

S.A. BROMELIAD GAZETTE

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xNeomea Santa Marta



Published by:-
**THE BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC**
Email address:
Secretary - tillands@senet.com.au
Web site: <http://www.bromeliad.org.au>

Meetings Venue:

Maltese Cultural Centre, 6 Jeanes Street,
Beverley

Time: 2.00pm.

Second Sunday of each month (unless
advised otherwise)

President:	Mr. Len. Colgan, 1 Ailsa Avenue, Warradale, 5046	82969426	
Secretary:	Mr. Derek. R. Butcher 25 Crace Road, Fulham, 5024	83567728	
Pots:	Available Feb., March, Sept., and Oct., meetings	83514876	Ron Masters for order or pick- up.
		0402250922	David Wecker

2008 Meeting dates :

Jul 13th, Aug 3rd (1st Sunday!) Sep 14th, Oct 12th, Nov. 9th and **Sales day** Nov. 8th,

Coming Events - 2008

July 13th -Reports from Cairns (Australian Bromeliad Conference)

August 3rd- Winter Brag

September 14th – Hard to grow and rarely seen Genera

October 12th- “4 corners” Educational Demonstrations - hands on

Applications for membership always welcome.

Subscriptions \$10.00 per year Feb. to Feb.



May meeting from the Secretary's desk

May meeting from the Secretary's Desk

The 4th May was Big Len's day because not only did he speak on the plants in the general display but the terrestrial pricklies.

First we will mention the general display. Sue Sckrabei had brought in a plant called *Neo olens* hybrid WM on the label but with two very good variegated offsets that had sported. She had already removed one variegated offset which we hope is settling into its new home. Len seemed more worried about the strappy look of the offsets whereas I was more concerned with the permanence of the variegation. Too many times have I seen this variegation go just as quickly as it came. Sue was advised to leave the offsets on and wait till early Summer before she thinks of removing the offsets. She can then look at growing it in optimal light to show the plant at its best. The name *olens* hybrid WM is a plant Margaret got from Bill Morris in 1989 and is a misnomer in that it does not have the traits of *olens* which is generally dominant in a hybrid but looks like a small 'Strawberry Cup'. It has done nothing in the last 20 years for it to be front stage but this may soon be changed. Bill Treloar tells us that in his experience stress has a lot to do with variegation but only Sue can tell us that! Did she threaten the plant? And so we wait because if the variegation seems fairly stable this Sport will need a name that Sue can think up. It was good to see Keith Bradtberg at the meeting not only to see his smiling face but the fact that he brought several plants in for the discussion! He had brought in *Cryptanthus* 'Black Magic' (see photo page 7) Little does he realise that there is discussion around as to whether some of 'Black Magic' growing in Australia are really 'Black Mystic' so perhaps Keith can do some sleuthing in his spare time.

A plant that the Secretary claimed should have been with the terrestrial pricklies was *Neoregelia* 'Macho' (see photo page 8) which had been found on a dump in Rio de Janeiro by the Floridian, R L Frasier. It certainly has large black spines.

One other surprise was to see *Aechmea fosteriana* in flower at this time of the year.

And so to the pricklies.

Most bromeliads do not need spines on their leaves when they are up in the trees, and if they are there they are generally small. But plants on the ground especially in dry areas need some sort of deterrent from grazing animals. These sorts of bromeliads are Len's second love after tillandsias and he had several to show us. Most had been grown from seed by Rudi Schulz of Victoria who had collected the seed when on his Cactus collecting trips. Len had bought the plants. Because Rudi is basically a 'Cactus' man his seedlings were known by numbers. As they flower under Len's care we try to identify them and have been successful on several occasions – *Orthophytum lucidum* being just one. While we seem to have success with the long scaped *Orthophytum* it was good to see *Orthophytum burle-marxii* (see photo page 7) as brought in by Keith. This is in the group that has little or no scape and often the centre leaves turn red at flowering. In fact, very attractive plants to grow but alas are very difficult in Adelaide. My friend in Rio de Janeiro, Oscar Ribeiro is a fan of this group and often explores their habitat. So much so. a recent find has been named *Orthophytum heleniceae*, after his wife. Apparently these forms like to grow on rocks near water sheds and it is this possible ecological niche that we cannot provide in Adelaide without going to a lot of trouble. Interestingly nobody had brought in *Orthophytum gurkenii* – rare in the wild but profuse in cultivation. This is a favourite with hybridists and we had several *Orthophytum* hybrids on display. One was called 'Fire & Ice' and supposed to be a Paterson hybrid but alas it is unregistered so we do not know how authentic it is.

