

# The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the  
San Diego  
Bromeliad Society

February 2021

VOLUME LVI

NUMBER 2

## President's Message

By Morlane O'Donnell

We finally got some much needed rain! Hopefully you all survived the gale force winds with minimal to no damage to your plants. Luckily my experience was only a few tillandsias were knocked from their perches and one billbergia was blown off a shelf and sustained damage from a bent inner leaf. The worst part of the wind for me was all the small, dirty leaves from my neighbor's tree which seem to have buried themselves deep inside the crevices of every brom in sight. Fishing debris out of my plants with tweezers will be my project for many days into the future.

Unfortunately a possum had decided to spend its last breaths of life in a very inaccessible spot under one of my storage sheds in my growing area. Nothing is more inspiring to encourage working with plants than inhaling fumes from a rotting possum corpse.

Last month we were privileged to have had Orlando Graeff as our speaker. He provided an amazing



*Zooming in: Tillandsia stricta is blooming now. Photo by Juliana Raposo*

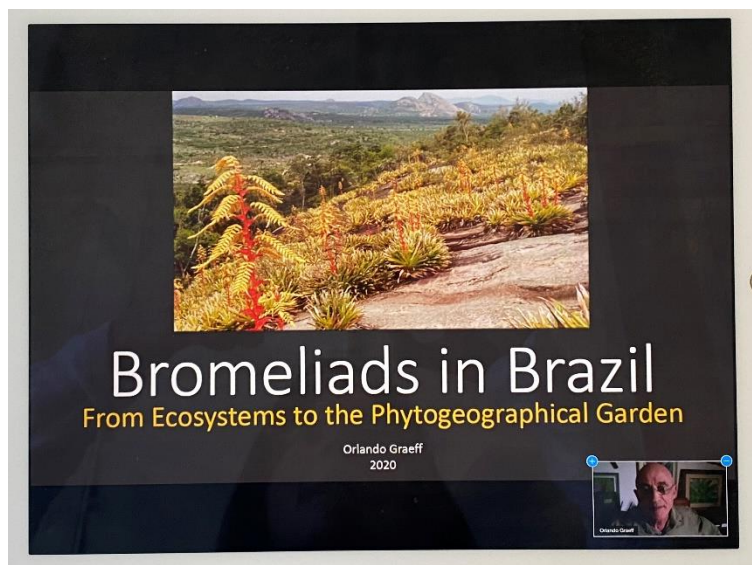
program about Brazilian bromeliads in their natural habitat and in the garden. This month's speaker will be long time BSI member, Jerry Raack. I hope many of you will attend. We are very fortunate by the power of Zoom, to have an opportunity to hear so many speakers from out of our area. Thank you, speaker committee.

There will be a Board meeting, Sunday, Feb. 28, via Zoom, starting at 10am. All members are invited to

attend. Email Scott Sandel if you if you would like to join us. It is hard to plan future events during the pandemic. I'm hoping we can have our show and sale this year. Check the SDBS website and future newsletters for more updated information. In the meantime, please wear your mask, social distance, wash your hands, and get vaccinated. Safe and happy growing.

## January Meeting Recap

We had a wonderful meeting this January with a talk by Brazilian naturalist, artist and bromeliophiles Orlando Graeff. The speaker took us on a journey through the landscapes of Brazil, his phytogeographic garden and his art. This fascinating talk was recorded and posted on the [SDBS website](#). If you missed the meeting, check it out.



## February Meeting

Speaker Jerry Raack



Jerry Raack

At our Zoom meeting at 10 AM on February 13, 2021, we will be honored in having Jerry Raack (*Tillandsia raackii*) as speaker. Make plans to attend since this

presentation is full of growing hints and lots of incredible photos. This program will NOT be recorded for later availability. Jerry has been a director on the board of the Bromeliad Society International, and a past president of the BSI. He has traveled the world extensively and been on collecting/studying trips for bromeliads in Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Peru. He has been to Ecuador 7 different times, most recently in January of 2018, and January of 2019. He has discovered a

number of new species of bromeliads and is currently in the process of working with both Eric Gouda and Jose Manzanares in naming, describing and publishing some of these.

