



Newsletter of the

Hawai'i Bromeliad Society

VOL. 36 NO. 4

HONOLULU, HAWAI'I

APRIL 2013

LIGHT, WATER, AND FOOD

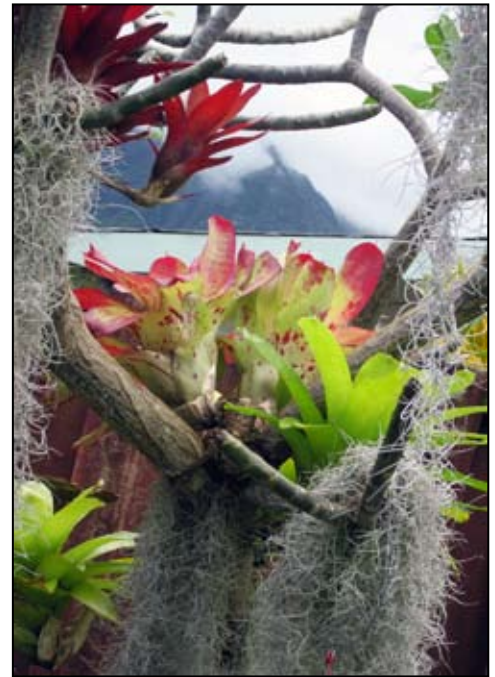
Last meeting, we learned how different Bromeliads can thrive in different living conditions: on rocks, in soil, or as “air plants.” Our March meeting focused on light, water, and fertilization. We’ve learned that there are a lot of different ways to grow Bromeliads, but the information Troy shared made much more sense sitting in his yard, where he could show examples of his hard-earned wisdom, learned from growers like Sharon Peterson and from his own trial and error and experimentation.

One important experiment we all can do is to look for mini ecosystems in our yards and growing areas, and particularly for patterns of light and shade. The goal is to give a Bromeliad as much sun as it can take without burning or fading. “Strappy” growth, with long, narrow leaves, is a sign of a plant reaching for the sun. Bromeliads will grow more compactly and develop more intense markings and color under maximum light. But we need to acclimate plants gradually to greater light, and to watch for signs of burning and bleaching—and if we find them, to move our plants to more diffuse, shaded light, pronto.

Troy—who lives makai on the Windward side—waters his plants three evenings a week, which keeps his terrestrials from going thirsty and from getting soggy. He also flushes his plants, both to get rid of mosquito or other insect

larvae and to prevent the buildup of minerals and salts from water and fertilizer.

In the wild, Bromeliads turn insects, bird and small animal droppings, leaves, and dust into nutrients and minerals, and cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) in the water in the plant cups convert nitrogen to a usable form. To complement those natural processes, some—but not all—growers fertilize their Bromeliads. Troy uses a highly diluted soluble foliar fertilizer (1/2 teaspoon per gallon), which he sprays on his plants in varying amounts, given the size of each plant and making sure not to fertilize in full sun. Because he can control the speed of absorption, he prefers the foliar spray to fertilizer pellets. And if you want to find out how too much nitrogen can temporarily ruin the look of a show plant, ask him sometime about his adventures with Miracle Gro.



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APRIL MEETING

This Saturday, April 27, we meet at

Lyon Arboretum

at Noon.

Our hospitality hosts are

Karen (drinks) and

Randy and Val (food).

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF MARCH 30, 2013

Troy & Jorji Oden's House

ATTENDING: Betty Chang, Marcy Doseo, Raleigh Ferdun, Helen Friend, Marie Grininger, Sam Kagesa, Annetta Kinnicutt (and her cousin!), Dennis Labra, Tessie Labra, Terese Leber, Ed Nishiyama, Jorji Oden, Troy Oden, Karen Rohter, Stan Schab, Sid Sneider, Gary Thompson, Randi Thompson, Lynette Wageman (presiding), and Hazel Wong.

CONVENED: 12:10; ADJOURNED: 3:00

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer Tessie reported that our current balance is \$2,241.77 (a new record!).

HOSPITALITY: Our Hospitality Hosts for April are Karen (drinks) and Val and Randy Wong (food).

ANNOUNCEMENTS: On behalf of the Display Committee (Val, Tom, and Terese), Terese thanked all the members for making possible a very successful HBS display at the Windward Orchid Society show in March. Take a look at page 4 of this newsletter for pictures of the display, which consisted of Troy's handmade arbor, foam steps and a wire display cage, a huge pineapple Randy borrowed from Lyon Arboretum, and Bromeliads loaned or donated by many different members. Several plants were left unclaimed after the show; Terese brought them to the meeting for members to claim (or to auction). For our participation, the Windward Orchid Society gave us a nice display pot, which the Display Committee is giving to Troy as thanks for building the display frame.

