



# East London Bromeliad Society

## South Africa

NEWS  
LETTER  
March  
2019

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

### A revisit to a lovely garden and a bumper February meeting!

On a hot summer afternoon last month, I think we experienced one of our longest and busiest meetings and what a super turnout there was to enjoy the hospitality of Ron and Gale Kockjeu at their home in Berea. Thirty eight of us including 3 visitors ! I think word got out the topic was Tillandsia and it just shows how much more popular they are becoming to collect. An amazing genus!

Gale is very creative and retired now and busier than ever! There are loads of items that she has made that are around the garden. The mosaic work is stunning! She has done a lot to the garden since we were there a year ago, lots more light in the back garden and areas cleared with mass plantings of bromeliads. She asked members to help with identifying some of the broms. I especially loved the herb and vegetable seedlings growing in four wheel barrows! Thank you so much for sharing your inspiration, plans and garden with all of us Gale. Also a huge thanks for a scrumptious tea which you catered for us.

Dudley welcomed everyone to a jam-packed meeting with Tillandsia everywhere!!!! He introduced the topic and spoke about Tillandsia in general before showing individual plants. Many thanks to all those who brought their plants to show and discuss. Wow! there were some real beauts!!! We will highlight a few in the newsletter.



Gale is trying her hand at topiary, shaping her Duranta shrub into a snail shape.



Gale with Missy ! And above the lovely back garden with a huge tree providing dappled shade.



Our awesome hosts, Ron and Gale Kockjeu.



One of Gale's frames of mounted tillys.

**Next Meeting: 31st March at 2.00pm: ELBSSA Mini Judged Show to be held at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School in Avalon Road, Beacon Bay. Please bring your entry plants at 1.00pm, meeting will start at 2.00pm.**



## Tillandsia - Flowering and Form

**Lynn Friend** brought in her *Tillandsia malleontii*, a miniature species from Brazil. With the right light will grow well, forming clumps that are quick growing. The tiny blue flowers have a sweet fragrance. It is pollinated by moths and butterflies. It enjoys an airy position with not too much sunlight. Lynn Wegner and Brenda Wegner also brought their lovely fragrant baskets of *T. malleontii* to the meeting.



Lynn Friend's *Tillandsia malleontii*



Brenda's *Tillandsia remota*

**Brenda Wegner** brought *Tillandsia remota* which is a species and native to Guatemala and El Salvador. It stands out for its thin green leaves, which serves them well to pick up water. It produces spikes of white tubular flowers.

**Dudley Reynolds** brought many stunning *Tillandsia* to show and discuss. *T. tricholepis*, *T. disticha* Green, *T. harrisii*, *T. araujei*, *T. baileyi* 'Halley's Comet', *T. neglecta* and more.



Dudley's *Tillandsia x nidus*.



Dudley's *Tillandsia minutiflora*.

Among them, *Lemeltonia* (prev *Tillandsia*) *narthecioides* which is a stemless plant or very short caulescent with white flowers which are scented. It flowers at night and is pollinated by a moth. It requires semi-shade conditions. I grow mine under shade cloth.

*Tillandsia minutiflora*, (previously *T. bryoides*). A tiny moss type *Tillandsia*, slow growing and self seeding. Grown in shady conditions. Part of sub family Diaphoranthema.



Pete's *Lemeltonia* (prev. *Tillandsia*) *narthecioides*.

*Tillandsia x nidus* from Mexico. This is a natural hybrid. Parents are *T. fasciculata* and *ionantha*. Leaves turn red when blooming. Needs to be grown in a sunny position.



Dudley's *Tillandsia disticha* Green.

**Dr Pete Pfister** brought in tons of super *Tillandsia*, many of which became Lucky Draw plants. *Tillandsia latifolia* var *divaricata*, *T. confertiflora*, *T. recurvata*, *T. tricolor*, *Lemeltonia narthecioides*, *T. schiedeana*, *T. secunda*, *T. pruinosa* and *T. jalisco-monticola*.



Pete's *Tillandsia confertiflora*.

Thanks Pete, you are such a star at sharing your knowledge, experience and plants with all of us.



Dudley's *Tillandsia harrisii*.





Tracy's *Tillandsia* 'Samantha'.

**Tracy Moss** showed her magnificent *Tillandsia* 'Samantha', not quite in full bloom yet and a beautifully grown specimen of *Tillandsia seleriana*.

**Lyn Wegner** showed *Tillandsia caerulea*. A species found in the dry areas in Ecuador and Peru. It grows into clumps fairly quickly and is fragrant. I am interested to learn it comes from a dry area and that it is fragrant. I haven't noticed mine having a scent and I think I should grow mine a little drier even though they are doing well in wire baskets in the garden.