Pricklies cont:

Most dyckias in cultivation are hybrids so it was refreshing to see more species on display. More of us should be growing Len's Heidelberg 130223 to see who can be the first to flower it and find out if it is a new species. Because seed was collected in the wild there is a greater chance of it being a species and not a hybrid. by the way, the plant said to be *D. brevifolia* with yellow leaves should be called by the cultivar name 'Yellow Glow'.

And now to the oddity where Len was able to give an interesting odd story. He had at least 3 sorts of 'Warren' on display which should be called 'Sons of Warren' if you are machoistic and/or realistic. We do not even know the parents of 'Warren' or what 'Warren' looks like but that did not stop others growing on seed from this hybrid and calling the seedlings 'Warren'. Will the true 'Warren' please stand up? The identity of some of these hybrids emanating from California is slowly being revealed to the Bromeliad World by a keen *Dyckia* grower in Thailand by the name of Chanin Thorut. If you really want to see a *Dyckia* collection 'par excellence' you should pay him a visit.

Deuterocohnia was next with *D. brevifolia* (see photo page 7) taking pride of place. Colin Anderson seems to have the knack of rooting offsets. All we have to do is convince him that a large tight cushion of offsetting plants is a crowd pleaser. Another success story was the small seedlings that Len had of *Deuterocohnia brevispicata*. (see photo page 8)

The seed had also come from Heidelberg but again Len had spread the seed around Australia. Who cares if the Queenslanders had flowered theirs last year, at least we were the ones who started it off! There was an offset of *Deuterocohnia lotteae* which Len offered to the first person who could tell him the country where the person it was named after, came from. The answer was Austria and Andrew Rawlinson has the job of rooting it. Perhaps he should speak to Colin Anderson because it took the Secretary 12 months to succeed.

We had several *Encholirium* on display and mostly Rudi Schulz numbers. I am prepared to say that #13 is *Encholirium reflexum* purely from leaf shape. Now this is a surprise because Len is the one who identifies *Tillandsia* from leaf whereas I say wait for the flower!

Then there was the *Hechtia* – we think – which has yet to flower so we can at least find out if it is a boy or a girl. If Len had got two plants it may have saved a loneliness crisis further down the track.

Len has always been proud of his *Deinacanthon urbanianum* which he got from Dutch Vandervort in California some years ago. It flowered recently and Len got its photo in the American Journal. Very few people share his enthusiasm and throughout his talk he tried to stay away from its clutches. You see, it has lovely hooked spines on its leaves. Len was somewhat dismissive of the scent from *Tillandsia* 'Kashkin' so I just had to ask him what scent his plant had. Apparently, he was too worried to get close because I quote from an article in 1954 "As do all other Argentine Bromeliaceae, it flowers early in the spring. Its whitish flower opens in the center of the foliar rosette and sends forth a cadaverous smell. It secretes abundant nectar, which often overflows over the perianth leaves, and can only be sucked by the flies who are attracted by the flower's unpleasant odor."

Then there was a *Puya mirabilis* that we were told wasn't and has yet to flower, and a *Puya laxa* where Len wanted proof of its flowering by bringing it in to a meeting when in flower!

Finally, there was the very rare *Bromelia flemingii* from Venezuela and only recently described. Perhaps because Keith grew it from seed it seems to have got used to the weather around Two Wells. On the face of it, it should be one of the hardest *Bromelia* to grow.

Finally, finally a bit of coincidence. Everybody must know our bicycling member called Peter Franov. He was undecided to buy a ticket for the special raffle because the *Alcantarea glaziouana* was 1m in diam and not a thing to take home on a bicycle. Then my Margaret –God bless her soul – said, "if you win it we'll take it home for you." And that is what happened. Seed for this was sown 20 years ago so it must be close to flowering! We had three plants surviving but felt we could spare one for the special raffle! Andrew Rawlinson had the job of protecting said plant on its trip to Brompton.



June meeting from the Secretary's desk

Special Raffle. To whoever won the Dyckia 'Warren' in the special raffle I suggest you put 'Son of Warren' on the label which will be closer to the mark although grandson of 'Warren' may also be on the cards. This matter will never be resolved because of unwillingness of the seed growers in NSW and California to show their hand and try to solve this riddle. 'Son of Warren' will not be in the Cultivar Register, yet!

