



**June 2009
BSSF Officers 2009**

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What	Who
Sales Table	Antonio Arbelaez

JUNE 2, 2009, 7:30 PM

SPEAKER: Dr. Terrie Bert "DEFG. Diving Even Further Into Unusual Bromeliad Genera"
RAFFLE TABLE: Alan and Rhonda Herndon
FOOD TABLE: Joan Manley, Shirley Berckmans, Joy Parrish, Sky Palmer, and Lavinia Acton

Speaker for the Month:



Dr. Bert has chaired symposia on ecology and aquaculture, and numerous presentations on fisheries, evolutionary biology, population genetics, and biodiversity. She has reviewed for 10 research agencies and 19 professional journals in the areas of marine ecology and biology. Bert has held the editor's title for four publications, and has helped to acquire over \$1 million in research grants. And, in her spare time, she works extensively with bromeliads. Bachelor's Math and Biology Southeast Missouri State University; Master's Marine Science Univ. South Florida, Ph.D. Yale University. She continually lectures and was able to come to our neighborhood just a few weeks ago to judge our annual show.

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In Case You Missed by Robert Meyer

Dr Jeffrey Block virtually escorted the BSSF around his lovely island-themed garden. Broken into numerous plots, the power point stroll enlightened or energized many of us.

The entrance to the home included the bizarre green colors of the Jade Vine attached to a large oak tree, which followed a narrow drive shouldered on each side by palms and orchids. "I want two things from plants," Block stated – "... color and long lasting flower." Orchids provide the former, bromeliads provide both.

Further down and upon taking a sharp left, one encounters the green houses of Florida – shade houses. One shade house is dedicated to bromeliads. Both are well computer-maintained with heat and other directives given to the reverse-osmosis water treatment center, specifically directed to the plants – which show their appreciation with health and size.

Passing by the shade houses, one encounters an outdoor area between the shade houses and the pool or "back of the house" area – where the bright sun is absorbed by vertically enhanced Vanda and their abundant colors.

Passing through the hot area, there were numerous – maybe as many as 50 – hanging bromeliads in a jungle-like atmosphere protected under a high ceilinged screen enclosure – humidity added by a pond and a "wet wall" laced with ferns and other plants. Occasionally gargantuan species of *Alcantareas*.

After going through this area, one passes outside to the swimming pool and back yard where the greatest treasures may lie. "Certain bromeliads look better from above, and others from below." Block presents this discipline by showing *Neoregelias* on the ground so the observer's attention focuses upon the roseate – easily permitting observation of the shape and color. Above on tree branches may be *Vriesea* or other plants where the underside of the leaf is very attractive.

In the end, the deceptively small lot of one builder's acre appears to contain countless plants that ordinary lots many times larger could not show, or display. The hard, and sometimes spined, plants on this lot softly flow.

In the end, Dr. Block invited the society to have a walk through the yard which would enable others to perceive what photographs fail to provide. More information to come!

The wet wall

Investigation into the start of the wet wall led to an interesting discovery. To have the wall start off with life, a mixture of cow manure and old buttermilk (Block added Superthrive and other enhancements) were painted on the wall. After which growth arose. And bigger items – ferns among others – grow from the manure/buttermilk mix.

It turns out that amateur doctors like the mix for other purposes: "Stumpwater, buttermilk, dew of the first day in May, and a cow manure facial were used to remove freckles." *Folk Medicine in Southern Appalachia* by Anthony P. Cavender

And, Cavender further adds to this information: "... one had to take care not to leave it on too long because it would turn the skin green." Any volunteers?

Faces No Longer in the Crowd: **Robert W. Read**

by Alan Herndon

Robert Read was only a member of BSSF for a short time during the 1960's, but he became a consequential force in bromeliad taxonomy after he left the Miami area. Robert came to Miami to take the position of Botanist at Fairchild Tropical Garden. Much of his work at the garden was on palms (befitting the major role palms play in Fairchild collections), but he was not restricted to palm studies. During this period, spurred by a plant brought into cultivation by Nat DeLeon, he published a comprehensive review of the epiphytic genus *Cochliostema* of the

Commelinaceae, including the description of a new species. He also published an article arguing for the transfer of the widely cultivated *Aechmea marmorata* to *Quesnelia marmorata* (Bromeliad Society Bulletin 15(2): 23-26. This opinion has been upheld to the present day.

