

The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the
San Diego
Bromeliad Society

August 2019

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President's Message

By Morlane O'Donnell

Now that we are moving into our warmer weather time of year, the question is, when and how much should bromeliads be watered? There is no one answer where one size fits all. It depends on where you live, what medium in which you grow your plants, humidity, and what conditions are like in your plant's natural habitat. Even your growing area has more than one microclimate. The further you live from the coast, the more frequently you'll probably need to water. Know your plant. Some prefer to be dry no matter where you live. If possible, learn what you can about the plant's natural habitat and try to replicate that. You'd be surprised at how well a lot of bromeliads can tolerate dry conditions.

It's generally agreed that you should water in the morning. Be careful about watering in the afternoon, especially when it's hot. For example, there can be times when water in the cups of neoregelias can become so hot that it actually boils. It doesn't

smell very pleasantly either. The center will easily come out as well as several leaves - similar to rot. Don't forget to flush the cup with fresh water periodically too. If the lower leaves of bromeliad start to turn brown, ease up on the watering. Most of the time when the leaves start to curl inward, especially with tillandsias, increase the humidity or submerge your plant in water. Make sure to tip your plant to let the water drain. If leaf tips turn brown, that may also be an indication to increase water.

Mostly watering is a trial and error type of thing. Experiment and find what works best for you. You can get advice from others, but remember to tweak it to fit your conditions.

I am closing this month's message on a sad note. Long time SDBS and SDSCS member, Don Patterson passed away. He was truly a classy gentleman who had a pleasant



Posing next to a 5ft tillandsia spike. Don Patterson, at home. January 2019.

demeanor. Before meetings would begin, he and I would reminisce about past members and times in the SDBS. We all enjoyed pictures of his beautiful plants in the newsletter. He will be missed.

Farewell to Don Patterson

by Jerry Moreau

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Don Patterson (1941-2019). He was a wonderful and special man who loved all his plants: Bromeliads, epi hybrids, *Sansevieria*, cacti, succulents, and countless other plants that struck his fancy. For many years, Don was a member of many plant societies including SDBS. He attended meetings and brought plants to the show and tell. He gained many friends from his involvement with the societies.

Don was many things: an artist, hybridizer of epi hybrids, friend, presenter, collector of pottery, and adept at astrology. If Don had an

interest in meeting you and wanted to get to know you, he would weave the conversation to get some information about your birthday, place and time of birth. Don's interest in astrology gave him a framework for his life and a way he could connect to other people. He was an avid meditator that grew out of his interest in Buddhism.

Don was also an art professor at Grossmont College for 33 years and his house contained many pieces of art including his own.

Don's interest in plants started many years ago. In the early 1970's he received some plants (epi hybrids) as a gift. Soon after that the plant bug

bit him and he started collecting more epi hybrids. In time his interest in plants expanded to include *Bromeliad*, cactus, and succulents. The close proximity of nurseries and other growers led him to SDBS and other societies.

Over the years Don's interest in different genera waxed and waned as did his garden but never deviated from his primary interest: Bromeliads, epi hybrids, cacti, and succulents.

If you ever had the pleasure to visit Don's garden it was a sight to behold. It was neat, orderly, and very well labeled. His plants were like his babies; he would lead you around this wonderful yard telling you the names of the different plants and patting each of them as he talked about them.

Don will be greatly missed.



A view of Don's bromeliad collection

Upcoming Events

SDBS Meetings

August 10, 2019
SDBS Annual Picnic
Pam Koide-Hyatt's home
www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org



Have you RSVPed for the Picnic this Saturday? Email Eloise Lau if you are going.

Monthly Meetings

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

SDBS Annual Picnic

By Eloise Lau

This year our annual picnic will be held at Bird Rock Tropicals. Pam has graciously invited us to picnic on the grassy area in her private garden behind the nursery.

She will open the nursery for us for sales from 10 am to noon.

You should have received a blast with picnic details.

Email Eloise if you have any questions.

See you there.

July Meeting Recap

We had a beautiful presentation by our own Scott Sandel about his recent trip to Bolivia. As always, Scott treated the crowd to many stunning images of bromeliads and also people and archeology. Don't we all want to visit Bolivia now.

Due to this Editor's vacation, there's no Show and Tell section for July.

SDBS 2019

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Bromeliads at the San Diego Botanic Garden

By Scott Sandel

We can help to enrich the bromeliad collection at the San Diego Botanic Garden. John Clements, the Horticulture Manager, is renovating some garden areas at the SDBG. The Palm Garden on the main thoroughfare at the SDBG is the perfect place for many types of bromeliads. John is incorporating bromeliads in the gardens there to great effect, and he's bringing in logs and tree snags for mounting epiphytes.

I asked if he would like more bromeliads for the gardens there, and he said definitely yes! I would like to organize getting some plants from the club to him for use at the garden. (We won't have planting or maintenance responsibilities.)

So look at your collection and consider donating some extras that you may have. The sun orientation there runs the spectrum between high light and filtered lower light.

I will be accepting your donations at our September meeting in Balboa Park. Plants should be in good condition. Got questions? Ask me about it at the picnic or send me an email at Scott.Sandel@outlook.com.



Bromeliad display at SDBG

Wrapping Up

I leave you with some words by Don Patterson. He would email photos of his bromeliads and always include some poetic commentary that went beyond the usual descriptions to convey his emotional connection with his plants. This quote is from Thanksgiving Day of last year.

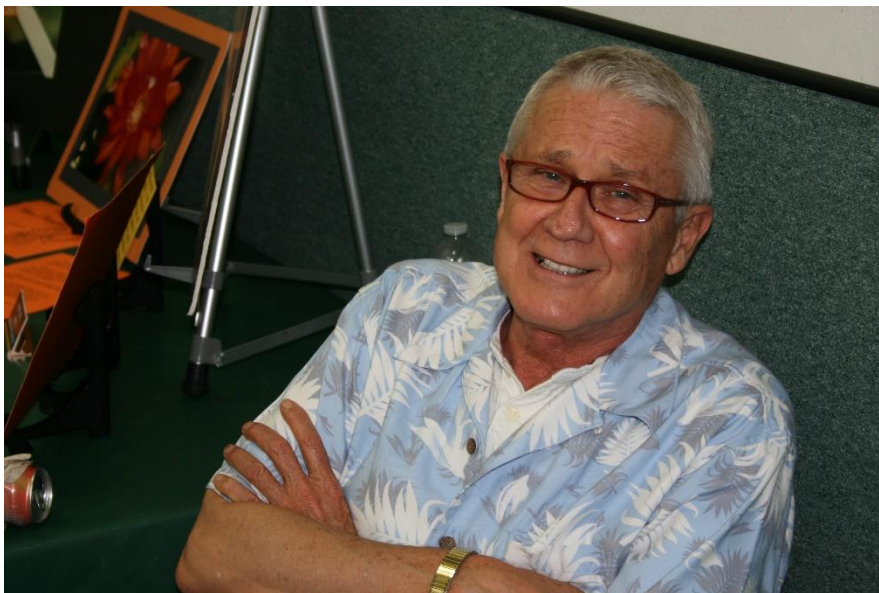
“ This day, thanksgiving...I’m particularly thankful for my continuing

Engagement with these plants from our earth...what wonders!

Two Aechmeas are exhibiting their unique floral expression...

The first, is A. Loies’s Pride.

Second, an old favorite of mine, one of the numerous Orlandiana Expressions... please, enjoy..Don”



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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