

Bromeliaceae



VOLUME XLIV - No. 4

-

Jul/Aug 2010



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Front Cover: *xGuzryiensea* 'Happa' Photo by Ross Stenhouse
Rear Cover : *Hohenbergia correia-araujo* Photo by Ross Stenhouse

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From the Desk of the Editor

Yet another edition safely put to bed - feels like it wasn't so long since I put the previous edition together.

As editor, you get exposed to a lot of the internal workings of the bromeliad world and if you aren't careful you can make/retain friends in one camp and end up completely off side with another. Experience has taught me that as editor I shouldn't become involved, no matter how much I might want to.

If you are correctly reading between the lines you will have formed the opinion that I have received a "Letter to the Editor" that I am not publishing. I have decided that becoming involved would not be beneficial to any of the affected parties. I hope people understand that sometimes I am in an awkward position and decided that discretion is the better part of valour in this case..

Have you noticed that two of the most regular contributors are Rob Smythe and Derek Butcher. I think the Australian bromeliad community and maybe further afield owes these two people a big thank you. Well done Rob and Derek.

Having said that I am glad to introduce a new contributor to these pages Maxim Wilson. Max has written an article on how to use "YouTube" to find and watch videos about bromeliads on the web - welcome aboard Maxim.

I have been hard at work with the Society web site. I completely re-engineered it. I think it looks a lot better and is far easier to use. I have added a few new pages as well, one being a page where copies of the Society's new email newsletter "Bromeliad Newsletter" is available for download.

Have you ever wanted to contact a Society Office Holder but didn't know their email addresses, well have a look in the contact us page on the web site. Mail is sent to a mail box on the site where it is redirected to the correct email address.

Its amazing just how many unique visitors visit the site each day, usually about 160 a day or about 4800 a month. There certainly is great interest in bromeliads world wide.

On page 21 I have extracted a couple of graphs from the statistics for the site for August to give you a bit of an idea how things are going.

Have you ever tried self-Googleing I do it often and get surprised where my name turns up. Sometimes there is a namesake who is famous who gets all of the hits. My name comes up quite a bit and I enjoy seeing where it refers. I like it when you find that an article you wrote and was published picked up by other editors and published in their journals. It encourages you to give it another go and see if you can write another article.

While on this theme, by accident I ended up in the State Library of Queensland and so I decided to have a look inside and find out what was there. I spoke to one of the librarians and found out how to search the library catalogues and did a search on "Bromeliaceae" and found that the first issue was sent in during 1969 and the most recent was the 2010 May/June edition. I was hooked and so I registered with them.

You can access the catalogues online at www.slq.qld.gov.au/ and search as a visitor. I noticed that member Peter Paroz had written a paper called "Bromeliad Society of Queensland: the First Twenty-five Years"

It should be understood that the State Library is a reference library and you cannot borrow books, rather you go in there for research and you make request and they retrieve them from the repository for you.



Photos top and middle left: *xQuesmea* 'Lymanii' photos by M Kellett

Photo bottom left: *xQuesmea* 'Lymanii' ex M Foster - photo circa 1970 courtesy Marie Selby Gardens - photo by Marcel Lecoufle

xQuesmea 'Lyman'

by D Butcher 8/2010.

You may be growing this as *xQuesmea lymanii* but there is a little problem. It has never been described! Does this matter? Well, Lyman Smith seemed to think so when he wrote in *Phytologia* 30 (5): 292-295, 1975 about *xCryptbergia* Hort ex R. G. & C. Wilson where he pointed out that meadii was illegitimate. This is why we now know this plant these days as *xCryptbergia* 'Mead'.

xQuesmea lymanii is of the same vintage! The nothogenus did not become 'legal' until 1972 when Eric Knobloch just mentioned the name in an article in *J Brom Soc.* 22:58, 1972. No mention was made as to any culton involved.

This all started in June this year when Harry Luther sent a copy of a slide from Racine Foster for the Cultivar Register. He had already sent me a copy of a Marcel Lecoufle slide of the same cultivar in 2009. What is interesting is that the only photos I had had previous to this had come from Australia.

Anyway, I could find no description for this cultivar.

The first mention was by Edgar Smith in *J Brom Soc* 33:75, 1983 where the parents *Quesnelia quesnelioides* x *Aechmea distichantha* var. *schlumbergera* are at odds with that quoted in the 1998 Bromeliad Cultivar Register! Here it is said these are *Quesnelia testudo* x *Aechmea distichantha* var. *schlumbergera* which are a repeat of that quoted by Brian Smith in his Manuscript of Bromeliad Hybrids 1984 which was a summary of information obtained from US Nurserymen's catalogues at that time.

The only other reference I could find was an article by Racine Foster in *J Brom Soc* 37: 99-104, 110, 1987 where we read:

xQuesmea ? (*Aechmea distichantha* x *Quesnelia arvensis*) 1960

xQuesmea lymanii (*Aechmea distichantha* x *Quesnelia testudo*) 1960

The formula is again in conflict and here we have another hybrid that would look very similar with these quoted parents and we only know about it 27 years after the event. How do we know if the *xQuesmea lymanii* we are growing today is not *xQuesmea* ? ?

Being positive we will have to accept that all the plants at least growing in Australia should be *xQuesmea* 'Lyman'. Maurice Kellert in Victoria imported his plant direct from Mulford Foster and it arrived on Australian shores in June 1973. Geoff Lawn in Western Australia tells me he got an offset from Maurice in 1983, so no doubt, there must be more plants being grown around Australia – somewhere.

If anyone is aware of old unpublished information, or newsletters of the period in Florida please let me know.



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SELFING Species

Author: Rob Smythe MSc

Ed - please look at the photo bottom right on pg.8 prior to reading this article. Unfortunately it is not always possible to get the article and the photo illustrations on the same page spread.

