

# BromeliAdvisory

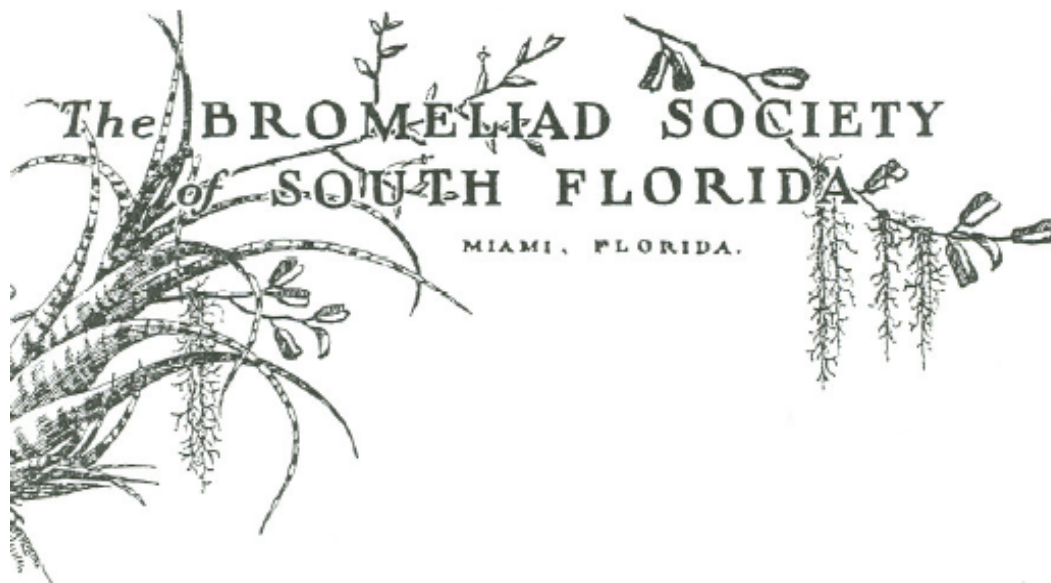
July 2014



*Neoregelia* fireball at Wilkins home. Photo by Desiree Meyer

## **In this Issue**

|                            |     |
|----------------------------|-----|
| President's Message .....  | 2   |
| In Case You Missed It..... | 2-3 |
| Upcoming Events .....      | 3   |
| Murder in Corbin A .....   | 3-5 |
| Aspiring Writers .....     | 5   |



## BromeliAdvisory

**July 2014**

WEBPAGE: <http://www.bssf-miami.org/>



[http://www.facebook.com/groups/BromeliadSF/?bookmark\\_t=group](http://www.facebook.com/groups/BromeliadSF/?bookmark_t=group)



<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Bromeliad-Society-of-South-Florida/84661684279>

President: Barbara Partagas  
VP: Lenny Goldstein  
Treasurer: Fred Sussenberger  
Secretary: Peggy Fisher

### DIRECTORS

Past Pres.: Carl Bauer

Directors:

Maureen Adelman '13 –'14  
Joy Parrish '13 –'14  
Alex Bello '14 –'15  
Barbara Sparling '14 –'15

### Editor

**Robert C Meyer**

**Advertising: Robert Meyer**

**Door Prize: Alan Herndon**

**Education: Nat DeLeon**

**Hospitality: Elaine Mills**

**Library: Barbara Partagas**

**Membership: Maureen**

**Adelman/Melody Ray**

**Mem. Plant Sales: Antonio**  
**Arbelaez**

**Raffle: Melissa Brail**

**Refreshments: Sandy Roth**

| What        | Who        |
|-------------|------------|
| Sales Table | Alex Bello |

**JULY 17, 2014 7:30 PM**

**SPEAKER:** Diana Guidry, Natural Resource Specialist II, Broward County– “NatureScaping with Bromeliads”

**RAFFLE TABLE:** Sandy Roth

**FOOD:** Maureen Adelman, Martha & Fred Sussenberger, Carl Bauer, Mary Ann La Russo, Joy Parish, Laura Coe

### About the Speaker

Diana has worked toward supporting wildlife and the environment for over 20 years, with Broward County's NatureScape Broward program, the Extension Education Division, and Flamingo Gardens Botanical Gardens and Wildlife Sanctuary. As the NatureScape Broward Outreach Coordinator, Diana organizes programs, trainings, and community projects that support sustainable landscapes and wildlife habitat.



