

# The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the San Diego Bromeliad Society

October 2018

VOLUME LIII

NUMBER 10

## President's Message

By Scott Sandel

It's the time of year when we begin to look to the end of the year. For our Society, we plan for next year's officers and board members, and we plan for things such as a spring bus trip. (More on that at a later date!) We will run the slate of officers by the membership at the October meeting and vote on the

### SDBS Elections

President	Accepting Nominations
Vice-President	Stephen Zolezzi
Treasurer	Al Evans
Secretary	Ruth Contino
Board Director	Morlane O'Donnell
Board Director	Kerry Nelson
Board Director	Lucia Velazquez

a few new offsets to swap or want to share a cultivation tip. Why not post it? For those of you who don't have Facebook access, here are a couple of this past month's FB plant photos. On the bottom left corner, Nancy Groves' Tillandsia 'Samantha' turning a lovely pink. On the right, Tammy Harmon's Neo.



slate in November. As always, nominations can come from the floor in October and in November. (New officers and board members take their positions in January.) If you have any interest, please give me shout, or contact the election committee chairperson, Nancy Groves. As of press time for the Blade, the list of officers for 2019 is as follows. On the electronic front, our Facebook page has been getting good participation, and our website keeps getting lots of traffic. Please post a photo or two on Facebook of your prized plants. Maybe you have



# September Meeting Recap

September's presentation was a hands-on demonstration by SDBS members Al Evans Jr. (current Vice-President) and Dave Kennedy (former V.P.). They discussed different ways to grow bromeliads epiphytically, with a focus on tillandsias.

## Show & Tell

Editor's Note: The editor is working to comply with BSI best practices.

When a hybrid is not listed in the BSI registry, it will be marked as unregistered.

If a species name listed in your Show and Tell card has changed, we will call it by the new name, and keep the old name in parenthesis for reference.

In a perfect world, everyone who is bringing plants for Show and Tell should check the [Bromeliad Cultivar Registry](#) the day before the meeting to learn if their plant is actually registered. For species names, check the [BSI New Taxon List](#). You will be surprised to learn that many common plants changed names!

### Nancy Groves

Wallisia cyanea (former Tillandsia lindenii)  
Tillandsia 'Samantha'  
Tillandsia mooreana x kalmbacheri

### Kerry Nelson

Racinaea (former Tillandsia) dyeriana



*Kerry did an excellent job blooming her Racinaea dyeriana outdoors! Not easy to do in our dry climate.*

### Don Patterson

Tillandsia 'White Fountain' unregistered  
Neoregelia 'Dorothy Howson'  
Neoregelia 'Red Mist'

### Steve Salley

Quesnelia 'Tim Plowman'  
Assorted tillandsias

### Eloise Lau / Dan Kinnard

Tillandsia hybrid

### Robert Vitacco

Vriesea friburguensis var. paludosa (former saundersii)

### Al Evans

Tillandsia 'Amethyst'  
Tillandsia butzii  
Tillandsia ionantha x concolor  
Tillandsia ionantha 'Peach'  
Tillandsia ionantha 'Hazelnut'  
Tillandsia ionantha x ionantha  
'Rosita' x magnusiana

Tillandsia tectorum mounted on rock  
Tillandsia jalisco-monticola on rock

### Robert Kopfstein

xCanmea 'Galaxy'  
Nidularium albiflorum

### Andre Wilson

Tillandsia 'El Rancho'

### Bob Wright

Hohenbergia pennae  
xOrthoglaziovia 'Rosita'  
Dyckia estevesii hybrid by George Allaria

### Scott Sandel

Tillandsia hybrid, Davis Farms



*Dyckia estevesii hybrid*

# October Program

by Andrew Wilson

This month's program will be in two parts.

## Mosquitoes and Bromeliads

Our speaker will be Aviva Goldmann from the Entomology Department at UC Riverside. She will tell us about the research that she and others are doing on the increasingly important problem of how mosquitos and bromeliads interact. But don't be scared that this will be a highly technical problem that you won't understand. It will be quite practical and Aviva will be looking for feedback from members on what they have seen and what they want to know.

