat and coir to these. Large-growing Neo's, like ones that have *N. concentrica* or *N. carcharodon* in their parentage, will get a large pot that could become waterlogged, so I use more chunky perlite and lava rock for those. For longer-living species and hybrids, I plan for permeability of the media over time by using more inorganic material (perlite and lava rock) and chunky organic material that takes longer to break down in the pot. For medium and large growing Neoregelias, I typically use 5" to 8" plastic pots, and I fill the pot to within an inch with lightly packed media, placing the offset in the middle of the pot. Often, I lodge small cobbles around the offset to brace it to be as motionless as possible. Another technique is to brace the newly potted offset with three bamboo stakes. It is important to keep the offset braced so that it can be undisturbed while it grows its first roots. My typical Neo recipe is as follows:

- 30% light potting soil, such as "seed starter mix" (a soil-less peat/perlite media)
- 20% coir chunks (search on Amazon)
- 15% ground coir
- 10% medium size orchid bark
- 10% large-aggregate size perlite (available from George at the Cactus & Succulent Society meetings)
- 15% 3/8" volcanic "Lava" rock gravel (Southwest Boulder sells by the bag or yard).

Place your potted offsets in a bright place with indirect light. Being under 50% shade cloth is ideal for me. Your young Neo's will grow and establish themselves quickly in the next few summer months!



June Meeting

Very fun talk by SDBS member Lisa Rini. She showed us how she uses broms in the landscape, with lots of visuals. Loved to see her eclectic and very personal style of gardening, where bromeliads are front and center. We had a plant table by Dave Kennedy. Auction plants were *Neoregelia correa-araujoi* (see story on page 4), *Tillandsia aeranthos* hybrid, *Billbergia 'Raspberry Spritzer'*, *Neoregelia carolina x concentrica x 'Charm'*.

Show and Tell

Tammy Harmon

Billbergia 'Casablanca'
 Tammy actually dug out her plant from the yard just to show it to us. Beautiful bloom.

Krista Mills

Tillandsia ionantha
 A beautiful ball, from the late Jim Wright.



Andrew Wilson *Tillandsia kretzii*



Morlane O'Donnell *Vriesea 'Florinda'* (photo) *Vriesea 'Princess Annique'* *Tillandsia 'Twisted' capitata x intermedia* *Tillandsia 'Silver Queen' x tomaselli*



Bob Vitacco Mistery tillandsia, slowly growing a florer spike

Don Nelson *Dickia 'Naked Lady'*

Cristy Brenner *Aechmea weibachii pendula*

Bob Wright *Canistrum sandrae* *Aechmea 'Pica'*

Robert Kopfstein *Quesnelia marmorata*



Joanne Dossett *Hohenbergia leopoldo-horstii*



July Meeting

by Dan Kinnard

Our program in July will be on one of our favorite and least correctly named plants, *Tillandsia ionantha*.

The speaker has sent the following with his background and presentation outline and a promise of lots of slides to illustrate the project that is just beginning and will clarify the names / varieties / forms of *Tillandsia ionantha*. Our speaker, in his own words:

My name is Juan Pablo Pinzón Esquivel. I have a major in Biology (2006) and a doctorate in plant science and biotechnology (2012); in my doctoral dissertation I treated the systematics and evolution of *Tillandsia utriculata* and related species. In 2013 I was a postdoctoral researcher at the University of Vienna, studying also several aspects on the systematics of *Tillandsia* subg. *Tillandsia*, and since the end of that year I am a researcher at the Autonomous University of Yucatan, Mexico, where I continue this line of investigation, having published popular science and scientific articles on that subject. I have also collaborated in taxonomic and systematic studies of other group of bromeliads and Polygonaceae.

I have the honor of being invited by the San Diego Bromeliad Society to give a talk, where I will intend to give

a glimpse of a project we are developing about *Tillandsia ionantha*, which is a very popular species for growers all around the world. The plants of these species are epiphytes with small, clumped rosettes that blush in red at the time of flowering, displaying showy violet petals in a tubular corolla. The species is quite variable in shape



and other characters, and as a consequence, six varieties and one form have been published. During the talk, the different varieties will be reviewed, showing their differences, where they grow, and I will explain why these varieties should be re-evaluated. Some differences can just be part of the variation of the same species, but other populations could represent new species, and this can be clarified through morphological and molecular analyses.

Plant Table

by Al Evans

The July plant table will be our second annual member provided plant table. Plants brought in by members should be groomed and cleaned and either potted (or not) and preferably tagged. When you separate pups and clean up your collection, please consider setting a few aside to care for and bring into the July meeting. At the meeting, you can talk a bit about your contribution if you choose. If you have a special plant that could be offered for auction, that would be even better! Our July plant table will be as successful as you, the members, make it. In the spirit of donating to the society, please also consider occasionally bringing in a plant to donate to the monthly plant table when you can!