When growing species it is very important to be sure that only you have selfed the plant. Here I am studying probably a primary hybrid and I want to find out if there is variability in its seedlings. I want no confusion as to what plant the pollen plant is. If you are working with hybrids it is not so important as you can register these with an unknown parent. Don't just collect seed of a species and assume it is selfed.

The best methods to self is to select a branch pre-flowering and wire a stocking over it. Keep it covered till all buds have flowered. The only time you expose it is when it is being pollinated. Preferably take the pollen from a species of the same name.

With plants like *Neoregelias* this is not possible. You can put drinking straws over the flower but this does not keep ants away unless you seal the end of the straw. Better to take your plant inside and sit it in a tray of water. You can't leave it inside till all flowers are spent so mark the fruit. Again a coloured drinking straw will suffice. It only has to be kept inside till the day after pollination.

The BSQ Web Site

Don't forget that the society has a web site. We place urgent and general information and information on the site.

The URL is:

www.Bromeliadsqueensland.com

Bromeliaceae

BROMELIADS on YouTube and the Internet

Author Maxim Wilson

There are many short videos on bromeliads on YouTube to add to the information we get at Bromeliad Society meetings.

Just Google "YouTube", bring up the web site, then look for the search bar .

Type bromeliads , hit return , and a large selection of short videos appears.

Do remember to click the small icon with four small arrows at the bottom Right hand corner, to get full screen video. Below I list some of the videos I found useful, and you can enter the titles listed below in the search bar .

1. How to harvest pups, Part 1. Todd from N.Z. demonstrates harvesting pups from *Guzmania* and the mini *Neo ampullaceae*, in 6 minutes .

2. How to plant pups, part 2. Again Todd does that in four minutes 46 seconds.

3. Jack's Florida Bromeliads. This four minute video takes you through his greenhouse showing interesting specimens. No commentary, occasional labels.

4. Jack's Florida bromeliads I and II feature a slide show of his plants in flower, with occasional names .

5. Bromeliad *Alcantaria imperialis rubra* is a one minute 48 seconds video of a good specimen.

6. The Evil Florida Bo Weevil is a video clip from TV News with a woman reporting on the pest, from Central America, which is destroying bromeliads across 20 counties in Florida.

7. *Tillandsia ionantha* Bromeliads shows a 47 seconds slideshow of the many forms of this bromeliad

8. Spanish moss in flower (two minutes 30 seconds) .This caught my attention because I have not seen this bromeliad in flower.

9. The Story of Spanish moss. This professional video from the History Channel tells a fanciful story (one minute 26 seconds).

If you understand Spanish, then your choices are extended. You don't need to search each of the titles listed above. Once you have viewed one video, you will see a column on related videos down the right hand side of your screen.

When I see a beautiful bromeliad at our monthly meeting, I Google its name, and come up with many sites. Clicking images at the top left hand side of the window brings up a whole screen of photos of that bromeliad, and others.

Some sites lead to a blog where brom fanciers exchange ideas, photos and answer questions .One such blog introduced me to large Neoregelia species and hybrids .I found I could import them to a file, so I built up an archive of bromeliad photos.

Our Society web site has some links to other Societies .

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Above: *Tillandsia* 'Uluru' - photo by J Batty

Above left: *Tillandsia* 'Uluru' - photo by Derek Butcher



Left Bottom: *Tillandsia* 'Domingensis' - photo by Derek Butcher



Photo above: illustration for article "Selfing Species" pg.6

Tillandsia 'Uluru'

by Derek Butcher May 2010

This all started out at the May meeting of the Bromeliad Society of SA when Adam Bodzioch brought in a flowering Tillandsia. You see, he had been playing with chemicals to induce flowering. It had *T. capitata* 'Domingensis' hybrid on the label. It was all the more interesting because I had got a very similar looking plant from Nev Ryan in 2000 as hybrid #2000 that was still waiting to flower. Mine was from a seedling batch and the similarities of the seedlings suggest it was a primary cross. Clearly Nev was not sure of the identity of the plant he got the seed from when I got my seedling but later he was convinced the mother plant he had was one called 'Domingensis'.

Let us look at this rather obscure plant because this name is popular in collections. The name means coming from the Dominican Republic but there are other *T. capitata* growing on the island that used to be called Hispaniola which is now shared with Haiti. So the name is not really definitive in itself.

In 1964 Ariza Julia collected a plant in the Dominican Republic at El Penon, Higüey to El Seibo, which Lyman Smith identified as *T. capitata* var. *capitata* and is held as a herbarium specimen in the US National herbarium. A drawing was done and used by Lyman Smith in *Flora Neotropica* as an example of what this species should look like. This seems an odd choice when we know that this species comes in many shapes and sizes from both the West Indies and mainland Mexico.

So botanically speaking it has been swallowed up under a broad concept species. From a horticultural point of view it does have certain identifying features and dare I

say that the use of the name 'Domingensis' has much more meaning than 'Yellow', 'Marron', 'Peach' etc. The use of such terms based on colours is useless to anyone trying to make a study of this species!

This small plant was recognised by nurserymen as being 'different' but as is usual nothing was done to define it. The fact that it was different meant it had a selling edge! In 1982 I brought back such a plant from the USA and no doubt, others over the years have imported this plant from the USA.

In 1983 in *Brom Soc* 33(4): 170. Rauh & Ariza Julia wrote the following on a

Tillandsia capitata var. *domingensis*:

"One of the most attractive tillandsias of the Dominican Republic is *Tillandsia capitata*, known only from one locality, the limestone rock called El Penon, between Higüey and El Seibo in the southeastern part of the island. It differs in so many characters from the type that it should be described as a separate variety, *T. capitata* var. *domingensis* nov. var. Rauh et Ariza Julia, Fig. 19.

