



East London Bromeliad Society

South Africa

NEWS LETTER
July
2018

Established: 25 July 2009

Our aim is to promote and encourage awareness and interest in Bromeliads in East London and all of South Africa!

ELBS SA is an Affiliated Society  of Bromeliad Society International

The June Meeting

We welcomed 23 folks to the June meeting held at the home of Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead. It was one of those lovely calm, warm winter afternoons, perfect for an expedition to explore Pete's gardens, 'squatter camp' and shadehouses all jam packed with loads of bromeliads and more. This is what happens when you have been collecting for over 20 years! Be warned! Lol! There was lots to see and discuss and drool over, especially some of the stunning neos I saw in one of the shadehouses. Pete also has orchids and clivia and a few bonsai, which were Heather's pride and joy. I love the really nice feature of mounted *Neoregelia* on horizontal branches in the front garden. I have watched them develop over the last few years, they are really looking stunning right now, getting just the right amount of light and development of pups to make a pleasing display. Pete's 'squatter camp', which started out as overflow from the garden, is now a fully fledged collection of broms on its own! Thanks Pete and Marianne for your warm hospitality and



Horizontal branches, laden with clumps of mounted *Neoregelia* varieties.



Pete and Marianne with the host plant that Pete chose.



Above, a lovely *Vriesea philippocoburgii* in bloom.

Far left, Pete in search of a particular brom for Tracy and middle, one of the shadehouses.

Next Meeting: Sunday 29th July at 2 for 2.30pm. Hosted by Lyn and Trevor Wegner at 18 Wentworth Road, Sunnyside. Don't forget to bring your chair, mug and marker!

hosting us in your home and garden for a really super meeting.

After Chairman Dudley Reynolds had gone through all the formalities of the meeting and raffle draws, Lyn gave us an animated talk about her journey to WBC in San Diego, plus she got to christen the new projector which was used for the first time to show us photos from her trip. Enjoy a condensed version about her experiences below.

Lyn Wegner's San Diego Memories

I arrived at Paradise Point, in San Diego, California, the venue for the 23rd World Bromeliad Conference, 45 hours after leaving East London on Sunday morning, 27th May. The gardens just outside the airport impressed me, groupings of palms, skyrocket conifers, dietes with a pebble groundcover. Striking! Next came all the moored yachts. It took about 10 minutes (I think!), to reach Paradise Point which is surrounded by beautiful gardens featuring many plants we are familiar with. Daylilies, begonia, delicious monster, raphiolepis (Indian Hawthorn), plumbago, strelitzia, statice, agapanthus and more.

San Diego only receives 12 inches of rain a year. I noticed many water-wise plants, succulents etc but there are also tropical plants. I even saw flowering jacarandas! It was rather chilly and I would have liked some warmer clothes! It was overcast most of the time, but sunny on the last 2 days.

The conference, for Board Members, began with the all day Board Meeting on Tuesday. There is always much to discuss and the day goes by almost too quickly. There were 7 seminars, each an hour long. I enjoyed Peter Waters talk about New Zealand, which included info about their climate, hybridisers, importation and quarantining and even some garden visits. He also mentioned their Kiwi Broms Conference in 2021.

Paul Isley spoke about the devastating fires at Rainforest Flora last December. Some of the *Tillandsia* were determined to survive and bloomed even though severely burnt. Major rebuilding is in process. Paul also showed us some photos of some of his spectacular *Tillandsia* hybrids.

Jose Manzanares is a happy jovial Spaniard who became interested in bromeliads when he was 10 years old! He has been working on the bromeliads of Ecuador for 32 years. He has degrees in Agronomy and Environmental Sciences, Soil Sciences and Nutrition and Plant Physiology and he spoke about understanding the new taxonomic classification. In simple language he spoke about all the name changes that are happening in the bromeliad world.

Ivon Ramirez discussed her work with *Hechtia*, a story of love and hate! Ivon was interesting to listen to, a passionate lady!