As a National Wildlife Federation Host, she has graduated 20 classes of Habitat Stewards and serves as the team leader for Broward County's Community Wildlife Habitat. Diana plays a major organizational role in Broward County's annual Water Matters Day, overseeing the tree and plant giveaway, where 36,000 native trees and plants have been given to residents over the past twelve years. Diana is also responsible for the annual NatureScape Emerald Awards program, which recognizes outstanding landscapes and environmental achievements

## President's Message

by Barbara Partagas

Congratulations to Alan Herndon on his new position as Editor of the BSI Journal. Nobody needs to be told what a huge project this is.

We can all look forward to continued good content and more articles that cover the newest discoveries in the bromeliad world and the adventures of the heartiest of bromethusiasts trekking through all nature of, well, *nature* to bring us their discoveries.

The Board position at BSI that Alan vacated has been filled by your president. I hope to serve you all well in this capacity. It would be my pleasure to present to the Board at their upcoming meeting any comments or suggestions pertaining to what you would like to see BSI get involved in or what you would like to see changed

## In Case You Missed It

by Robert Meyer

*Aechmea chantinii* (hereinafter “AC”) was the topic of conversation by Alan Herndon. Herndon has well over 50,000 plants at his nursery where he continually endeavors to hybridize the banded beauty.

AC is one of two great banding *aechmeas* – the other being *Aechmea zebrina*. Cooing the market, the AC found for sale usually demands more conformed banding plants with greater contrast.

Three characteristics make the AC: leaf color; leaf width; leaf stiffness and banding.

The color varies from lighter green to solid dark chocolate. The rule of thumb is that the less nutrients delivered to the plant make the plant dark. Alternatively more nutrients make the color lighter.

Consumers prefer the dark chocolate. Why? Herndon says the contrast increases with such dark coloring, therefore making the banding more prevalent or obvious to the naked eye – hence showing off the plant's best characteristic.

In the world of AC, especially when concerning leaf width, width is a relative term. Herndon is not a specific measurement, but rather is a proportionate measuring of the width divided by length of the leaf. Consumers lean toward wider leaves.

Stiffness is a misleading characteristic. All AC are stiff-leaved. The issue is more about the leaf shape. There are three main characteristics: erect, stiffly ascending and arching out. The erect may be too narrow and hide some of the plant's interior banding. The arching out can look ill and as though the plant is fatigued or undernourished. Consumers prefer the middling ground, or stiff ascending leaf.

Crossband patterns are an AC's highlight. They can be even, straight and parallel or attenuated. The even bands appear machine manufactured with little diversity. As the evenness dissipates, the bands either vary, or become jagged or divergent. The banding on the top of leaves often mismatches the bottom's banding. The

perfect cylindrical banding can become uneven – akin to an EEG or EKG reading – and make a dizzying pattern. And, often the banding is wider on one side than it is on the other – all characteristics Herndon seeks to avoid when hybridizing.

The bands are resulting from trichomes on the plant which efficiently gather the light. The regularity of the trichomes appears mercilessly dependent upon the weather, light, and other variables seemingly beyond the control of the grower.



Table of plants brought by Alan Herndon showing differences.



But, many pups appear to be true to their parental banding characteristic, while just as many differ from the parentage's banding patterns.

Herndon claims requisite proportionate banding to the leaf makes the best plant. Wider leaves outperform narrower leaves in pronouncing the bands. The darker colors help lead the eye to see the banding's character. If trichomes are less



Nat DeLeon looking at *Aechmea chantinii*  
DeLeon

prevalent in the plant, the contrast between the colors decreases. Conversely, the increase of trichomes on the plant increases the color contrasting on the plant – the bands will be more pronounced from the leaf's coloring.

Herndon brought some *Aechmea zebrina* to show the similarity of the exterior of the plants to AC, but the inflorescence of the *zebrina* appears heartier, and perhaps deemed more pronounced, than the common flowering of the AC.

