

orlandiana

**Newsletter of the
Bromeliad Society of Central Florida**

Volume no. 50, Issue no. 7

Next meeting: July 19, 2023

Where: Leu Gardens, 1920 N. Forest Avenue, Orlando, FL 32803

6:30 –7:00 is time for displaying and purchasing plants

Program officially begins at 7:00 pm

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Visit the Bromeliad Society of Central Florida Website at:
www.bromeliadorslando.com

You will find an activities page that lists our speakers for upcoming meetings, downloadable copies of newsletters, plant photos, a map to Leu Gardens, and more! This is a great place for the public to find out about our Society or send us a message. Check it out!

President's Message

First there were weeks with no rain at all. Then there were 10 days in a row with heavy rain every day. Then came the heat ... over 100F on the heat index. Isn't it fun to raise broms in the Florida summer?

I need to re-build a bench in my shadehouse. I'm putting it off until Fall. I don't think the existing one will collapse before then.

I got some *Neoregelia* Yang to replace a bed of Neos that have been getting too much sun. Bad timing. The Yangs will have to go in a temporary spot until I can work in long sleeves to remove the sun-faded Neos.

I was going to do the monthly fertilizing of Tillandsias starting at 7 AM, but when I opened the door the humid hot air hit me in the face. I think the fertilizing can wait.

The only good reason to have the Extravaganza in West Palm Beach in late July is that the hotel is air conditioned. I can get immersed in broms without breaking into a sweat. I've registered because I am interested in listening to the talks being given, and the rare plant auction is fun, even if I always end up spending more than I intend. Plus, as a registrant I get into the plant sale on Friday evening. It opens to the public on Saturday morning. There will be more than enough broms on Saturday to overload everyone's car and break all budgets. There will be over a dozen different nurseries and a bunch of hobbyists selling. Still, I like getting in early. There just might be some brom I've always wanted, or some oddball I've never seen. So, I'll be there the moment the doors open Friday night... me and a hundred other brom-crazies. The first few minutes will be a stampede of zombies as folks rush to their favorite seller's spot. The frenzy lasts about an hour. Then it is a mob scene for another hour. People who are not into plants get bug-eyed and mumble... 'Those people are crazy'. Right. We are.

Despite checking out everything on Friday night, I'll be back on Saturday morning. You never know what arrived when they re-stocked overnight. I lost out at the Sarasota World Conference last year by not going first thing on Saturday. Besides, what better way to spend the time waiting for the speakers to start in the afternoon? Looking over all the broms and chatting with fellow crazies, the morning goes quickly. I do not expect brilliant lectures from the speakers, but they all know a lot more than I do. I'll be eager for every little pearl of wisdom.

The rare plant auction on Saturday night is the main fundraiser for the Florida Council. The vendors in the plant sale donate plants and each society from around the state donates 5 plants. There are a lot of broms auctioned, and there are always some I've never seen before. Some will go by live auction; some by silent auction. I enjoy just seeing them all. Some of the broms really are rare and draw big dollar bids. Many are just seldom seen broms. They can draw big bids, too. Give brom-crazies a few drinks and the live auction can be very entertaining.

Then on Sunday, it is an early drive back home so I can unload all the plants acquired. The big job is figuring out where each will go. I try not to acquire a brom without knowing I have a spot that fits its needs. But, I know at the Extravaganza I'll break that rule. So, after an air conditioned weekend immersed in broms, know where I'll be?

That's right. I'll be out in the 98 degree heat moving plants, switching things around to make room, wishing I had re-built the bench that probably collapsed while I was gone, and chances are pretty good that some new brom needs to go where those Yangs were stuck awaiting their new bed to be prepared. So, it will be time to don the long sleeves, etc., etc.

It must be a lot of fun to raise broms in the Florida summer. I keep doing it.

See you in West Palm.

Mike McMahon

June Minutes

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, INC.

Meeting Minutes

June 21, 2023

Program: Vice President Tim Dreggors introduced speaker Dr. Terrie Bert of Bradenton to speak about other genera in the *Tillandsioidae* subfamily that have been separated from the *Tillandsia* family. Rather than bore us with the scientific DNA work done to identify them, she brought physical examples of the ones that we can easily cultivate in Florida. Dr. Bert also showed and described a wide selection of enticing varieties that were for sale after the talk – and was swamped by members who happily took them home.