He left his position at Fairchild to enroll in the graduate program at the University of the West Indies campus in Mona, Jamaica.

He left his position at Fairchild to enroll in the graduate program at the University of the West Indies campus in Mona, Jamaica. His PhD dissertation was based on an intensive study of the genus *Pitcairnia* in Jamaica. The timing of his sojourn in Jamaica was fortuitous. A new Flora of Jamaica was in preparation, and Robert was able to contribute to the treatments of several bromeliad genera. Also during this period, he gathered material that was later published for the enjoyment of general bromeliad enthusiasts: Crabs in bromeliads on the high mountains of Jamaica Bromeliad Society Bulletin 19(4): 78-79. 1969. and Some Jamaican bromeliads worthy of cultivation. Bromeliad Society Bulletin 20(2): 42. 1970.

Following his graduate study, he moved to the Smithsonian Institution, where he became a curator in the United States National Herbarium, part of the National Museum of Natural History. His position at the Herbarium required maintenance of the dried plant collections from the West Indies. This included trying to improve the identifications of all West Indian collections through his own studies and/or recruiting outside specialists to work on the collections. Most curators, however, find time to work in areas outside of their primary responsibility. Robert Read, following his concentration on Jamaican bromeliads, began to work closely with Lyman B. Smith on general questions in bromeliad taxonomy. He also maintained a strong interest in palms through the years, publishing a comprehensive study of the genus *Thrinax* in 1975, a detailed taxonomic study of the genus

“Much of Robert Read’s work on bromeliads during the Smithsonian period was carried out in collaboration with Lyman B. Smith ”

Gaussia and numerous shorter papers describing new species or providing new information on old species.. He also published (with M. L. Solt) an exhaustive bibliography of the living cycads and made a brief foray into orchid taxonomy with a paper on the genus *Nageliella* (American Orchid Society Bulletin 55(3): 252-254. 1986.)

Much of Robert Read’s work on bromeliads during the Smithsonian period was carried out in collaboration with Lyman B. Smith. Most of the new species these two jointly published appeared in Lyman B. Smith’s long-running series Notes on Bromeliaceae in Phytologia. Among the more ornamental plants jointly published were *Orthophytum burle-marxii* (Journal of the Bromeliad Society 29: 164-165. 1979) and *Billbergia eloiseae* (Journal of the Bromeliad Society 33(6): 243-245, 263. 1983). This last species was named for BSSF member Eloise Beach. In his later years at the Smithsonian, he also collaborated with Thomas A. Zanoni (a botanist from the Dominican Republic) in publishing a series of papers based on studies on the bromeliads and palms of Hispanolia



Read’s beloved *Neoreglia burle marxii*

Photo by Moyna Prince as displayed on FCBS website

While still at the Smithsonian, Robert independently proposed the genus *Lymania*, combining three species originally described in *Aechmea*,

Araeococcus and *Ronnbergia* with a newly described species *Lymania smithii*. This was published as part of a tribute to Lyman Smith on his 80th birthday in 1984 (Journal of the Bromeliad Society volume 34, number 5.)