Pamela Koide Hyatt spoke about hybridising *Tillandsia*. She started Bird Rock Tropicals

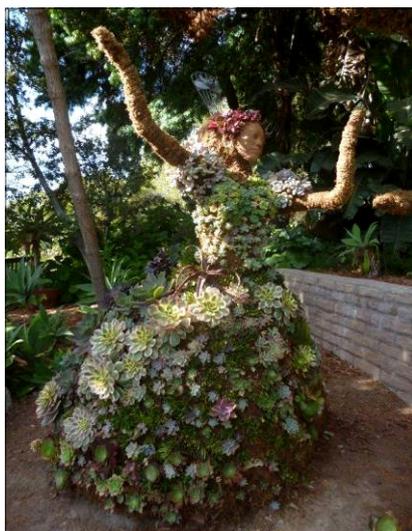
in 1981 and has spent more than half her life on these plants and bromeliads too. She mentioned how she is



Lyn Wegner, far right with Karl and Janet Schaeffer and Pat Mitchell, two of our ELBS international members. Janet is from Colorado and Pat from Houston in Texas



New Zealanders Peter Waters, one of the Speakers and Graeme Barclay, who succeeded Peter as a BSI International Director. Graeme is also the BSI Assistant Journal Editor of non-scientific Journal articles.



A figure of a lady made out of succulents.



Deuterocohnia brevifolia - Best of Show - Horticulture.

often asked why *Tillandsia x nidus* are so variable. The answer is simple, it is a natural hybrid of *T. fasciculata* and *T. ionantha* and both of these *Tillandsia* have many forms. Another amazing plant lady!

Li Ping spoke about her 20 years working at the Shanghai Botanic Garden. She is the Chief Horticulturist and she told of the important role of botanical gardens in educating the people of China. She is young and lovely and I thought very brave as she struggled a little with her English.

There were heaps of plants for sale, including a few succulents and orchids. There were 34 vendors and a buying frenzy meant buyers and sellers were happy! I brought back *Billbergia 'The Artist'*, *Tillandsia straminea* Red Flower! and a succulent, *Kleinia stapeliiformis*! I felt like a traitor holding a succulent at a Bromeliad World Conference but I couldn't resist it!

The Show had a variety of entries. It was nice to see some of the plants that I have in my garden! The Best of Show winner was *Deuterocohnia brevifolia*, a beauty! The Sales and Show were held in an enormous tent with tables edged with pineapples and other fruit forming a room divider.

The Rare Plant Auction had 139 items of which 47 were on the Silent Auction. We started the evening with delicious hors d'oeuvres. Our society donated Dudley Reynold's book, 'Dramatic Leaves of *Aechmea orlandiana*'. Dudley donated a second book too. Trevor and I donated 3 sets of the wire baskets that he makes. The baskets brought in an amazing \$94 and the two books \$51. A set of three rare books brought in \$1500! A David Fell *Vriesea* went for \$410. I got carried away and bid on *xSincoregelia 'Burgundy Thrill'* which I am thrilled to now have at home @ \$105! A lot of money was raised for such a worthy cause. All the proceeds from the Auction are for the benefit of scientific research, education and conservation endeavours.

We visited Balboa Park, a cultural park on 1200 acres with beautiful Spanish style buildings. We didn't have too much time there but managed to see the wooden structure tropical house which included orchids and bromeliads of course! We also visited the botanical gardens. I saw a magnificent orange leonotis (wild dagga) in the South African section. There was a tropical area too, with a waterfall and some *Guzmania*.



Pam Koide Hyatt, *Tillandsia* world expert, one of the Speakers.



Pineapples galore used as a room divider.



Tillandsia capitata variegata
- Award of Merit



Balboa Park tropical house.



My purchases from the sales tent and auction.



Bottles used to hold back a bank in the canyon garden.

There are many succulents and cactus and I was fascinated by the many figurines which consisted solely of succulents. We had supper at this venue.

We visited a few gardens, urban and rural. Those out in the country have problems with eg. rabbits, squirrels and snakes, rattle snakes! and the danger of fires. We visited the garden of Dan Kinnard and Eloise Lau whose 300sq m shadehouse is about twice the size of their house. As Dan says, you can tell what is important! I have a very nice email from Dan with more info on their garden which I will circulate to you all separately.

Robert Kopfstein's garden was adjacent to this garden. Both had many succulents, cactus and other waterwise plants. It is very dry. The shadehouse was jampacked with beautiful broms and tillandsias and immaculate!

We visited Scott Sandel's garden in town. I loved the narrow tropical walk down the side of the house which led to the back garden, fish pond and bromeliad jampacked shadehouse. Beautiful!

Another garden was on the side of a canyon, very steep, 300 steps to the bottom, beautiful, waterwise plants, places to rest, interesting features including beds built up with glass bottles. This garden was not for the elderly. I struggled to get back up all those steps! The conference ended on the Saturday with the traditional Banquet.

It was good to see 2 of our International members, Janet Schaeffer and her husband Karl from Colorado, and Pat Mitchell from Houston. I managed to spend some time with these special friends and members of our society!