The Business Meeting was called to order by President Mike McMahon at 8:00 pm.

New Members and Guests: Recording Secretary Katherine Vaccaro invited us to welcome guests Rayot and Susan diFate and new members Iris Barclay and Dan & Holly Lott.

Minutes: The minutes of the May, 2023 meeting were published in the Newsletter. A motion was made by Pam Flescher Marion and seconded by Teresa Eddy that they be approved. The motion passed.

Treasurer's report: Joyce Gibault gave a full report that included outstanding sales at the Mother's Day Show and Sale. After our many expenses connected with the event, she was happy to report a nice increase to our financial status.

President's Report: The call for "Big Boy & Girl" species *Neos* proved a winner, with many gorgeous plants shown. The Silent Auction also offered some lovely tempters.

Mike McMahon reported that the yearly statewide membership rosters produced by the Florida Council are not being mailed this year. Instead, they will be available monthly at meetings until they run out. This is a valuable resource for contacting bromeliad lovers around Florida, so be sure to get one.

He was pleased to report that we now have the most members in the state – with Seminole nipping at our heels.

Our large space at Mead Gardens for the November GROWvember sale has been successfully negotiated.

A substantive bylaw change has been proposed and will be voted on at the July meeting.

We will host the Florida Council's board meeting in October.

We will have a Holiday Party for our November 15th meeting! Teresa Eddy and Joyce Gibault will co-chair and are counting on us all to help make it special.

There was no **Old Business**.

There was no **New Business**.

Show & Tell continued to draw beautiful specimens, including a few big *Neos* that weren't species.

Door Prize/Raffle giveaways rounded out the evening.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine Vaccaro, Recording Secretary

Guest Speaker - Jason Mellica

Our July speaker is Jason Mellica. Jason received his Bachelor of Science in Botany from the University of Florida. Following graduation, he interned at Selby Gardens where he developed an interest in bromeliads. He then began his own business, growing, hybridizing, and selling bromeliads for over 25 years. Currently there are two greenhouses behind his home with over 10,000 plants. Jason has over 150 of his hybrids registered, and has many more new ones still to register. He is currently president of the Sarasota Bromeliad Society.



Jason's presentation will be a hands-on discussion of the hybrids he has made over the years, mostly Neoregelias, but some bi-generics as well. He will explain the process of hybridizing and the thought that goes into it. He will be bringing plants to sell. **Please note: Jason is not set up to accept credit cards. Sales are cash and checks only.**

Upcoming Events

Save the Date
July 28th & 29th
2023

2023 FCBS Bromeliad Extravaganza
hosted by the
Bromeliad Society of the
Palm Beaches
where Bromeliads meet

Our exciting guest speakers
will include:

Chester Skotak
Eloise Beach
David Shiigi

More details to come

2023 BROMELIAD EXTRAVAGANZA, July 28-29

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, in partnership with the Bromeliad Society of the Palm Beaches, presents its largest event of the year.

Don't delay. Register today. This event sells out!

World Renowned Guest Speakers

Chester Skotak, Costa Rica

David Shiigi, Hawaii

Eloise Beach, Apopka

*Chester's final appearance, don't miss this historical event

Registration

\$150 register by April 30

\$175 register on or after May 1

- Friday Night BBQ
- Early Access to Plant Sale
- Afternoon Lectures
- Saturday Night Banquet
- Rare Plant Auction
- Silent Auction

Optional: \$25 Sunday garden tour and brunch

Saturday Agenda

- Bromeliad sale 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
- Dutch treat boxed lunch available
- Lectures
 - David Shiigi 1:00 to 1:45 pm
 - Eloise Beach 2:00 to 2:45 pm
 - Chester Skotak 3:00 to 3:45 pm
- Reception 6:00 pm cash bar
- Banquet dinner 7:00 pm
- Raffle 50/50
- FCBS Rare Plant and Silent Auction

Schedule at a Glance

Friday

Registration opens at 3:00 pm

Welcome reception and BBQ 6:00 to 7:30 pm

Registrants only plant sale 7:30 to 9:30 pm

Saturday



Aechmea "Don Juan"

Plant sale 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (Open to the public)

Lectures 1:00 pm to 3:45 p.m.

