



Newsletter of the

Hawai'i Bromeliad Society

VOL. 33 NO. 2

HONOLULU, HAWAI'I

FEBRUARY 2011

TILLANDSIA EXPERT PETER DE MELLO TO SPEAK AT NEXT MEETING



Photo by Ken Sakamoto (*Honolulu Star Bulletin*, 12 Sept. 1997, © copyright and used without permission).

Peter “the Hawai'i *Tillandsia* expert” De Mello, Jr. will be our guest speaker for the February 26, 2011, meeting. He will tell us all about *Tillandsias*—the largest genus in the bromeliad family, with about one thousand different varieties—and his secrets for propagating, growing, and showing them.

Tillandsia have moved from a hobby to a second career for Peter, who has been growing them for about thirty years. “I started by using *Tillandsia* for shade for my orchids and it kind of went from there,” he explains, as he discovered how *Tillandsia* ask different things of their growers than orchids do.

“Most *Tillandsia* can be cross pollinated,” Peter notes, “but it is a lot easier to grow them from pups rather than seeds.” He will bring plants for show and tell, including some of his special hybrids.

Peter has been a long-standing member of the Hawai'i Bromeliad Society, and has done a lot to educate and interest people in growing *Tillandsia*. So come prepared with any questions you may have about mounting, fertilizing, propagating or watering *Tillandsia*, or about matching varieties to your own growing locations.

Peter sells his plants at most of the big plant sales, but will also bring some to our meeting to sell—so come prepared to buy. They take up very little space!



2011 OFFICERS OF THE HAWAI'I BROMELIAD SOCIETY

CO-CHAIRS

Laura St. Denis & Susan Andrade

TREASURER

Tessie Labra

HOSPITALITY

Lum Keith

NEWSLETTER

Terese Leber

VICE CHAIR & PROGRAMS

Lynette Wageman

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Val Wong

MEMBERSHIP

Raleigh Ferdun

www.hawaiibromeliadsociety.org

LEFT TO RIGHT: “Ionantha Lei” by Hatsumi Maertz; *Tillandsia ionantha* var. *maxima* by Herb Plever (both photos from the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies Photo Index, © copyright and used without permission); *Tillandsia bourgaei*, by Bird Rock Tropicals, Bromeliad Society International Genera Gallery, © copyright and used without permission); *Tillandsia cyanea* by J. F. Garrard, from the Jardin botanique de Lyon (Creative Commons/Wikimedia Commons); and *Tillandsia cyanea*, by Ken Marks, Bromeliad Society International Genera Gallery, © and used without permission.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 29, 2011

Lyon Arboretum meeting room, 12:00 – 2:15 p.m.

Attending: Susan Andrade, Raleigh Ferdun, Karen Gollero, Marie Grininger, Tessie Labra, Terese Leber, Sally Mist, Stan Schab, Laura St. Denis, Tom Stuart, Lynette Wageman, Val and Randy Wong

Outgoing Chair Lynette called the meeting to order, and enthusiastically welcomed the members to a new year of activities. She confirmed that anyone who wished to be reimbursed for expenses relating either to the December party or to preparation and delivery of the newsletter had been reimbursed, and thanked Betty Chang, Hazel Wong, and Sally Mist for persuading/corralling a new slate of officers. The Society approved the following officers for 2011:

Co-Chairs: Laura St. Denis and Susan Andrade; Vice Chair: Lynette Wageman; Treasurer: Tessie Labra; Corresponding Secretary: Val Wong; Hospitality: Lum Keith; Librarian: Lynette Wageman; Membership: Raleigh Ferdun; Newsletter: Terese Leber; Programs: Lynette Wageman.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Lynette passed the meeting over to new Co-Chair Laura. Marie circulated an invitation from the Mānoa Heritage Center for docent training; if you're interested, call 988-1287 or email margomhc@hawaiiantel.net. Laura reminded members of the extensive variety of bromeliads and other plants that would be available at the Punahou Carnival. Susan announced that Mary Louise Boyd is interested in culling her bromeliad collection, and that members could call her to arrange a visit. Susan also circulated an ad from Sea Breeze Nurseries, a Florida-based seller of bromeliads and a wide variety of other plants (www.seabreezenurseries.com).

