

Far North Coast Bromeliad Study Group N.S.W.

Edition: November 2022

Agenda: General Discussion

Venue: PineGrove Bromeliad Nursery
114 Pine Street Wardell 2477
Phone (02) 6683 4188

Study Group meets the third Thursday of each month

Next meeting December 15th 2022 at 11 a.m.

This will be our Christmas Party.

Editorial Team:

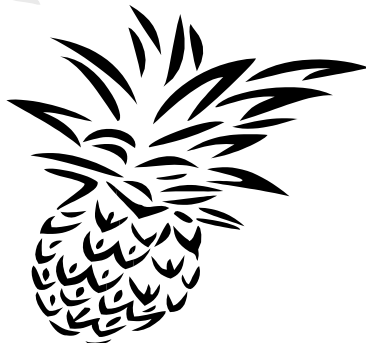
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Statements and opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Group.
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Meeting 20th October 2022

The meeting was opened at approximately 11.00 am
The 9 members present were welcomed.
Four apologies were received.

General Business

Kayelene advised that Jean has gone into care, we wish her all the best.

Ross gave a brief talk about his recent trip out to Norfolk Island telling us how pretty and picturesque the island is. He spoke a little about its history and of course about finding Bromeliads in a most wonderful garden. The owner kindly showed him about her garden, a mix of trees and shrubs which afford a little extra shade cover for the Aechmea, Alcantarea, Neoregelia, Vriesea, Tillandsias and some orchids which are all growing very nicely. As time permits photos will be sorted for a 'home movie' show.

Fire ants - it appears these nasty pests are on the move again with some new areas in SE Queensland being added to the fire ant zone. These fire ants are aggressive, highly adaptive and well-equipped for survival.

Under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, everyone — including individuals and organisations — has a general biosecurity obligation (GBO) to take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of fire ants. Queenslanders are legally required to report suspected sightings of fire ants within 24 hours of their discovery. Depending on the nest location action must be taken to treat the pest. If you do not do this, penalties may apply.

Note to our Group members - if you are buying plants from S.E Queensland take extra care, ask if the seller is outside the fire ant zone. Better still, check the relevant web site prior to any exchanges.

Fire ants have been found within 30 km of the NSW border at Charwood, Boonah, Coulson, Tarome, Wyaralong, Scenic Rim, Canungra and Tambourine Mountain. The closeness of the South East Queensland infestation makes fire ants one of the highest biosecurity risks to NSW.

To move potted plants (plants in containers grown in potting media including the plant, the container and the potting media) into NSW from or through the fire ant biosecurity zones in Queensland they must be:

- Treated with a chemical approved for the control of fire ants before dispatch.
- Handled and stored in a way that prevents infestation by fire ants immediately after treatment and until it arrives in NSW.

They must be accompanied by one of the following certifying these requirements have been met:

- A Plant Health Certificate
- A Plant Health Assurance Certificate that certifies they have been produced and dealt with in accordance with the Interstate Certification Assurance Scheme ICA-39 Treatment of Bulk Growing Media and Potted Plants for Red Imported Fire Ants.
- A Biosecurity Certificate that certifies they have been produced and dealt with in accordance with BioSecure HACCP Entry Conditions Compliance Procedure Number ECCPRIFA03.

It's highly recommend you check if the nursery you're buying from is certified and compliant with biosecurity measures. Plants should be grown on compacted hard surfaces such as concrete, plastic etc.

If bringing plants across the border ensure that they are bare rooted with no soil and that offsets or cuttings are free of ants.

If in doubt spray with fipronil - which is a broad-spectrum insecticide that belongs to the phenylpyrazole chemical family used to control ants, beetles, termites, cockroaches, fleas, ticks etc. As with all chemicals read the label and follow all instructions thoroughly.

Show, Tell and Ask!

