



October 2007
BSSF OFFICERS 2007

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Education: Nat DeLeon
Hospitality: Elaine Mills
Library: Lynne Fieber
Membership: Moyna Prince
Member Plant Sales: Anthony Arbelaez
Raffle: Peter & Clara Kouchalakos
Refreshments: Patty Gonzalez

What	Who
Sales Table	NONE – Auction

ANNUAL AUCTION

OCTOBER 2, 2007 MEETING 7:00 PM

SPEAKER: NONE

RAFFLE: NONE

WHAT: This is the AUCTION. It is 30 minutes ahead of schedule.

WHEN: 7PM – NOTE

WHERE: The auditorium – NOTE

WHEN: October 2

WHAT TO BRING: Cash or Check and bid heartily

2007 EXTRAVAGANZA

WHEN: September 29, 2007

WHERE: Hilton Fort Lauderdale Airport

1870 Griffin Road

Dania Beach, Florida 33004

(954)920-3300

WHAT to EXPECT: Speaker: **Chester Skotak**, bromeliad hybrids (his ace subject) who will be a speaker at the World Conference – this is a cheaper method of listening to his gospel

WHO to CONTACT: Jose Donayre, Chairman, email

jcadonayre@bellsouth.net

EXTRAS: Dinner Saturday evening

HOW to GET DINNER RESERVATION: Download form at

<http://fcbs.org/index.html>

SPECIAL THANKS: A special thanks to Karl Green and other members who have volunteered to be on the board. And, to the Broward organization – most particularly Jose Donayre and wife Sara – for the duties cast upon them with the highly demanding Extravaganza.

WILL IT EVER END ??

President's Message

If you didn't buy enough plants at the Broward Extravaganza....you will have another chance at the Auction !

I think I have an addiction....I just can't get enough. I think I need help....is there a BA (bromeliads anonymous) out there somewhere....I need to join.

Don't forget to bring in your best plants ! I just need to buy one more....

I'll see you there !!

Peace and Love

Sandy Roth

[Editor's Note: Should we cajole Dr. Green to start having BA sessions at his home?]

Evil Weevil Attacked **Reprinted from Miami Herald**

BY CURTIS MORGAN
cmorgan@MiamiHerald.com
Related Content

BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE --
The small band of scientists sloshed through thigh-high water to reach the stronghold of a ravenous invader they call "the evil weevil." For years, they could only watch as the pointy-nosed pest quietly munched its way through neighborhoods and forests in South Florida on a strict diet of bromeliads, the spectacular array of native air plants that adorn tree limbs like holiday ornaments.

This time, the team led by University of Florida entomologists came to the Big Cypress packing a new weapon against the Mexican weevil. Their big -- and so far, only -- gun is a small fly discovered in the cloud forests of Honduras.

The hope is the fly will do to weevils exactly what weevils have been doing to bromeliads from Broward County backyards to this sprawling Southwest Florida preserve:

Devour their hosts from the inside out.

"Think of the movie Aliens," chuckled Howard Frank, a UF entomologist who along with colleague Ronald Cave is spearheading fly

releases at five infestation spots around the state. "We're going to gross them out."

Since it was first found at a Fort Lauderdale nursery in 1989 in a shipment of air plants from Vera Cruz, the half-inch-long weevil has gnawed its way into 18 counties as far north as Polk and Brevard in Central Florida.

Though little known to most people, the bug's spread has alarmed scientists, nursery owners, bromeliad enthusiasts and federal and state park managers. Facing no natural predators in its lush new digs, it's left decimated colonies of air plants in its wake, robbing the landscape of a distinctive beauty and important diversity.

AIR PLANTS

Named because they grow without ground roots, air plants sprout from trunks and limbs, creating a niche of life between land and treetops. They produce fans of thick spiked leaves, seasonally erupting with colorful flowering stalks called bracts, that hold water and make them a sort of botanical oasis in the dry season.

"Basically, each bromeliad is its own little habitat," said Bob DeGross, Big Cypress' chief of interpretation. "Specific species of frogs and ants and other insects and animals depend on certain bromeliads. Basically, once you remove that bromeliad, it's like a domino effect on an array of life."

Researchers haven't fully assessed how much of the bromeliad population has been lost statewide, but weevils found at Myakka River State Park at least doubled the normal rate of air-plant deaths, according to Teresa Cooper, a UF doctoral student.

The weevil targets a dozen of the state's 16 subtropic species, including two classified as endangered, and has already reduced two once common air plants to scarcities.

The damage is easy to see in the cool shade of a stand of the preserve's signature trees -- an infested cypress dome researchers picked to release 108 flies last week.

Jim Fisher, a wildlife rehabilitation specialist from Lighthouse Point, and Dennis Giardina, manager of the adjacent Fakahatchee Strand

Preserve State Park, pick through rotting air plants, brown leaves falling away like burnt paper, to hunt for weevils that tunnel in to feast and leave behind hungry larvae that finish the destruction.

To a first-time visitor, the trees might appear thick with bromeliads but to Fisher, who has visited repeatedly, "there's none left." For every healthy plant high in the tree, there's a dead or dying clump, long withered leaves drooping down like matted hair on a shrunken head.

"You hardly ever see that much dead material just hanging up there," said Giardina, a biologist who found the weevil in the Big Cypress in 2002 while scouting for panthers and has since joined the eradication effort.

Though pesticides would kill weevils, aerial spraying would be a logistic nightmare, staggeringly expensive and produce an awful lot of collateral insect damage.