Narelle and Greg Aizlewood from Australia and I were collected by Andrew Wilson from Paradise Point on Sunday morning, as he had invited us to spend the day with him and Beatrice and B's precious Curly, a beautiful very happy and very spoilt rescue dog! It was so nice to see Andrew's garden too. Many succulents, aloes, bottle brush varieties, heaps of spekboom (elephant food) and I was surprised to see huge pots of *Dendrobium* in the garden. Of course there were bromeliads, I loved the *Deuterocohnia*, and there were heaps of beautiful *Tillandsia*. **Some colourful, striking *Aechmea blanchetiana* varieties.** I'm surprised to see how well the tillandsias and broms do considering the dry climate. It was an enjoyable day and I left San Diego that evening to repeat the long trip home.

The San Diego corner in my garden will feature my conference mug, *Deuterocohnia lorentziana*, some spekboom and *Agave victoriae reginae*, all spotted in the San Diego gardens.

The 2020 WBC venue is still to be announced. Watch this space!

- Upcoming Australasian conferences: **2019 Golden Broms, Gold Coast Australia**, 17 to 20 October 2019
- 2021 **Kiwi Broms, Auckland, New Zealand** 8 to 11 April 2021

Why not plan a visit now. You may even have friends and/or family in Australia and/or New Zealand so you could plan a visit to co-incide with these dates! I dare you! I will keep you updated as I receive more information. These conferences are really well worth attending! I must just warn you that attending conferences is just as addictive as collecting broms and tillandsias! I am counting the days to my next conference!

Show and Tell

Dudley Reynolds showed two species plants and an interesting development in one of his orchids.

Neoregelia maculata is a medium to small tubular species with nice dark speckling on the top side of the yellowish leaves and light silver banding on the dark bottom base. It forms a nice clump in a few generations



Some broms in Scott Sandel's garden.



Andrew Wilson's garden showing *Aechmea blanchetiana* and the countryside around the garden and an example of his labeling for his plants.



An unbeaten record! Herb Plevier has attended all 23 BSI World Conferences held over 46 years! Herb has been the Editor of the New York newsletter, Bromeliana, for over 50 years!

on short stolons. This species is endemic to Brazil. It made its way to the show tables of the 17th World Bromeliad Conference in San Diego in 2006.



Tillandsia crocata

Tillandsia crocata is quite widely distributed and is native to Brazil, Bolivia, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.

T. crocata grows in arid conditions, epiphytically and is also found growing over rocks. It has silver grey leaves, drought tolerant and easy to grow in a well ventilated position. The highly fragrant flowers are normally yellow, but there are clones which are orange in colour as well.

While browsing through my garden I noticed something which I thought was quite interesting and decided to share it with the members at the meeting. I have an indigenous orchid *Diaphananthe xanthopollinia* growing close to a *Eugenia uniflora* tree. One of the berries from the tree had lodged itself on the epiphytic roots of the orchid and must have been there for a period of time. Some of the colour leached out of the berry and stained the orchid root a purple colour, showing just how effective the orchid roots have adapted to absorbing nutrients and moisture in its epiphytic way of living. Nature is wonderful.



Neoregelia maculata



Diaphananthe xanthopollinia

Member News

- Welcome to our new local member Mark Bradfield, who you will all know from the Gift Garden and new country members, Tania Muhlenbeck from Queensburgh and Peter Mouleng from Port Elizabeth. We hope you all enjoy a long and rewarding association with the society.
- We were very sad to learn that Miriam Kennard lost her husband last month after a long illness. You have been very much in our thoughts at this sad and difficult time Miriam.

Thanks

- Dr Pete Pfister and Marianne Hillstead for hosting the June meeting.
- Dr Pete Pfister and Lyn Wegner for Lucky Draw plants.
- Dr Pete Pfister and Brenda Wegner for loads of give-away plants.
- Lorraine for organising the eats for tea for the first half of this year.
- Marianne Hillstead for volunteering to take over the Catering Portfolio.
- Miriam Kennard would like to thank everyone for the love, caring, beautiful card and sympathy messages received on the recent loss of her husband John.



Lyn, giving her talk with the aid of the new projector operated by Pete. So, anyone with a photo story to share, let the committee know and bring it along to share at a meeting.

Congratulations to the June Raffle Winners !!

