



BromeliAdvisory

January 2010
BSSF Officers 2010

Webpage:

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

President Robert Meyer
 VP: Pepe Donayre
 Treasurer: Alan Herndon
 Secretary: Barbara Partagas

DIRECTORS

Past Pres.: Sandy Roth

Directors:

Nat DeLeon '10-'11
 Rhonda Herndon '10-'11
 Judy Pagliarulo '09-'10
 Lori Weyrick '10

Editor

Robert C Meyer

Door Prize: Alan Herndon

Education: Nat DeLeon

Hospitality: Elaine Mills

Library: Ofelia Sorzano

Membership: Moyna Prince

**Member Plant Sales: Antonio
 Arbelaez**

**Raffle: Peter & Clara
 Kouchalakos**

Refreshments: Patty Gonzalez

What	Who
Sales Table	Antonio Arbelaez

JANUARY 5, 2010, 7:30 PM

SPEAKER: – Tom Wolfe to replace him. His topic will be "Bromeliads at the Longwood Gardens, Kenneth Sq. PA"

RAFFLE TABLE: Will be there

Tom Wolfe –

Speaker Tom Wolfe brings a great history. Delivering speeches in humble manner, he deceptively conjures thoughts in the unaware mind that bromeliads are merely a hobby. The truth is that the firm commitment by he and wife have delivered to the bromeliad world numerous concepts, hybrids and more which expanded the knowledge of the plant we admire.



Inside this edition:

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	2
HUMMERS ARE BACK	2
VARIEGATED ALCANTERAS	3-5
LETTER RE: CULTIVAR REGISTRY	5
GET INVOLVED	5
WHAT'S IN BLOOM	5-6
TIME TO ORGANIZE THE 1020 SHOW	6
RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP FORM	7

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Robert Meyer

It is all about timing. And timing is moving at fast paced each year – or so it seems.

The drudgery of daily activity seems to speed the days, weeks and months – events of each year become more pronounced and sudden.

One coming deadline is – believe it or not – just a few months away: The Annual Show.

And, the participation of the people of this organization is imperative as the size of the show remains the largest on the plant earth – amazingly showcasing more entries than even the prestigious bi-annual World Conference.

So, please open your calendars and donate the generous giving of your time.

And, it is that time to fill out and send your annual membership application to the society. The form is on the last page.

T-Shirts Still For Sale

Sandy Roth has shirts to sell to the masses
– contact her at the next meeting

Hummers are back

If, out in the garden over the next few months, you may hear a soft, rapid chirping or chattering followed, perhaps, by a loud buzz. These are the welcome sounds of an encounter with a hummingbird. If you look quickly in the direction of the sounds, you will likely see the little flying dynamo itself. Hummingbirds are happy to share your garden as long as you don't try to approach too closely.

In almost all cases, we see Ruby throated hummingbirds, but strays from both the east (the Bahamas) and from the western United States are reported frequently enough to make things interesting. In other words, it is worth your while to carefully observe any hummingbirds that hang around. Of course, you will have to have good eyes, and some opportunity for extended observation (preferably when the hummingbird is perched), if you hope to tell the difference between the species.

Hummingbirds are regular visitors to southern Florida. Moyna Prince has kept an eye on the

annual influx for several years. Hummingbirds show up in her lawn during October and hang around until sometime in April.

Several plants native to southern Florida provide favored food sources for the hummingbirds. Many people plant the native firebush, *Hamelia patens*, to attract these birds. If you wish to follow this trend, be sure to specify *Hamelia patens*. There are other species of *Hamelia* in the market, but they are not as successful in our landscape.