Reception 6:00 pm

Banquet 7:00 pm

*Registrant guest \$75 for banquet dinner

Sunday: Optional Garden Tour

9:00am Garden tour and brunch \$25.00

Hosted by Joe Libertucci

*Travel on your own, about 20-minutes from the hotel

West Palm Beach Marriott

1001 Okeechobee Blvd

West Palm Beach, FL 33401

www.marriott.com

[561-833-1234](tel:561-833-1234)

Rooms are \$139 until June 30th

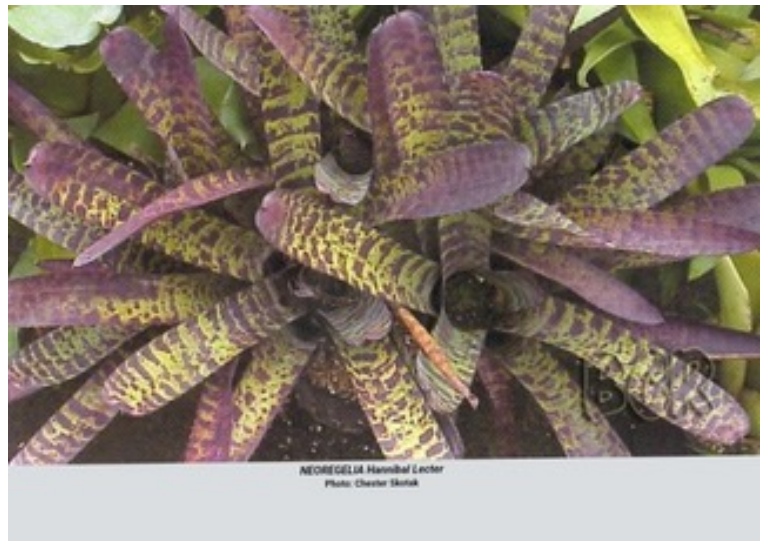
Parking is \$8 per day

Register online or download and print the registration form at:

www.fcbsextravaganza.org

Plant of the Month

Neoregelia 'Hannibal Lecter' has to be one the most game changing hybrids by Chester Skotak . Named after a character from one of Chester's favorite movies "Silence of the Lambs ", 'Hannibal Lecter' comes from good breeding stock, Neoregelia 'Skotak's Tiger' X Neo 'Rafa' . Grex siblings include Neoregelia 'Clarice' and 'The Governors' Plea'. All three of these popular Bromeliads are used by hybridizers to create other banded hybrids. Anyone who has any of the 'Hannibal Lecter' family in your collection please bring to our meeting, any questions you can contact me at jboard55@yahoo.com.



We will get to see if there is a family resemblance. And, yes, once again, those who participate get called first for the door prize table.

Snacks

Thanks to all of you for making the snack table at the June meeting the BEST ever!!!! It was especially fun to have so much food that we could munch and socialize both before the meeting and during the break.

The only problem was that we have so many members now that we ran out of napkins and almost plates. I am sorry that some of you had to run to the bathroom to get a paper towel. Keep bringing the diversely tasty morsels and I shall bring four times the amount of napkins. I goes without saying that Kathy Hancock always brings the correct amount of varied liquid refreshment!

See you in July at the food table!!!!

Variegation In Bromeliads

RAMBLING ABOUT VARIEGATION IN BROMELIADS

Mike McMahon

(Reprinted with edits from the BSCF Facebook Group)

Kwame Daniel asked what causes variegated broms to revert. This post is to answer his question & I thought I might as well expand on the topic for anyone interested.

Kwame: Nobody knows what causes broms to revert. We just know they do. What I can tell you is that you did nothing wrong. It happens through no fault of the hobbyist.

When we speak about variegation in bromeliads, we refer to there being white, yellow or pink stripes in a leaf. If the variegation is on the edges of the leaves, we say it is marginated. Variegation occurs in bromeliads fairly regularly, but mostly in the Bromelioideae (Aechmea, Neoregelia, Billbergia, Nidularium, Cryptanthus, Ananas, etc.) It is less common in the Pitcairnioideae and Tillandsioideae. A variegated Dyckia is a treat to see. Variegated Tillandsias are really rare, but do occur. We hobbyists find variegation beautiful. Nature does not like it. Variegation is the absence of chlorophyll, which means a variegated brom is weaker than its non-variegated sister. The greater the amount of variegation, the weaker the plant. A complete absence of chlorophyll produces a white stripe. Sometimes there is just a reduction in quantity, resulting in the stripe being yellow or a yellow-green color. The brom may still be able to produce the red pigment that protects from sunburn, resulting in the stripes being pink or rosy-red.

