



orlandiana

Newsletter of the
Bromeliad Society of Central Florida
Volume no. 52, Issue no. 2

Next meeting: February 19, 2025

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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Articles and Photos can be submitted to: orlandiananews@outlook.com

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

Well it is starting to feel like Spring out there, hopefully we are out of the woods with the cold weather. I made a great purchase on Black Friday and bought a roll of freeze cloth. Although my area did not see freezing temperatures, my plants were probably happier with it over them. This is a great time to clean and organize your collection/garden. It's also the time we are starting to organize our Spring sales: Leu Gardens in March and the Mother's Day weekend sale in May. There will be more information about this at the next meeting. Our sales are a way the BSCF attracts new members; but don't be afraid to invite a plant friend to a meeting.

There has been a change in operations at the garden. The building night shift was originally staffed at 5:00 pm, now the shift starts at 6:00pm. The front doors to the building will be locked until 6:00pm. If you are working on meeting setup, the doors on the north side will be open. We are still looking for members to take over a few positions: Hospitality Coordinator, Librarian, and Recycle coordinator.

Thanks.

Dan Sawyer

January 2024 Minutes

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA, INC.

Draft Meeting Minutes: January 15, 2025

Will be approved with potential corrections at the February 19, 2025 meeting.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by President Dan Sawyer at Leu Gardens Orlando, Florida.

Program: Vice President Dr. Telka diFate introduced speaker Alex Bello of Bello Tropicals Nursery who spoke on Skotak Hybrids.

Announcements: At 7:40 Dan Sawyer announced a meeting break until 8:00.

Business Meeting: The business meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. by Dan Sawyer.

Membership Secretary: Pam Marion introduced new members David Tunnel and Phyllis Zitzer, renewing member Art Petrillo, and our guest Amy Herp.

Minutes: The draft minutes of the October 16, 2024 meeting were published in the January 2025 *Orlandiana* with no corrections. ***A motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Joyce Gibault and seconded by John Vecchitto. The motion passed unanimously.***

Treasurer's report: Joyce Gibault reported that the organization was financially stable. Income and expenses were presented.

Committee Reports: None.

Board Report: Each year the BSCF is required to file an annual report with the Florida Secretary of State in order to retain its authority to do business. As president, Mike McMahon has routinely filed the annual report. On December 6th he reached out to the Board, volunteering to continue doing so as a current director. The Board approved his offer and thanked him.

President's Report: Dan Sawyer had nothing further to report.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Greg Kolojeski discussed the 2025 Bromeliad Extravaganza to be held September 26-27 at the Ramada Gateway Hotel in Kissimmee. He encouraged people who plan to attend to make room reservations early to obtain the most favorable rates.

Mike McMahon made a motion to have 2025 membership fees remain the same at \$15 for an individual and \$5 for each additional household member. Phil Wright seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dan Sawyer announced that we need a volunteer to oversee the library and its books. In addition, we need to establish a three-person audit committee. Anyone interested should discuss this with either Joyce Gibault or Dan Sawyer.

Show & Tell: Numerous interesting specimens were shown and explained by various members.

Door Prize/Raffle giveaways: President Dan Sawyer announced the order of seating rows to select door prizes. At Dan's request Phil Hancock drew and announced raffle ticket numbers.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Norton
Recording Secretary
Bromeliad Society Central Florida

Date Approved

Guest Speaker

Guest speaker: Our meeting on February 19, 2025 will be on the topic, “ Mindful Garden Design: Less Weeding, More Wine,” with the focus on Bromeliad gardening presented by Stephanie LaRusso.

Stephanie will present a comprehensive approach to garden planning, design, and maintenance for people with small yards, big plant collections, and busy lives.

This is a live lecture that will let you follow the steps of planning and developing a garden from start to finish. Along the way, you will learn how to create a working plan, consider lighting zones, space plants properly, source accurate plant information, maximize plant density, and create easily maintainable planting beds.

The emphasis will be on teaching you all to be mindful as you garden. Gardening smart and planning for future garden problems can save money, time.

