



Newsletter of the

Hawai'i Bromeliad Society

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SANSEVIERIA EXPERT ANGEL RAMOS TO SPEAK

Bromeliad, Cactus, Succulent. To many people, these plants seem similar—exotic, out of the ordinary. But botanically the words refer to very different types of plants.

Bromeliads, as we know, belong to the plant family *Bromeliaceae*; cactuses (or cacti) belong to the plant family *Cactaceae*. Succulent does not actually name a family of plants; botanists use the term to refer to plants with unusually thick and fleshy parts, which evolved to retain water in dry climates and soil conditions. About sixty different plant families have members that are succulents, including almost all plants in the *Cactaceae* family.

Our April meeting will feature Angel Ramos, hybridizer, author, photographer, and mainstay of the Cactus and Succulent Society of Hawaii, who will be able to answer any questions we might have about succulents and their relation to bromeliads and cactuses.

Mr. Ramos is particularly known as a *Sansevieria* specialist. *Sansevieria* is a genus containing about seventy species of plants, mostly native to Africa, Madagascar, and southern Asia. One of the more familiar varieties is often known as mother-in-law's tongue (*Sansevieria trifasciata*). Like most *Sansevieria*, it is usually grown for the form of the plant, not its flower.

Like bromeliads, succulents have developed many adaptations for conserving water and conducting photosynthesis. Most cactuses, for example, have replaced true leaves with spines, and carry out photosynthesis in their stems or trunks. The *Sansevieria* genus, on the other hand, contains both tropical plants like mother-in-law's tongue, with thinner, softer leaves, and desert succulents, with thick, hard leaves.

If you would like to learn more about these plants, the Cactus and Succulent Society of Hawaii meets on the third Tuesday evening of the month at the Susannah Wesley Community Center, 1117 Kaili Street in Kalihi—and come learn from Angel Ramos at our April meeting.



Sansevieria trifasciata 'Laurentii.' Photo by Peter A. Mansfeld [CC BY 3.0 (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0>)], via Wikimedia Commons.

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APRIL MEETING

This Saturday, April 30,
we meet at **Lyon Arboretum**
at **12:30.**

Our hospitality hosts are
Marcy and Terese.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 26, 2016

Home of Val and Randy Wong

ATTENDING: Susan Andrade, Marie Ferdun, Naty Hopewell, Gail Rabideau Ishihara, John Ishihara, Terese Leber (presiding), Larry McGraw, Sally Mist, Ed Nishiyama, Karen Rohter, Dolores Roldan, Jaime Roldan, Stan Schab, Lynette Wageman, Randy Wong.

GUEST: Linda McGraw.

CONVENED: 12:35 ADJOURNED: 2:30.

Terese welcomed everyone to the meeting. “Just being here is an education,” she remarked, thanking Val and Randy for welcoming HBS to their home.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Dolores reported a balance of \$10,069.15, with proceeds of \$122 from our February auction. Members moved that

\$102 be spent to renew our HBS post office box for a year.

MEMBERSHIP: Terese circulated a current members list; if any of your information is incorrect, please let her know.

HOSPITALITY: Thank you, Dolores and Ed (and Val and Randy) for providing food and drinks. Our April hosts are Marcy and Terese.

PROGRAMS: Terese thanked the Program Chairs and members for suggestions. In May we will meet at Sharon Petersen’s nursery, Sharon’s Plants, in Waimanalo. Suggestions for future field trips include the Dole Plantation, and the Honolulu City and County Botanical Gardens in Wahiawa and Koko Head. Additional program suggestions are always welcome, as are volunteers willing to share photos of their gardens and displays, as Gail and John did in February.

OLD BUSINESS—THE BROMELIAD GARDEN: Terese reported that the Lyon Arboretum Bromeliad Garden work group has been resurrected. Karen, Lynette, Terese, Randy, and Stan (and Susan, when her knee heals!) have been braving the mud and rain on Friday mornings to clean and maintain the Garden, with the help of several enthusiastic (and younger) Arboretum staff members, who are looking to the HBS to provide guidance on thinning and replanting the garden—and especially on identifying plant varieties. Currently the group is busy clearing out old growth and replanting keiki, giving the plants the air and space bromeliads need to thrive. The goal is to return the Garden to being an attractive and educational site.



LEFT: Lynette, visiting volunteer Paula, Stan, and Karen, pau hana.
ABOVE: Lynette and Karen tackling the slopes (photos by Terese Leber).

REPORT OF THE MARCH 26 MEETING

OLD BUSINESS—DIGITAL PROJECTOR: Terese reported that Nancy didn't get a chance to check with her son on the price and availability of other projectors. Members moved

to buy from Terese at cost the projector she brought to the February meeting, and to keep it as the HBS projector.

Marie and Lynette agreed to draft rules for its use.