The plant is not stemless, but forms long stems and produces many offsets, so that it forms dense mats and big clusters. All rosette leaves, including the 3-4 cm long sheaths, are of a dark wine-red color, which does not fade in the winter in Europe; the inflorescence is shorter than the rosette leaves, is depauperate-compound or often pseudosimple and very short-ellipsoid, with few flowers."

But, nothing further was done – no Latin description, no herbarium specimen so it is an invalid name as far as taxonomists are concerned.

We now return to the hybrid that occurred under Nev Ryan's care but what provided the foreign pollen? Nev is not prepared to guess the pollen parent but I am putting my money on *T. ionantha*. In any even parent names, especially father, are only a guide.



'Photo' in Gartenflora 1891



Billbergia 'Elvenia Slosson'



Billbergia 'Leodiensis'

I'll be getting the name 'Uluru' recorded. My plant is 18 cm tall. This is an apt name because the plant is red and it just sits there for years doing nothing – just like a rock! If you have a plant I suggest you change the label.

**The link between
Billbergia 'Leodiensis'
and *Billbergia* 'Elvenia
Slosson'**

by Butcher July 2010

Let us go back to 1981 when Bernard Stonor wrote in 'Bromlink' (WA Soc newsletter) 2(3): 7. 1981. (Bernard was one of the early stalwarts in Bromeliaceae in Australia.)

"*Billbergia*. *x leodiensis* (*nutans* *x vittata*) was originally grown in many collections (in Australia) as *B.* 'Elvenia Slosson' but now that details of these two hybrids are known there seems little doubt that *B. x leodiensis* is correct. *B.* 'Elvenia Slosson' is said to be *nutans* *x* 'Albertii' with 'Albertii' being *distachia* *x* *nutans*. This suggests the plant would be very close to *nutans*!"

This sounds reasonable enough but I did not really know what *B.* 'Leodiensis' was supposed to look like. Thanks to Leo Dijkgraaf from the Netherlands I now have a copy of *Gartenflora* 1891 where Witte describes this new hybrid. Needless to say this opened a can of worms again showing that hybridists in California in the early days of the BSI guessed what they were doing. First let us look at what Witte had to say. He was a gardener at Leiden, Holland and had problems with the academics of his day!

"*Billbergia leodiensis* H. L. B. and *Billbergia Intermedia* H. L. B. by H Witte.

in *Gartenflora* 40: 563-9. 1891

H. L. B. stands for Hortus (Academicus) Lugduno Batavus, this name goes back to a Roman settlement near Leiden called Lugdunum Batavorum; so it is Hortus Leiden.

Gardener in the Leiden Botanical Garden

See illustrations 99-102

Translated by Butcher & Leo Dijkgraaf

In the month of December 1889 two *Billbergias* came into flower at the Leiden University Botanical Garden, which greatly interested me and probably everyone else that I informed of its origin.

They were two hybrids from the same named parents in fact, but then the plants themselves showed a strongly distinct difference. Both were descendants well known and much cultivated *Billbergia vittata* (fig. 99), and *B. nutans* (fig. 102), but in the reverse positions. The one that had *Billbergia nutans* as the mother and *vittata* as the father (*B. intermedia*, fig., 101), and the reverse, (*B. leodiensis*, fig., 100).

When I showed these plants to a systematic-specialist and he looked at all four plants (both parents standing at one end), he called it a scientifically very interesting example of hybridisation, but "if we continue in this way", he added, "will flora itself mistake her children, and how will it then be possible to conform everything with rules and laws, to distinguish hybrids from species?"

I say this is possible and in my opinion it is not so relevant when a hybrid is regarded as a species.

One must assume however that most of the species of truly hybrid origin are; and whether nature that uses the wind, the insects or human being, to transmit pollen, is actually all the same however; as well whether a hybrid originated now, or whether it originated



Billbergia 'Leodiensis' plant originally from Bernard Stonor, photo by Derek Butcher

centuries ago, and the science learned, to know it as a species. Most important thing is firstly that we have the plants, secondly that we distinguish them, and also make both things possible for other people.

He shook his head, and laughed. Some days later I showed him the photos of these four plants, in the same sequence, glued on cardboard, he was quite content.

I sent printings of it also to the Senior executive officer Professor Dr. Wittmack, who is specifically interested in Bromeliads; I told him that I had received one from Berlin, and others from the Liege Botanical Garden, and left it to him, whether he wanted to use this communication in "Gartenflora".

Prof. Dr. Wittmack however had already sent me, a couple of months before, illustrations of very exact copies which had been prepared from the photographs, and requested me to write more text for it, which was somewhat inconvenient, since I had so much to write, and also, because I am not as comfortable with the German language, as with Dutch.

I console myself however with the thought, that I will be better in German, than if he did it in Dutch. Further he must now see it legibly as he does my chitchat, that carries also a rather hybrid character!

I got one of the two plants, which is in my article here, in 1887 from my colleague, Herr Marechal, from the botanical garden in Liege, under the name *Billbergia vittato-nutans*. It was grown by the unfortunately too early deceased bromeliographer Ed. Morren from seeds of *B. vittata*, that had been fertilized with pollen from *B. nutans*. (Fig. 100).

In 1889, a duplicates list sent from my colleague Mr. Perring from Berlin of Bromeliads to exchange. Under the same name, I found *Billbergia nutans* x *vittata*, a hybrid cultivated in the Berlin Botanical

Garden, from seeds of *B. nutans*, that had been fertilised with pollen from *B. vittata*. Therefore in reverse.