Bio:

Stephanie LaRusso is a South Florida local who has spent the last 10+ years working with tropical plants. She is the owner of Can't Grow Squash Inc., which is a small garden/ nursery consultant and plant grower/reseller. For the past 9 years she worked with Tradewinds Tropicals, at their Wholesale Bromeliad nursery in Homestead Florida, where she fell in love with Bromeliads.

Currently she enjoys working for private clients, helping them to care for their plant collections and giving lectures to the public on bromeliads and gardening. Stephanie is a former Master Gardener of Miami Dade and is a botanical watercolor painter in Fort Lauderdale. Stephanie's passion is getting people to love and grow plants.

Her hope is that if she ignites this passion in others, they will begin to value the natural world around them and start to protect the wild spaces that remain both within their communities and across the world. Any place can be a botanical sanctuary. All that is needed is a gardener, a collection of plants and the willingness of both to grow together.



Upcoming Events

2025 Bromeliad Extravaganza

September 26th to 27th, 2025

Kissimmee, Florida (near Disney)

Conference Registration Fee: \$125

(Online Registration or Mail-In)

Sponsored by the [Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies](#) and hosted by the [Seminole Bromeliad & Tropical Plant Society](#), this will be Florida's biggest Bromeliad event of the year!

The **Bromeliad Extravaganza** will include a Friday night dinner (BBQ buffet), three Saturday afternoon seminars (including [Leonardo Versieux](#) from Brazil), a Saturday night banquet (Italian buffet) with a rare plant auction, and last (but not least), the biggest Bromeliad sale of the year in Florida. The Bromeliad sale (an area of almost 6,000 square feet) is open to the public on Saturday from 9 to 4.

Bromeliad growers and enthusiasts from all over Florida will bring a large selection of top quality Bromeliads for your purchasing pleasure. Those who register for the Conference will get first stab at acquiring some of these fantastic plants on Friday evening.

The hotel is the **Ramada Gateway**, 7470 W Irlo Bronson Memorial Hwy 192, Kissimmee, FL 34747. To obtain the conference rate, call the hotel (407-396-4400 or 407-997-6662 from 9am to 5pm) and ask for the special **Bromeliad Extravaganza** rates.

The special hotel room rate for Conference registrants is only \$85.80 per night (\$67.80 plus \$18 resort fee) plus 13.5% taxes. This rate includes free parking and breakfast discounts. Deluxe tower rooms are also available for only \$105 (\$87 plus \$18 resort fee). Rooms are King or 2 Queen bed rooms.

A deposit for one night's room rate plus taxes (\$67.80 plus \$9.16 or \$76.96 for the courtyard or poolview rooms) will be required at the time of booking (refundable up until 72 hours before the scheduled arrival date). The special rates will also be available from Sept. 23rd to 30th for those who would like to make a vacation out of their stay, but you need to book before August 26th to get this special rate. Hotel check-in time is 4pm and check out time is 11am.

You should book the hotel as soon as possible.

Those Confusing Name Changes, Again

At the January meeting Mike McMahon brought a blooming *Tillandsia guatamalensis* for the Show & Tell table. However, as Mike explained, it is not *guatamalensis* anymore. It is now *Tillandsia cyanea*. When the plant was discovered in the 1800s, it was named *T. cyanea*, but that name had already been given to what we all know as *Tillandsia cyanea*, the 'Pink Quill'. Under nomenclature rules, the plant had to be given a new name. It became *T. guatamalensis*. But, when the 'Pink Quill' was re-classified as *Wallisia cyanea*, the rules of name priority were triggered again. The name originally given had priority. Automatically what everyone had been calling *T. guatamalensis* reverted to the name it was first given more than a century ago. It became *T. cyanea*. So, what everyone calls *T. cyanea* is actually *Wallisia cyanea*; and what everyone knows as *T. guatamalensis* is now the real *T. cyanea*. Whatever you call them, they are beautiful.



***Tillandsia cyanea* (formerly *T. guatamalensis*)**

An Evolutionary Blurb: Tillandsia Roots

By Mike McMahon

If you have ever raised anything from seed, you know that when a seed germinates the first thing it does is send a root downward into the soil. That anchors the new plant so the upward growing sprout does not fall over. However, some bromeliads are different, especially in the subfamily Tillandsioideae (E. g., *Guzmania*, *Tillandsia*, *Vriesea*, etc.).