Once and for all...

Who is this Correia Araujo?

by Juliana Raposo

Eloise Lau came up with a great idea: People who have their names in plants can become great presentation material. Hey, Eloise, here's my guy.

Luiz Knud Correia de Araujo was one of Brazil's first noteworthy bromeliophyles. Along with his buddy Roberto Burle Marx, the legendary landscape designer and plantsman, he went on several collecting expeditions in Brazil (Revista Bromelia, vol 2, no 3, September 1995).

Some of the bromeliad species we grow today bear his name. All of them are very ornamental, like *Hohenbergia correia-araujoi*, *Aechmea correia-araujoi* and *Neoregelia correia-araujoi*, to name the ones growing in my yard. The man had a great eye for spotting plants in the wild, one could infer.

Correia de Araujo was an honorary trustee of the defunct Brazilian Bromeliad Society, SBBr, where some would call him by the friendly nickname, Lulu. He was also the go-to plant guy, always sharing plants with the club members, in a time where bromeliads were not grown commercially in Brazil.

Little did he know what a hard time people would have saying his name. *Knudii* (from Knud, his other family name) would have been a whole lot easier...

These are the *correia-araujoi* that I grow. With the exception of the *Vriesea*, that I killed, everything else does wonderful. From top: *Hohenbergia*, *Aechmea* and *Neoregelia correia-araujoi*.



THE BROMELIAD BLADE



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Bromeliad Society

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To send material for publication,
please contact Juliana at
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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

Now Blooming!

In Juliana's yard: A new Kent plant
that I just picked up, wondering what
this is? Plus, the SDBS logo neo is
blooming... Who knows the name of
this one?



SDBS 2018

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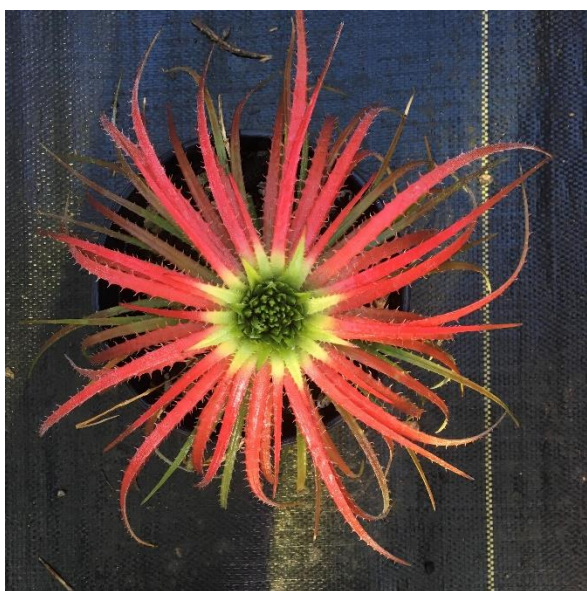
Morlane O'Donnell (2017-18)

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Dan and Eloise's After Conference Bloomers

Dan Kinnard and Eloise Lau were one of our wonderful garden tour hosts in the WBC. Those who attended the visit to their home know that everything was meticulously prepared to impress. However, some things are out of control even for the most dutiful gardeners... like the stubborn after-conference bloomers!



Side and top: Sincoraea rafaellii withheld its flowers until the crowds were gone.

Below: Quesnelia marmorata post-conference mass bloom.



Upcoming Events

SDBS Meetings

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

August 11, 2018
 SDBS Annual Picnic
www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org

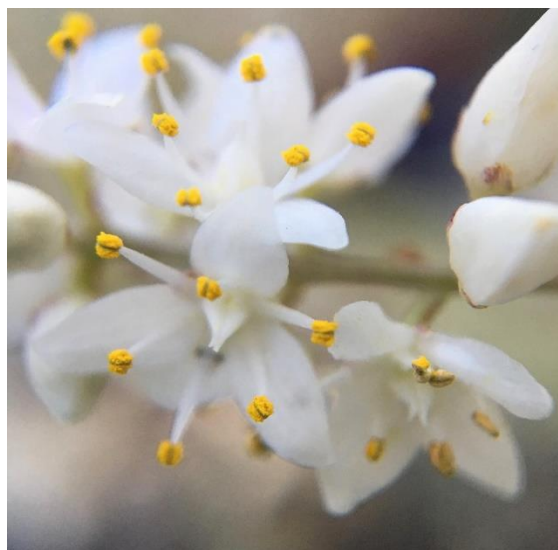
Monthly Meetings

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

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

2nd Wednesday, 7 PM
 San Diego Epiphyllum Society
 Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101
www.SanDiegoEpi.org

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



More: The delicate and short-lived flowers of Hechtia lundelliorum (top and side), Portea petropolitana var. extensa (below).