Not since that time had the former plant flowered here, but flowering was soon to occur, I had also much interest in the second one in order to see how far different these two hybrids were or how similar.

Mr. Perring had the kindness to send me a strong plant of the Berlin hybrid, and so both flowered simultaneously in the winter 1890/91 in the Orchid House.

The two plants look so different that one should not suspect that they are so closely related, and yet, when compared with the two parents, it is undeniable that both must be viewed as an inter-form.

With one, where *B. nutans* is the mother, (*B. intermedia*, fig., 101), its habit has remained more or less similar to the leaf form of the mother, modified only visibly through the influence of *vittata*. The same is with the other the case, so that the habit (*B. leodiensis*, fig., 100) is rather near to *vittata*; however the effect of the father, *B. nutans*, in size, is such that nobody would consider it *vittata*, but as a strongly modified *B. nutans*.

Already the Liege plant new from Professor Morren had flowered, and reported by Baker in "Handbook of the Bromeliaceae". As it is known, Morren's rich collection of original illustrations of Bromeliaceae became the property of Kew Gardens, and probably gave Baker incentive in the publication of his monograph. On page 83 No. 38 he gives a description of *Billbergia vittato-nutans* Hort. Makoy, after a plant, which flowered in March 1888 at Kew. He says there that Morren's illustrations occur in two different forms of this hybrid, one that has shorter stiffer leaves than the one he described that recurve from low down. So both forms must have flowered earlier with Morren (the hybrid did not come from Makoy but from the

botanical garden in Liege).

Since the Baker's hybrid name seemed unsuitable to me (and also others), and this plant still had no other name, I named it *Billbergia leodiensis*, (the Liege Billbergia, Fig. 100).

As said, this plant not at all resembles its father, *B. nutans*, resembles however more through the leaf form of the mother, *B. vittata*, although the leaves are much strongly bent over. They are more narrow and flabby, and show only a weak touch of the white cross-lines that are so strongly marked in *vittata*. The spines on the leaf edge are smaller than with *vittata*.

Therefore *B. nutans* had a clear influence on the leaves, and even more strongly visible in the flower.

The inflorescence has from the middle a long bent over scape, and reminds on the whole more *nutans* than *vittata*: whose scape is stronger and not bent over and nodding (*nutans*), that is, not bent suddenly at the top but up to half bend over; it is however stiffer than *vittata*. The bracts or here better 'transition bracts' (Scape bracts, anaphylla - after Wittmack) that involves stature, form and number is more near to *nutans* than reminiscent to *vittata*.

It is clear, that the character of the father (*nutans*) is prevalent in its flowers, by virtue of all its parts. (Now, with the sample before me, casually looking at the flowers of the two hybrids again, they are much stronger and beautiful. The scape is longer, the inflorescence much stronger, branches below; it is no longer similar to *nutans*, but suits the two parents as know)

The Ovary is light green, 13mm long, the calyx pink coloured, with dark-blue tips. The petals are 2cm longer than the tips of the calyx, green only at the lowermost end, blue above. Against the light is seen the greenish mid rib of the petal. The filament is as long

as the petal; the stigma is green.

If you follow Baker's method the Berlin hybrid should be called *B. nutans-vittata*. I used the name *Billbergia intermedia* H. L. B. (Illustration 100), because it is clear it is in the middle between *nutans* and *leodiensis*. In the habit of the form of the leaf, this is similar to the hybrid with *B. nutans*, only much stronger in its development, so that you might consider it a quite another species. The plant offsets like *nutans* as well; the leaves stand stiffly, straight erect and only bent over at its top; they reach 90cm long and 3cm wide.

The inflorescence comes closer to that of *nutans* than to *Billbergia leodiensis*.

The pink coloured 'transition bracts', 5 in number, have the same form and stand completely like *nutans*; the middle, the third and the largest, is 8cm long, 1.5cm wide, (Now the largest is 11 cm long, 2cm wide). All somewhat white powdered (like bran) and surround the tips of the lower most flowers. These, 6 in number (Now more than the double, 15-17; also there is a three flowered, lowermost flower-stalk so that panicle shows an inclination to branch.) are not stemmed, and have only very small, hardly visible, densely adjacent to the ovary, red scale-like bracts.

The ovary is green, 1cm long. The calyx is red, with blue tips, 2cm long, and the corolla 2 cm long. The petals are bent backwards, green at the base, further above blue, with a greenish touch. The filaments seem to be the same length as the corolla, but in reality a little shorter. The stigma is strongly twisted, blue.

On the whole you can say that this plant is a very much-improved form of *Billbergia nutans*. The plant is much stronger and the flowers more appealing.

Just as with the little similar *B. leodiensis*, it can be spoken here as having a nutant scape, a nodding shaft. This shows

that the nodding inflorescence character has been lost in the two hybrids. The scape of *B. nutans* stands in the low part stiffly erect, but is flabby in the hybrids. In the remaining comes the flower stem, in which bracts and the flowers show the character of *B. nutans*.

To say, that these two plants are an important improvement would be, seen from a floristic point of view, saying too much.

There are more beautiful ones in this rich bromeliad genus.

But they are an asset anyway; the plants by themselves are already strong and maintaining a flowering period are graciously named.

Interesting is the example of the influence of the foreign pollen. *B. vittata* and *nutans* are quite different plants, and the two hybrids stand so exactly between them that these four represent an impressive row; the two between forms so to speak, connect the two others with each other.

The enclosed illustrations show that most clearly."

After reading this and looking at the 'photograph' I think I have an idea of what *B. 'Leodiensis'* looks like and can confirm Bernard's decision that we have *B. 'Leodiensis'* or a plant with similar parentage in Australia.

But what about this plant that arrived in Australia as 'Elvenia Slosson'? All I can find is this, because it was not formally registered.