Science has not yet figured out what causes variegation, but there has been a lot of study. Sometimes it appears on a single seedling in a batch, or maybe just a couple of leaves on one pup produced by a normal brom. It is generally thought to be the result of damage to the genetic code in the meristem (growth point) that prevents chlorophyll production. One theory is that such damage is caused by a viral infection. Another is that environmental exposure to radiation, chemicals, etc. can cause the damage. All of these factors could be involved. Variegation in seedlings could be due to a viral infection of the plant that produced the seed. The infection ends, but the damage remains affecting a single seed. A lot more variegated broms appear in commercial mass production nurseries than in Nature. There seems to be a correlation between the use of certain chemicals to induce blooming or pup production and the occurrence of variegated plants. But, it is not consistent or predictable. There is a lot for science to learn.

The only practical way to reproduce a variegated brom is vegetatively by growing pups. Attempts at tissue culture fail. The little plantlets are all green. Seedlings from variegated broms are overwhelmingly non-variegated. There have been a few instances where there is a tendency toward a higher rate of variegation among seedlings from particular parent plants... like maybe 1 in 100,000 seedlings instead of 1 in 10,000,000. Chester Skotak's work with *Neoregelias* and David Fell's work with *Vrieseas* has resulted in them producing numerous variegated hybrids and cultivars, far more than other hybridists experience. Indeed, there are very, very few variegated *Vrieseas* produced by anyone other than Fell. So, it seems that Skotak and Fell lucked out in having a parent plant that was able to transmit a tendency toward variegation, and then they had to do a ton of work to take advantage of it. Even so, variegated beauties are not the norm among their seedlings. Vast quantities of non-variegated seedlings are trashed as unworthy of the time and space required to grow them. So, vegetative reproduction is the essential means of maintaining a line of variegated broms.

In theory, vegetative reproduction with pups should result in uniform copying of the mother plant. However, that is not what occurs in practice. Many pups may be identical, but it is often the case that there will be pups with less variegation, or maybe a lot more... some may be completely white. Or, there may be a solid green pup. Different varieties have different degrees of stability. *Neoregelia* 'DeLeon's Inferno' is one of my favorite broms, but so unreliable! It can be a red-centered Neo with just a thin white marginated edge to the foliage. Such plants are pretty, but not extraordinary. Or, there can be wide margination and a lot of variegation the length of the center of each leaf. These sorts can be mind-blowingly beautiful. When the pups come, some may be like the mother plant; some may have even more white; some may be entirely white; some may have much less white and there may be one that is solid green, or even 50-50 – variegated on one side and solid green on the other. What does the hobbyist do? The solid white ones cannot survive on their own. Remove them as soon as noticed so the parent plant puts her strength into producing more pups. The ones

that are very heavily white with just a few green lines in the leaves may be able to survive on their own, but seldom thrive. So, I get rid of them early on. The pups that are solid green may make nice plants, but they are no longer Inferno. As long as they remain attached to the mother plant, she is inhibited from producing more pups. So, I remove these solid green ones as soon as noticed. The 50-50 ones require some thought. If the mother plant remains strong, I get rid of the 50-50 pups. If the mother plant is weak, I let the 50-50 ones grow. Then, when the 50-50 is a mature size, I destroy the center of the plant to induce pupping and lay it on its side, with the variegated portion up. There is a tendency for pups to form on the side that is up, so that way I can maximize the chance of pups with full variegation.

Much of the time variegation that shows up is unstable. It may be wide on some leaves and narrow on others. Perhaps some leaves are marginated on only one side, while other leaves have central variegation. One of the great tasks of hybridists is to work with these variable plants to obtain stable variegation. This can take many generations of separating pups, aborting pups, etc., until there is finally a plant with consistent variegation that carries through to all (or nearly all) of its offsets. Many of the variegated broms available today took 7, 10 or even 20 years of work to get a quantity of plants with stable variegation that look alike. Some never stabilize and years of work gets trashed. That's why new variegated hybrids can be expensive. They are not only rare, but also represent an investment of years of work and huge amounts of greenhouse space devoted to producing something different.