## Names of Bromeliad Cultivars

Sometimes when we look at a cultivar name like 'Amazing Grace' we ask 'Now, where did that name come from?' This one is well known



Neoregelia 'Amazing Grace' photo by K Golinski

to many of us as the plant named after Grace Goode, the Australian hybridizer. However, there are hundreds, if not thousands of others that require background work to uncover the history and the reason for the name selected. Three cultivars, each named after somebody, will be shown and described by several of our members. But you won't find out who they are until they and their fascinating histories as well as cultivation tips are shown and described in the meeting.

# Plant Table

by Al Evans

The plant table this month was supplied by Tillandsia International. These will be available:

Cereicola 13"+  
 Pruinosa Giant  
 X Samantha 4"-7"  
 Brachy. x Streptophylla (5)  
 Fasciculata Paint Brush  
 Didisticha Giant  
 Chlorophylla 13"-16"  
 Caput x Flabellata  
 Limbata  
 Vernicosa Purple Giant  
 Gardneri 6"-7"  
 Concolor 9"-12"  
 Pauc. x Streptophylla 10"-15"  
 Tectorum Pincushion  
 Capitata x Balbisiana(5)  
 Capitata Mauve Giant  
 Roland-Gosselinii 9"-12"  
 Fasciculata v Compacta 15"  
 Brachy. Green Giant Crested  
 Hammeri Mound

Up for auction will be:

Aeranthos/Ber. Giant Spec. large clump  
 Aeranthos Minuette large clump  
 Duratii Thick Leaf 10-12"  
 Stricta Siff Gray Mound Large clump



# SDBS Membership Holiday Gifts

By Robert Kopfstein

Last year the SDBS began something new: a gift membership certificate that would be available to the members. Here is how it works. You can obtain the certificate from the membership chair, Tammy Harmon, and fill it out (This takes just a minute). You then can give it to the recipient as a gift. You do not pay until the person redeems it at a SDBS meeting, at which time the person becomes a new member in the society.

If you have a friend or neighbor who might be interested in joining the brom society, this is a good way to get that person (or persons if you give a dual membership) involved in the society.

With the holidays coming up, this may be just the gift for that someone who is hard to buy for. And this is also a good way bring your friends and acquaintances into the group.

## For sale: Tillandsia mima



Our Own Krista Mills will be selling several T. mima in the October meeting. They will be priced to sell fast! They are between 8-10 inches tall, in pots but not totally rooted yet. A plant is shown next to pruning shears for reference.

## Upcoming Events

### SDBS Meetings

**September 8, 2018 @ 10 AM**  
SDBS Monthly Meeting  
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, room 104  
[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)

**October 13, 2018**  
SDBS Monthly Meeting  
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado, room 104  
[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)

### SDBS Events 2019

**SD Home & Garden Spring Show**  
Del Mar Fairgrounds  
March 1, 2 & 3, 2019

**SD Botanic Garden Spring Festival**  
San Diego Botanic Garden  
March 16, 2019

**SDBS Display at the Del Mar Fair**  
Del Mar Fairgrounds  
June 1 – July 4, 2019

**SDBS Annual Show & Sale**  
Balboa Park  
June 2019

### Monthly Meetings

**1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, 6:30 PM**  
San Diego Orchid Society  
Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101  
[www.sdorchids.com](http://www.sdorchids.com)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday, 1 PM**  
San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society  
Balboa Park, Casa Del Prado, Room 101  
[www.sdcss.net](http://www.sdcss.net)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 7 PM**  
San Diego Epiphyllum Society  
Balboa Park, Case Del Prado, Room 101  
[www.SanDiegoEpi.org](http://www.SanDiegoEpi.org)

**2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, 5:45 PM**  
San Diego Horticultural Society  
Congregation Beth Israel (CBI)  
9001 Towne Centre Drive  
San Diego, CA 92122  
[sdhort.org](http://sdhort.org)

# A Visit to Kent's Bromeliads

by Juliana Raposo



*Larry Kent, in the nursery*

**Vista, March 2018** - The Blade had the opportunity to visit Kent's Bromeliads this spring. Kent's needs no introduction, but in a nutshell, they are the commercial nursery that produces most of the blooming bromeliads on sale in home improvement stores and supermarkets in our area. Started by Leonard Kent, a doctor and bromeliad aficionado, the business grew from his oversized collection - and in its second generation, remains a family enterprise. Larry Kent and his brothers Jeffrey and Michael run the sprawling operation in the San Diego suburbs.