After retirement from the Smithsonian, Robert moved to the Naples area of Florida. He was involved in the early planning for the Naples Botanical Garden among other projects, but also continued to work on bromeliads. He served as a consultant for Ulrich and Ursula Baensch, helping identify the bromeliad species for their book *Blooming Bromeliads*. This work has attained the status of a standard reference to bromeliad species in cultivation, ensuring Robert's continued influence in the bromeliad world. Another result of this collaboration was the recognition and publication of a new species of *Aechmea* in the *Gravisia* complex, *Aechmea callichroma* (first published in *The Aechmea/Gravisia* complex (Bromeliaceae). *Selbyana* 12: 54-67. 1991. later announced in the *Journal of the Bromeliad Society* 44(1): 17-19. 1994). A third result was the recognition and publication of the new genus *Ursulaea* with two species *U. mcvaughii* and *U. tuitensis* (*Journal of the Bromeliad Society* 44(5): 205-211. 1994.) Both of the last two publications were made jointly with Ulrich Baensch.

A short time later, Robert



Read's also beloved
Neoregelia burle-marxii ssp.
meeana
Photo by Derek Butcher as
displayed on FCBS website.

published
Neoregelia
a burle-
marxii
and *Neo-*
burle-
marxii
subsp.
meeana
(*Journal of the*
Bromeliad
Society
46(6):
261-264.
1996.) He
had been
cultivating
the plants
of *Neo-*
burle
marxii
from
seed s

collected in the gardens of Roberto Burle Marx since 1975. The discovery of subsp. *meeana* in the collections of Elton Leme reawakened his interest in the species and led to the publication.

During his later years, he was concentrating on the genus *Quesnelia*, particularly the *Quesnelia quesneliana-testudo* complex. A plant closely related to *Quesnelia quesneliana* that he was considering naming for his wife is present in several local collections. Other plants of note he introduced to our collections include *Lymania alvimii* and the miniature, still unidentified, *Neoregelia* 'Bob Read'.

Robert Read gave occasional programs to our society throughout the years. In February 1971, BSSF paid his travel expenses from Washington, DC to give a program. His last program to our society was given in Mar 2001. He lives on in the memory of several long-time BSSF members

T-Shirts Still For Sale

Sandy Roth has determined to take on another task – make t-shirts. Artwork is approved and she has contacted the proper printers to manufacture t-shirts for the masses. Announcements will be delivered at the meeting.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Robert Meyer

Occasionally the silver lining of a cloud is merely crisis delivering opportunity. The issue of the membership obtaining people to enlist in the judging school may very well be an example of opportunity arising from crisis.

Once the bulwark of the judging community for bromeliana in the state of Florida, the BSSF was revered and admired. There were more than 10 judges from the community, and many held high rank among the file. Now that is not the case.

Age, relocation and inevitable death have made our numbers dwindle to – believe it or not – one judge. It is when such an otherwise unrecognized event occurs that youth in the society's community must rise to an opportunity.

And, this is the time for reaction reasons other than necessity.

The school is not always open. Quite simply that means more than the simplicity of the sentence can mean. The required numbers for the school make it arrive only every three or five years – it is not an annual event.

And, when enrolled in the rarely offered school, the cluster of classmates will work together for a period of time. And, that is where this opportunity may best entice enlistment. This is an event in which bonds and friendships will be greatened over something which you have already determined is of importance to you.

And, while engaged in this activity, the benefits will be greater knowledge of the plants, meeting those with such similar increased knowledge, and traveling about the state of Florida to see how others in this state of bromeliad prominence.

If this is not persuasive, read Alan Herndon's pitch, and hopefully one of us can trigger interest from the membership.

Name tags are ready for the following new members:

Marilyn Gresh
Andy Sigl
Dennis Murasaki
Joan Murasaki

JOIN the BSSF:

Friends or Family contact Moyna Prince at 305-251-5289

What's in Bloom - May 2009

by Alan Herndon

Compare this list with the list for April 2009 and you will see that the number of blooming plants has increased significantly. Plants recorded blooming for the first time this month number 41. Plants recorded for the first time are in bold letters. For the most part, these plants are blooming for the first time this year, but some rapidly cycling

plants (particularly in *Orthophytum*) are reappearing after a month or more absence from the list. In these species, the new blooms are on pups that have reached maturity since the original mother plant bloomed. Such behavior is common in *Aechmea* subgenus *Ortgiesia*, *Aechmea nudicaulis*, the *Aechmea racinae-warasii* complex, *Aechmea tillandsioides*, *Billbergia* subgenus *Billbergia*, *Cryptanthus* and *Quesnelia* subgenus *Billbergiopsis* in addition to *Orthophytum*.