Adam spoke on the display plants

George brought in a row of almost flowering *Tillandsia erubescens* if only to show us living on the Adelaide plains that we should move to the foothills where it is more cool and breezy in the Summer! Len had brought in his flowering *Tillandsia* collected high up on rocks near Mitla, Mexico. Len's problem was that he was in China –somewhere- when it started to flower. Hon Sec and wife decided to take the bull by the horns and remove one flowering branch to scan on the computer so data could be sent to Renate Ehlers. Adam noted what a fine job of butchery that did not need stitches and thus was not visible to the general audience. Renate is of the opinion that it is closely related to *T. wuelfinghoffii*, also rare in Australia. It was great to see the good looking *Vriesea* 'Adam's Dilemma' in flower. One of interest at least to me was *Aechmea* 'Burning Bush' which is a showy hybrid. You see, it all started in 1938 when Dutrie produced 'Fulgo-ramosa' crossing *fulgens* with *ramosa*. Offsets from this (these) plants were still around in the 1960's but were getting a bit old. Yes, plants do age, even in offsets. You need to start afresh with seed to give a plant a young and vitality look. Here, commercialism takes a role because a new name sells easier than an old name.

We also saw an *Ananas comosus* behaving badly. Bill Treloar while in Victoria could not miss a 'bargain'. 1. It had fruit any true *comosus* would be ashamed of, and 2. the leaves were spineless in the plant but not in the topknot!

Adam had been inducing plants recently and showed us *Hohenbergia rosea* (see photo page 8) – a huge plant with very small flowers!

And now to the big show when Derek joined Adam

Bigenerics.

Thanks to members rallying to the cause there were lots of bigenerics on display. First we handed out a listing of 51 nothogenera to show that much crossbreeding has been made in the past

A bigeneric occurs when one species from one genus is crossed with a species from another genus. This term is easier to understand than the official term nothogenus

To my mind, in Bromeliaceae all bigenerics are mules in that they cannot set seed nor provide viable pollen. I have yet to be proved wrong even though several have challenged this. When I have asked for proof the discussion ends. A Trigeneric has also been mooted which would also prove that a bigeneric can be fertile but this also lapsed.

So far, bigenerics have only been done within a subfamily thus *Pitcairnioideae*, *Bromelioideae* and *Tillandsioideae* mainly because I believe the seed shape has a great bearing on close relationships. However, I have had a claim by the Cuban Pineapple people that they successfully crossed a *Tillandsia fasciculata* with an *Ananas* but when I asked for proof, all went quiet. In another example Chester Skotak had crossed a *Guzmania* with a *Pitcairnia*. The resultant grass got to about 2 inches high and promptly died. So still nothing on this sort of hybrid.

Bigenetics cont:

Bigenetic hybrids seem to be easier to make if between two similar genera such as *Nidularium* and *Neoregelia* which also grow in close proximity but would be harder if between say *Hechtia* from Mexico and *Dyckia* in Brazil.

A hybrid between a *Dyckia* and a *Hechtia* (*xDycktia*) has an Australian flavour. In 1991 Don Beadle picked up from a Bromletter article that Olwen Ferris had crossed a *Dyckia* with a *Hechtia*. What he failed to pick up was that Olwen in a later Bromletter announced she got no seed! So don't count your chickens before they hatch.

When we first started the SA Brom Society we all grew *xOrthoanthus* 'What'. Not only was it easy to grow but when you realised you could say '*Orthoanthus* 'What' it gave you a warm fuzzy feeling. The problem was it grew from self set seed so is now just *Orthoanthus* 'What'. In 2003 a chap in Florida claimed the smallest hybrid *Dyckia* which flowered when only 4cm in diam. He wanted to call it *xDylirium* 'Angelita' (what a name!) because Harry Luther said it had links with *Encholirium*. We know that *Encholirium* are very close because only recently some *Dyckia* got transferred to *Encholirium*, but I could get no reply from Harry on the subject so as far as I was concerned it was still a *Dyckia*. Meanwhile they were being sold at US\$70 a piece. Dennis Cathcart knew about this and reported to me that they grew from self set seed too, so the *xDylirium* was well and truly dumped. With the close relationship between these two genera it is possible this name may rightly reoccur!

Succeeding with a bigeneric hybrid seems to be one of luck rather than expertise. In the early 1990's we visited Bill Morris near Newcastle and he offered me a stack of old letters he had from the 1960's with many links to bromeliad growers of the time. You see, Bill used seed from the Australia cycads as bait to get Bromeliads into Australia and he was successful on many occasions. In fact, I would say that Bill was one of our unsung heroes in getting so much new Bromeliad material to Australia in those early years. Anyway, back to the silverfish chewed letters that I sorted from date order to correspondent order. What revelations! In one batch we had Bill bragging to Mulford Foster that he had crossed *Billbergia nutans* with *Neoregelia carolinae* in the early 1960's. Bill was bragging because Mulford Foster had been trying for years to get a bigeneric to 'stick' and Bill had pipped him at the post. Such was Mulford's dismay that he categorically refused to believe what Bill had done. This made Bill disappointed too, because this bigeneric did not get named until 1991 when I pushed for the name *xNeobergia* 'Noddy'.

