



Newsletter of the

Hawai'i Bromeliad Society

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APRIL 2015

APRIL FIELD TRIP TO LARRY MCGRAW'S GARDEN

We may not get to go exploring the jungles of Mexico or surf spots of Indonesia with Larry McGraw, but we will have the opportunity to see some of the plants he has brought back and cultivated over the years. Larry has graciously agreed to host our April meeting.

For some lucky participants in last year's Bromeliad Society International World Bromeliad Conference, a visit to Larry's house was a high point of "Bromeliads in Paradise," and now HBS members will get to see how he has incorporated a variety of bromeliads in his garden, and to hear more about some of his adventures in landscaping, including growing *Vriesea* from seed.

We will meet at Larry's house at noon, for a business meeting followed by a guided tour, led by our host. Mahalo nui, Larry.



2015 OFFICERS OF THE HAWAII BROMELIAD SOCIETY

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APRIL MEETING

This Saturday, **April 25**,
we meet at **Larry McGraw's**
at **Noon**.

Our hospitality hosts are
Helen and Val.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 28, 2015

Lyon Arboretum

ATTENDING: Susan Andrade, Frances Arakaki, Nancie Arakaki, Marcy Doseo, Helen Friend, Karen Gollero, Naty Hopewell, John Ishihara, Tessie Labra, Terese Leber (presiding), Larry McGraw, Gail Robideau, Karen Rohter, Dolores Roldan, Jaime Roldan, Stan Schab, Sid Sneider, Tom Stuart, Lynette Wageman, Val Wong, Randy Wong. Guests: Edie (Sid's daughter), Carrie Okata.

CONVENED: 12:45 ADJOURNED: 2:20.

Terese thanked everyone for helping make the HBS participation in the Windward Orchid Show a success. Nancie especially thanked Lynette for stepping in to give the Sunday morning bromeliad cultivation demonstration at the Show, when Nancie's laryngitis kept her from giving the talk. Lynette noted that about thirty people attended the presentation. Terese passed on to Dolores the \$20 check the WOS presented the society for providing a display, and the complimentary pot was given to Larry for his services as auctioneer.

Terese offered a special welcome to Sid and Tom, who were able to attend their first meeting of the year.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Dolores reported a balance of \$8,984.26. Expenditures of \$841 included \$600 for BSI membership, which extended our affiliate membership to December 2018; \$90 for a three year membership in the Cryptanthus Society; \$96 for post office box rental; and \$55 for the docent-led Lyon Arboretum tour at the last meeting. Our auction last month raised \$92.

LYON ARBORETUM CONTRIBUTION: Tom explained the HBS tradition of giving both regular annual donations to Lyon Arboretum, as thanks for providing our meeting space and hosting our library, and special donations for particular funds or project. Terese will check on any special projects Lyon may have in the works. The Society moved **to contribute \$300 to Lyon Arboretum.**

PROGRAMS: John noted that the photography program has been moved to the April meeting.

HOSPITALITY: Thank you Dolores and Ed for the pupus (especially the tasty and healthy salad) and drinks. April hosts are Helen and Val.

NEWSLETTER: HBS has been asked to send its newsletter to other societies; Stan will collect the newsletters sent to HBS, and forward them to the members.

OLD BUSINESS: Lynette has ordered one hundred copies of *Bromeliads: A Cultural Manual*, by Herb Plever and Joyce L. Brehm, from the Bromeliad Society International.

NEW BUSINESS: Lynette reported that she ordered journal holders for the library, to keep the copies of the *Journal of the Bromeliad Society* we receive as part of our BSI membership, and reminded members that the journal and all the library holdings can be borrowed (but don't forget to return them!).

AUCTION: Thanks to Tom for serving as auctioneer, and to all who donated plants, which included *Quesnalia*, *Achmea*, and *Tillandsia capitata*—the one that at certain stages can look like a pineapple.

SMALL BROMELIADS NEEDED FOR ACUW FUNDRAISER

The Associated Chinese University Women (ACUW) will be having their annual Fundraiser Event on June 27th at the Hilton Hawaiian Village to raise funds for scholarships and community service projects. For the first time this year, they will be including a Summer Garden that will be selling smaller plants and garden-related items. If you have any small bromeliads (unpotted) that you would be willing to donate to a worthy cause, please contact Val Wong at wongvklc@hotmail.com to arrange for drop-off/pick-up, or bring them to the HBS meeting on April 25th.



A SHOW OF *TILLANDSIA*

Many thanks to Sid, Tessie, Ed, Nancie, and Marcy for bringing in a fabulous and creative variety of *Tillandsia* displays.