How does an oversized hobby become one of the biggest plant suppliers of big box stores in a few decades? We really wanted to get an insider look at how they create this magic. I toured the nursery in March and interviewed Larry along the way.

The family team works diligently to create and develop bromeliads for interiorscapers and architects. Today, the Kent name is synonymous with Guzmania. Now take a moment to think how a "great plant" is different for a hobby grower and a commercial grower. To thrive in the mass market, plants must be compact, grow fast and have big bright inflorescences. Blooms have to be long-lasting and at the same time sturdy enough to be palletized and shipped. They must tolerate low light environments. And no spiny leaves, thanks. Doesn't that spell Guzmania? If I can pay 8 bucks for a cute guzzy that will sit pretty on my side table for 3 months, I'm not growing one.

You may have heard the story of the Kent nursery accident that resulted in lots of plants blooming at the same time. In the late 70s when the ethylene leak happened, about ten thousand Aechmea

Hummel hybrids were induced into blooming. The nursery had to work quickly to move the inventory and managed to send the plants to Ralph's, the grocery store. Back then, bromeliads were not widely available in big chain stores, and the aechmeas were quite a novelty. The plants sold so well that the initial crisis morphed into a great opportunity: it actually opened the door to a huge market.

The nursery seized the moment to become the number one source of blooming bromeliads as common houseplants. But how do you morph from a boutique grower into a production line that churns out blooming bromeliads in every color of the rainbow? The Guzmania. Following the Aechmea Hummel mass bloom, they started growing European Guzmania hybrids, and quickly went on to developing their own very successful breeding program. These days, the Kents not only grow plants, but also have a revenue stream from their own hybrids grown elsewhere. Their Guzmania 'Brimstone' alone has sold more than 2 million plants in China.



*Guzmania Brimstone*



*One of the greenhouses at Kent's*

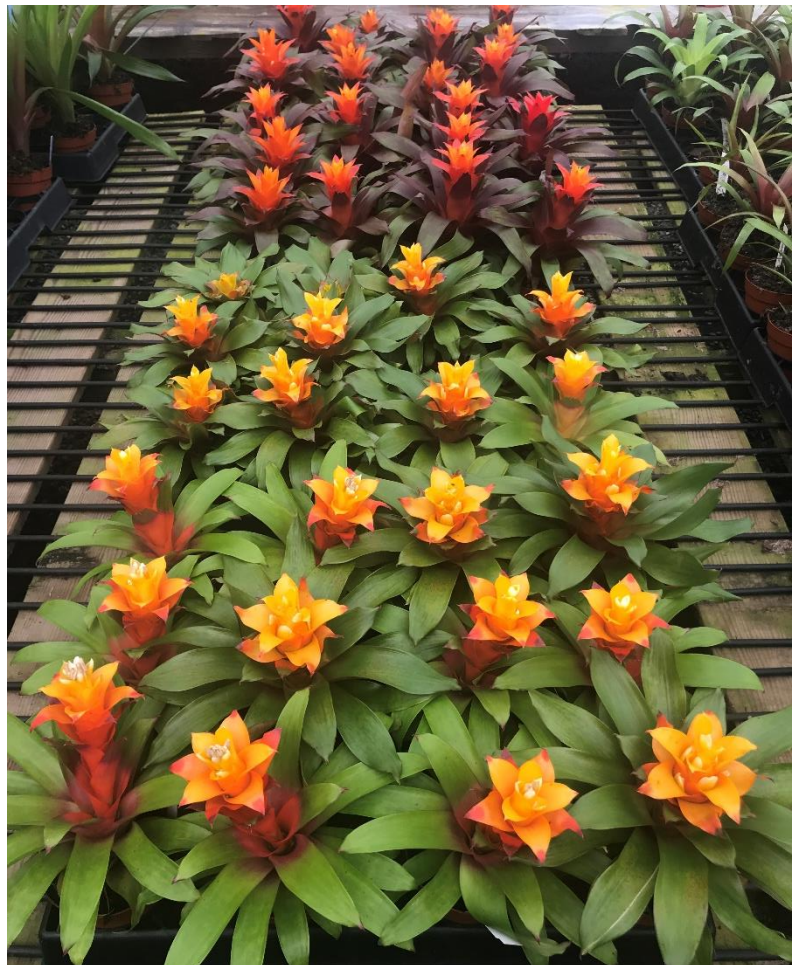
Jeffrey, the eldest brother. He is also a plant explorer and was one of our speakers at WBC 2018. With many collecting trips to Latin America under his belt, Jeffrey knows exactly how to use the traits of wild plants to create the hardy bloomers that do well in living rooms everywhere. The savvy hybridizing program has yielded several award-winning plants, such as Guzmania "Brimstone", "Lindsey" and "Passion". Other breeding feats include spineless aechmeas and the largest variety of guzmanias by any other commercial grower in the country.

