



Newsletter of the

Hawai'i Bromeliad Society

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TILLANDSIA TREASURES FROM GEORGE AND JUDY HIDANO

Last month we welcomed back *Tillandsia* specialists Judy and George Hidano, of GJ Orchids and Tillandsia. On their first visit, in August 2016, Judy and George brought an intriguing sampling of *Tillandsia* to “show and tell,” highlighting the variety of plants in the genus. This visit the Hidanos focused on *Tillandsia* propagation and division—how to separate keiki—as well as watering and fertilization. They also answered a wide range of questions, from novice to expert, and offered a variety of plants for sale.

As George reminded us, *Tillandsia* are called air plants because they don't really need soil. They take in everything through their leaves: nutrition, water, and sun. Because they don't need soil, *Tillandsia* can be hung, potted, or mounted in a great variety of ways. Their roots are incidental, and used for holding onto the environment, which could be trees, rocks, driftwood, lava—or “walls” of plastic chicken wire, as Larry McGraw has demonstrated.

But there are consequences to being an “air plant.” *Tillandsia* need air circulation, and they do need to be watered regularly. George waters his *Tillandsia* two or three times a week, and by watering, he does not mean misting, which can actually be harmful to the plants. He doesn't water for a particular length of time, but makes sure to soak the plants. If you only have a few *Tillandsia*, he recommends dipping them in a bucket or



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www.hawaiiibromeliadsociety.org

APRIL MEETING

This Saturday, April 29,
we meet at **Lyon Arboretum**
at **12:30.**

Our hospitality hosts are
Karen and Terese.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 25, 2017

Lyon Arboretum

ATTENDING: Susan Andrade, Nancy Arakaki, Naty Hopewell, Gail Rabideau Ishihara, John Ishihara, Mischa Kobayashi, Wes Kobayashi, Terese Leber (presiding), Larry McGraw, Linda McGraw, Ed Nishiyama, Karen Rohter, Dolores Roldan, Jaime Roldan, Stan Schab, and Lynette Wageman.

CONVENED: 12:40; ADJOURNED: 2:20.

Terese welcomed everyone to the meeting, and thanked Dolores and Karen for the meeting's hospitality treats.

TREASURER: Dolores reported that our balance is \$11,245.01, including \$209 from the January auction and \$285 from the February auction. At the request of the president, Dolores confirmed that in 2015 HBS donated \$300 to Lyon Arboretum, as a thank you for allowing us to meet on their premises, and another \$300 for a special equipment fund, but that we had neglected to make any donations to the Arboretum last year. HBS members moved

to donate \$600 to Lyon Arboretum, as our contribution for 2016 and 2017.

(Naty moved, Susan seconded. Approved).

Dolores will draw a check for Terese to send to Carl Evensen, director of the Arboretum. Terese also reported that she will contact Lyon's education coordinator to discuss HBS providing funding for a student worker to complement the efforts of HBS volunteers in maintaining the Bromeliad Garden.

HOSPITALITY: Our hospitality hosts for April are Karen Rohter (snacks) and Terese Leber (drinks).

LIBRARY: Lynette reported that she had discovered some mold and weather and insect damage on the books and journals in the HBS library, and that after consulting with Terese, she wrote to Carl Evensen to explain the situation and to ask if the collection could be moved from its current location. For years, the collection has been held in a wooden cabinet, provided by the Arboretum and kept in the Arboretum's downstairs classroom, but during the renovation of that room over a year ago, the cabinet was moved into the screened-in work and storage facility next door. Even though the bookcase is covered with a plastic sheet, the weather, humidity, and insect life are taking a toll on the collection, which would be better preserved if it were moved back into the classroom or into a climate-controlled environment. Evensen wrote in reply that he wanted to confirm that the collection was being used by the Society, but that it could not be kept permanently in the classroom in its current cabinet. He suggested getting a wheeled cabinet that could be kept in the classroom or moved to the corridor by the staircase, if need arose. Lynette and Terese agreed to check out varieties of cabinets and report back at the next meeting.

PROGRAMS: Gail reported that the April program will feature photos, videos, and discussion of recent HBS member visits to Larry McGraw's garden, and to Hawai'i to attend the March plant sale of the Big Island Association of Nurserymen and Dennis Heckart's and David Shiigi's nurseries.

