



Pup Talk

September 2023

THE SADDLEBACK VALLEY BROMELIAD SOCIETY

We Will Meet: Thursday, September 7, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

At the Norman Murray Community & Senior Center

24932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo, CA

Note: Our entire meeting last month was devoted to our special raffle and this presentation was delayed:

In May, the La Ballona Valley Bromeliad Society had a show and sale in Culver City. For the following meeting their Vice President, Ken Simpson, did a presentation for any possible new attendees. Their newsletter had the following description: "VP Ken Simpson will discuss and demonstrate bromeliad care and culture. He will go over watering and fertilizing, potting media, light, useful tools, and more. Please join the discussion and share your experience, tips and tricks, and learn from your friends! If you are new to bromeliads, this is a great chance to learn how to keep your plants healthy and happy -- the plant tables, club sales, and plant auctions at our meetings will help you grow your collection, too."

"Ken has been collecting since 1961 and met many of the early orchid and bromeliad collectors. A past president of our club in the 1970s, Ken spent a month in Peru during the early 1980's through the UCLA Extension course "Tropical Ecology: The Amazon" and remains enthusiastic about our hobby."

Ken will not be with us in person, but instead he generously offered to download his entire presentation when Cristy toured his garden and spoke to the LBVBS in June. Much of his presentation has written information, but it will also be narrated by Cristy and Jeff. Please join us for this very informative talk that also features many photos of Ken's beautiful garden (shown at right).



DIRECTIONS: Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Norman Murray Community and Senior Center, 24932 Veterans Way in Mission Viejo. Visitors Welcome! Where is that? Off the I-5 take the La Paz exit. Go east on La Paz past Marguerite Parkway to Veterans' Way. Turn left. The parking lot is at the road's end. We are in room Sycamore B.

This Meeting Includes:

Bromeliads and More Wonderful Bromeliads:

- * **Show & Tell** – A meeting highlight. Bring in your bloomers, show stoppers, interesting plants, questions, even disasters. Help all of us learn and enjoy while you get a free raffle ticket.
- * **Raffle Table** – A chance to add to your collection; buy lots of tickets!
- * **Silent Auction** – We usually have special plants for you to bid on.
- * **Library & Information** – Want to learn even more? Check out a book and read up!
Or ask our bromeliad experts that question that is bugging you! We love to talk Bromeliads!



Upcoming Events (mark your calendars):

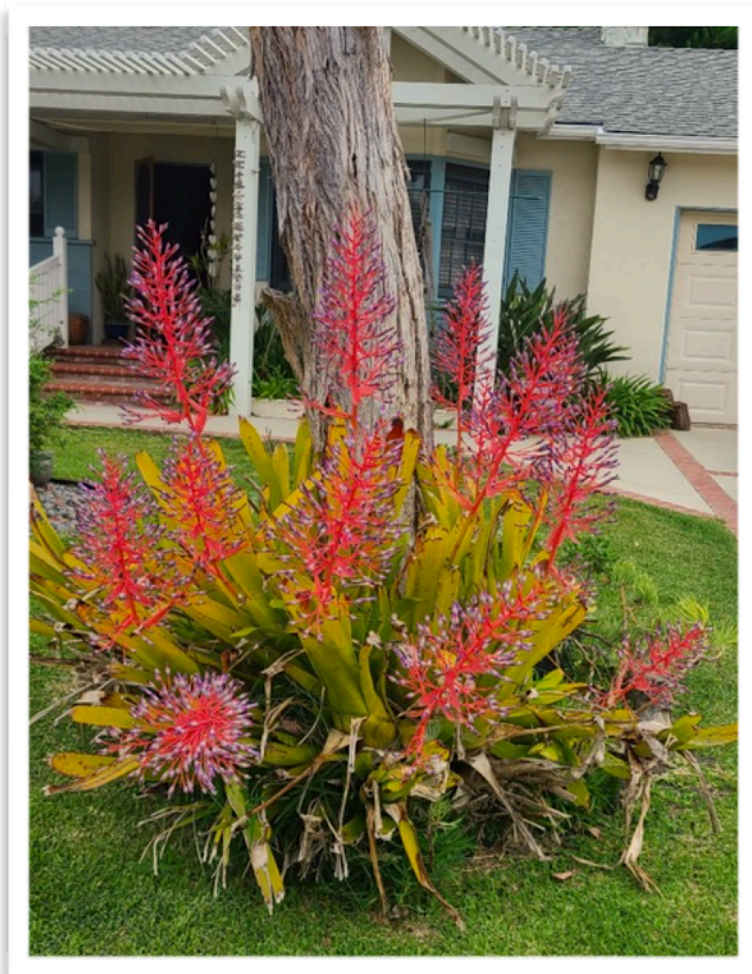
September 7 — Our monthly meeting with a presentation about Bromeliad culture.