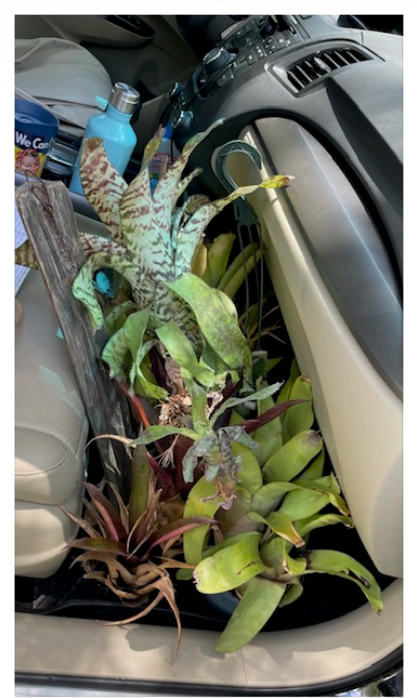
Vriesea platynema var. *variegata* Shown by Peter Wan
14th World Bromeliad Conference, San Francisco, California June 26 - July 5, 2000



(Photos: *Vriesea platynema* v. *variegata*, a naturally occurring brom, which lacks what hobbyists consider variegation; *Vriesea platynema* v. *flava* 'White Lightning', a cultivar with what hobbyists consider variegation)

Pictures

Tropiflora Sale - Courtesy: John Boardman



Tropiflora Sale
Courtesy: John Boardman

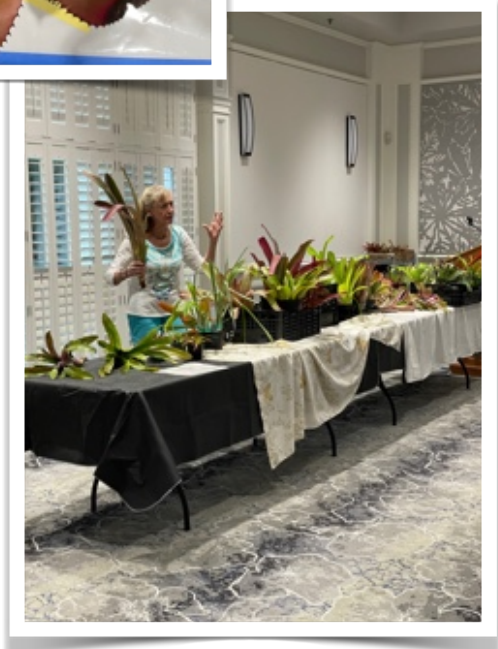
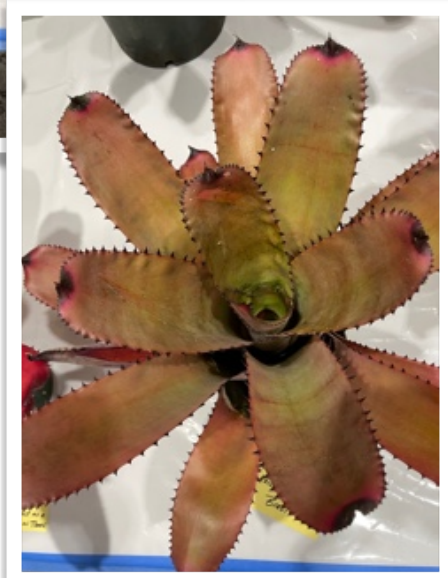
Michael's Sale
courtesy: John Vecchitto