Billbergia 'Elvenia Slosson'

From Padilla in Brom Soc Bull 12(4): 71. 1962

James N. Giridlian, of Oakhurst Gardens in Arcadia, California, has made a number of noteworthy *Billbergia* crosses. One of his first is *B. x 'Elvenia Slosson'*, named in honor of a prominent garden club leader. This is an exceedingly graceful *Billbergia*, with very long, strap-shaped deep

green leaves, which turn purplish bronze in the sun. The attractive inflorescence with its bright red bracts and deep purple flowers may measure from 24 to 36 inches. This *Billbergia* makes a handsome pot plant.

From Padilla in Bromeliads 1973

'Elvenia Slosson' Giridlian (*B. nutans* x *B. albertii*?). The very long, strap-shaped, dark green leaves turn purplish bronze in the sun. The bracts are bright red; the petals, deep purple. The flowering plant is about 3 feet high.

It appears that 'Elvenia Slosson' came into being just after WW2 so it was some years before the parents were made known. To help us decide how a hybrid can get deep purple petals we need to know a bit more about this *B. albertii*.

Billbergia 'Albertii'

From Padilla in Brom Soc Bull 12(4): 1962

Some *Billbergias* found in nurseries do have names, however; but, unfortunately, many of these are erroneous. For example, some of us have a *Billbergia* known as *B. x "Albertii."* Its origin is uncertain, and Mulford Foster insists that there is no such plant. Perhaps this *Billbergia* is a distachia cross, but we do not know. It is a stocky, broad-leaved tubular plant with dull green leaves suffused with light purple and creamy-white spots, then dusted over with a fine white powder. Regardless of its doubtful origin, this is an attractive *Billbergia*

Magically in BSI-ICBH-1979 parents of distachia x nutans appear

Here again we do have an 'Albertii' in Australia and it does show traits of *B. distachia* in its flowers by having more green in the petals (not mentioned in Padilla's description)

Let us now return to 'Elvenia Slosson' that if we follow Bernard's reasoning could only have green petals with blue edging NOT

totally deep purple petals. History shows us that the dark blue petals of *B. vittata* is dominant in its hybrids which makes me wonder how 'Elvenia Slosson' came into existence. Was it an unknown hybrid that had got to the USA from Europe or was it a deliberately made hybrid with guesses as to parentage? At the moment I feel that 'Elvenia Slosson' is really another name for 'Leodinensis'! We will never know but it has the same feeling I had when I proved that *Billbergia 'Theodore L Mead'* was really a renaming of *B. 'Windii'*

In conclusion

From investigations made in July 2010, *B. 'Elvenia Slosson'* is very rare amongst collectors in California and is not in current US catalogues. It is on sale at a Mexican plant nursery, and surprise, surprise by Seidel in Brazil. The photo obtained from Donato Seidel shows the same traits as the plant

imported to Australia over 30 years ago and thus showing no influence of *B. distachia*. Meanwhile, all we can do is to note the Register that the parents quoted for 'Elvenia Slosson' are suspect and this cultivar is a probable remake of 'Leodiensis'

Hohenbergia lanata* it is not. Try *Aechmea (Hoh). 'Whyanbeel'

Author: Rob Smythe MSc

The plant shown in the pictures (page opposite) has been known as *Hohenbergia lanata* for some time. I received my plant from the Brisbane area some years ago. Arno King visited a couple of months back and I showed him this plant. My comment was that I had never seen it flower. Arno replied that the flower is very short and I may have missed it.

The photo you have before you is what we now see in my garden. Checking with photos available from Far North Queensland and Central Queensland-- I am not alone. This plant is most definitely not *Hoh. lanata*. With *Hoh. lanata* the flower spike is as Arno says. It is about half the size of the leaf. So if you have the plant shown you can cross the label off if it has the name *H. lanata*

Hoh. salzmannii has also been suggested as a possibility. It is definitely not this as *Hoh. salzmannii* does not have armed sepals and you can take my word for it, my plant does have a prickle at the end of each sepal.

Aechmea floribunda.

Another suggestion was that it is not a *Hohenbergia* but *Aechmea floribunda*. This is wrong also as it is not an *Aechmea*. *Hohenbergia aechmeoides* has no significant epigynous tube, flowers tubular, cone-like

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branches, inflorescence mainly pinnate (multi). Well developed petal appendages all of which suggesting it fitting within the *hohenbergia* genus. Yes the plant itself does look like an *aechmea* and hence its species name. The cone like spikes are much tighter than the lax *Aech. floribunda*.

Aechmea. 'Whyanbeel'. That name probably would be OK if the genus was correct. Mine is most definitely the plant illustrated with this registration.

After a lot of hours of work I have come to the conclusion that the best fitting name for this plant is *Hohenbergia aechmeoides*. Now why have you not heard of this? I don't know how I got into this as my study time is fully booked studying *Alcantareas*. The problem with *alcantareas* being that so many species came into Australia before they were described botanically. Now I have found, without trying, a *hohenbergia* that has been in our garden for years and not described until 2010.

Note:- At this juncture it is more a feeling than a fact that this plant is *Hohenbergia aechmeoides* (see taxonomist's comments below who says it is not. I must bow to authority).

