

Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay Newsletter



www.bromeliadguildoftampabay.org

October, 2017

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE OCTOBER 2017



October is the time to get ready for fall. Planting our vegetable gardens.
Raking leaves and adding them as mulch to our flower beds.
Dividing our bromeliad pups to bring to the raffle table.
Cleaning up our yards from Hurricane Irma.

I hope everyone came out all right from the hurricane.
I know that all of us were fortunate that we and our families and pets were safe.
There are some of us that had some tree damage and need some help.
Please reach out to your bromeliad friends to see if they need help in their yard or just someone to talk to about their experience.

The nominating committee will present their recommendations for nominees for our officers and board at the October meeting. We will request any nominees from the audience. We will vote on these nominees to serve 1 year in 2018.
Please step up to the challenge if you are asked.
Please take your turn; many of us have already done so.
You will work together with a great bunch of knowledgeable folks to guide our club through 2018.
If I can do it, you can too!

Sincerely,
Julie Lessard
President



PROGRAM OCTOBER 16, 2017

SPEAKER: CLIFF BROWN

“Tillandsias - Fifty Shades of Grey and More..Some of Cliff’s Favorites”

Cliff has been growing tillandsias for over 30 years. He has a AS in Horticulture from HCC and worked at Eureka Springs Park for 26 years at the botanical gardens. He now grows tillandsias in his back yard in Temple Terrace. He will bring some of his favorites to show and limited ones for sale. He will be there to educate and to humor you speaking about the growing of tillandsias.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING, SEPTEMBER 18, 2017

The meeting was called to order by Julie Lessard, president

Welcome to our new member, Sandy Weaver.

Secretary’s Report. Motion to accept the minutes as written in the newsletter made by Steve Byram. Seconded by Tom Wolfe

New Business: Nominating committee for 2018 officers: Eileen Hart, Pam Slagg and Dottie Kellogg

Possible combined plant show with Tampa Garden Club in 2019.

Announcements: Fall Plant Festival October 14 & 15. Volunteers are needed. Sign-up sheet passed.

Birthday Bromeliad won by Lois Sadd

Show and Tell: Plants were shown by Verna Dickey - *Billbergia pyramadalis*, *Aechmea Fulgens* x *Remosa* (Burning Bush)

Meeting Adjourned

Program was presented by Tom Wolfe - “Aechmeas - Where the Growing is Easy”

Respectfully submitted by Steve Byram, Secretary

BGTB MEETING, SEPTEMBER 18, 2017



Verna’s *Billbergia pyramadalis*



Aechmea Fulgens x *Remosa*



Tom Wolfe’s Program on Aechmeas

Pots

One of the most remarkable characteristics of bromeliads is their apparent indifference to their surroundings. Many of these plants will grow to maturity and produce a beautiful bloom whether they are placed in a 8" flower pot filled with the richest potting soil available or if they are glued to a sterile, 8" slab of granite. Given reasonably good care, they will thrive equally well in either of these two very different situations. The purchase of a new pot to contain your bromeliad should then be a simple, straightforward activity, right? Unfortunately, pots are available in a bewildering array of styles, colors, sizes, and materials in most garden centers. Experienced growers are not distracted by the variety available and rely on past experience and personal preference in making their purchases, but the less experienced hobbyist is often left agonizing over a selection. Although there is no best pot for your bromeliad, there are some distinct differences to be aware of when you make your selection.

1. Plastic vs. Clay - Clay pots, both glazed and unglazed, have been used for centuries by home gardeners and for good reason. Despite outward appearances, clay is actually a porous material that allows moisture to evaporate from the potting medium. Because of this characteristic, clay pots can be very helpful for those who tend to overwater plants. Overwatering encourages the development of "root rot" organisms in the media. This is easily diagnosed when a prized bromeliad suddenly separates itself from its roots and falls over dead. Unfortunately, clay pots can look absolutely dreadful after moss and mold become established on outside surfaces or salts leach through the sides. If treated early enough, most of these deposits can be removed by a good scrubbing with a stiff brush and some detergent. More stubborn stains can sometimes be removed by using tri-sodium phosphate or any of the lime deposit removal products found in hardware stores. Make sure you read and follow the instructions when you do this! Clay pots are also heavy and fragile - two qualities that immediately come to mind when they are dropped on a hand, foot or head. A word about glazed pots: Glazed pots may catch your eye, but be cautious in their use. In addition to not "breathing" like unglazed pots, many of these decorative ceramics come from remote lands where toxic compounds like lead, copper and arsenic are not as strictly regulated as they are in this country.