September 17 — Board meeting at Carolyn's home, 1:00-4:00 p.m. (More information available at our September meeting.)

May 22-25, 2024 — World Bromeliad Conference (BSI) in West Palm Beach, Florida.



September refreshment signups: Zulima Storf, Gloria Ballou, Tu Le, and Amy Uyemura. Thank you!



Patti Dunn sent us this photo of *Portea petropolitana var. extensa*, native to Brazil, that has encircled one of her trees. This is a wonderful landscape plant that you can lean against a tree, (no need to actually plant it), and it will produce many offsets that may be as much as four to five feet tall. It usually blooms in June every year, however, this spring was unusually cool and cloudy, and these *Porteas* did not bloom until late July.

A great advantage of *Portea petropolitana var. extensa* is that it remains colorful for about nine months! The brightly-colored inflorescence first displays light purple flowers that are pollinated by hummingbirds. The flowers eventually become violet-colored berries that remain attractive until the entire inflorescence eventually dries and turns brown in February. This *Portea* is easy to grow and is tolerant of light conditions that range from full sun to full shade. If grown with more light, the plants will be compact with light green leaves, but if grown in shade the leaves will be "lanky" (etiolated) and dark green. This is a great plant for beginners and several will be available at our September meeting.

Our August Show and Tell Featured:

Lee Brandt

Nidularium innocentii 'Midnight'? #1

Cristy Brenner

*Billbergia brasiliensis** #2

Launi Cory

Aechmea 'Fasciculis' #3

Sean Donlin

Fascicularia pitcairniifolia #4

Mary Kermani

Tillandsia Oerseriana (*T. flabellata* X
T. tricolor) #5



*These plants missed the meeting by a few hours and were waiting for Cristy when she returned from Ecuador.



August Show and Tell, continued

Michael McGuire

Billbergia 'Darth Vader' #9

Carolyn Parsons

Aechmea roberto-seidelii (*guarapariensis*) #6

Tillandsia funckiana #8

Jeff Sorensen

Vriesea 'Golden Koi' X Vr. 'Grandiose' #7

Kerry Wakely

"Naked" bird in need of *Tillandsias* (Please donate small *Tillandsias* for his wonderful art work). #10



Plant-O-Rama Bromeliad Sale: Our summer Bromeliad sale at Sherman Library and Gardens was a great success. Thank you to Sherman Gardens for providing a great venue for our sale and thank you to all of our volunteers who helped set up and run our booth. Also, thank you to all of our members who provided plants for our sale.



Our Saturday morning volunteers.

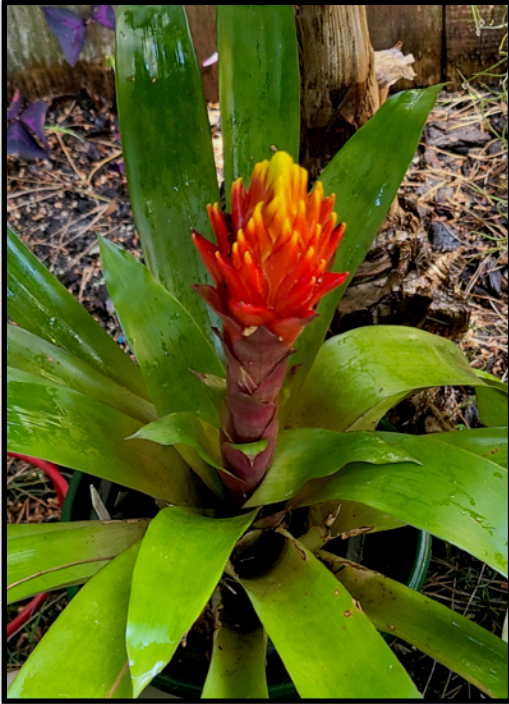


Thank you to Beverly for being our best customer, purchasing three wagon's full of Bromeliads.