Do bigenerics occur in the wild even though they have reached an evolutionary dead end. Certainly they were reported in the early 1900's but there seems little proof that this was the case.

Only recently do we have *xHohenmea itaipuana*. In the 1980's Elton Leme named 3 *Nidularium edmundoi*, *fraudulentum*, and *lyman-smithii* all based on Seidel collections but where he saw oddities that made him uncertain of the genus. In 2000 he moved them to *xNiduregelia* and although he suggested they were made in cultivation he continued with the Latin name linking it to wild origin. What is interesting is that for the first two he had finds made at least 100 miles from each other. The mind boggles as to how the same two parents were involved so far apart. I still think he should have given them anglicised names and put them in the Cultivar Register. While Elton was having his problems with these three species I was wondering what to do with a plant from Ruby Ryde which also has tenuous links to Seidel. After many articles in Bromletter with me changing my mind it was eventually called *xNiduregelia* 'Ruby Ryde'!

Clearly, *xNeophytum* is a favourite of Adam's and he had brought in several examples (See page 8). He didn't bring in the main parent *Orthoanthus navioides* because we can't grow it in Adelaide but had photos instead.

We even had a similar looking *xOrthomea* 'Powder Puff'

There were several *xCanmea* and one *xVrieslandsia* 'Heavenly Wings' this one seemed to be struggling from the effects of the import gassing but is not yet in heaven, so we keep our fingers crossed.

Bigenetics cont:

Because *Vriesea* and the green leaved *Tillandsia* have similar inflorescences there have been few really outstanding x*Vrieslandsia* produced. One humdinger is 'Marichelle' promoted by Chris Larson in Melbourne where *Tillandsia imperialis* was crossed with a *Vriesea* hybrid to give a robust hybrid. (see photo page 8)

x*Neomea* has been done many times with nothing really outstanding because the *Neoregelia* seems to predominate causing the inflorescence to have a small scape and causing the flower to occur well down in the leaf cup.. One called x*Neomea* 'Santa Marta' (see photo page 1)

Adam thought was a *Neoregelia* and I made a weak joke about it. **Who** went home and looked at the Bromeliad data bases for 'Santa Marta'? Well, I did and it is a fascinating plant that originated in a nursery in Colombia and nobody has bothered to check the inflorescence. Lainie could do this but she may like to wait until her plant offsets when she can remove the total inflorescence and get it to me as long as it is not too mushy. I will butcher it just as little boys take wings off flies, just to see what it looks like. I had a sceptical nurseryman in northern NSW who I got to dissect some of his *Neoregelia* and *Nidularium* and bigenerics. I opened a whole new world of wonder for him and now I can't stop him!

x*Niduregelia* are just a variation between each of the genera involved and have produced only a few outstanding ones. Probably the same ratio as occurs with truly outstanding *Neoregelia* hybrids.

x*Anagelia* and x*Anamea* were there for those who want an easy way to produce ?inedible pineapples.

x*Neotanthus* seems to combine the better points of both genera in leaf structure but forget about the flowers.

x*Cryptbergia* 'Mead' is very common and yet does not have a photo in the 'official' records. Bill Treloar promises to help out!

x*Hohenelia* 'Nifty Nev' so called by the quirky humour of John Catlan

Finally we must mention x*Neostropsis* 'B-Fire' as it is known in Australia but 'Shadeball' in the USA purely because of laziness of the hybridist concerned.

Aechmea triticina* to *guarapariensis* to *roberto-seidelii by Butcher May 2008.

This article was prompted by the photograph on the back page of the Hunter District Brom Soc April 2008 Newsletter.

A plant was imported to Australia from Seidel in the 1980's by Len Colgan in Adelaide that was called *Aechmea triticina*. It is a prolific with its offsets and soon spread around Australia. The only puzzle was its identity. In the 1990's I started to get hold of original descriptions for my files and translated many from German and Portuguese. In the case of *Aechmea guarapariensis* I was dealing with Latin and Portuguese and because of my findings I considered that our *A. triticina* was in fact this plant. The description in Smith & Downs just did not fit. At least I convinced South Australians to change their labels. Tania Wendt and Elton Leme in the early 1990's in Brazil were in disagreement and so I just sat!