*Tillandsia duratii*

*Tillandsia duratii*. Grows in the dry forests of Bolivia. It is rootless but has adapted its leaves to twist and spiral around its support and anything else in close proximity! It grows as an epiphyte on trees, shrubs and cactus and occasionally as a lithophyte on rocks. The leaves are very curly and strong. As the lower leaves dry and wither the plant climbs up the tree or mount. The

inflorescence is tall with scented lavender flowers. I have had large and small forms blooming and mine grow out in the garden in sunny spots. An attractive and fascinating easy grower that can handle some rain and drought.



*Lemeltonia narthecioides*

*Lemeltonia* (previously *Tillandsia*) *narthecioides*. A night flowering, fragrant and easy grower which likes moisture. An interesting inflorescence which to me resembles the backbone of a sole. The flowers open one by one travelling up the spike. It is found in Ecuador growing as an epiphyte. Mine is growing potted and I have it under shade-cloth.

*Tillandsia plumosa*. I have had this plant for many, many years and the fairly advanced flower spike I noticed this week surprised and excited me! I have found conflicting info on this *Tillandsia* so I wonder if mine is correctly named. They are described as feathery (*plumosa*) which mine is most certainly too. They are found in Mexico. One source mentions it is 'delicate, lovely small plant but difficult'. Another source says 'high altitude, somewhat moist'. Mine



*Tillandsia plumosa*



*Tillandsia xerographica*

has just got longer and longer, the base dries out as it elongates. It is growing in a metal spiked stand in a sunny spot and it doesn't receive much water. It resembles a *T. tectorum* in some ways although the *T. plumosa* trichomes seem shorter and compact and the leaf tips are slightly curly. The flowers haven't opened yet but appear to be green and once opened I hope to be able to confirm if it is indeed *T. plumosa*!

*Tillandsia xerographica*: It is found in Mexico, Guatemala, Salvador growing in dry conditions as an epiphyte and very rarely as a terrestrial. This tells us we need to grow it in a sunny spot where it won't receive too much water. You could mount it at an angle so that excess water doesn't collect at the base of the plant which could lead to it rotting and dying. I have mine in a metal stand out of reach of the rain when we are fortunate to get some! The foliage can be spectacular, mine isn't great but it is blooming! I am sure some of you will remember Dr Boots Horsfall's magnificent specimen from a meeting last year.



**Dr Boots Horsfall Horsfall** brought some plants to show as well, a lovely *Tillandsia ionantha* ball, *T. Jackie Loinaz* (parents *concolor* and *capitata rubra* from Mexico) and a mounted *T. duratii*,



*Tillandsia ionantha*



*Tillandsia 'Jackie Loinaz'*



*Tillandsia duratii*

## Show and Tell

**Zena McClaren** showed *Guzmania sanguinea* var. *tricolor*. This plant is one of the most beautiful *Guzmania* when it is flowering. Zena says for the rest of the time, it's just green leaves 'blending into the background' in many collections. In brief, their main requirements are: grow them under 70% shade cloth, or the equivalent amount of shade from trees. Pot them in a well-draining mixture. Water them once a week in winter and twice a week in summer. The leaves form a flat rosette approximately 60 cm across. At flowering, the leaves become completely red, yellow-orange, a combination of these colours, or a red/yellow/green combination. This leaf colouration is retained for several months. Flowering can occur in spring or autumn. It is also an upper pupper, making them difficult to separate from the mother plant successfully.



*Guzmania sanguinea* var *tricolor*

**Michael McClaren** showed the very unusual *Mezobromelia pleiosticha*. This species is native to Costa Rica, Venezuela and Ecuador. It was named in honour of the German Bromeliad Scientist Carl Mez. *Mezobromelia* has nine known species with *Mezobromelia pleiosticha* being one. They are among the basal families within the Poales and are unique because they are the only family within the order that has septal nectaries and inferior ovaries. Lyn – hope you all know what that means! The genus is said to be an 'intermediate' between the genera *Guzmania* and *Vriesea*.



*Mezobromelia pleiosticha*

**Lyn Wegner** showed *Billbergia 'Hallelujah' x 'Golden Joy'* no4: This *Billbergia* which I purchased in Australia has pupped but it now looks like I have a plant of each parent! I am a *Billbergia* fan and struggle to understand why they don't appeal to more growers.



Lyn also showed *Aechmea chantinii* Yellow Bracts. I purchased this beauty at the Sunny Broms Australasian Conference in 2017. It was blooming at the time so it is great to have a pup which is now blooming! I grow it potted in a sunny spot. The *A. chantinii* varieties are often difficult growers, they don't like being cold. This particular form grows easily. (*Ae. chantinii* comes from the Amazon rainforests.)