A special thank you to Don DeBok for creating our booth.

Guzmania conifera: Patti Dunn sent us the photo at left and she called it *Guzmania conifera*. However, several of us think that it is a *G. conifera* hybrid. Please let us know if you have a positive ID of this plant. *G. conifera* is a tropical Bromeliad that grows in the Amazonian regions of Ecuador and Northern Peru. It has an inflorescence that lasts for many months and so I have purchased several over the years, knowing that the offsets would not survive the Southern California winter months.



Patti asked me if I had seen *G. conifera* on my recent trip to Ecuador. The answer is “yes” and it was very exciting to see this beautiful Bromeliad in habitat. I had never seen it before, even though we had traveled on the same dirt road in the Zamora valley, at the same time of year, on three previous trips. Not only has the weather been unusual in Southern California recently, but Ecuador experienced a strong El Niño this year. It had been much cooler and wetter and the plants that we usually saw in bloom were just beginning to show their inflorescences. This is probably the reason why we were able to see the beautiful *G. conifera* plants shown below:

Cristy



Guzmania conifera growing terrestrially next to the dirt road.



Guzmania conifera growing epiphytically in the trees high above the Zamora Valley, Ecuador.



→
The
perfect
explanation
for my
situation:



Thank you to Lorraine Ferguson for donating her Bromeliad book collection to our society. Lorraine has been a member since at least the 1990's, and has continued her membership, even though she has been unable to attend our meetings in recent years. We toured her amazing garden on several occasions in the past, and when she had to downsize to a smaller property she donated a huge number of plants to our society.



Chris Bruce, our President, wrote the following:

“Patti Dunn visited Lorraine Ferguson recently to accept Lorraine's donation of all her book collection for our library. Thank you Lorraine for thinking of us and sharing your collection. The books will enlarge our collection and provide valuable reading for our members.”

Lorraine enjoying Ed Voelker's garden during our October, 2006 tour.

From the Archives: Below is a scan of a very informative article from our April, 2006 issue of *Pup Talk*. Since we have a number of members who are new to the world of Bromeliads this article might help to answer some of their questions.

Bromeliad Basics...

By Karen Andreas (Abridged from the April 2004 *Orlandiana* in the March 2005 Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago News by Steve Goode)

In order to survive and thrive, bromeliads need just a few basics – air circulation, water, and light.

Bromeliads are divided into two groups, the terrestrials and the epiphytes. Terrestrials such as pineapple (*Ananas comosus*) and *Cryptanthus* must be grown in soil. However, most of the epiphytic, or air plant, bromeliads can be adapted to growing in soil or other potting media. The one exception is the grayish-leaf *Tillandsia* which does best when mounted and not planted.

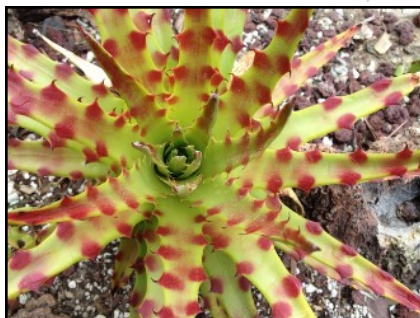
Air circulation is one of the key elements for healthy bromeliads. They need to be in areas with good airflow and grown with room around them. Bromeliads growing us against each other will not thrive and such compact growing conditions encourage scale. If you are growing indoors, keep your bromeliads away from heating and air conditioning vents. That kind of direct airflow will dry out your bromeliads too quickly.

On their leaves, bromeliads have specialized cells called trichomes, sometimes visible as “scurf” (white powdery dusting you see on the leaves) but which often can be seen only under a microscope. It is through these cup shaped cells that water is absorbed into the bromeliad leaves. So when you water your bromeliad, make sure there is always water in the center of the plant, if its leaves form a cup shape, and be sure to let the water cascade over the leaves so your bromeliad gets a good drink.