From last month's Newsletter we discussed the Aechmea article on page 10 and how it is best to read the article and compare the details to your own plant when you have it in hand flowering. We often hear these days of people discarding older books because they're 'out dated', thankfully for this 'older' article Michelle was able to confirm the identification of her plant. When she got home from our Group meeting she checked her plant, it was flowering and had "greyish petals", the "odd coloured petals" that make it *Aechmea* 'Red Bands'

Digging deep into the archives to respond to a question about getting roots to form on pups lead us to the 'old articles' written in 2013. The diagrams we did back then and reprinted in our October 2022 Newsletter are self explanatory, however, we did have one offset we'd prepared earlier. An offset 'deliberately' cut short as an exercise to prove it works, *luckily it did!*, there were roots galore on a *Goudaea ospinae* var. *gruberi* offset. These tried-and-true methods are always worth trying if you have a plant that is being difficult to set root or you cut one short and you wish to try and save it as these methods are often reliable.

It's good to know that these old articles can still be very helpful. So save your 'old' books, Newsletters and Journals, visit them from time to time and do your own research, it can be rewarding.

To keep for flowers or snap it off for more pups ?

This question has been raised again as it often is especially at this time of year when many of our foliage Vrieseas are beginning to spike. The simple answer is if you want lots of pups/offsets snap it off. The earlier in a spike's development that it can be cut off the better, and feed the plant, this will allow more energy from the plant to be directed toward pup/offset growth. Alternatively if you want many many plants, don't cut the inflorescence off, go for seed. Be sure you have lots of patience before you go down this road, because it's a long one.

How to Care For a Bromeliad After it Blooms (from the internet, adjusted)
"Bromeliads often have both striking foliage as well as its striking inflorescence. However, a Bromeliad will only bloom once throughout its lifespan. Though that seems like a bummer, especially if you bought it for its inflorescence. Fortunately the inflorescence actually lasts for a good portion of time - generally 3 to 6 mths. Plus, once it's finished blooming, it signals that its pups/offsets are on their way.

Once the inflorescence finishes blooming, you'll want to remove it. This tells the Bromeliad to begin focusing more energy on its pups. My Aechmea had finished blooming come late October, but I hadn't removed its flowers until December. Still, there are new pups being produced by the Bromeliad. You'll still want to water the Bromeliad, as you had previously. I give it water in its central cup and also along the edges of the pot into the soil. My plant seems to be growing well, it's just set slightly back from a north-facing window.

By now you should see some pups developing, which basically look like little miniature versions of your original plant. I'll be keeping my pups/offsets on the parent plant until they are between 1/3 - 1/2 the size of the original plant or when the Bromeliad starts to die back. I actually don't know how long it will take for my Bromeliad to truly die back, but I'd imagine it would be at least two years."

Some pretty basic information there but the gist of the story is, continue treating your plant as normal, feed it well because either way you'll get pups providing it's not one of the monocarpic types. These are generally considered to be plants that flower but don't produce pups so seed production is a must.

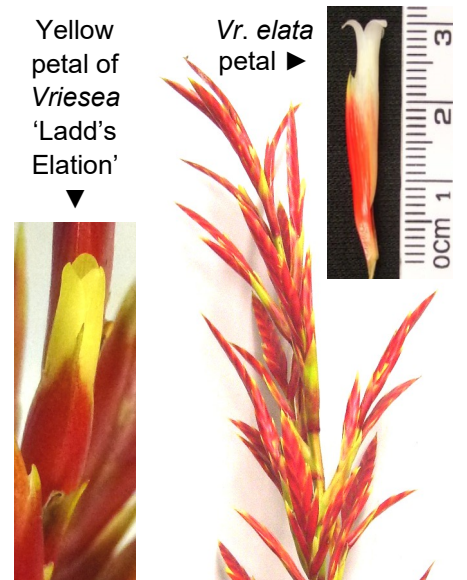
Is it Safe to Use Driftwood From The Beach ?