*Aechmea chantinii* Yellow Bracts



*Billbergia 'Hallelujah' x 'Golden Joy'* no4

**Andre Eybers** showed his frame of mounted *Tillandsia* he has on a wall inside his home.

**Tracy Moss** showed a lovely *Wallisia cyanea* in bloom, perhaps a giant form or cultivar?



*Wallisia cyanea*

## Species Talk - Lyn Wegner



*Catopsis morreniana*: These grow epiphytically in the moist forests of Central America and Southern Mexico and there are about 20 species in the genus. They have soft, spineless green foliage and they have a chalk-like film under the leaves. The long flower spikes emerge from the centre of the plant and the flowers are yellow. I grow mine potted in the shade.

*Wittrockia superba*: I like this plant. It does well in full sun and I find the foliage attractive, especially the red tips on the leaves. It has beautiful vicious spines too! Hawi Winter from New Zealand says he had to wait more than 10 years for his plant to flower. Mine is potted and in a sunny spot and has also taken a long time to bloom. They are found in Eastern Brazil where they grow as an epiphyte or terrestrial. I was sorry to read that it is an endangered species in its natural habitats.



*Catopsis morreniana*



*Wittrockia superba*

## Thanks

- Ron and Gale Kockjeu for hosting a bumper meeting.
- Dr Pete Pfister, Dudley Reynolds and Barbara Black for Lucky Draw plants.
- Gale Kockjeu for baking and catering a really scrumptious tea for all the members to enjoy.
- Robert and Tracy Moss and Val Nel for assisting with tea.
- Robert and Tracy Moss for all their guidance and assistance with regard to the upcoming Mini Judged Show.

## Congratulations to the February Raffle Winners!

- Tracy Moss chose *Neoregelia* 'Jaline'.
- Dr Boots Horsfall chose *Neoregelia* 'Cosmos'.
- Sandy Wegner chose *Wittrockia superba*.
- Dudley Reynolds chose to take a voucher for R120.00 to buy a plant later.
- Lianne Kirstein from George chose *Tillandsia mallemonitii*.
- Philip Visagie from Pretoria won 3 raffles and chose *Tillandsia mallemonitii*, *T. caerulea* and *Billbergia* 'Muriel Waterman'.

**Attendance Lucky Draw Winners:** I think everyone got a plant this month and more, including our visitors !!

\* Please note that the Lucky Draw is not a Raffle, you have to be present to claim your prize!



Local raffle winners, Dr Boots Horsfall, Dudley Reynolds, Tracy Moss and Sandy Wegner.

## From the Chairman Dudley Reynolds



All we seem to do year in and year out is complain about the weather and the lack of rain. Being gardeners and collectors, these are the two factors which influence our hobby the most. I am sure that you, as have I found this summer to be very hot and dry. The effect of the harsh sun rays have bleached a lot of the Bromeliads foliage. Fortunately we know that their progeny will bounce back and be more tolerant when nature repeats itself. Watering from a tap is just not the same as a nice shower of rain and that has been very scarce this season. It seems to help when one is able to complain..... But that is human nature.

Our next meeting is our very first Mini Judged Show and our committee have been hard at work planning to



make this a success. A big thank you to Robert and Tracy Moss for coming on board to offer assistance with advice. Robert and Tracy are South African Orchid Judges and we have found their experience, so willingly shared, to be invaluable.

To all our new members and visitors to our meetings, a very warm welcome. We hope you enjoy the introduction to this family of plants. It soon turns to passion and then definitely becomes an obsession. (My wife is always giving me counselling on that subject), I always tell her there must be a little madness in most of us. Well, until we chat again. Happy Bromming and best wishes.



Sitting the back row Cousins Terrence and Wendy Reynolds with Bev and Glen Reynolds

## From the Committee

- We have a Plan B if it rains on the day of a meeting. A decision will be made by 10.00am on the Sunday and a committee member will Whatsapp or sms you to advise the new venue for the afternoon's meeting. The Plan B venue will be the Little Beacons Pre-Primary School in Avalon Road in Beacon Bay, the same venue for our Mini Judged Show at the end of this month.
- Did you know that any member who participates in a meeting eg: presents their plant for Show and Tell receives a free raffle ticket!
- Vouchers: If you don't find a plant you want to choose as a raffle plant you can ask Lyn Odendaal for a voucher to the value of R120.00 to buy a plant from a member or accumulate vouchers, (should you be so lucky! ) to buy a more expensive plant you have been wanting from a member of the society.
- There will be NO Member Plant Sales at the March meeting.

## Upcoming Society Events

**31st March:** [ELBSSA Mini Judged Show](#) to be held at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School in Avalon Road, Beacon Bay. **If you are entering plants in the show, please bring them at 1.00pm** so that they can be entered and benched. The meeting will start promptly at 2.00pm this month as there is a lot to get through at this meeting and you will all be the judges! It is going to be fun, we will still have raffles and possibly Lucky Draws. Bring your mug but no need to bring a chair this month.