Herndon's numerous plants showed the differences of contrast, banding, leaf length, leaf width, and coloring to those who appeared. The visual aids on slide as well as numerous model plants eased audience understanding of the concepts provided in the lecture.

Photos can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10152457846644280.1073741855.8461684279&type=1>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**July 12-13, 2014**

**The 22nd Annual International Mango Festival**  
Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

<http://www.fairchildgarden.org/Events/?date=07-2014&eventID=936>

**July 25-27, 2014**

**Caladium Festival**

Stuart Park

Lake Placid, FL

<http://www.lpfla.com/caladium.htm>

**September 8-14, 2014**

**21<sup>st</sup> World Bromeliad Conference**

Honolulu, HI

<http://www.bsi.org/new/wbc-2014-registration-and-info/>

<http://www.bsi.org/new/wbc-2014-event-schedule/>

**October 21, 2014 – 7:00 PM**

**Annual BSSF Auction**

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

## MURDER IN CORBIN A

© by Robert Meyer

PREVIOUS CHAPTERS MAY BE SEEN IN

<http://www.bssf-miami.org/>

**97.**

"I'm no rocket scientist." Susan admitted. "But, I have invested in what could make rocket science look like basic arithmetic. You know that?"

Joshua knew what little he knew a few minutes before was less than what he knew now, and he further knew that what he knew now did not include "that." "No." he responded softly.

"Well, it is complex. But, I need to tell someone, and you deserve an explanation." Susan then took a breath of air and began to tell Joshua something he had never imagined.

"It started years ago when I learned about this chimp. Its mother was killed at its birth, and immediately it was removed from the environment of other chimps. He was raised in a home by people, only interacted with people, and was constantly observed and tested by these



people. The chimp was housetrained, it ate human food, it learned sign language and actually had hundreds of words for vocabulary. It could tease. It could do most anything a toddler could do. Then, one day they learned something more. The Chimp could interact with us. The Chimp could use language other than rote memory. When it first bit into a watermelon, it signed 'candy water.' When it ate an onion for the first time, it signed 'hurt cry food.' We learned that environment had literally given the Chimp an ability to communicate, and virtually be a human. It moved from its species. Or so I concluded. You know a species is more than common traits. It is the group within which the same can procreate. The species quite literally is a group of organisms capable of interbreeding and producing fertile offspring. But, there is the ability to create cross species when one is in the presence with another for a long time. Well, that Chimp did more than sit and sign. It began to enter puberty, and the owners gave it porn, from which it began to masturbate. Human porn. And, then as time progressed the Chimp became erotically aroused by man. Wanting to have sex with man. But, the urges became violent, and the lack of pleasure resulted with destruction to the family's home. Frustration culminated with destruction. And, we never could learn if the chimp, or others soon like it, would be a subspecies.

"Well, that is a mammal. I told dad about this, and he began to think. Plants, which are much simpler than mammals, may be readily more adaptive. And, the great possibilities could be earthshattering. He employed a few people from our insurance money to look into the basic concept, and amazingly a result appeared within months. A species of simple *Aechmea fosteriana* had crossed with a simple *Phalaenopsis* orchid. Months later, through advanced cloning, we made a wide striped leafy plant, with mild barbs like the bromeliad, which had a long thin neck like the orchid, but colored red-orange like the bromeliad. It was only the beginning. We took it to a show, far away in Australia, and people asked about it, and we said nothing. They are polite and respectful there, and we said we had a patent pending on the plant, and could not sell it to anyone. And, it was there that we met that scoundrel – Marin. I tell you no lie when he walked up and looked

my dad in the eye and said, 'How did you ever cross a fosteriana with a *phalaenopsis*?' Dad was floored. So much so that his silence answered the question.

"Marin then said he would tell no one about the matter if he was paid something. But, if not told, he would tell both the BSI – Bromeliad Society International – as well as dozens of orchid societies. The publicity would ruin our labs, and research would come to a halt. I would even bet that people would start coming to the far reaches of Australia to see the cross-specied wonder plant. And, Marin – someone who made numerous eco-tours in Latin America – would be creating the tours the moment we refused him. So like chickens, we gave him \$50,000. Per year. In unmarked funds.