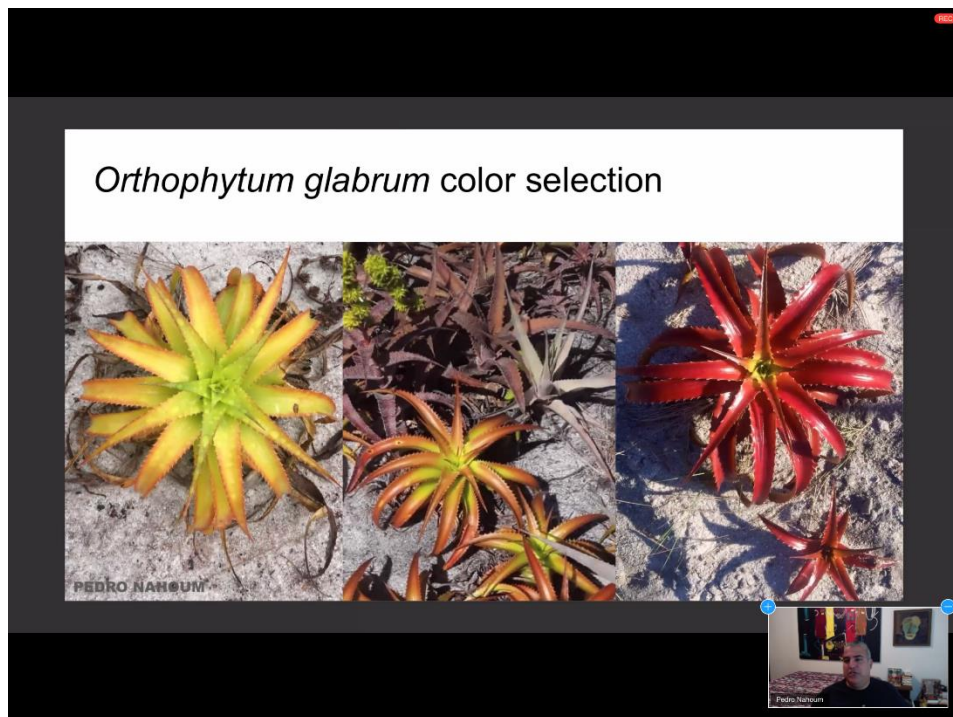
Even though he lives in Ohio, which gets very cold in the winter and hot in the summer, he maintains an extensive collection of bromeliads with an emphasis on soft-leaved *Tillandsia* and *Guzmania*, many of them from higher elevations.

This presentation will focus on what we can learn about the native habitats of bromeliads that can be applied to our everyday ability to try and grow various bromeliads. It will focus on 2 days of a trip he took in June 2015 with Jose Manzanares and Eric Gouda, as well as some of his own travel in January 2018 and 2019 to Ecuador. Through examination of the different environments that are seen in the 2 days he will highlight what we can learn and how to apply that information to our own growing environments. There will be lots of photos of bromeliads in their native habitat, with some new species that were discovered being presented.

As usual, be on the lookout for an email from our Zoom host Scott Sandel with the meeting credentials.

# Loving the Zoom Meetings

by Juliana Raposo



*A still from Pedro Nahoum's presentation for La Ballona Bromeliad Society. The recording of the talk is available on YouTube.*

Here we are, one year after our last in-person SDBS meeting in February 2020. Can you believe it?

Since then, we learned to do things differently, and adapt. Yes, we all miss seeing our bromeliad friends and the raffle table. But guess what? I love the Zoom meetings.

How else would we have the opportunity to hear from such a stellar and varied cast of speakers from all over the world - while in pajamas?

From what I gather, several BSI affiliates have embraced Zoom as their preferred method of getting together in the pandemic. Some of the clubs, including SDBS, LBVBS (La Ballona Valley) and SVBS (Saddleback Valley) went even further, extending the invite to the entire BSI

membership. Not only we get to enjoy some fascinating presentations, but we also meet new people and see our friends from afar. For example, our January meeting was attended by the BSI president Lyn Wagner, all the way from South Africa. Attendees from New Zealand, Australia, Brazil, Mexico and the Netherlands have also participated in our meetings. In pre-pandemic times, one would have to spend big bucks to travel to a BSI conference for this kind of meeting-of-the-minds.