SHOW AND TELL: Lynette reported that she had been away for two weeks, and upon her return found several of her plants to be afflicted with the early signs of quilling: ridges that develop on leaves from lack of water—unusual in outdoor Mānoa. In bad cases, leaves can roll up and get stuck together. Certain species of *Vriesea* and *Guzmania* are particularly susceptible to quilling. Sometimes quilling can be reversed by soaking the plants (the *Journal of the Bromeliad Society* recommends using a soapy solution like the ones used to disrupt mosquitoes), and the leaves can then be separated, but if the quilling is advanced . . . well, in Lynette's words, "if you have more plants than time, just throw them away."

Larry described how, because of the rain and microclimate where he lives in Nuuanu, he created a dryer, airier environment for hanging and showing plants by making a wall hanging using plastic chicken coop wire. By connecting the eight inch squares with zip ties, he built a movable and expandable structure that makes it easy to create and maintain colorful displays of bromeliads on his exterior garden walls. He noted that Paul Isley, during his recent visit to Honolulu, had reminded growers that bromeliads need more light, water, and air circulation than we might think they do. Larry found it easy to add color to his outdoor wall areas by attaching to the chicken wire displays specimens of *Tillandsia*, mini *Neoregelia*, and *Vrieslandsia* 'Twin Brother,' a John Arden bigeneric *Vriesea Tillandsia* hybrid. Larry attaches his plants to the black plastic display using Tilly Tacker and Tilly Hangers from Rainforest Flora so he can match the wire to the color of the plants (although fishing line works fine too).

Ed and Larry provided some fertilizing tips. Ed doesn't fertilize his *Billbergia*, or the colors change and the leaves grow too big. On his other plants, Ed does sometimes use a wettable 13-2-13 orchid fertilizer twice a month, at a dilution of about one-quarter teaspoon per gallon of water. Larry noted that David Fell treats his young plants with low dosages of water soluble fertilizer under low light, but as they grow he adds light and cuts fertilizer; as the saying goes, "if your favorite color is green, fertilize."

In response to a question from Terese, Lynette and Larry discussed different ways that bromeliads put out keiki, and how to deal with species that pup from the middle, such as the *Werauhia* cultivar 'Edna Shiigi,' or Helen Friend's plantings of *Guzmania sanguanea* and *Vriesea espinosae*, or *Vriesea glutinosa* which sends out lots of "hair pups" that can be treated like seeds. The best advice: have patience, and let the keiki grow.

AUCTION: The auction featured Ed's wood-mounted *Tillandsia*; specimens of *Guzmania* 'Carine,' *Neoregelia* 'Flash Point,' *Vriesea fosteriana*, *Vriesea fenestralis*, and *Vriesea* 'Red Chestnut'; and an *Orthophytum* cultivar of uncertain parentage. Thanks to all who contributed plants.

Bargains from the March auction—more good reasons to come to the meetings (photo by Terese Leber).



Example of quilling (photo by Terese Leber).



MAHALO TO VAL & RANDY

Many thanks to Val and Randy Wong for inviting us to their Pauoa home for our March meeting. The environment was both calming and inspiring, as we got to see how the Wongs had redesigned their property.

As Randy explained, they had been living in hot, dry East O‘ahu, but as their daughters were growing up and heading out on their own, Val and Randy thought about downsizing. He heard of this property for sale; at the time it was essentially just a yard, buried in mud and water, that had been on the market for a while because no one wanted to take a chance on it. Years of work and planning followed. It took five months just to sink the seven by seven foot structural footings that serve as the foundation. But the result is well worth the effort: a multilevel house over a koi pond fed by a natural fresh-water spring. The yard features a variety of planting areas and a wide range of fruit trees: five varieties of avocado, mountain apple, pomelo, tangerine, lichee, edible bamboo—about the only non-edible plants are the bromeliads!



ALOHA TO JILL LAUGHLIN

Lyon Arboretum Education and Volunteer Programs Manager Jill Laughlin is retiring after almost twenty-five years with the Arboretum. Jill started as a student worker in 1992, and two years later was hired to serve on the grounds staff. In 2001 she became manager of education and volunteer programs, developing continuing education programs and recruiting volunteers for a variety of activities (including the Bromeliad Garden)—the Arboretum regularly averages over 12,000 volunteer hours each year. She also managed the Docent Program to train volunteers to guide the daily tours of the Arboretum. As director of education, Jill worked with faculty from all the University of Hawai‘i O‘ahu campuses to create field trips, class labs, and opportunities for service learning, as well as developing programs for K-12 students and adult education. In 2015 Jill was honored as the University of Hawai‘i Employee of the Year, as part of the Governor’s Awards for Distinguished State Service. She has always been a good friend of the HBS—many of us remember the “behind the scenes” tour of the Arboretum she gave us last February—and we wish her well in her next adventures.