The large number of *Neoregelia* blooming for the first time is also noteworthy.

It appears to me that *Vriesea* (including the segregates *Alcantarea* and *Werauhia*) are blooming in greater profusion this year than normal. Please check your own collections, and let us know if you have unusual activity among your plants.

Aechmea subgenus *Ortgiesia* (***apocalyptic***, *cylindrata*, *organensis*, *pimenti-velosii*)
Aechmea (Alvarez, *angustifolia*, ***brueggeri***, *carvalhoi*, *chantinii*, ***cucullata***, ***disjuncta*** (formerly *Hohenbergia disjuncta*), ***fuerstenbergii***, Little Harv, ***mariae-reginae***, ***mollis***, ***mulfordii*** (red leaf form), *nudicaulis*, ***penduliflora***, ***pubescens***, ***seidelii***, ***servitensis***, *tillandsioides*, *victoriana*, *warasii intermedia*)

Ananas nanus

Billbergia viridiflora

Canistropsis burchellii

Canistrum triangulare

Cryptanthus (***acaulis***, *burle-marxii*, *delicatus*, ***ruthiae***)

Fosterella petiolata, ***schidiosperma***

Guzmania (*lingulata*, ***minor*** 'Orange Crush', Noah)

Hohenbergia (*distans*, *pennae*, *undulatifolia*, *stellata* (pink))

Lymania alvimii, ***spiculata***

Neoregelia (***amandae***, ***ampullacea***, **Annick**, Aztec, ***bahiana***, ***binotii***, **Bob Work**, Bossa Nova, ***burlemarxii***, ***burlemarxii meeanum***, ***camorimiana***, ***carolinae*** (several clones), ***carcharodon*** 'Silver', Charm, Catherine Wilson, ***compacta***, ***concentrica***, ***correia-araujoi***, **Devine Brown**, Devroe, ***eltoniana***, Emerald City, **Fosperior Perfection**, **Franca**, Gespacho, ***johannis***, ***laevis***, ***laevis maculata***, ***leprosa***, ***macrosepala***, ***maculata***, ***macwilliamsii***, ***magdalena***, ***marmorata***, Morado, ***nivea***, Nonis, ***olens*** (*fluminensis* of trade), ***oligantha***, ***roethii***, ***sanguinea***, ***sarmentosa***, Sheba, Tossed Salad, Tricolor Perfecta,

Ultima)
Nidularium (***innocentii***, ***jonesianum***,
krisgreeniae, *longiflorum* (green),
longiflorum
(discolor), *meeanum*, ***rutilans***)
Orthophytum (*alvimii*, ***burle-marxii***,
conquistense, ***duartei***, *grossiorum*, *harleyi*,
lanuginosum,
lemei, *leprosum*, *lymaniana*,
magalhaesii, ***navioides***, *saxicola*, ***vagans***)
Pitcairnia (***beachiae***, ***hitchcockiana***,
integrifolia, *xanthocalyx*)
Portea (*petropolitana extensa*)
Pseudananas sagenarius
Quesnelia (*quesneliana*)
Tillandsia (*aeranthos*, ***baileyi proliferata***)
Vriesea (*brusquensis*, *carinata*, *fosteriana*,
incurvata, ***inflata*** (red) *inflata*
(yellow), *Mariae*, *muelleri*, *ospinae*,
pinottii, *scalaris*, ***schwackeana***,
Splendide)
Werauhia ringens

WHY BE A BSI JUDGE

by Alan Herndon

At our just completed show, BSSF was fortunate to have the services of 3 out-of-state judges. These 3 were critical to reaching the magic number of 12 judges. We have enough entries on a yearly basis that we need 12 judges to work through all the plants in a reasonable number of hours.