In the Journal of Bromeliad Society 49: 168. 1999 I was pleased to see that Bruno Silva and Elton Leme had at last found a 'true' *A. triticina* which was nothing like what we had been growing. So I hung on to the name *A. guarapariensis* even though it took a long time to write a label.

I had to wait another 8 years before having yet another change. In Journ. Brom. Soc. 57: 159-161. 2007 Tania Wendt considered that *A. guarapariensis* was really the earlier published *A. roberto-seidelii* (see photo page 7) I quote as follows

"The difficulties in the application of the correct name are associated to the complex taxonomic history involving *Aechmea roberto-seidelii* with *Aechmea guarapariensis*, *Aechmea triticina* Mez and *Aechmea pineliana* (Brong. ex Planch.) Baker.

During my revision of the subgenus *Pothuava* (Wendt 1997), which includes these species, I considered *Aechmea guarapariensis* and *Aechmea roberto-seidelii* as synonyms of *Aechmea triticina*. My interpretation was based on the similarity among type collections and also on the information of the original description that mentioned white or greenish floral coloration for all three taxa.

***Aechmea triticina* article cont:**

Aechmea triticina was described by Mez in 1896, but since its discovery it has been poorly understood due to the absence of original drawings and insufficient herbarium material. In 1999, Silva & Leme collected a plant that they considered to be the true *Aechmea triticina*, which exhibits flowers vividly rose to lilac. They considered that the characteristic of greenish flowers attributed to Glaziov (the collector of type specimens of *Aechmea triticina*) by Mez (1892) in the protologue is certainly a mistake. Whoever is right or wrong about the colour of the flower of the type specimens we will never know.”

So please change your label to *Aechmea roberto-seidelii* if it looks like an *A. pineliana* with white flowers. If you look at Smith & Downs you will see that this plant was treated as a synonym of *A. pineliana* var. *minuta* to show how similar they are in looks!

Just one word of warning. In the 1980’s there was a plant being grown as *A. roberto-seidelii* but was really an *A. warasii* in disguise!



Aechmea roberto-seidelii
photo by P Franklin
Aechmea roberto-seidelii



Photo by E. M. C. Leme
Fig. 7: Comparison of inflorescences of
Aechmea warasii var. *intermedia* (left)
and *A. warasii* var. *warasii* (right).
Aechmea warasii

An article that the Conference committee hope will be published soon in an issue of the Journal of the BSI

BROMADELAIDE2009

The Bromeliad Society of South Australia invites you to **Bromelaide2009**, the XVth biennial Australian Bromeliad Conference to be held in Adelaide over Easter 2009, Friday 10 April to Monday 13 April.

Information, including the first flyer and registration form, can be obtained at

<http://www.bromeliad.org.au/BROMADELAIDE2009.htm>

The conference venue is the Adelaide Meridien, which can be contacted for accommodation reservations by telephone toll free in Australia on 1800 888 228, or by email

res@adelaidemeridien.com.au

The keynote speaker will be Dr Jason Grant, and the conference will include a reception/cocktail event, plant sales, rare plant auction, and balanced educational and stimulating talks. There is an optional Sunday afternoon/evening bus trip to McLaren Vale involving wine tasting at three world class wineries, other attractions and dinner at a unique and charming restaurant.

The early bird registration fee, including several meals, is AUST\$185 if paid before 31 December, 2008, or AUST\$200 if paid thereafter. Please refer to the above web site.

Reference photos



Cryptanthus 'Black Magic'



Orthophytum burle-marxii



Dyckia brevifolia

Reference photos cont:



Neoregelia 'Macho'



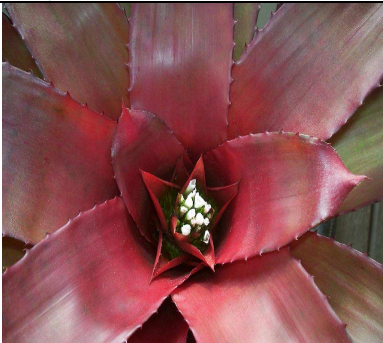
Hohenbergia rosea
photo by Luiz Felipe Nevaes de Carvalho



Deuterocohnia brevispicata

BIOGENERIC reference photos

Biogeneric



Xniduregelia
Something special

Parents



Neoregelia Vulkan



Nidularium fulgens



Vrieslandsia Marichelle



Tillandsia imperialis



Vriesea Favourite



Xneophytum Ralph Davis



Orthophytum navioides



Neoregelia Meyendorffii