- Bev Reynolds chose *Neoregelia* 'Shockwave'.
- Mavis Downey chose *Neoregelia (carolinae x concentrica) x concentrica* Broadest Leaves.
- Robert Moss chose *Neoregelia* 'Phyllis'.
- Cynthia Nel chose *Witrockia gigantea*.
- Christo van Wijk from Pretoria won two raffles and chose, *Neoregelia* 'With Love' and *N.* 'Bar-B-Q'
- Danie Taljaard from Cape Town chose *Neoregelia* 'Jalepeno'.



Raffle winners for June, Mavis Downey, Bev Reynolds, Tracy Moss and Cynthia Nel.

- Graham Watts from Umzumbe chose *Neoregelia* 'Tunisia x Blushing Tiger'

Lucky draw winners:

Loads of lucky draw Winners!

From the Chairman - Dudley Reynolds



Our 9th Birthday is on our doorstep, my, how time has flown by! Although still in our infancy stages, we have seen many changes in our society and I am sure you will all agree, we have learnt so much more about bromeliads. It has been a wonderful roller coaster ride and I look forward to an exciting future.

We are pleased to have acquired a projector recently which will assist tremendously in the quality and diversity of our meetings.

The recent strong winds have caused havoc in my garden and a major clean up is in progress. It just reminds me of our bromeliad friends from overseas who have suffered so much worse than we could imagine and just keep bouncing back. We have a lot to be thankful for. Until next time, happy bromming!

From the Committee

Our 9th AGM and Birthday Bash is coming up at the next meeting to be held at 'Bromeliads for Africa'. We always have our birthday right back where we started 9 years ago! Plus we will be playing Bingo instead of the usual Quiz. So, bring along your pen to cross off the numbers. You might win a bromeliad! It is sure to be loads of fun, especially after a glass or two of Fizz Ananas! There will also be extra raffle draws and brom prizes for the Bingo. Hope to see you all there!!

Upcoming Society Events

29th July: ELBS SA AGM and 9th Birthday Bash Plus Bromeliad BINGO hosted by Lyn and Trevor Wegner at 18 Wentworth Road, Sunnyridge. 2.00 for 2.30pm. Guaranteed to be lots of fun, with extra raffle draws too! Please bring your own chair if you want a seat and a mug and spoon if you don't want to use our styrofoam variety. Bring a pen to mark your Bingo ticket. We will be meeting outdoors as usual, so please wrap up warmly as it can get cold over the river with the wind coming off the sea.

NB: ONLY if it is raining on the day of the meeting, will you be notified via e-mail that there is a change of venue. In that case, the alternative meeting venue will be Little Beacons Pre-school in Avalon Road, Beacon Bay. Please check with Lyn if you are unsure, or do not have access to e-mail.

26th August: Mike and Mandy Godfrey in Beacon Bay.

30th September: Travelling meeting, David Gower and Paul Webb, both in Beacon Bay.

28th October: Michael and Zena McClaren in Vincent.

25 November: End of year Christmas Auction, BBB Surprise and Bring and Braai.

We are looking for hosts for this event. Please give it a thought?

Upcoming International Conferences (start saving now!)

2019: 'Golden Broms' 17 - 20 October 2019 Hosted by the Gold Coast Succulent and Bromeliad Society Inc. at the Sea World Resort on the Gold Coast. This will be the 20th Australasian Bromeliad Conference. For contact information go to the conference website at www.goldenbroms.com

2021: : 'Kiwi Broms' 8 - 11 April 2021, which will be held at the Waipuna Hotel in Auckland, New Zealand.. This will be the 21st Australasian Conference.

From the Members

Miriam Kennard 'Whatsapped' me these delightful photos of her very friendly rescue cat, Mishka, right, who loves drinking water from the cups of the *Neoregelia* in the garden. Classy cat!



Share your bromeliad news or journey with us, e-mail or Whatsapp me with pictures and words at blacket@telkomsa.net or 072 1787 421. We would love to hear from you!

From the Editor



Leaves, leaves everywhere! Anything that was loose was certainly blown to the ground and elsewhere last Monday in the hectic gales that hit East London. I think we all thought we were going to get some rain after all that, but nothing. So continue to water, early in the day as possible to allow plants to dry off before the night time temps bring the big chill.

The ELBS 9th Birthday is coming up at the next meeting, can you believe it? I find a birthday is always a time to reflect on how far we have come over the preceding years and in the case of the society, it is 9 years!!! It is also a time to plan the road ahead, where are we going as a society? Any ideas you might have or think of to enhance our meetings/activities, do come forward and tell someone on the committee.