TREASURER'S REPORT: Tessie reported that the society has a balance of \$1,242.08. At Lynette's request, the Society approved the

purchase for the Society library, for \$78, of *Tillandsia II: The World's Most Unusual Airplants*, by Paul T. Isley III (Botanical Press, 2009).

MINUTES/NEWSLETTER: The newsletter/minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

PROGRAMS: See "Coming Attractions" on page 4.

OLD BUSINESS:

Taxes. Tom reported that the Society's 2009 990 federal tax filing was returned for a minor correction. A missing line was filled in, which will not impact the overall filing, and the return was resubmitted. Tom noted that once he gets copies of the fiscal information from the Treasurer, he will prepare the Society's 2010 filing.

Web Site. Raleigh reported that the Hawai'i Bromeliad Society domain name registration is up for renewal in May. Domain names—labels, such as host names for web sites, that give organizations, companies, or individuals authority over parts of the Internet—may be registered for as short a period as one year. Many companies, known as domain name registrars, are authorized by an international body to sell and manage domain registration. Raleigh further noted that his server, which currently hosts the Society web site, needs repair, and that the site could benefit from ongoing maintenance. Though hosted by Raleigh, the site is designed and managed by Laura, who also maintains the Society's Facebook presence. The Society moved that

Raleigh renew the Society domain registration.

Raleigh noted that, since the registration is not due until May, the Society has time to look into package deals for domain name registration and web site hosting.

Lyon's Meeting Room. Laura announced that she will reconfirm with Lyon Arboretum use of its meeting facilities for 2011.

Hospitality. Laura reminded members that Lum has prepared a hospitality schedule for the next few meetings. Lum was not at the January meeting, however, so the names of the people providing refreshments for the February meeting cannot be included here.

(continued on p. 4, top)

A IS FOR AECHMEA

With this issue, we are pleased to set sail on an alphabetical tour of the world of bromeliads, under the navigation of Tom Stuart.

Aechmea is a large genus of the Bromeliad family, with over two hundred species and four hundred hybrids. They have showy bracts and sometimes very colorful foliage. The name comes from the Greek word meaning “point of a spear.” The leaves have a series of sharp thorns along the margin and at the tip. They are usually medium to large plants, from about fifteen inches to five feet, including the inflorescence.

Most *Aechmea* are quite prolific, producing two to three keiki each year. They will grow nicely by planting them in the ground just deep enough for them to stay in place. They can be propped up with rocks until they put out the short roots or holdfasts that will stabilize them. If you grow them in pots, use coir and cinders—half and half. Add about a teaspoon of Nutricote 13-13-13 time-release fertilizer. *Aechmea* can be grown in full sun and will develop more color in the leaves. The more shade they are in, the more green the leaves will be.

There are many species of *Aechmea* easily found in Hawai‘i: *Aechmea blanchetiana*, *fendleri*, *gamosepala*, *orlandiana*, *pineliana*, *ramosa*, *nudicaulis*, and *fulgens discolor* are quite common in our members’ gardens.



ABOVE: *Aechmea blanchetiana*; LEFT, TOP: *Ae. ramosa*; LEFT, BOTTOM: *Ae. winn-plantbyguessingthespeciesana* (photos courtesy of Tom Stuart).

TOM'S GUIDE TO TAXONOMY

Plants are scientifically classified by:

- Kingdom
- Division
- Class
- Order
- Family
- Genus
- Species

For our purposes, we only need to understand from the Family level down—though if anyone cares, the family bromeliaceae belongs to the order poales, the class monocotyledon (or liliopsida), the division angiosperm, and, well, you can guess the kingdom.

I follow the following guides for naming:

—Genus and species names are italicized: genus is singular, genera plural; species is both singular and plural (specie refers to what we are chronically short of).

—A binomial is a scientific name consisting of a genus and species, such as *Aechmea blanchetiana*.