So Frank, who has tracked the bug's alarming march since its initial discovery, began hunting for another way to whack the weevil: Something that would eat it, but not anything else.

With Florida over-run by nearly 1,000 invasive species, scientists have increasingly turned to exotic bugs to curb everything from alligator weed that chokes canals to melaleuca trees that once threatened to cover the Everglades.

In 1993, Cave, a research entomologist working in the mountains of Honduras, began looking for promising weevil killers at Frank's request. He soon discovered a prime suspect in rotting bromeliad leaves -- a previously undiscovered fly.

It's the offspring of the fly, since named *Lixadmonita franki* to honor Frank, that actually do the damage, Cave said. Drawn by the odor of rot, a female fly deposits its own eggs. The fly maggots then tunnel through the plant into the bodies of weevil larvae.

"Once inside a weevil grub's body, a fly maggot will feed on those succulent nutritious tissues and organs and feed parasitically inside the weevil," Cave said.

BURSTS OUT

The maggot remains inside the living, feeding weevil grub until ready to bust out -- in Aliens-style -- of its host's body, Cave said, an event the weevil obviously does not survive.

"It's the next generations, their sons and daughters that will begin to control the weevil," said Cave -- not wipe it out necessarily but slow or end its spread.

In June, after more than a decade of work to raise flies in quarantine at a UF lab in Fort Pierce and an array of agency testing, researchers released the first fly squadron near Tampa and have followed up with three others since, including in the Big Cypress.

In coming weeks, Cooper will examine "sentinel pineapples," the tropical fruit being a common bromeliad species that attracts weevils, to assess if the weapon is working.

There is no guarantee the flies will even survive, let alone attack weevils. They come from cool mountainous Honduras, not flat hot Florida. They must find nectar to feed. And, unlike in the confines of a climate-controlled lab, there are things that will eat them.

Three seconds after one of the 108 flies steps from Giardina's finger onto an air plant, an ant attacks, delivering a fatal pincer wound. Frank just shrugs at the loss of a namesake.

Researchers say it may take years of release to establish the flies.

"Frogs, spiders, dragonflies, ants, all kinds of things can eat them," said Frank. "We can only hope it works."

For Herald story, go to:

<http://www.miamiherald.com/548/story/225873.html>

AUCTION -October 2 – Reminder: Bring Plants and Money

This is a major fund raiser for our Society. Our continued success depends on a great event.

For the auction, you must follow the ancient right of "Bringa." We need each and every one of you to bring three things to our Auction on October 2nd:

1. Bring at least one of your very best plants for our Auction.
2. Bring your checkbook and buy, at least one great plant.
3. Bring a friend, who must buy at least two great plants.

Questions? Contact **John Lazarus** or **Peter Kouchalakos**.

In Case You Missed It

Lynne Fieber and husband Michael Schmale did it again. Maybe better than years past. The annual photos of the Annual Show were “shown” to the members on September 6, 2007.

Using state of the art equipment, Michael handled the photos while Lynne narrated identification and interesting “insider tidbits” about the show – with explanatory statements of what judges look for and like to see.

For a few pennies, we may be able to have Lynne make a few CD’s of the photos which the organization may desire to sell or auction.

A million thanks to their collective exhausting efforts in delivering digitally beautiful photos which we can see today and perhaps deposit in some records for posterity purposes. And, as known by the on-line BromeliAdvisory subscribers will attest, I enjoy cutting and pasting their works for this publication.

Upcoming Plant Events

September 29, 2007

FCBS Bromeliad Extravaganza 2007
Airport Hilton Hotel, Fort Lauderdale, FL
Bromeliad Society of Broward County
Contact: Jose Donayre, Chairman, email
jcadonayre@bellsouth.net

October 2 BSSF Auction

Annual Auction 7:00 PM
Note the time

October 13-14 at FTBG
Bonsai Show and Sale

November 3-4 at FTBG
Palm Show and Sale

Garden House and Lawn

November 17-18 at FTBG

67th Annual Ramble - A Garden Festival

November 30 - December 1 & 2, 2007

Caloosahatchee Bromeliad Society Sale and Show
10th International Cryptanthus Show
Terry Park, 3410 Palm Beach Blvd (SR80) Fort Myers, FL
Contact: Steve Hoppin @
Steveandlarry@comcast.net or 239-997-2237

June 24 - 29, 2008

18th World Bromeliad Conference
Cairns, Australia

Cairns International Hotel
More Information can be found.

<http://www.bromeliadsdownunder.com/>

MONEY/PASSION IN FOUR-DAY PERIOD

by Robert Meyer

In a period of days, those seeking to purchase unique specimens of bromeliads will have a cornucopia of choices. First, the September 29, 2007 Broward-based Extravaganza will deliver the region with plants from throughout the state. Not a common event. Not an event to be missed for the serious – or even semi-serious collector, grower (or self-admitted killer) of bromeliads.

Just a Sunday of rest and Monday of work later, Tuesday evening – October 2, 2007 – will launch the annual 7 PM – note the time people – auction to be held in the auditorium – note the location people. With the new venue, and minor amount of advertising, we hope a good turnout.

Hope, as President Sandy says, to see you at each event. And, do not feel compelled to hide your passion for purchasing these flowers/plants/specimens. Boast it instead. If such passion did not exist within you, would you be a member of the society? Would you be sitting through the lectures which deliver incredibly detailed and informative information which only those impassioned would care to receive? Of course not.

See you there.