Marie Grininger reminded everyone that following the meeting, members were invited to her house to help cull her collection, and especially her broad-leafed Bromeliads—leave the *Billbergia*, please!

CONFERENCE: Lynette circulated the latest issue of the Bromeliad Society International journal, which features a lead story on David Shiigi's plants. From now until next Fall, every issue will contain a "Conference Corner," with the most current information on scheduling, registration, logistics, and events for Bromeliads in Paradise—so the conference is official, and "we can't back out now!"

Conference treasurer Raleigh noted that he has opened a checking account with \$100 of seed money from the Bromeliad Society International. The bulk of the money is due to be transferred in September, a year before the conference, so please keep your receipts or give them to Raleigh, who will be sending monthly itemized reports to BSI. Small expenditures are ok, but if you plan to spend more than \$20, please first get approval from Lynette.

Troy reported that Sharon Peterson, Sherlette Shiigi, and the organizing committee are finalizing the conference logo and developing a color version.



Lynette noted that we will need table favors for the conference banquet, and that she welcomes all suggestions. She reported that committee members are still looking into different types of bags, which will be given to the conference participants along with their registration materials and program. She circulated a sample of the plastic bag donated to us by the Hawaii Visitors Bureau, and asked members to bring samples and suggestions to the April meeting.

Lynette also reported that Marie Ferdun is assembling a list of growers and vendors, who will be sent a letter informing them of the conference.

AUCTION: Many thanks to auctioneer Raleigh for working his way through what had to be a record number of plants, many of which came from Troy's back yard.

And mahalo to Jorji & Troy
for hosting a great meeting!

MOUNTING AND POTTING

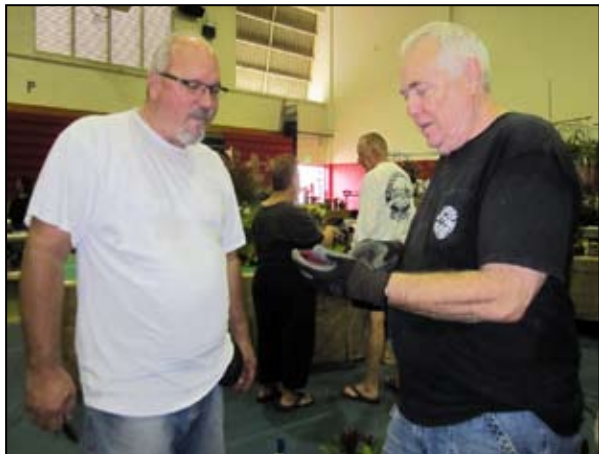
Troy demonstrated one way to create a strong, natural, glue-free driftwood display: he uses a drill to enlarge a natural puka in the wood, trims the roots to fit, and drills a small drain hole. You wind up with a beautiful, sturdy display, and best of all, you have a good excuse to go beachcombing.



As we learned at the last meeting, in the wild Bromeliads may live in various mixes of soil, mineral, and organic matter (terrestrials), or on rocks, like *Billbergia* (saxicolous), or attached to another plant or object (epiphytes). Although terrestrials should not be allowed to dry out, no Bromeliads like wet feet, and epiphytes in particular need air around their roots and an environment that allows water to run through it. From testing various mixes, and from talking to other growers (Sharon Peterson, for example, favors a mixture of coir and cinders, with time release fertilizer pellets), Troy has developed his own planting mix, which he makes by the wheelbarrelful. He starts with a cubic foot of orchid bark, adds about three-quarters of a cubic foot of black cinders, for nutrients and weight, and about half a bag of sphagnum moss, which holds water without becoming soggy, and breaks down quickly. This he calls his basic epiphyte mix. To make a minerally rich mix, he'll match one part of the base mix with one part sand; for an organic mix, he'll match the epiphyte mix with potting soil. He always inspects his plants before repotting; if necessary—if the plant, for example has weevils—he'll treat it with antiseptic soap. And as you can tell from his yard, unless they are mounted in trees or on the fence, ALMOST ALL of Troy's Bromeliads are in pots, which makes it easier to keep the yard clean, and to move plants around between microclimates, sun, and shade—and to follow Tom Stuart's "rule of three" for showcasing your Bromeliads as they bloom and decline: move them from house, to lanai, to yard.



A STAIRWAY OF BROMELIADS — WOS 2013



Congratulations all around for a successful HBS display at the Spring 2013 Windward Orchid Society show. Thank you to all who contributed plants, time, and expertise, and special thanks to Troy, for the arbor; to Tom, for the Sunday morning Bromeliad culture talk; to Randy, for the giant *Anana*; and to the set up (and clean up!) crew: Karen, Lynette, Raleigh, Randy, Terese, Tom, Troy, and Val.



Mahalo,
The Display Committee
(Terese, Tom & Val)