I am no authority on *hohenbergias* but my general taxonomic knowledge would allow me to trace this plant completely. I would need to consult to find out what recent namings have occurred within this genus. Not sure I can make the time. I could list all the *hohenbergias* that it is not. I will be very surprised if anyone can find a closer fit than *Hohenbergia aechmeoides* amongst the known species. The main divergences are in lengths of the sterile components of the inflorescence (see table below). Sizes of these are a function of horticulture and climate and since all plants viewed by me are grown in the tropics I am not surprised. I ran into this problem many years ago when studying *aechmeas*. I could

key out a species grown in full sun and get a different species for the same plant grown in the shade. I collected data over three years and isolated data that was consistent. The relationship of the primary bract's length to the sterile section of the branch was unstable and should not have been used for separating species. Without using a microscope the features of my plant fit with the description of the species with the exception of the length of the inflorescence's peduncle which is 50% longer than recorded and the length of the sterile sections of the primary branches which are about twice the size stated. It is struggling to meet the described four pinnate inflorescence with only one single pinnate spike on only one of the tri-pinnate spikes, whereas the literature suggests two per spike.

I have looked at fairly reliable photos and literature of approximately 60 current and ex- *hohenbergias* and found nothing else like the plant in question. If I have missed one I hope you will let me know. The last possibility is that it is a hybrid. As it carries the name *H. lanata* I would assume that the pod parent would be *lanata* and looking at photos that I have of other *hohenbergias* I could imagine the pollen parent as *H. ridleyi* which I know is in Australia. A genuine *lanata* I have not seen in Australia but until now I have never looked. Does anyone have one? The flower should be much shorter than the leaf (about 50%). As suggested in comments below the seed may have originated from a Brazilian garden where both species may have been present. I am very carefully selfing some flowers so that no other pollinator has access. Seedlings grown from this seed should answer this question. The seed responsible for existing plants in Australia is believed to have come in from wild plants and so far all three plants seen by me are much the same. They appear to be species but may all have come from one seed for all I know.



Aechmea 'Whyanbeel' inflorescence
Photo: Rob Smythe



Billbergia distachia

I am studying the taxonomy of the above plant. It is grown in my garden under full shade, from giant gum trees, during winter which is also the time of flowering. I have inserted a picture of the same plant when young and with summer colours. The picture shows my plant growing towards the East. It seeks an hour or two of morning sun. I believe this is why sterile segments are longer than expected. It is looking for light (phototropic).

a small form of *Aechmea floribunda*. It was given the cultivar name of *Aechmea* 'Whyanbeel'. Your plant flowered in April 2010 and Geoff pointed out to you that it looked like 'Whyanbeel'. You started to take your flower apart and you mentioned the virtual lack of an epigynous tube. This prompted me to send the description of Elton's 'hot off the press' *Hohenbergia aechmeoides* to you and it is the best match so far."

Characteristic	<i>Hoh. aechmeoides</i>	<i>Aechmea</i> (Hoh) 'Whyanbeel'
Peduncle of Inflorescence	57 cm	90
Inflorescence diameter	27 - 35 cm	42 cm
Primary fascicles	30 - 35	6 - 7 cm
Stipes (Sterile sections of first branches.)	2 - 3 cm	6 - 7 cm
Secondary branches	7 to 12	up to 15
Secondary fascicles on a tertiary branch	at base 1 to 2	only one case of one
Epigynous Tube	2 mm	less than 2 mm

Acknowledgements and responses

Geoff Breen:

For his collection of photos and suggestion of names that have been considered.

Derek Butcher:

I keyed it out, came up with *Hohenbergia* and keyed it out within this genus and came to a dead end. Derek put me on to a "hot off the press" paper mentioned below. I investigated and wrote up the article above which I circulated to several experienced growers for comment. Derek's response is below give a snippet of history.

"I think this is best tackled by saying that this plant was investigated by Butcher 3 years ago but he could find no link to any *Hohenbergia* and the nearest seemed to be

Taxonomist in Brazil:

"It doesn't look like *Hohenbergia aechmeoides*. It could eventually be a hybrid, but I am not sure what it is."

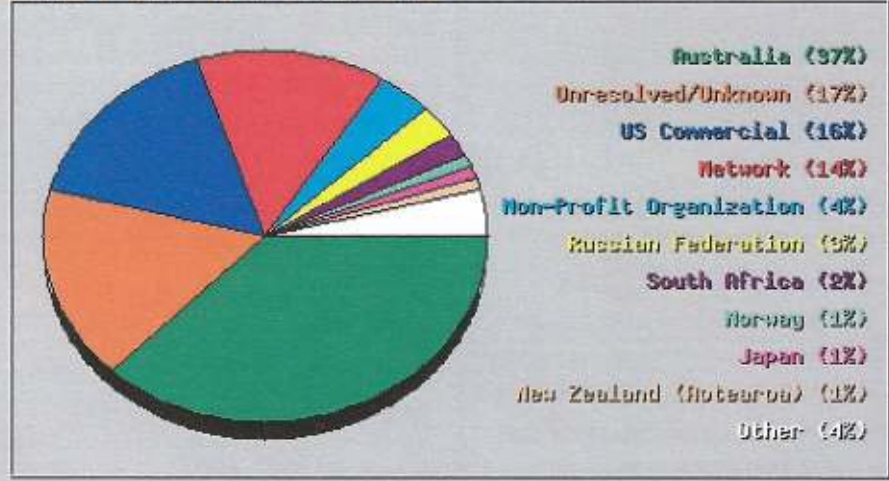
Conclusion:-

At this juncture none of the existing or suggested names are correct. I suggest we stick with the cultivar name though the genus is wrong. If I get selfings which are being done covered by stocking (no out-crossing possible) some ambiguity should be removed. New species or hybrid?