The reason to note the appearance of hummingbirds is that they are quite happy to feed on, defend, even fight over blooming stands of bromeliads. I have watched them feed on blooming *Androlepis skinneri* (both male and female plants), *Aechmea blanchetiana* and *Aechmea eurycorymbus*. They also show a decided preference for the red-flowered *Pitcairnia* species (a worthy reason to devote some portion of your garden to a clump or two of *Pitcairnia* with tall flower spikes). It is not a coincidence that all of the plants listed have tall blooms. It is much easier for me to see hummingbirds when they are several feet up in the air and there is less background foliage to contend with. Undoubtedly, they also visit smaller plants

If you would like to encourage hummingbirds in your own garden, you need to give some space to plants that bloom every year and, preferably, for most of the winter months. You may need to include some plants that have uninspiring foliage to get the proper bloom density and coverage. If you can, include some single species groups. Hummingbirds seem to prefer visiting flowers from a single species at a time, and, in the cases I have observed, tend to stake out a claim on a clump of (say) *Aechmea eurycorymbus* with several inflorescences rather than a group of plants with the same number of inflorescences that all come from different species. Don't assume you have to restrict yourself to the plants listed above. Try grouping plants you already have into some single species clusters arranged for optimal hummingbird viewing. Plant some *Hamelia patens*. Sit back and enjoy.

MEMBERSHIP MONTH IS HERE

The last page of the BromeliAdvisory includes your new membership form.

Variegated *Alcantareas*

Author: Bruce Dunstan

Originally printed *Bromeliaceae* July/August 2009

Over the past 5-6 years I have been growing a lot of *Alcantareas* from seed. The company I work for has been producing large numbers of *Alcantareas* for landscape clients and also people who want something different for their gardens.

When we are growing the seedlings through the varying sizes in our production process occasionally we can select out the striped plants and put them aside. Once we worked out that variegates were occasionally coming up I started to collect way more seed than what we would normally need and began sowing that seed specifically for variegates.

This resulted in trays of green seedlings numbering in the thousands that looked like turf being disposed of. Usually you can see if a plant has variegations by the 5th or 6th leaf, but some don't show their stripes until they are a bit older. Plants that look great at an early stage 3-4 leaves often don't have enough chlorophyll to maintain healthy growth as they mature and succumb.

The more striping they have also slows their growth rates to the point that some of my better seedlings have taken years to get to a decent size even with the high rates of fertiliser I use to push them along.

Visiting other growers and seeing variegates certainly got me interested in these plants. My first introduction was at Keith Golinski's nursery



Alcantarea extensa
– photo by Peter
Tristram care of
FCBS

Bromagic. Keith had a seedling batch of *Alcantarea glaziouana* and one of the individuals was variegated.

Keith was happy to sell me green plants but obviously was going to keep his stripy plant. My first variegated seedlings came as progeny from the green individuals that Keith sold me.

At the time I thought the variegation may have been transmitted genetically from the parents, coming from a batch of seedlings that contained a variegated individual, but now I tend to think some species are more prone to variegation and *Alcantarea glaziouana* appears to me at least, to be a species that throws lots of variegated seedlings.

I was able to prove my theory on genetic variegations when I sowed every last seed I collected from a variegated *Alcantarea extensa* that I named for Bobby Powell. Bobby grew an *Alcantarea extensa* to maturity down at the Gold Coast and I was luckily given some of the seed by Arno King, who at this stage was feeding my interest in *Alcantareas* with seed and pups from his collection and seed from New Zealand.

Of the 35 or so seedlings to germinate for me there was one striped seedling. It wasn't until it was 40 mm tall and in its own tube did we notice its stripes. Needless to say this seedling was kept and potted on and grown as fast as we could get it to grow.

It flowered in early 2007 and was self pollinated which produced copious amounts of seed which were all diligently collected, sown and grown on to produce absolutely no variegated seedlings - all green or grey as the case was. So there is no way to rapidly multiply the variegated plants by seed.

The best collection of variegated *Alcantareas* I have seen was in Brazil at the farm of Oscar and Helenice Robeiro. I was lucky to travel to Brazil in 2006 with five plant buddies and stay with Bruno Rezende Silva. Bruno took us to Oscar and Helenice's farm up in the Organ Mountains and as we drove up we were able to see wild populations of *Alcantarea imperialis* and *geniculata*. Oscar has grown many thousands of *Alcantarea imperialis* seedlings from a wild collected seed batch and the variation within this seedling progeny is impressive.