"Now, to get to the point. Someone is murdering people out there. This experiment is worth a fortune. We have a patent pending. We have plants in storage – a place where no one but one or two people can access. But, we are afraid. And, we know you work for the cops. We need help. Badly. My dad has been mugged, threatened, followed, and basically exterminated from the public's eye. He went to the feds for protection, but they laughed.

"In all honesty, I do not believe I will be alive next week. Nor dad. But, I want the project to finish. And, I chose you to complete the task. Why? You ask. First, you are a cop. And, that insulates you from most riff raff. Secondly, you are a scientist. A scientist can take the torch and go places where no one has gone before. And, lastly, I think you are truly honest and will do the right thing with this miracle. For instance, if you were given the cure for cancer: what would you do? Wait for the highest bidder, or take the big chunk of money immediately so the product would be disseminated before one more person died from awful curse? I pegged you for the latter. Was I wrong?"

Joshua knew she was right. And, he knew that she pegged him rightly about other things as well. Her one error was calculating his weight for tolerance to her sleep-inducing drug which triggered the seizure he managed to endure. "You are right."

“Great. Now, I want to go to the Beach and introduce you to dad. He has specifics about what you will need to know. You are the contingency plan. If nothing happens to us, you are without harm, and we will pay you for the trouble. If something happens to us, you will inherit a great responsibility, but will also receive a nice chunk of change. Ready to go?”

He was.

**98.**

Marin heard a knock at his door which alarmed him because the doorbell was where it belonged, was relatively large, and was lit at night. Only the blind would miss it, and he did not know anyone who was blind.

He looked through the peephole and immediately knew who the visitor was and opened the door in reflex fashion.

“What in the blazes sends the dead to my home?” Marin asked in winded fashion.

“Well, your eyes aren’t lying to you, therefore the dead ain’t here. And, I am here because you let the cat out of the bag and now many people have been buried because of your misgivings. Does that answer your question?”

“Now look here. I told no one nothing.” Marin was adamant, to the point where he inflexed his passion with his native Spanish grammar – double negatives.

“Okay, let us pretend for one second, you – a felon – acted like the choir boy and could be taken for your word. Who would be out there killing the masses at this time?”

Marin thought about who had the most to gain and honestly answered. “You. Or your daughter.”

“What the heck has happened to you. I always thought you’d be the first to go insane – those drugs and other lifestyle choices were sure to be your bane. Now, I know you’re as batty as they come. Your time for the old folks home has arrived, amigo.”

“Just a minute. Who has motive? You. Who has the most to gain? You. Who is the common

denominator? You. And, when I say you, I mean you or the Mata Hari of a daughter you raised.” Marin was adamant again.

“I am not here to gain. Quite the opposite. You know me. Am I someone who expects to live for long? Do I play it safe? Am I here to live another day, or am I here to live for the day?”

Marin had not known his guest for long, but for the period of time of their acquaintance, he had known the man to be anything but careful. First, he took up motorcycling. Then bungy jumping. Later it was rock climbing, parasailing, parachuting, flying small planes, and ultimately swimming with the sharks. Enveloping his life with dangerous activities was one way to avoid the doldrums of aging. He was engulfed by a fear of slow ennui through dispassionate life accompanied by lethargy, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s or some equally offending disease almost universally associated with age. Gort was not going peacefully.

“Okay. You are not a shrinking violet. But, you are also no *Alcantarea imperialis*. You know that too, right?” And, Gort nodded. “You are just another lolly-pop colored *Guzmania* without a single thorn, harmless to the world, and never capable of handling the direct sun.”

Gort nodded more. “Yes, ditto. Back at ya. Now let us dainty flowers go to Reynold’s Run and enjoy looking at the art of young women while sipping drinks full of rum and miniature umbrellas. Are you on?”

Marin was never one to refuse free drinks, especially rum. Before he could respond, he put on his best leather coat and two parted arm in arm with smiles.

### **Aspiring Writers**

This is your opportunity. Alan Herndon has donned the editor’s visor for BSI. Barbara Partagas has accepted the title of BSI board member. In short, two of the few writers for this publication have “other commitments.” If you have an article which you wish to deliver, please do. Any and all articles are welcomed. A few ideas: (a) meet someone at their yard and get little tidbits about why they grow what they grown and more; (b) biographies of some of our own masters; or (c) your own creative concept.