Driftwood taken from a beach is safer to have had all the salt leached out of it before use. However there have been claims of people using it immediately to mount Bromeliads on it with no ill effect. To leach the salts out soak your piece of driftwood in fresh water several times allowing to dry between soakings.

Alternatively you could just leave it out in the open air where it can get rained on several times before use. Driftwood from freshwater rivers is safe to use. Caution: check with your local council before removing driftwood from beaches.



Tillandsia 'Pink Beauty'
shown by Keryn Simpson



Vriesea
'Ladd's Elation'
unreg.
shown by
Helen Clewett

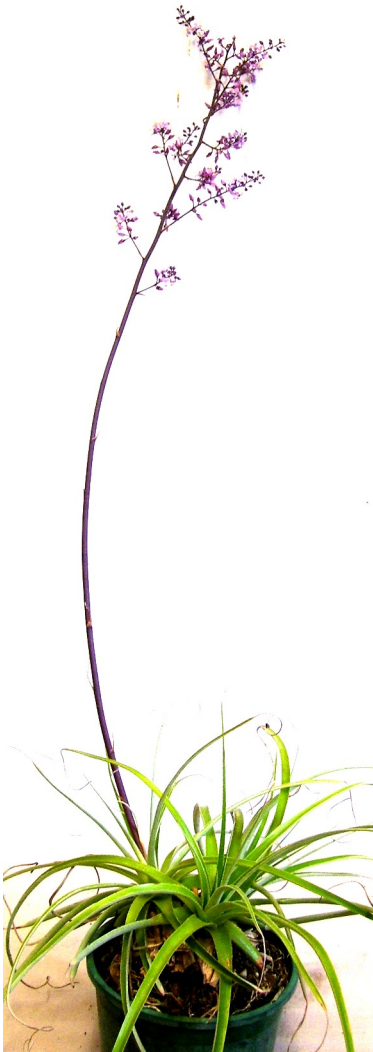
Seedlings acquired from breeder Alan Ladd circa 2009 as *Vriesea elata*. When these seedlings first flowered it was realised they were not true to type but a hybrid.

Pollen parent unknown, *Vr elata* has white petals and green leaves without patterning.

This hybrid has yellow petals and patterned lime green leaves.

It grows to around 90cm across and up to 125cm tall including the inflorescence.

Hechtia tillandsioides (André) L. B. Smith, 1951. compiled by Ross Little
Bakeria tillandsioides André, 1889.



A little nomenclatural history: in 1889, the French botanist Édouard François André, honouring the bromeliologist John G. Baker, proposed the genus *Bakeria* and described the first species referable to this genus (*B. tillandsioides*). André was apparently unaware that the generic name he coined was pre-occupied twice, once for a taxon in the Araliaceae (*Bakeria* Seemann, 1864), then again in the Rosaceae, when Michel Gandoger (1876) raised his own *Rosa* section *Bakeria* to the generic level. The great doyen of bromeliology, Lyman B. Smith, then proposed in 1934 the genus *Bakerantha* to accommodate: *Bakeria tillandsioides* André (= *Bakerantha tillandsioides* (André) L.B. Smith).

Later on, Smith (1951) placed *Bakerantha* in the synonymy of ***Hechtia***.

Distribution of populations of the species *Hechtia tillandsioides* are known from the Sierra Madre Oriental biogeographical region, close to the limits of the Veracruzian Province, in the Mexican states of Hidalgo, Puebla, and Querétaro, at 750 – 850 metres on steep vertical walls along rivers in tropical dry forests.

The plant shown here was grown by Mitch Jones in a full sun position, he had potted it in cacti mix with 12 month slow release fertilizer added.

Keryn brought back in for photographing her *Wittrockia cyathiformis* showing its golden-yellow petals, at anthesis (the flowering period) the bracts are reddish-pink, later becoming purplish. They are subdensely to densely and coarsely serrate with dark brown spines 2-3 mm long. ►



A couple of plants Keryn brought in for clarification of their identification, her first plant was confirmed as:

Aechmea racinae
 var. *tubiformis*
 E. Pereira, 1972.