**28th April:** Hosted by Brian and Bridget Kroger in Beacon Bay.

**26th May:** Would anyone like to host this month? and choose a topic that you would like to know more about?

**30th June** Presentation of BSI Media Library programmes at Little Beacons in Beacon Bay.

**28th July:** ELBSSA 10th Birthday Celebrations!!! at 18 Wentworth Road in Sunnyridge.

## Mini Judged Show

Our very first Show, a fun event planned for our meeting on the 31st March. We are looking forward to lots of member participation and encourage you all to bring your Bromeliads and Tillandsia to enter on the Show.

We have 14 classes that you can enter your plants into including Artistic Expression, which will include items like a special mounting, fancy container, bromeliad flower arrangement, artwork, cushion cover etc. Anything that involves Bromeliads and/or Tillandsia.

Members will be placed in groups with an experienced grower and they will guide the group through the process of judging the plants to select the winners of the different classes. From the winners of the Classes, all of us will vote for a Show Champion and Runner Up!

So take a look at your plants and choose ones that you can groom to bring along to the show, your plant could be voted the Grand Champion of the show!

We will email more information about the Show soon. This is a first for the society and it is going to be a lot of fun!

Classes	Genera
Class 1.	Aechmea Foliage
Class 2.	Aechmea Flowering
Class 3.	Billbergia
Class 4.	Cryptanthus / Orthophytum
Class 5.	Guzmania
Class 6.	Neoregelia Medium / Large
Class 7.	Neoregelia Mini
Class 8.	Tillandsia Flowering
Class 9.	Tillandsia Non-flowering
Class 10.	Bigenetics, Hybrids & any other genera not listed
Class 11.	Vriesea Foliage
Class 12.	Vriesea Flowering
Class 13.	Bromeliad Species
Class 14	Artistic Expression

## Upcoming International Conferences

**2019: 'Golden Broms'** 17th - 20th 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](http://www.goldenbroms.com)

**2020: WBC2020** To be held in Sarasota, Florida, USA 9-16 June 2020. Some exciting conference visits planned to Michael's Bromeliads, Tropiflora Nursery and Selby Botanical Gardens. Watch this space and the Conference Corner at [bsi.org](http://bsi.org) for more details!

**2021:** This bi-annual **Australasian Bromeliad Conference** will again be hosted by The New Zealand Bromeliad Society. **'Kiwi Broms'** April 8th<sup>h</sup> - 11th 2021, venue: Waipuna Hotel.

## From the Editor



Right now we are experiencing the most wonderful rain in the Eastern Cape, long overdue with 118mm recorded by Sunday morning, I am sure it is not over yet. The garden is a bright, shiny and colourful display, it makes my heart happy!

We put so much into our plants and gardens, often spending hours splitting, repotting, finding new homes for them as our collection grows that it can all seem like darn hard work at times. But ohhh, the rewards if you are patient, are all worthwhile. So, with that in mind, think of participating in next months meeting. This is open to any country members who would like to join us and enter some plants as well.

Our next meeting will be the Mini Judged Show starting at 2.00pm sharp at Little Beacons Pre-Primary School in Beacon Bay. We look forward to a full turnout for this first ever show of what I am sure is going to be a collection of stunning Bromeliads and Tillandsia entered by all our members.

Don't feel shy, go around your garden and look out for plants that are in good shape, clean them up and bring them along from 1.00pm on the day, to give time to enter and place them. You won't have to worry about the Class/es you are entering as the committee will assist with all of that. A few people have asked if they can come and view the show, it is an exciting prospect, if it all goes well we can look at possibly having a future show lasting a weekend, so the East London community can be exposed to these amazing plants. Spread the love, who knows, exciting hey?

Thank you to those who have sent photos and text from the meeting for the newsletter. This is your forum to share, so do keep it coming. Lets hear from our country members too. You can e-mail or Whatsapp information and photos to me.

Happy bromming and show prepping!

*Barbs*



Lyn Wegner sent this photo of a well camouflaged Fred ready for lift off!



Thanks Mark Bradfield for this photo of Dudley introducing the topic Tillandsia - Flowering and Form at the meeting.

This is a publication for the **East London Bromeliad Society, South Africa** for the interest of its members. Articles may be used by non profit societies with acknowledgement to the author where applicable and East London Bromeliad Society South Africa. Please use the photos that accompany the article used. If you require higher resolution photos please request them from the Editor.

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

When submitting items for inclusion in this newsletter, please ensure that all facts and 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.

### Committee Members

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 You will find ELBS on Facebook: 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 very useful and informative forums to share and 'meet up' with other like-minded bromeliad folks.

Back copies of all our newsletters can be accessed by joining the East London Bromeliad Society web page members section. You will find it at [www.elbssa.co.za](http://www.elbssa.co.za)

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](http://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](http://bsi.org)

Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies: [fcbs.org](http://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!