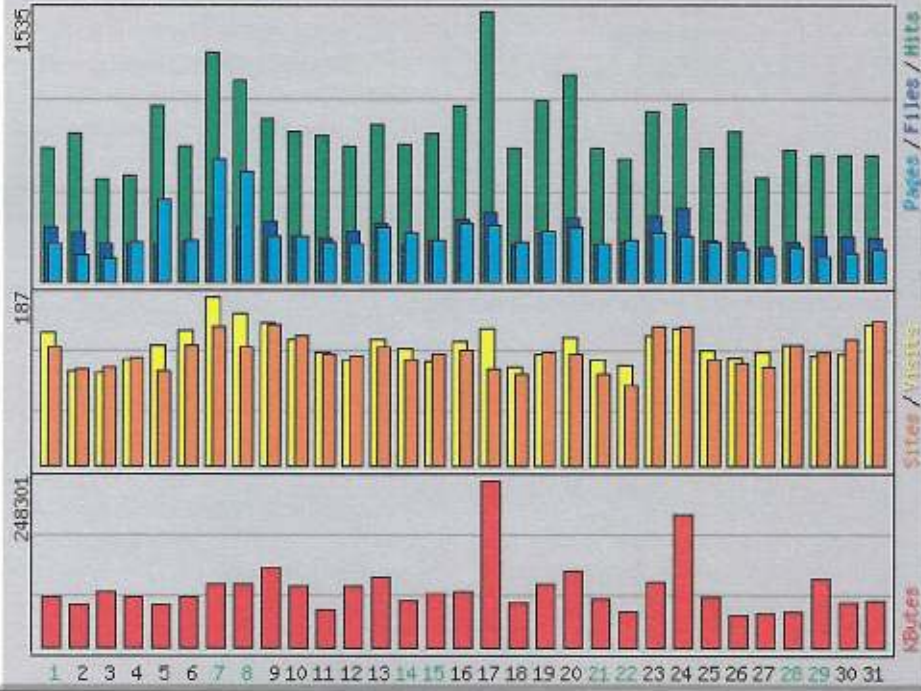
Table of data for future reference. Interested in seeing what changes with environment

I have to change my plants label from *Hohenbergia lanata* as that is wrong. Until further study has been done I personally will use the label *Aechmea* (Hoh.) 'Whyanbeel'. A late piece of evidence has come in.

Usage by Country for August 2010



Daily usage for August 2010



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Geoff Breen has crossed *Hoh.* 'Whyanbeel' with *Hoh. correia - araujoi* and seedlings were all over the place in appearance. As *Hoh. correia - araujoi* is considered a true species and the fact we have great variation in the seedlings suggests *Hoh.* 'Whyanbeel' is a hybrid. Crossing of species usually gives a very similar plant for all seedlings due to a large amount of homozygosity in each species chromosomes. It may also be a hybrid of two very similar looking species. One would have to be flava because of the flower colour and cone spines. The other should look similar but have fascicles on much longer sterile sections and a much longer scape. I don't know enough about *hohenbergia* plants to even guess here.

Probably the least confusing label and needing less attention with registering body is to just label your plant "*Aechmea (Hoh.)* 'Whyanbeel'".

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Thursday 2nd December

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The Society has the following books for sale:

• Starting with Bromeliads	\$23
• Pitcher Plants of the Americas	\$60
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• Back Copies of Bromeliaceae	\$4
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• Bromeliads: Next Generation by Shane Zaghini	\$33
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• Tillandsia II by Paul T. Isley III	\$85
• Genus Tillandsia by Paul T. Isley III	\$12
• Growing Bromeliads third edition	\$25
• The Tillandsia tectorum Complex	\$35

Postage and package extra. Unfortunately we cannot supply overseas orders. Please phone the Librarian, Mrs Evelyn Rees (07) 3355 0432 to order books.

CCA Treated Logs and Bromeliads

Author: Ross Stenhouse

To the more experienced bromeliad grower what follows will be old news, however to the newer enthusiast, this could be important and one that saves a degree of heartache.

CCA treated timber and bromeliads don't go together, however before we get onto that, we should look at CCA treated timber and humans.

Copper chromium arsenic (CCA) is Australia's most widely used wood preservative

A few precautions need to be followed, do not breath the sawdust generated when cutting the timber. After working with the timber your hands should be washed before eating or lighting up a fag. Definitely do not burn unwanted CCA treated timber. a very poisonous gas called arsine is liberated. Scrap timber can be put through the domestic waste.

Now how about bromeliads why is it a problem with them? Bromeliads are very sensitive to copper, it poisons them and materials containing copper should be avoided. CCA treated timber are the obvious one, however there are other sources such as copper wire. Be careful that you don't use copper wire to hang baskets. A less obvious source of copper could be from water dripping off power lines. In Australia the service wire in from the power pole is generally plastic covered, however often the power lines themselves are bare copper wire.

Simply put "beware of copper with Bromeliads!". Common sense should guide your actions and if unsure then prudent avoidance is the best alternative.

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Making Vertical Growing Space

Author: Rob Smythe MSc

For those with limited space wanting to grow Alcantareas. This idea has not been tested to full size yet. It is something simple that I have come up with.

Drive a large spike into firm ground.

Cut a hole with, a hot tool, into the base of each pot.

Put a metal tent peg through the stake to stop the pot.

Repeat for remaining pots (I put an extra peg just inside the top pot to prevent pot being lifted off. It is covered by potting medium

Pot as normal.

(Ed See the illustration opposite page top left - what a great idea! Reminds me of the BBQ light stands you can buy to light your garden)

Aechmea 'Golden Candelabrum' and Friend

Author: Rob Smythe MSc

This plant flowers in November and carries right through to August. Most of my Forest Fire Hybrids are browning off by now. I usually think of chopping off the flower heads about this time (August).

This one is going to be spared. The little Brown Backed Honey Eater was nearly too clever for her own good. If you look towards the base of the inflorescence you will see a nest blending perfectly with the back and foreground. What a gem.

Look even more closely and you will

see a tail sticking up in the air, on the left hand side and towards the centre a turned head with an eye just keeping me in check and a long curved black beak also heading to the left. The only way I could have found it was by watching a little bird disappear. Looks terribly uncomfortable for her.