Alcantarea geniculata
– photo by Vic
Przetocki care of
FCBS

Colours range from grey greens right through

to dark reds or purples. There are also variations in the amount of waxy coating the top surfaces of the leaves also have. We were there during winter and this is when you see this characteristic and the plants colours displayed best.

Oscar had more than 20 variegated *Alcantarea imperialis* plants that we saw on that day. There were green plants with white stripes, red plants with golden bands, albo marginates, and true variegates. I was blown away by them, having never seen anything like it before, plus I'm quite partial to variegated plants.

One of my travel companions, Mark Paul is not quite as enamoured by variegated plants calling them 'diseased', but over time he is slowly changing his opinion and even has one of my variegates in his garden, though over the years he has given me lots of 'diseased' individuals to put in my 'shrine to variegates' AKA my tunnel for special babies, at work.

On the same trip we also saw collections of variegated *Alcantareas* at Tropiflora in Sarasota, at Morriera's collection at Isla Grande south of



Alcantarea glaziouana – photo by Dorothy Berg care of FCBS

foliage.

As I have begun to produce more of these plants we have found better ways to produce and indeed multiply their numbers. Most *Alcantareas* can be encouraged to produce adventitious pups when they are young. Planting them very high to expose the plants bases where the pups can emerge, along with high fertiliser rates are the best ways to start, as well as with removing lower leaves to expose the dormant buds or developing pups.

The variegated plants tend to produce three types of pups, green white or yellow solidly variegated or plants with no chlorophyll and if you are lucky variegated little replicas of the parent plant.

These are treated in the same way as other adventitious offsets and removed and potted on. I take the view it's better to remove them as soon as you can in the hope that the next leaf axil will produce another.

As some of my seedlings grew they began to lose their stripes and became fully green again. These unstable plants obviously needed some work to maintain a good variegated leaf pattern. These were treated with a screwdriver in the growing point to encourage the lateral buds to initiate. This propagation method has been very successful, as most pups that emerge from leaves with a stripe tend to produce a more regularly variegated plant, either Albo marginated or Variegated.

You will also tend to end up with plenty of green pups as well. It requires a strong constitution and fortitude to attack your valuable plants with a screwdriver but attempts on green individuals can provide good practice. I also know of some people who just couldn't bring themselves to mutilating a healthy plant just for financial gain.

My excuse is I am a horticulturist and it's my job to produce what people crave in plants. This method of propagation also shows me just how tough and resilient Bromeliads are with some plants producing more than 50 pups.

Once we have a stable plant we are trying to get them to a flowering size as quickly as possible. This is best achieved by regular watering to both the top of the plant as well as the potting mix the plant is growing in. *Alcantaraeas* in containers can tend to shed water with the leaves directing water away from the media below them. I tend to water my bigger specimens once a week in and around the root zone.

Regular applications of slow release fertiliser are also applied to ensure rapid growth. Come spring and once the emerging flower spike is up above the foliage it is then removed, as any future development is wasted reproduction potential.

Pups appear as both adventitious and larger pups inside the mature plants rosette of leaves. It can take more than 12 months to

successfully remove all of these pups without damaging them in the process.

Patience is a virtue but it's something I have little of and many a time I have destroyed pups by not waiting. Taking them early can result in them not producing roots from their basal tissue and just sitting in pots and slowly declining until death. It's best to wait and ensure you give them every chance of success.

LETTER RE: CULTIVAR REGISTRY

To Derek Butcher and Michael Andreas:

As Corresponding Secretary of the BSI, I've been instructed by the President of the BSI to forward to you the results of a special electronic meeting held by the Board of Directors which addressed the following:

Motion: that the BSI Board of Directors requests Michael Andreas and Derek Butcher to restore the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry on fcbs.org to full operational functionality. Through this motion the BSI recognizes the work of Michael Andreas and Derek Butcher for the past 10 years in creating and maintaining the Bromeliad Cultivar Registry, which is universally acknowledged by the bromeliad world as a highly valued facility. It expresses the desire of the BSI Board to further cement collegial relations with the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies.