By the way, our February speaker Jerry Raack is one of the WBC Sarasota 2021 speakers. I have been wanting to hear from Raack since meeting him in the San Diego conference and buying some of his cool plants. He occasionally writes articles for the BSI Journal narrating

his experience in growing super rare or understated bromeliads in his greenhouse in Ohio. He makes it look easy, but it's certainly not. Visit the BSI website Journal Archive and enter "Raack" in the search box for a variety of interesting reads.

The third interesting aspect of bromeliad societies in the Zoom Age is that some of these talks were recorded and are available for watching, such as Orlando Graeff's last month. Notably, Barry Landau from LBVBS has posted their talks on YouTube, with names such as Chester Skotak, Bruce Dunstan and others. I especially recommend the presentation by Jan Maruska, a tillandsia enthusiast from the Czech Republic I had not heard off. He made a delightful presentation for the La Ballona club. Somewhere in a village in central Europe, there's an incredible private collection of tillandsias.

We have to thank Eloise Lau, Dan Kinnard and Andrew Wilson, our dearest speakers committee, for thinking big and inviting bromelians from far and wide to talk, and Scott Sandel, our Zoom host, who puts on a great show every month with beautiful graphics and great organizing.

When we conquer covid, I hope SDBS can incorporate the Zoom sessions into our club traditions. It's the easiest, most accessible way to hear from speakers that live outside Southern California.

## Upcoming Events

SDBS February Meeting  
 Saturday, February 13 from 10am to 12pm  
 Join meeting on Zoom  
[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)

## SDBS 2020

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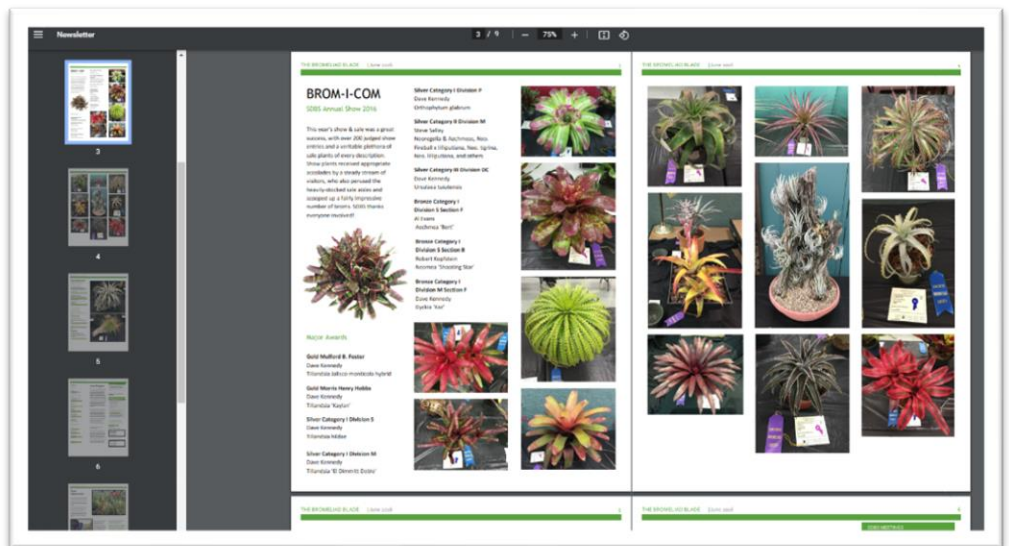
Krista Mills (2020-21)  
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# The Bromeliad Blade Archive is Now Available to the Public

SDBS has moved the older editions of the Bromeliad Blade (2016-2019) to a public page in the [San Diego Bromeliad Society website](http://San Diego Bromeliad Society website). Members can access the archive with 4 years' worth of newsletters without the need to log in, just click on the tab Past Newsletters.

The Blades from 2020 to present remain in the member's only section.

By making the archive public, we invite the public at large to learn more about growing bromeliads in San Diego and see what the San Diego Bromeliad Society is about.