Found growing in
 Brasil, Estado do
 Espírito Santo.

Keryn's second identification query is possibly:

xGuzvriesea 'Red Rain'

If you have any other thoughts let us know.





Neoregelia 'Cane Fire' query ??
1st Open Kayelene Guthrie



Tillandsia ionantha
1st Tillandsioideae Gary McAteer



Two more Decorative entries using 'John's objects',
'3 ball glass planter' shown by Keryn Simpson and
'glass tear drop' shown by Kayelene Guthrie.



Hohenbergia leopoldo-horstii hybrid grown by Michelle Hartwell acquired many years ago from Ross at PineGrove is one from Geoff Breen's Capricorn series.



'Donald Is Going to Have a Happy Christmas'
1st Decorative and Judges Choice
Coral McAteer



Tillandsia 'Leiboldiana Median'
'Ode to Baphomet'
both entries shown by Mitch Jones

Tillandsia ionantha
shown by
Helen Clewett



Racinaea decipiens (Andre) Gouda and Manzanares 2017. compiled by Ross Little

Basionym: *Tillandsia decipiens* Andre (1888).

Racinaea multiflora var. *decipiens* (Andre) M.A. Spencer & L. B. Smith (1993).

The inflorescence of this species is totally green, except for the white petals. It grows epiphytically and was seen on power lines in dry areas from sea level up to 2400 metres elevation in Ecuador and Northern Peru. The yellow-green rosettes easily adapt to pot culture growing to 85cm across and up to 105cm tall including the inflorescence.



The quite small white flowers of *Racinaea decipiens* are only about 3 - 4 mm across.

Racinaea decipiens var. *tomensis* (Smith) Gouda & Manzanares 2017 differs from the species by being slightly larger and has a beautiful orange-red inflorescence. One to look out for.

A **basionym** is an earlier valid scientific name of a species that has since been renamed and from which the new name is partially derived.



Racinaea decipiens growing in trees above a stream in southern Ecuador 2015.



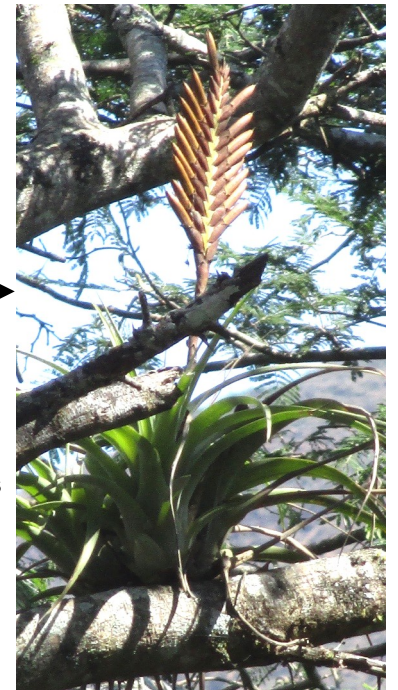
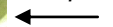
Tillandsia espinosae



Tillandsia barclayana



Tillandsia pruinosa



Just a few others we saw growing in this southern area of Ecuador in 2015.



Billbergia 'Muriel Waterman'
inflorescence from BCR.



Billbergia amoena var. *viridis* shown by Keryn Simpson has green petals.

In its vegetative / foliage state it is often confused with

Billbergia 'Muriel Waterman' which has an inflorescence with steel blue petals.



Tillandsia scaposa (L.B. Smith) Ehlers 1999
was originally described as a variety of
Tillandsia ionantha
(=T. *ionantha* var. *scaposa* L.B. Smith)
Ehlers is nowadays treated as a
different species due to the
presence of a
pedunculated inflorescence.

The difference is the inflorescence
is nestled in the leaf rosette for
Tillandsia ionantha but raised
for the variety *scaposa*.

shown by
Gary McAteer

A peduncle is the stem of a
flower cluster.