As the motion was passed overwhelmingly, the Board hopes you will carefully consider a favorable response to this request.

Carole Richtmyer
BSI Corresponding Secretary

Get involved in your society by Alan Herndon

The BSSF, like other volunteer-driven organizations, is always looking for new blood to relieve the burden on old timers. We have several permanent committees (listed in the roster) that carry out the work necessary to keep the society functioning smoothly and ensure the comfort and entertainment of members during our monthly meetings. For the most part, these committees consist of one or two people. We would like newer members who are looking for ways to be more active in the society to volunteer for service on some of these committees.

It is not necessary to be an experienced bromeliad grower, or have any special knowledge of bromeliads, in order to participate in the workings of the society through some of these committees. If you expect to be at the meetings anyway, running the Door Prize or the Raffle Table requires no knowledge of bromeliads whatsoever, and gives you a prime opportunity to interact with other members of the society.

Running the Membership committee also requires no knowledge of bromeliads, although you need some computer skills to maintain an up-to-date membership and mailing list, as well as the annual Roster. Interaction with all current and new members is a necessary part of the job.

Someone is also needed to mail the monthly copies of our newsletter (BromeliAdvisory) to members who still require a hard copy. Duties include printing out a master copy of the email Advisory, taking the master copy to a commercial establishment for duplication, checking the quality of the duplicated copies, affixing the mailing labels and mailing the finished product.

The board has been edging towards creating a new committee to handle sales of growing supplies (gloves, plant tags, fertilizer, etc.). Since this is a new committee, the scope of duties will be largely defined by the interests of the person in charge. All we can say for certain is that a volunteer is needed to make sure the supplies get to the meetings, and to handle the sales. You would also be expected to bring to the board's attention new items that might be appropriate for sale or that members express an interest in having available.

Descriptions of duties associated with most of the positions (and estimates of the time required to carry out the duties) will be available at the BSSF meeting on Jan 5, 2010. Please ask for this information if you are interested in participating.

What's in Bloom - December 2009 by Alan Herndon

Blooming activity picked up noticeably during the past month. At least part of the increased activity must be due to the unseasonably warm

weather we have been experiencing. I am sure some of the plants are blooming because they have been tricked into thinking spring has arrived early. It will be interesting to see how cold weather (when it finally arrives) will affect blooming activity.

One further manifestation of the extraordinary blooming season this year has shown up at this late date. *Neoregelia* Fireball has been in bloom for the past month by the dozens. Normally, I only see a plant here or there in bloom, and then it is during the summer.

Aechmea (*angustifolia*, ***araneosa***, *blanchetiana*, ***bromeliifolia***, *chantinii*, ***contracta***, ***dealbata*** Coral Bracts, ***curranii***, ***fendleri***, *fulgens discolor*, ***gamosepala***, *gracilis*, ***gurkeniana***, ***kerteziae***, *kuntzeana*, Little Harv, ***pimenti-velosi*** var. ***glabra***, ***racinae***, Victoria, ***weilbachii leodeniensis***, ***weilbachii penduliflora***, *weilbachii viridisepala*, ***weilbachii weilbachii***)

Billbergia (***amoena***, ***reichardtii***, ***saundersii***)

Canistrum lanigerum

Cryptanthus (***bahianus***, *warren-loosei*)

Guzmania (*fusispica*, ***lingulata*** Flammea, ***minor*** Orange Crush, ***sanguinea*** Tricolor)

Hohenbergia (*distans*)

Neoregelia (*compacta*, ***dungsiana***, Fireball, *myrmecophila*, Sheba, Ultima)