Botanists have observed that there are species whose first roots grow upwards, the exact opposite of what we think of as 'normal'. What's going on? Well, it is thought that this is an adaptation to the fact that many fluffy seeds like those of *Tillandsia* get stuck to the sides and bottoms of branches. When these seeds germinate, the upward growing roots are headed to the bark where they affix the tiny nub of the new plant to the branch.

It also has been observed that seedling Tillandsias sprouting on the bottom or side of a branch are often more numerous and stronger than those that had the luck to land on the top of the branch. Is this because of those initial upward growing roots not attaching? Maybe that is a factor. However, it has also been observed that In Nature the seeds on the top of a branch can get exposed to too much sun when they are young and dry up before they get established. The ones on the bottom and sides have more protection. Attaching to the side or bottom of a branch can increase the likelihood of survival to adulthood. Over time, and as generations pass, the clump may end up on top of the branch or may encircle it.



Mature Tillandsia roots reaching out for a place to attach

For understandable reasons, there aren't many botanists studying the rooting habits of Tillandsias up in the tree canopy. When I first read the arcane article about Tillandsia roots, I was surprised anyone had made the effort. But, it made me go examine what was happening with Tillandsia seeds I had spread. It is not an easy thing to check. The seeds must be just beginning to germinate to see where the initial root is heading, and Tillandsia seeds are

really small. The initial plantlet is like a speck of moss. A magnifying glass is helpful. And, the seed may not germinate for weeks or months. Visiting a branch of freshly spread seed daily looking through a magnifying glass to find some extending their initial roots takes a lot of patience and determination.

I tried checking some seed I had spread on a low branch. I'm not sure exactly what I saw over the course of a week, which is as long as my patience and determination lasted. I think I saw initial roots starting off any which way, upward, downward and sideward. Somehow, they figure out where the branch is and the roots end up bending around and attaching to it whether that's up, down or sideways. (Smart little things for something lacking a brain.) It makes sense to me that the initial root would go in random directions. Having the initial roots of thousands of seed grow in different directions would tend to maximize the number successful in attaching themselves to a branch. Besides, the fluff attached to each seed does a pretty good job of holding onto bark, especially after wetted by rain, so the root nubs have some time to figure out the direction in which they need to bend to attach to something. When I re-mount grown Tillandsias or mount rootless pups, I often see new roots heading in

all directions. Eventually some end up attaching to what they are mounted on, or, at least, most do. Why would germinating seeds be different?



An initial root of a seedling Tillandsia. (Photo by Lloyd Goodman)

This may seem like useless knowledge, but maybe it is not as completely useless as it seems. When trying to naturalize some Tillandsia seedlings in your trees, spread them all over the branches and trunk, top, bottom and sides. They have evolved to make the best of wherever they land, even the underside of a branch. It may maximize your chances of getting them to grow. It's a wonder of Nature right in your backyard.

Don't forget to bring something for SHOW & TELL at the next meeting! Anything interesting that you would like to share with the membership.