Very few bromeliads can tolerate being grown in full shade; most will develop long and leggy leaves when grown in insufficient light. On the other hand, only a few can tolerate being grown in full sun. One key to determining your bromeliad’s light needs is the type of leaf it has. In general, the more leathery and tough the leaf, the more light it can take. Soft paper-thin leaves indicate a lower light level is needed. *Guzmanias* and *Vrieseas* like bright, filtered light.

When planting your bromeliad, make sure that the soil drains well and is not heavy or soggy. Bromeliads don’t like wet feet. Orchid bark, fern fiber, grape wood, driftwood, fern fiber slabs, and cork work well as potting medium or mounting surfaces for most bromeliads. Remember to never use pressure treated wood or anything with copper in it when mounting or planting bromeliads and do not plant around areas where your bromeliads will be exposed to either material: there are toxic to bromeliads and will kill them.

Fertilizing is a matter of choice; some growers do and some don’t. Conventional wisdom suggests that you do not fertilize *Neoregelias* or *Billbergias* as this may cause them to grow long and leggy leaves, out of symmetry, and loose color. If you choose to fertilize your bromeliads, use water-soluble fertilizer at one-quarter or less of its recommended strength. Spray on the bromeliad leaves and allow it to run into the water cup and remain for an hour or so. Then flush it out with fresh water. Do not fertilize during the heat of the day or in full sun as this may cause the leaves to burn. A time-release fertilizer works well for terrestrial bromeliads and may have minimal benefit for the epiphytes whose roots generally are used to hold the plant in place and provide little nutrition.



Terrestrial Bromeliads:
Hechtia species (left) and
Aechmea recurvata (right)



2023 Society Officers/Committee Heads

President:	Chris Bruce	Publicity:	Kathy Jones
Vice President/Programs:	Jeff Sorensen	<i>Pup Talk</i> Editor:	Cristy Brenner
Secretary:	Carolyn Parsons	<i>Pup Talk</i> Team:	Pete and Patti Dunn
Treasurer:	Mary Kermani		John Marzolino
Fundraising:	Yvonne Wilson	Refreshments:	Launi & Tony Cory
Librarian:	Paul Selzer		Kathy Jones
Membership	Nada Chatwell	Supplies:	Don DeBok
Plant Table:	John Marzolino	Webmaster and Zoom	John Marzolino
	Michael McGuire		



Tillandsia tectorum collection.
Photo by Ed Voelker

Where did the phone numbers and email addresses go?

Now that *Pup Talk* is on a website that is accessible to everyone, some board members are concerned about the security of their personal information. If you are a member, be sure to keep your membership roster that has all of the contact information. Rosters are available from Nada at the meetings.

Our Web Address: bromeliadsociety.org



SVBS 2023 DUES/MEMBERSHIP

Dues are \$15 per membership (for one person or for two or more at the same address). Please send a check & info to: Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society 24891 Camberwell Street, Laguna Hills, CA, 92653

Membership Name(s): _____

Newsletter via: [] email (dues \$15/year) or [] USPS (Dues \$20/year) or [] **Both** (Dues \$20/year)

Street: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number(s): (____) _____ - _____ (____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

Pup Talk, September, 2023

Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society

1068 Santa Cruz Circle

Costa Mesa, CA 92626

FIRST CLASS PLEASE!

Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society

Pup Talk

September, 2023, Page 10

The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society next meets Thursday, September 7, 2023, at 7:00 PM.

Festivities include a:

- * **Program** on Bromeliad culture;
- * **Plant raffle and silent auction** (Bring a show & tell plant to receive a free raffle ticket!);
- * **Show & Tell** with lots of our plants to see and enjoy;
- * **Lending library** for books you need to learn;
- * **Friendship; and Information.**

A big thank you goes to all who contributed information, writing, photos, and production of this newsletter including Cristy Brenner (Ed.), John Marzolino, Patti & Pete Dunn, Chris & Hank Bruce, Jeff Sorensen, and Ed Voelker.

Pup Talk is a publication of the Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society. Any opinion expressed herein is not necessarily that of the Society. Send comments, inquiries, and articles to: cbrenner4@cox.net. Deadline is mid-month before month of publication. When credit is given, nonprofit publications may reprint from us.

The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society is an educational organization promoting the study and cultivation of bromeliads and fellowship among those who do. We are an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