And thanks to Lynette for bringing in English, Czech, and Japanese books on *Tillandsia* to help us identify different varieties—and for providing us with our word for the day: myrmecophilous (ant loving), which means if you bring your *Tillandsia* indoors, check them over good for bugs.

As part of our Show and Tell, we got to see Lynette's demonstration of Hatsumi Maertz's hanging basket technique, twisting coated wire (not copper, because it can harm the plants) into a simple self-hanging basket for *Tillandsia* or other bromeliads. Thanks to guest Carrie for demonstrating how *Tillandsia* can be "strung" on *Tillandsia usnoides*, a.k.a. Pele's hair. Besides "natural" places such as tree stumps and rocks, another unique suggestion for displaying *Tillandsia*: stuffing them into the pukas in old-fashioned hanging cloth bags for shoes.

Thanks to everyone for suggesting places to find unique displays and containers that can be repurposed as planters, including the Swap Meet and garage sales, Goodwill, Savers, Ross's, or on the high end, Pier 1 Imports. Thanks also for the good discussion of the pros and cons of various mounting agents, such as shoe glue and liquid nails—slow setting; hot glue—can melt under some hot, sunny conditions; and marine glue—fast setting.

We got to see a good sampling of the great variety of *Tillandsia* shapes and sizes, and learned how they can mimic *Vriesea* and even *Ananas* in their appearance and inflorescence, until the flower reveals the true genus. And speaking of flowering, we got to see a *Tillandsia cyanea* in bloom, with its pink bracts and the largest of bromeliad flowers. Of course, if you're more interested in encouraging your *Tillandsia* to pup, cut off the inflorescence so all that solar energy doesn't get turned into flowers.



ABOVE LEFT: Presto, a hanging *Tillandsia cyanea*
ABOVE: Welcome Back, Tom.
(Photos by Dolores Roldan)

BOTTOM LEFT: A head for *Tillandsia*.

(Photo by Dolores Roldan)

BOTTOM RIGHT: When the Easter Bunny joins the Bromeliad Society; display by Terese Leber.

HEADING TOWARD THE LIGHT

Some of the most common questions that come up at HBS auctions have to do with light conditions: “can such and such a plant take full sunlight,” or “does this plant do good in the shade?” But what counts as bright light or shade?

Over the years, greenhouse growers, landscapers, and photographers have developed various standards for measuring light. For many years, a common standard was the foot candle: a measure of the amount of light given off by one candle from one foot away. But what exactly does that mean? As we know, in our gardens, light intensity can vary widely depending on the time of day, the time of year, the amount of cloud cover, even the humidity. Two plants in locations where a light meter might record the same amount of light can grow very differently: one could wind up sunburned, while the other never develops full coloring because of insufficient light. The changing angle of the sun’s rays, shade from other plants or buildings, even humidity and air flow can impact the amount of energy plants receive from light, even when grown within a few feet of one another.

Surprisingly, plants grown in the shade can often be bigger than the same variety grown with more light—but not necessarily better or more attractive. Sometimes bromeliads growing in insufficient light will develop long, strappy leaves, while in brighter light, the plant will grow more compactly, or symmetrically. The amount and type of light also greatly impacts the color and markings plants develop. As we’ve seen especially with *Tillandsia*, more light can often result in much more vibrant color and tighter growth patterns. It’s also the case that some plants will only bloom in certain light conditions.

While more sun can lead to more and brighter color in our plants, too much sun, or an abrupt move from shade to sun, can result in bleaching, faded leaves, dry edges, and sunburn spots. Sunny, windless days, dry conditions, and lack of humidity can stress plants just as much as too little light, too much water, and the lack of air circulation.

So, how do you decide where to put the bromeliad you just got for a steal at the HBS auction? “Hard leaves, hard light, soft leaves, soft light” is a common rule, but even tough, thick-leaved plants like *Hohenbergia* and *Aechmea* can experience some bleaching and sunburn if they are in full sun from sunrise to sunset.

Here are some of the experts’ suggestions for full-sun bromeliads: *Aechmea*, particularly species like *blanchetiana*; *Hohenbergia*; *Portea petropolitana* (featured in the Lyon Arboretum Bromeliad Garden); some common varieties of *Neoregelia* like *burle-marxii*, *compacta*, *marmorata*, and ‘Fireball’; most thick-leaved *Dyckia* and *Hechtia*; and several *Tillandsia* species, including *bulbosa*, *ionantha*, and *capitata*; and of course, *Ananas comosus*.



The difference lighting can make: *Neoregelia* partially shaded and in full sun, and sunny and shaded *Achmea* in the Bromeliad Garden at Kapi’olani Community College.