Plant of the Month

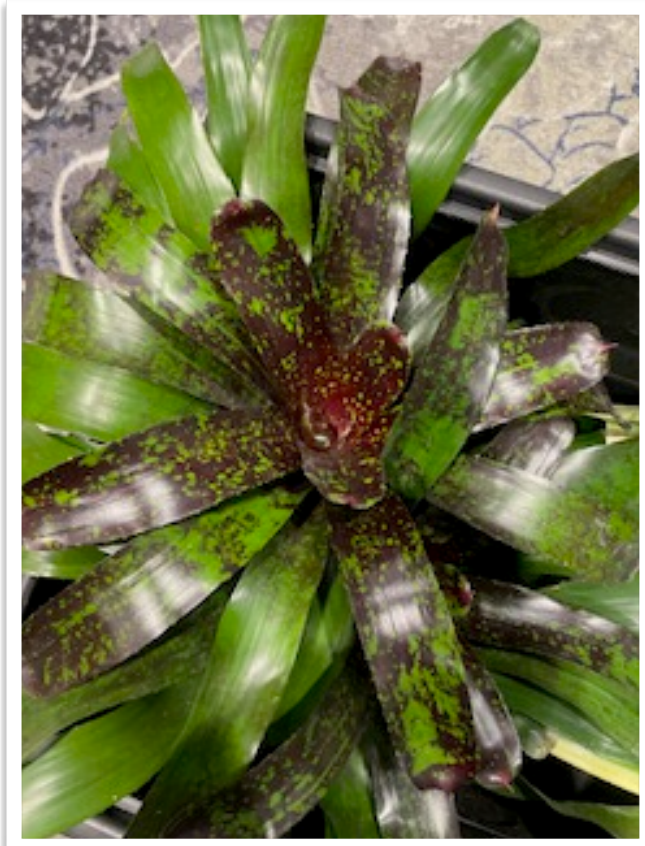
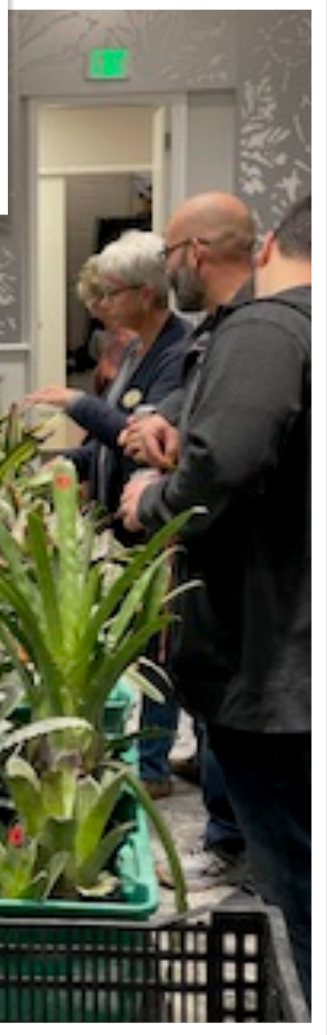
February: Valentine's Day Theme

This month's theme is anything and everything about Valentine's Day. Some key words are love, romance, heart, flowers, sweetheart, cupid, candy, chocolate, kiss, jewelry, sweet, passion, Romeo, etc. Additionally, any bromeliad with the word "red" in the name will do nicely, of which there are many across all genres! Also, pet names people have for each other, such as honey, sweetie, babe, etc. Be creative within the Valentine Theme as there are many more to draw upon!



Neoregelia 'Babe'

Pictures



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 \$8 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!

Date _____ Check # _____ Cash \$ _____

www.bromeliadorslando.com

Officers

President: **Dan Sawyer**
Vice-President: **Dr. Telka diFate**
Treasurer: **Joyce Gibault**
Recording Secretary: **Robin Norton**
Membership Secretary: **Pam Marion**
Immediate Past President: **Mike McMahon**
Florida Council Reps: **Mike Saunders & Dan Sawyer**

POSITIONS

Meeting Layout Coordinator: **Dan Sawyer**
Meeting Hospitality Coordinator: **VACANT**
Welcome Table/Raffle Coordinator: **John Hancock,**
Recycling Coordinator: **VACANT**
Meeting Breakdown Coordinator: **VACANT:** **Secret Bid Auction Coordinator:** **Phil Wright**
Plant Of The Month Coordinator: **Steve Beaudoin**
Speaker Helper: **Bonnie Friedrich**
Librarian : **VACANT**
Newsletter Editor: **John Vecchitto**
Newsletter Proofreader: **Marty Folk, Katherine Vaccaro, Destini Coiner**
Audit Committee: **Dr. Telka diFate (Chair).**

PLANT SALES -
Plant Sale Chair for Leu Gardens Spring Plant Sale: **VACANT**
Plant Sale Chair for Mother's Day Show: **Mike McMahon, Mike Saunders**
Plant Sale Chair for Mead Garden Fall Plant Sale: **VACANT**
Field Trip Organizer: **VACANT**
Holiday Party Coordinator: **VACANT**
Webmaster: **Greg Kolojeski**

Permission to reprint is granted with acknowledgment.

Please send all correspondence to the address below:

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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.