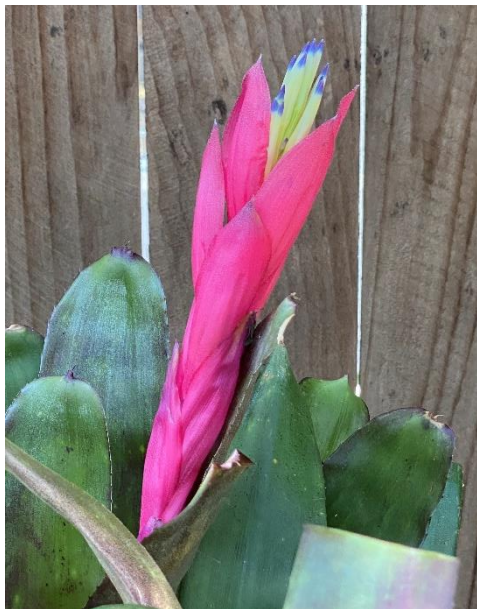


From the public archive: Above, a spread from the June 2016 edition of the Bromeliad Blade, covering the SDBS annual show. Below, an article by Scott Sandel detailing the bromeliad finds in a visit to Peru in the January 2017 issue.

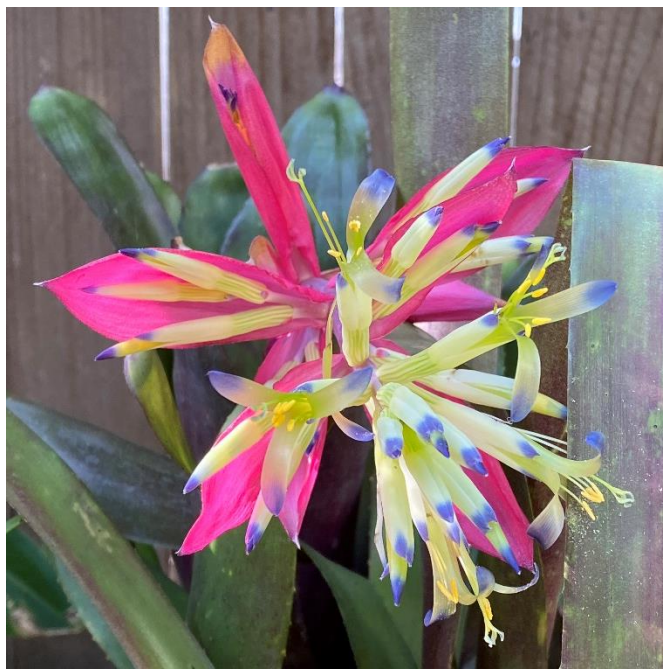


# Blazing Billbergia

It's the blooming season for these effemorous beauties. Enjoy them why they last!



*Above, Billbergia Hallelujah; left and below, flower progression on Billbergia "C'est Bon". Photos by Juliana Raposo*



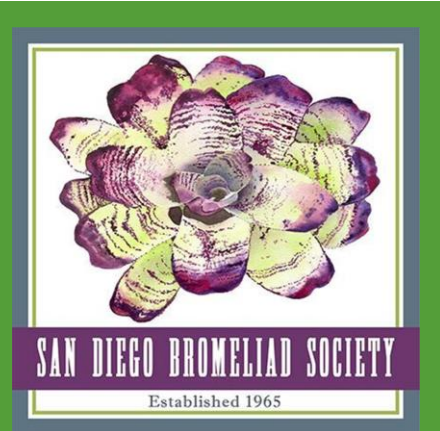
# Hechtia argentea

Hybrid or variant

Scott Sandel sent us these shots, the plant is producing 8-9 inflorescences. Not bad when most bromeliads will only produce one!



## THE BROMELIAD BLADE



Newsletter of the San Diego Bromeliad Society

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To send material for publication, please contact Juliana at [julianadraposo@gmail.com](mailto:julianadraposo@gmail.com)

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)

# DK ORNAMENTALS

## BROMELIADS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

<p><b>Tillandsia Neoregelia Vriesea Orthophytum Bigenerics and more!</b></p>	<p><i>Purchase directly from an award-winning grower</i></p>
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To make an appointment email David Kennedy at [thedavekennedy@gmail.com](mailto:thedavekennedy@gmail.com) or find him on Facebook