OLD BUSINESS—WINDWARD ORCHID SHOW: Terese thanked all the members who provided plants and fixtures, and helped set up the HBS display at the 2017 Windward Orchid Society show, "Diamond Jubilee—WOS 1967." She reminded members that the show



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From left: Dolores, Jaime, Gail, John, Terese, Tom Stuart, Stan, Randy, Lynette, and Val.

REPORT OF MARCH 25, 2017

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break down will be on Sunday, March 26 at 4 pm, and to come by and pick up their plants.

OLD BUSINESS—LYON ARBORETUM BROMELIAD GARDEN: Terese thanked all the stalwart volunteers who have been devoting their Friday mornings to sprucing up! (weeding, thinning, culling, replanting, mulching, bug-swatting) the Bromeliad Garden, especially Randy, Karen, Lynette, Stan, and Dolores and Jaime (right).

NEW BUSINESS—2017 HOLIDAY PARTY: Susan reminded members that if we are interested in reserving a pavilion at Ho‘omaluhia Botanical Garden for our year-end party, we should make reservations soon. Members pointed out some of the difficulties of last year’s party at the Willows Restaurant—parking, crowds, and timing—and suggested moving the party from December to January, when members might have more time, and more venues would be available. Terese asked members to come to the next meeting with suggestions about when and where to have the year-end party.

AUCTION: Thank you to all who donated plants for the auction—especially Ed for a huge *Hohenbergia* ‘Fudge Ripple’ and a *Billbergia* ‘Baton Rouge,’ and Gail for an assortment of *Neoregelia*, including specimens of *Carolinae*, ‘Zoe,’ and the Lisa Vinzant cultivars ‘Popoki’ and ‘Doodlebug.’



NEXT MONTH: AT THE MOVIES

Our May program will feature videos and photos taken by HBS members on recent excursions to Hilo, to attend the Spring 2017 sale of the Big Island Nurserymen’s Association and meet with Bromeliad growers David Shiigi (below left) and Dennis Heckart, and to the home and garden of our own Larry McGraw (below right). Bring your own popcorn!



TILLANDSIA WITH GEORGE AND JUDY

From page 1.

running them under a faucet. To aid in nutrition and promote plant health and growth, George combines watering with fertilizing his *Tillandsia*, on a monthly or bimonthly basis. He prefers a 13/3/15 fertilizer developed by Michigan State University for orchids, but which he uses for *Tillandsia*, anthuriums, ginger, and palms as well. Although the water soluble fertilizer can be used in a sprayer, because of the number of his plants, he uses a Hozon brass syphon mixer that draws up one part from a five gallon bucket to sixteen parts of water (he also covers the first three rows of holes in his hose nozzle to better direct the spray). Although he rarely needs to, he uses the same system to apply a fungicide like dithane or insecticide like Bayer 3 in 1.

Even though *Tillandsia* are open air plants, they can burn from a constant or heavy sun, so George and Judy grow theirs under a 50 percent shade cloth. George does on occasion propagate his plants from seeds gathered from the inflorescences of his *Tillandsia*, but he is the first to acknowledge that growing from seed is *very* slow and uncertain. He favors developing new plants by separating keiki or pups from the mother plants, which he demonstrated by separating a *xerographica* (below center). The only way to do it, he admitted, is to get up close and handy with the plant, and dig in to see where to separate it. He lets the keiki grow to about one-third to one-half the size of the mother plant before separating them out. One tip George mentioned is that if you see lots of seed pods in your plant's inflorescence, that shows where the plant's energy is going—so if you want to encourage the growth of the keiki, cut off the inflorescence.

Another tip George offered: to identify hard to name *Tillandsia*, try Paul Isley's books and online databases such as the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies' photo collection (www.fcbs.org).

Thanks to Judy and George, members had a chance to purchase specimens of *albida*, *bulbosa*, *capitata*, *flabellata*, *ionantha*, *jalisco-monticola*, *pseudobaileyi* (below right), *streptophylla*, *tectorum*, *xerographica*, and the *Stricta* cultivar 'Cousin It' (right), as well as *Cryptanthus* cultivars 'Ice Age' 'Jennifer' 'Roman Candle.' We're already looking forward to their next visit!