Show, Tell and Ask! continued..

We often recommend to Group members that if they have a plant with pups they are not sure about removing to bring the plant to a meeting and someone will assist. This month Kayelene brought along an *Alcantarea glaziouana* that had a couple of good size pups/offsets still attached. We had at hand a large *Vriesea* to practice on before attacking Kayelene's plant, 'a confidence booster to show her that we sort of know what we are doing!'. Accidents do happen though, so it's "all care but no responsibility taken if things do go wrong".

Firstly it is best to strip away all the lower leaves to expose the base/heel of the first offset. Once this is done the offset can be eased away slightly from the main plant to show exactly where the attachment point is. Now that this point is clearly visible you can use a sharp knife/saw/chisel etc to slide down between the main plant and the offset and cut in a downward and slightly inward motion to remove the offset. Once removed, set the offset aside to allow the cut to dry or place in the leaf axil of a larger plant, *Alcantarea* are good to use for this purpose.

That's one done, now begin to remove the next layers of leaves until you reach the next offset and repeat the process.

Alternatively the brave at heart can follow the first set of directions but instead of cutting, slide your thumb down between plant and offset easing the offset out and away from the main plant. Getting your thumb right down as close to the heel of the offset is important at this stage, grasp the offset and tear it down and out. I did say for the brave hearted. This method should bring with it the black stringy bits which are roots, this is good, pot these offsets as soon as possible.

After this exercise was completed we attacked Kayelene's plant following the first suggested procedure step by step, it was a success, now it's up to Kayelene to nurture them on to good health. Don't forget to label each offset.

Final step, give the parent plant some foliar fertilizer or even a couple of slow release fertilizer prill in each leaf axil and it should give a few more offsets.

Nova - A Term Wrongly Used The term is '**novar**' NOT nova.

'**novar**': meaning no variegation, an offset that has reverted, lost variegation. It is a term used where a cultivar is registered as a variegated plant and 'loses' its variegation, first coined by Dennis Cathcart (Tropiflora Nursery USA) in the 1990s.

nova: is a girl's name of Latin origin. It is derived from "novus," meaning "new." Nova is also an astronomic term given to bright stars that appear suddenly in the sky and release powerful energy. **Not** a term relating to Bromeliads.

Name changes and keeping up-to-date with them makes an editors task harder and harder each year. Partly due to name reclassification changes and we're getting older! We can't always remember them and we do slip and use old names occasionally. Fortunately we have 'Eagle Eyed Observers' out there who thank us for our latest Newsletter and remind us of our 'old age slip ups' e.g: "I couldn't find *Aechmea burle-marxii* in the BSD - it's now *Wittmackia burle-marxii*. So please make corrections to our October 2022 Newsletter page 5 where this aging editor slipped up and didn't follow his own golden rule of check check check before going to print. Excuse me! what happened to the proof readers?

It was quite coincidental that this happened as we discussed this exact issue at our October meeting and how difficult it is to keep up with the changes. This is especially so for those of us who have been collecting for many years and have seen lots of name changes. The question we often here is "how do we keep up to it?" and "how am I supposed to remember that?". Generally I would say it's easy, but more so for the next generation of collectors who only get the new names. For longer time collectors make the change on the labels in your pots as soon as possible, then each time you're potting and writing labels it gradually sinks in. However not everybody notes the changes so old names perpetuate and occasionally we slip, which is why we need to make use of the tools we have at hand e.g. to check current names and spelling of species refer to: New Bromeliad Taxon List - <https://bromeliad.nl/taxonlist/>

For this and all other sites refer to page 16 of each issue. (reminder to self)

General discussion was had about how can you write plant tags/labels without the writing fading. The preferred methods suggested are as follows:

- Use a 2, 3, 4 or 6B pencil.
- Engrave the tag using a hand held engraving pencil.
- Use the rougher side of the tag.
- Roughen smooth tags using fine sandpaper.
- Put the tag in the pot upside down with the writing facing the wall of the pot.
- Number your plants as the number is often easier to read, use either of the previous suggested methods and record the number in a ledger including all relevant details e.g. plant name, where from and date acquired etc.
- Sticky backed labels supplied as a ribbon and printed on a small machine linked to a computer.
- Use an engraving tool on plastic labels is an effective permanent solution,
- Aluminium tags, a ball point pen or similar will indent plant name into them.