I must catch that green tree snake and take it down to the creek bank for the third time. There are lots more frogs down there but it does not get the message.

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Top Left: Making vertical space, Photo Rob Smythe

Top Right: First day covers - see article over page. Photo Roy Pugh

Bottom: Birds next in Bromeliad. Photo Rob Smythe



No-maintenance bromeliads

Author: Roy Pugh

(Ed - Most of you are more familiar with the author in his disguise as the membership secretary, but he has had us all fooled, he has writing skills as well!)

One of the joys of poking around in the internet - (I know - it's called "surfing the internet" but I don't surf, I poke around) - is discovering the unexpected. So while I was researching a subject in East Germany the word "Bromelien" came up.

Such is my command of the German language my first thought was that it was probably the name of a town in Germany but quick recourse to that miracle of international communications - the internet translator - told me that "Bromelien" was the German plural for "bromeliad".

Of course, I had to see what the connection was between bromeliads and East

Germany and found these two first-day covers dating to the 16th. of February 1988. The sketch on the left of the envelope of what is presumably meant to be a type of bromeliad habitat looks decidedly odd.

The leafless, sharply angular trees look more like a Disney-esque witches forest but the stamps themselves are quite attractive.

The stamp-values and bromeliad types are:-

- 10 - Tillandsia macrochlamys
- 25 - Tillandsia bulbosa
- 40 - Tillandsia kalmbacheri
- 70 - Guzmania blassii

I know even less about East German currency than I do about bromeliads so I don't know if the values on the stamps represent marks or pfennigs.

I wonder if anyone has considered collecting stamps featuring bromeliads as an adjunct to collecting the real thing? I haven't researched the subject any further but it's very likely that they appear on stamps from Central or South America. These two first-day covers cost me three dollars; not a large outlay for an interesting sideline.

Calendar of Events

Sat/Sun 13/14 November - November Bromeliad Bonanza - Plant Show and Plant Sale - Opening Times: Saturday 13th 8.00 am - 4.00 pm - Sunday 14th 9.00 am - 3.00 pm

Spectacular displays of Bromeliads, Over 700 varieties/hybrids of Bromeliads on sale, advice on cultivation from experienced growers, displays and most of plant sales areas under cover, refreshments available for purchase, Monster Bromeliad raffle, wide range of bromeliad books on sale including Starting with Bromeliads a comprehensive bromeliad guide for sub-tropical and tropical Australia, plenty of free parking - ADULTS \$3.00 - Children under 14 free. Public transport: BCC bus 471 from City or Great Circle Bus 598 from various suburbs.

Thurs 2nd Dec - BSQ Christmas Party at Arana Hills Leagues Club, Dawson Parade Keppera, starting at 6.30 pm Cost \$25 per head Bookings and money to the treasurer ASAP

GENERAL MEETINGS of the Society are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month except for December, at the Uniting Hall, 52 Merthyr Rd., New Farm, Brisbane, commencing 7.30 pm. Classes for beginners commence at 7.00 pm.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING is held immediately before the February General Meeting

Plant of the Month Programme for 2010

FEBRUARY:	Ananus, Intergeneric Plants, Tillandsias and Full-sun Neoregelias.
MARCH:	Cryptanthus, Tillandsias, Full-sun Aechmeas and Canistrums
APRIL:	Cryptanthus, Tillandsias
MAY:	Spotted Neoregelias, Orthophytums, Tillandsias and Variegated Bromeliads
JUNE:	Alcantareas, Foliage Vrieseas, Dyckias, Hechtias
JULY:	Billbergias, Pitcairnia, Nidulariums
AUGUST:	Billbergias, Foliage Vrieseas, Catopsis and Miniature Neoregelias.
SEPTEMBER:	Billbergias and Guzmanias.
OCTOBER:	Vrieseas, Neoregelias, Nidulariums, Guzmanias
NOVEMBER:	Not often seen Bromeliads and Succulents

Competition Schedule for 2010

Novice, Intermediate and Advanced in each Class of the Mini-Shows and in the Popular Vote.

January: MINI-SHOW

- Class 1: Aechmea - species and hybrids
- Class 2: Vriesea - species and hybrids
- Class 3: Dyckia - species and hybrids
- Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

February : POPULAR VOTE: Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

March: POPULAR VOTE: Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

April: MINI-SHOW

- Class 1: Bromelioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule – species and hybrids.
- Class 2: Guzmania - species and hybrids
- Class 3: Pitcairnia and Pepinia - species and hybrids
- Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

May: POPULAR VOTE: Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

June: POPULAR VOTE: Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

July: MINI-SHOW

- Class 1: Billbergia - species and hybrids
- Class 2: Tillandsioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule – species and hybrids.
- Class 3: Neoregelia - species and hybrids – up to 200mm diameter when mature.
- Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

August: POPULAR VOTE: Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

September: POPULAR VOTE: Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

October: MINI-SHOW

- Class 1: Neoregelia - species and hybrids – over 200mm diameter when mature.
- Class 2: Tillandsia - species and hybrids.
- Class 3: Pitcairnioideae not listed elsewhere in the schedule – species and hybrids.
- Class 4: Any Other Mature (flowering) Bromeliad - species and hybrids.

November: POPULAR VOTE: Any Genus – species or hybrid, Novelty Bromeliad Display

Note 1: Class 4 in each Mini Show schedule provides for any flowering bromeliad that would not be in its prime for the appropriate Mini Show.

Note 2: Class 1 (April), Class 2 (July) and Class 3 (October) provide for plants from these subfamilies not elsewhere included in the Mini Show schedule.



Hohenbergia correa-craujoi

Bromeliaceae

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Jul/Aug 2010