—If another species in the same genus is referred to, the genus is usually abbreviated, such as *Ae. gamosepala*.

—A hybrid is a cross between two naturally occurring species.

—The genus name is italicized, the hybrid name is not and is enclosed in single quotes, such as *Guzmania* ‘Puna Gold,’ or *Disneydwarfianis* ‘Sleepy.’

The best single source for confirming spelling is the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies at www.fcbs.org. Their “Photo Index” lists thousands of species, including hybrids, and most are illustrated with photos.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF JANUARY 29, 2011: NEW BUSINESS

(continued from p. 2)

Membership. Laura noted that Raleigh will prepare a new mailing list for members, with postal and email addresses as appropriate. He will also indicate members' payments of dues for 2011, which he will then give to the Treasurer. Dues remain \$15 for single membership, and \$20 for joint membership. The Society moved that

joint or family membership applies to two people living in the same household, both of whom will have a vote on Society motions, but who will receive one newsletter.

Finance and Donations. The Society moved to

donate \$250 to Lyon Arboretum; send \$100 to the Bromeliad Society International to renew our affiliate membership (\$30) and support the BSI Identification program (\$35) and journal (\$35); and donate \$100 to a fund set up by Ray Baker, the longtime head gardener at Lyon Arboretum, who established a \$50,000 endowment for the facility. This donation is to go to the fund Baker established, and not the University of Hawai'i Foundation's Lyon Arboretum general endowment.

PROGRAM: Lynette organized a grab bag presentation of choice items from her personal garden—as long as the recipients could tell the *Billbergia* from the *Tillandsia*!

SHOW AND TELL: Tom began a year-long education initiative by introducing the group to bromeliads belonging to genera that begin with the letters a, b, or c: *Aechmea*, *Billbergia*, and *Canistrum*—including an *Aechmea blanchetiana* (and a hybrid) in full bloom, an *Ae. orlandiana*, an *Ae. gamosepala*, a *Canistrum aurantiacum*, and (defying alphabetical tyranny), a *Quesnelia quesneliana*. Laura pointed out the defining knuckles on an *Ae. nudicaulis*. Tom also reminded members of Freecycle Honolulu as a venue for gifting unwanted plants (groups.yahoo.com/group/FreecycleHonolulu). The show and tell was followed by a spirited auction; many species were sold, adding plenty species to our Society pockets.

Sez Tom . . .

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

by roving correspondent Tom Stuart

That would mean that a thousand pictures are worth a million words—so you can save a lot of reading if you go to the web site of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: www.fcbs.org. When you get to their homepage, look on the left side of the page for “Photo Index.” There you will find a listing of genera. Choose a genus, such as *Aechmea*, then pick a species, and you will find the photographs. FCBS lists 215 species and 414 hybrids of *Aechmea*.

Another good source for images is the web site of the Bromeliad Society International: www.bsi.org. Its pictures are contained in a Genera Gallery (www.bsi.org/brom_info/gallery).

If you don't have access to the internet, there are many books which can be checked out from our library. See Librarian Lynette at the next meeting.

The Hawai'i State Public Library also has books on bromeliads. Search its catalog—use “subject browse”—for bromeliaceae. One of the best books is *Blooming Bromeliads*, by Ulrich and Ursula Baensch (Tropic Beauty, 1994). It has an easy to read text and excellent photographs. They only have one copy, so you might have to request it and wait, but they have many copies of *The Book of Bromeliads* by Ron Parkhurst of Maui (Pacific Isle, 2000), so it is more readily available.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

From our Program Chair Lynette:

- March to Marie's
For our March meeting, we have been invited to Marie Gringer's home
- Heidi Ho
Heidi Bornhorst has expressed a willingness to present a program; Laura will consult with her on a date
- Foster Children
A field trip to Foster's Botanical Garden has been proposed, and Tom has agreed to approach Nathan Wong about the possibilities for a group visit
- Please identify and begin to prepare bromeliads from your own collections for an upcoming show and tell
- But rest up, because we are also planning on a work session at Paul Ekern's home.