It pays to check your tags frequently as they may deteriorate from the sunlight, if deterioration is evident, replace your tag and try one of the suggested methods.

When labelling your bromeliad and you are unsure of it's name, would you please write the genus name e.g. *Neoregelia* and on the reverse side of the label write 'name unknown' — please do not abbreviate.

Have you ever come across a label that reads:-

- *Neo.* 'Imp' ? It is not the name of the plant, 'Imp' is short for imported.
- *Aechmea* 'No N' it is not 'NoN' but short for No Name.
- Bromeliad GKW, this means the grower has no idea of the genus, species or the name of the plant so it becomes a GKW — 'God Knows What'!
- NOID means 'No Idea'.

The abbreviation WTIF — 'Wait Till It Flowers' is often seen on Forums when (ID) identification is being sought for plants not in flower.

Which Bromeliad Flower Holds Colour The Longest Indoors?

The bromeliad flower is one of the best flowers you can use to add colour to your home, Guzmanias are some of the best plants for bathrooms.

The bromeliad family comes in many varieties producing a wide assortment of colours – from solid purple, red, or yellow flowers. Some bromeliads produce flowers with mixed colours.

To add stunning colour to a room mix bromeliads of different hues into one plant container to create a colourful bromeliad garden. They offer so much colour for long periods of time and can really dress up an area.

But, which bromeliad varieties last the longest?

Guzmanias and Vrieseas offer the best long lasting colour even after they've hit their prime.

Following a few simple steps can keep you enjoying bromeliads, both indoors and out, for several seasons.

- Provide bright light without direct sun exposure.
- Maintain optimal humidity.
- Keep air flowing around the plants.
- Make sure the plants stay moist but not soggy.
- Provide adequate drainage.
- Fertilize sparingly.

Open Popular Vote

1st	Kayelene Guthrie	<i>Neoregelia</i> 'Canefire' query ??
2nd	Mitch Jones	<i>Hechtia tillandsioides</i>
2nd	Helen Clewett	<i>Vriesea</i> 'Ladd's Elation' unreg.
3rd	Keryn Simpson	<i>Billbergia</i> 'Muriel Waterman'

Tillandsioideae

1st	Gary McAteer	<i>Tillandsia ionantha</i>
2nd	Helen Clewett	<i>Tillandsia ionantha</i> 'minima'
3rd	Mitch Jones	<i>Tillandsia</i> 'Leiboldiana Median'

Decorative

1st	Coral McAteer	'Donald is going to have a Happy Christmas'
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Judges Choice

1st	Coral McAteer	'Donald is going to have a Happy Christmas'
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John's Decorative Object - judged by John Crawford

1st	Keryn Simpson	3 Ball Glass Planter
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Web Links for Checking Correct Identification and Spelling ?

Bromeliad Cultivar Register (BCR): <http://registry.bsi.org/>

Refer to this site for correct identification and spelling of your hybrid or cultivar.

New Bromeliad Taxon List : <https://bromeliad.nl/taxonlist/>

Refer to this site for latest species name changes and correct spelling.

Bromeliads in Australia (BinA) <http://bromeliad.org.au/>

Refer to this site for its Photo Index, Club Newsletters many with Table of Contents Index and there's Detective Derek Articles.

Keep these web sites set as desktop icons for quick reference access.

Where do I Find the Dates ?

www.bromeliad.org.au then click "Diary".

Check this site for regular updates of times, dates and addresses of meetings and shows in your area and around the country.