This year, we did not, as in the past 2 years, share a show date with the Sarasota Bromeliad Society, but the number of judges available was still barely sufficient to meet our needs. The problem was that three societies held shows in April, and, as dedicated as our BSI judges are, most could not accommodate more than two shows during the month.

One way to lessen the strain on existing judges is to increase the number of judges. An opportunity to do this is now available. If sixteen (16) students sign up by 1 Jun, a new series of Judge's Schools is scheduled to start on 26 Sep 2009. The School consists of two full-day courses offered during each of three years. After completing the first two courses, you are eligible to become a Student Judge and may participate in judging BSI approved shows. After successful completion of the full six-course series, you are eligible to become an

Accredited Judge.

Judging is a serious commitment. You will be expected to pay your own expenses for the classes (\$20 per class and any travel expenses; classes are expected to be offered in Fort Lauderdale and Fort Myers) as well as manage your schedule so you can attend the classes when offered. If you become active as a Student Judge after the first year, you will be expected to pay your own expenses for travel to shows. One of the classes will be held in conjunction with the World Conference in 2010. Fortunately, this World Conference will be held in New Orleans.

Benefits of going through the series of courses and study to become a judge are plentiful, even if not profitable. First, you cannot fail to learn more than you ever dreamed about bromeliads during three years of study. You will come out able to grow plants to a standard you never imagined, if only because you have learned to look at your plants with a critical eye. You will also be exposed to a much wider range of bromeliads than you could ever see in the collections of BSSF members, giving you an opportunity to enrich your own collection. Finally, you will have the opportunity to work with, and learn from, judges from other parts of the nation and world. If you are interested in understanding bromeliads deeply, belonging to this fellowship of judges, all dedicated to learning ever more about bromeliads, is priceless.

For more details, and to sign up, contact Vicky Chirside [by phone at (951) 493-5825 or e-mail at vickychir@aol.com] or Betty Ann Prevatt [by phone (239) 334-0242 or e-mail at Bprevattpcc@aol.com]. Please remember that the deadline is June 1. Sign up now.

Special Thanks:

Thanks to Carol Barrus for a generous donation to BSSF.

WANT A NAME TAG?

Other new members who want tags should call Moyna (305-251-5289) or email MoynaP@comcast.net.

THERE IS A WEB PAGE FOR THE SOCIETY WHICH YOU MUST VISIT

<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

by Robert Meyer



The efforts of **Bill Benaim** have quickly and seemingly without effort to have prepared a rough preliminary to our newly created Web Page. Not a task for the weary, the page already includes astonishing photographs, many of the BromeliAdvisory issues for the past few years, a special component for Nat DeLeon, and more.

This will become the reservoir of future information, laden with the Schmale photographs, full of Herndon theses, and a quick-to-reach resource for anyone wondering who will be speaking next, who will be bringing plants to the auction table and more. In short, this provisional conquest will be more than a step into the 21st century. It will be the pivot of resources for those within and outside of our BSSF community -- where all can learn about and understand our purposes and goals.

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The box above is the web page's hot button index. Most are self explanatory. And, members are urged to explore the resources contained therein as even in the nascent stage, the page's wealth of information is significant and impressive.

I also urge that people to work with Bill in delivering items which they may have of interest. Ultimately, this presently large resource will expand to become a virtual cornucopia of bromeliana.

Moreover, the recent growth of a few exponentially growing concepts. Most close to home being the Nat DeLeon's and Alan Herndon's inception of the Clone Preservation Project -- an item which may have a tab on the web page in the not-too-distant future.

With great enthusiasm, I invite any member or party who receives this publication to venture to the new web page. Benaim and his efforts are already an invaluable aid to the society and a continued delivery of the same to the society will be heartfelt and warmly appreciated. Sitting idly with head fixated on the ceiling tiles, I can easily conjure innumerable uses for this page. But, restraint will be exercised. And, as Humphrey Bogart said in *Casablanca's* closing scene, "This is going to be the beginning of a beautiful friendship."