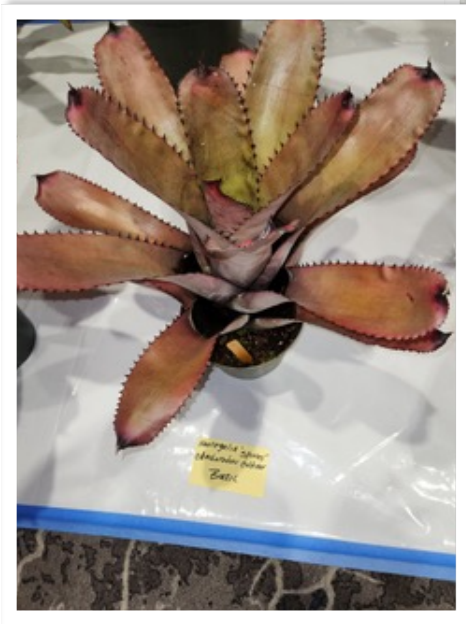
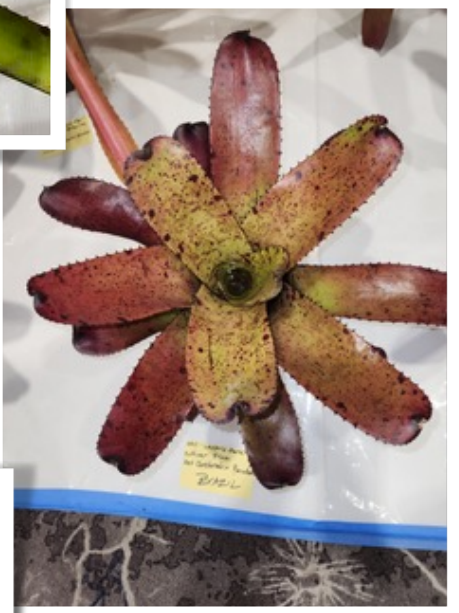
Michael's Sale
courtesy: Steve Beaudoin



Michael's Sale
courtesy: Steve Beaudoin

Michael's Sale
courtesy: Steve Beaudoin





Meeting photos courtesy:
Robin Norton, Pam Marion,
Tim Dreggors



The Big Boys



I hope everyone got a chance to look at the plant of the month display, The Big Boys, at the June meeting.

It was a jaw dropper array of large nicely grown specie Neoregelias and to see them was a treat. They are really amazing plants.

A big THANK YOU to John Boardman for bringing in those Big Boys. It was alot of work for John but he loves getting chewed up by those big Neo's. Just kidding John, we appreciate your efforts!

A big THANK YOU also to the members who brought in their plants for the display!

Submitted by Pam Marion

2023 Bromeliad Society of Central Florida MEMBERSHIP FORM



_____ NEW MEMBER _____ RENEWAL

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name (s) _____

Address _____

City, State Zip +4 _____

Phone/Email _____

\$15 for one member, plus \$5 for each additional family member at the same address.

Name Tags are optional. The price for a name tag is \$7 per member.

If so desired please insert number ordered _____ \$ _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ Make checks payable to BSCF

Either **bring payment to the next meeting.** OR If mailing please send to:

Bromeliad Society of Central Florida, PO Box 568872 Orlando, FL 32856-8872.

Meetings are held at Leu Gardens, 1920 N Forest Ave, Orlando, FL 32803.

On the 3rd Wednesday of every month, from 6:30-9:00 pm. Buy plants from the speaker between 6:30-7pm. The meeting starts promptly at 7:00. You'll enjoy informative programs, Show & Tell, plant sales, door prizes and raffles. Members also receive a monthly newsletter. Please come join us!

Treasurer:

Date _____ Check # _____ Cash \$ _____

Officers

President: Mike McMahon

Vice-President: Tim Dreggors

Treasurer: Joyce Gibault

Secretary: Katherine Vaccaro

Immediate Past President: Mike Saunders

Florida Council Reps: Mike Saunders & Mike McMahon

POSITIONS

Meeting Layout Coordinator: President.

Meeting Hospitality Coordinator: Kathy Hancock (Beverages); Peggy Bohl (Snacks)
Helpers:

Welcome Table/Raffle Coordinator: Robin Norton Helpers: Tracy Kochmann,
Katherine Vaccaro

Secret Bid Auction Coordinator: Phil Wright

Plant Of The Month Coordinator: John Boardman

Speaker Helper: John Boardman

Librarian : Telka diFate

Newsletter Editor: John Vecchitto Would be good to have a couple of people as
'reporters', supplying John with photos, news blurbs and articles.

Newsletter Proofreader: Marty Folk

Membership Secretary: Marilyn Howser

PLANT SALES -

Plant Sale Chair for Leu Gardens Spring Plant Sale: Mike Saunders.

Field Trip Organizer: Karen Steinberg

Webmaster: Greg Kolojeski



BSCF is a nonprofit Florida corporation recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization.

Donations to this society are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

BSCF is an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International, Inc., and a member of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies, Inc. and the Cryptanthus Society.

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