Nidularium (*angustifolium*, *krisgreenii*, *procerum*)

Orthophytum (*disjuncta*, *duartei*, *grossiorum*, *harleyi*, *hatschbachii*, ***ophiuroides***, ***saxicola***, *vagans*)

Pitcairnia (*echinata vallensis*, *flammea*)

Portea *alatisepala*, ***nana***, ***petropolitana*** var. ***petropolitana***

Quesnelia strobilospica

Tillandsia (*chiapensis*, *ionantha*, ***ionantha vanhyningi***, *fasciculata*, *fasciculata clavispica*, ***festucoides***, *lindenii*, *tricolor melanocrater*, *vernicaosa*)

Vriesea (*bleheri*, *carinata*, ***colnagoi***, ***eltoniana***, *ensiformis*, *fluminensis*, *Mariae*, ***sucrei***)

Time to organize for the 2010 BSSF Show

by Alan Herndon

Only a few short months remain before the 2010 edition of our annual show, so we need to begin organizing. First order of business is to find

committee chairs. As a reminder, the committees are:

General Chair, Advertising, Art, Auction, Award Sponsors, Awards, Catering, Classification, Clerks, Commercial Sales, Entries, Hospitality/Security, Information Table, Judges, Member Sales, Photography, Placement, Plant Holding, Publicity, Schedule, Show Booklet, and Staging.

The show runs for four days (Thursday through Sunday). Some committees finish before the show starts, including Award Sponsors, Publicity, Schedule and Show Booklet. Several of the committees (Classification, Placement and Staging) are active only on Thursday. An Entries volunteer is needed both Thursday and Friday. Awards and Clerks complete their work on Friday. Committees active on Saturday and Sunday are Hospitality/Security, Information Table, Member Sales and Plant Holding.

If you are willing to take on the duties and responsibilities of chairing a committee, please let me know. If you think you might like to take over a committee sometime, but need to know more about what the job entails, consider volunteering to be a co-chair. There is no better way to gain first-hand experience.

We are encouraging all possible committees to have co-chairs to ensure a wider array of membership participation.

A brief description of chair duties has been prepared for many of the committees, and will be available at the January meeting.

Even if you aren't able to consider taking over committee leadership this year, it is not too early to decide what committee(s) you might be able to help. Volunteers are needed throughout the four days of the show (somewhat larger numbers are needed for Saturday and Sunday). Look at your own schedule and see where you can devote a few hours. Be ready to volunteer as soon as the committees are in operation.

<p>DATES: April 16, 2010 – Enter Plants April 17, 2010 – Plants Judged April 18-19, 2010 – Show</p>
--

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SOUTH FLORIDA 2010 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME(S) _____
(Couples - please include BOTH names)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TEL _____ ADD'L. TEL. _____

EMAIL _____

Include email address in the roster? Yes No

Email *BromeliAdvisory*? Yes No (If yes, you will not receive a hard copy)

IF ANY OF THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS DIFFERENT FROM LAST YEAR, PLEASE **HIGHLIGHT** OR UNDERLINE

Please renew my(our) membership in the *BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SOUTH FLORIDA* for the period of March 1, 2010 to February 28, 2011.

Check the category:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | SINGLE MEMBERSHIP | \$20.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | DUAL MEMBERSHIP | \$30.00 |

Dual members enjoy all the privileges of active membership, but receive only one copy of the Advisory.

Do you want to join the Bromeliad Society International? If so, add \$30/single, \$35/dual, to your BSSF dues and we will do the rest for you. Membership includes the **BSI Journal**, issued bimonthly. Check Yes _____ if you do. (NOTE: New memberships only)

Make check payable to BSSF

IN ORDER FOR YOU TO BE INCLUDED IN THE 2009 ROSTER, DUES MUST BE RECEIVED BY MARCH 1, 2010

Please mail completed form and check to:

Alan Herndon
Treasurer
19361 SW 128 Ave.
Miami, Fla. 33177-4216