Plastic pots are easily kept clean and neat looking, although some plastics withstand sunlight and general weathering much better than others. If you are prone to forgetting to water your plants for long periods of time, plastic pots may prevent the medium from drying out quite as quickly as it might in clay pots since plastic does not "breathe". If your bromeliads are kept outdoors in plastic pots, heavy or frequent rainstorms may not coincide with their optimal watering needs. If the plastic pot selected either does not have a drainage hole in the bottom or you feel that the hole is insufficient for proper drainage, additional holes can be easily drilled or even melted through the plastic using a heated wire. Plastic pots are very lightweight, can be easily stacked and

handled in large numbers and are very easy to clean and disinfect with soap and water when it comes time for them to be reused. Plastic pots also are inexpensive compared to similar sized clay pots - a deciding factor for many gardeners when making a purchase. On the negative side, plastic pots in darker colors may absorb significant amounts of heat when placed in the sun. This can result in an overall decline in health of an otherwise vigorous plant during our long, hot summers.

2. Pot Size - Selection of pot size is often a matter of aesthetics. Size should be chosen to complement the size and conformation of the mature bromeliad. A 3 foot tall bromeliad in a 4" pot can look as unbalanced as a 3" tall plant in a 8" pot. 4" pots look well matched with many of the small to medium sized plants and 6" to 8" pots will accommodate most of the larger species. As a rule of thumb, immature bromeliads prefer to be "underpotted" or crowded in their pots, so, if faced with a choice of two or more sizes, select the smaller pot. When your plants keep toppling over in the slightest breeze, take that as a sign that it's time move up to a larger pot size.

3. Shape - Obviously, the amount of decoration on a plastic pot or the colored glaze on a clay pot will have little effect on the plant grown in that pot (outside of reflecting or absorbing heat). Pot shape and proportion however, may influence growth and overall health of a bromeliad. Generally, low form pots (sometimes referred to as "azalea style") are well suited for many bromeliads since roots form at the caudex or base of the plant near the surface of the potting medium and tend to be very shallow. Any potting media not occupied by roots is not only wasted, but can become a source of fungus or disease if kept wet. Taller style pots not only have a high center of gravity and are easily tipped over, but will also have a larger proportion of media unused by the plant-a potentially unhealthy situation. Decorative bulbous or vase-shaped pots may pose a problem in regulating consistent moisture levels throughout the medium. The surface and bottom of the medium may appear dry while excessive water is retained at mid-levels in the pot. This problem is especially aggravated in plastic pots since plastic does not lose moisture through its walls like clay pots. Unconventional, non-standard pots can be used very effectively with bromeliads, but special attention should be given to watering practices. This is probably a good spot to stop in our discussion on pots (they are also fun to use in anagrams)

Jay Thurrott

Florida East Coast Bromeliad Society

November 1999

Any Changes?

If your mailing address, email address, or phone number changes, please inform Marilyn Byram at 21535 Northwood Drive, Lutz, 33549 or bgtbnewsletter@gmail.com



October Birthdays: Rick Hunter, Ted Ledbetter, Nancy Stamm

We will have a drawing at the meeting for one of the lucky birthday people to take home a nice bromeliad as a Birthday gift from the club.

Club members celebrating their birthdays also provide the refreshments at our meeting each month. This way everyone helps once during the year. If you have a May or December birthday, please bring refreshments the following month, since we have the picnic and Christmas parties those months. Suggestions: chips & dip, veggies, salsa, crackers, cheese, chicken wings, popcorn, favorite recipes, pies, pizza, brownies, fudge, cookies, cakes, candies, deviled eggs, sandwiches and beverages.



Sunshine Greetings

Please notify Julie Lessard of any illness, surgery, birth of a child, death in the family, or other concerns you or another member may have.

Call 813-662-7972 or email at taxxmaam@tampabay.rr.com

Officers for 2017

President: Julie Lessard 813-662-7972 Taxxmaam@tampabay.rr.com

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Bromeliads Online

Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay - www.bromeliadguildoftampabay.org



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/562988247096958/>

Bromeliad Society International— www.bsi.org

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies— www.fcbs.org

Marie Selby Botanical Gardens— www.selby.org

Bromeliads Online - <http://www.bromeliads.co.nz/index.html>

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The Bromeliad Guild of Tampa Bay, Inc. was organized in 1963. BGTB is affiliated with the following: Bromeliad Society International, The Cryptanthus Society, Inc., Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc., and Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Sarasota, FL.

When: Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of every month.
Plant sale at 7:00 p.m. Meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Where: Christ the King Catholic Church, Mary Martha Center, Room 201-202, 821 South Dale Mabry Highway, Tampa

Informative programs, workshops, Show & Tell, plant sales, door prizes, raffle & refreshments
Visitors welcome!

**NEWSLETTER OF THE
BROMELIAD GUILD OF
TAMPA BAY, INC. 21535
Northwood Dr. Lutz,
Florida 33549**