We started out with a small founder group of 13 local members in 2009, now there are 71 local members, 72 country members and 3 international members! WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Life is busy for all of us, but we all share a combined love of growing bromeliads and a curiosity and desire to learn, share and grow in our understanding and care of these amazing plants. I have found out the hard way that experience is definitely one of the best teachers of all, you will never make the same mistake twice with your precious broms! So continue to 'Spread the love!' and enjoy growing bromeliads!

I love watching the development of flower spikes in our garden, in this case a few *Aechmea araneosa* are currently in bloom. I saw Lynn Friend also has one blooming in her garden. I think this was one of the early bromeliads Eddie had to have! He was really into *Aechmea* to start with.



It is from the *Bromeliad* sub family *Bromelioideae*, Genus - *Aechmea* and species - *araneosa*. This species is endemic to the State of Espírito Santo in Brazil. The plant ranges from 65cm tall and 60cm wide.

Mine are all planted in the ground, some in sun and some in what has now become shady spots on the back bank, they need to be moved to sunnier areas to grow to their best potential. They develop about two pups and can be relied upon to bloom when mature, which takes about 3 years. It has stiff, very spiky and hardy leaves. The striking inflorescence is made up of lots of furry white flower bracts from which lots of little yellow flowers emerge, which are attached to the pink central stem/scape and pretty scape bracts that look like flags. It lasts for a long time in our winter garden. The last photo was taken from the top, it looks like a snowflake pattern to me, quite appropriate for this time of the year! Brrrrrrr.....



I stumbled across an interesting Facebook page recently that tilly lovers might enjoy: Open Facebook and type 'The Tilly Tribe' into the fb search bar and hit enter. Like and Follow, I did! Quote: 'The Tilly Tribe was created in mind to foster a community-based approach to growing our tillies well - with the aim of sharing observations and studies on different growing conditions and methods alike! Everyone can share their tips and tricks!'

See you all soon at the Birthday Bash. Just a thought, nothing is stopping country members from joining us. It is always great to meet you!! Happy bromming wherever you are in wintery South Africa!

Barbs.

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Any opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Society.

When submitting items for inclusion in this newsletter, please ensure that all information, including spelling is checked and accurate.

ELBS SA is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

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We meet on the last Sunday of every month at 2.00 for 2.30pm, January to November, at various venues around East London. We have a topic for each meeting and Show and Tell where members are encouraged to bring along their brag or problem plants. There are member raffles, lucky draws for those present, tea time, library and member plant sales, plus a monthly newsletter sent out via e-mail only. Visitors are always welcome and can attend three meetings before they will need to join the society in order to continue attending. Annual subs are R120.00 for individuals/families and R60 for students.

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Peter Cook from Sunnybroms (Australia) has very kindly created a link to ELBS SA newsletters on their web page: <https://bromeliadnewsletters.wordpress.com/east-london-south-africa/>

- You can access all the back copies from 2016 of the ELBS SA Newsletters
- The first of the BSI BCR genus changes and cultivar changes generated via DNA studies compiled by Derek Butcher the BSI Cultivar Registrar.

 You will find ELBS on Facebook: [eastlondonbssa@groups.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/eastlondonbssa/) or type 'East London Bromeliad Society' into the fb search bar. You can request to join the group and will then be able to upload your photos and comments on the wall. The ELBS SA page and other bromeliad related sites are a useful and informative forum to share and 'meet up' with other like-minded bromeliad folks. There are also many other bromeliad related sites that you can join and become part of a world wide online sharing environment.

You can view most of all the bromeliads mentioned in meetings or in the newsletter at the following websites:

The BSI's official Bromeliad Cultivar Registry www.registry.bsi.org which is maintained by Geoff Lawn, the BSI Cultivar Registrar. Plus other information regarding the Bromeliad Society International is found at bsi.org

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: fcbs.org This is a very useful site to reference many bromeliads where you can clarify identification or just trawl through the site and add to your wish list!

Encyclopedia of Bromeliads - <http://bromelia.club> (Bromeliad Taxonomists and Growers Society) has photographs. It also now has keys for the genera and sub-genera. If you like to be informed what is happening, just follow on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/bromeliadsencyclopedia> Just type in 'Encyclopediad of Bromeliads' into the Facebook search bar.

For internet resources you can also go to TAXON (The New Bromeliad List) for the most authoritative and right up to date list of genera and species, accepted and new names and taxonomic keys - <http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php> or just type in 'New Bromeliad Taxon List', it's much easier!