Larry, whose focus is on sales, is on top of the market trends. He is an avid art collector and has an eye for color and composition, which certainly helps when trying to gauge what plants interiorscapers will love. After all, designers shop by color and shape. Success means being able to translate what they want into the finished product - living, breathing plants that take years to grow.

So we toured the vast climate controlled growing facility. Spotless plants seem to grow like magic as far as the horizon. We also had a chance to visit another greenhouse, in a different location, where Jeffrey's

hybrids are developed. This greenhouse looks entirely different from the growing facilities, as you would expect. Lots of different plants are lumped together and all of them look perfectly beautiful to me. Sadly, most are destined to the compost

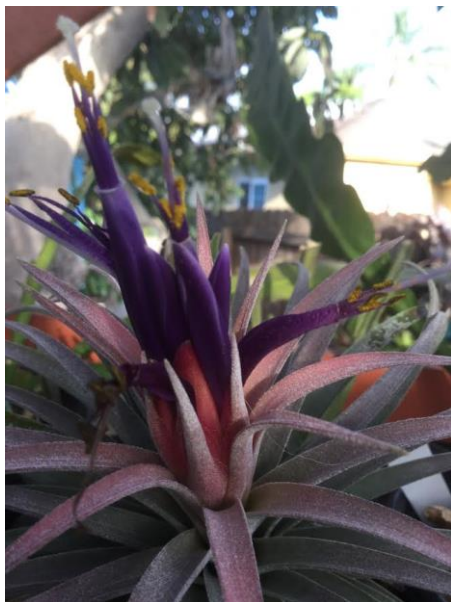
pile, as only a few make it to the final rounds of selection. The adorable Guzmanias you see don't have a name yet. They are no bigger than a dessert plate. I hope they make it to the stores! These would be another sales success for sure.



*New hybrid in the breeding greenhouse*

# Now Blooming!

SDBS member Don Patterson is keeping this section alive! Neo 'Belladonna' and 'Cherry Float' followed by Tillandsia 'Velvet Fountain'. A team picture of Don's broms.



## THE BROMELIAD BLADE



Newsletter of the San Diego  
Bromeliad Society

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

## SDBS MEETING

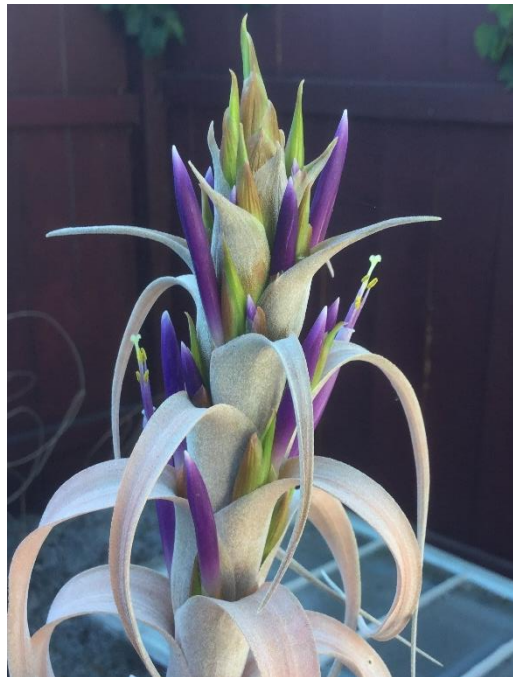
The club meets on the second  
Saturday of the month at 10am in  
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado,  
room 104.

## SDBS WEBPAGE

[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)

## Now Blooming!

Thanks Don Paterson for showing off  
his *Tillandsia xerographica* x  
*brachycaulos*.



## SDBS 2018

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