



**S.F.V.B.S.**

**SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BROMELIAD SOCIETY**

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## JUNE 2014 NEWSLETTER

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### OFFICERS

Pres & News: **Mike Wisnev** V.P.: **Mary K. Carroll** Secretary: **Kathleen Misko** Treasurer: **Mary Chan**  
Membership: **Nancy P.-Hapke** Health & Wellness: **Georgia Roiz** Web Page: **Kim Thorpe**  
Directors: **Steve Ball, Bryan Chan, Richard Kaz -fp, Dave Bassani-fp** address

**Saturday June 7, 2014 @ 3:00 pm**

**Annual Bar-B-Q at Bryan and Mary Chan's**  
10571 Odessa Ave., Granada Hills – Details on page 2

**Saturday & Sunday June 14 - 15, 2014**

**Annual Bromeliad Display and Sale @ LACSS Festival**  
Sepulveda Garden Center

### *President's Message*

This month is our most active month, and I hope all of you will participate in both event.

On Saturday, June 7, instead of our regular meeting, we will have our annual picnic/barbeque hosted by Bryan and Mary Chan. This has been a great event in the past. Besides the fantastic food and company, it is an opportunity to see their Bromeliad collection, which is as good as it gets! They have stunning plants, and you will certainly get some ideas for your own collection when you see how they have designed their collection.

More information is on the next page - if you haven't already responded to Mary C., please do so ASAP.

The following week is the annual show and sale! As before, we participate in the Los Angeles Cacti and Succulent Show and Sale, which has always been great, but amazingly is getting even better. Artie, Kim and others have made this show truly unique – a drought garden festival, with a kid's day, rock vendors, and all sorts of plants. Our club has a sales table and puts on a great exhibit inside.

I'd like to encourage each of you to participate. Either bring some plants in for the Bromeliad exhibit or help out Saturday or Sunday. It's always great to have someone greet visitor who look at our plants – it's an easy way to help participate. And if you have some plants you'd like to sell, we have a table for plants to sell – remember to double tag them with your name and the price. We can always use help with the kiddies, with the lunch. Don't forget we are also invited to participate in the dinner/auction on Saturday evening. If you have questions about how to help out, talk to me or Mary K. or Bryan at the barbeque or shoot us an email!

*Mike Wisnev*



# BACKYARD BAR-B-Q PARTY

**SATURDAY JUNE 7, 2014,**

*hosted by: Bryan and Mary Chan*

**10571 Odessa Avenue Granada Hills, CA 91344**

405 FWY to Devonshire; go west on Devonshire;

Turn right (north) on Hayvenhurst Ave. for 2 blocks;

Turn right (east) on San Jose St.

Turn left (north) on Odessa.

10571 is on the left at the end of the cul de sack.

If necessary you may call Bryan for directions **818-366-1858**

*Bryan [bcbrome@aol.com](mailto:bcbrome@aol.com)*

*Mary [mchan2001@aol.com](mailto:mchan2001@aol.com)*

**3:00** - *Guests are invited to view Bryan's plant collection*

**by 4:30** - *Deliver all pot-luck food*

**5:00** - *Pot Luck Dinner served*

We need your help to put together a list of pot-luck dishes. Please call or E-mail Mary Chan with your pot-luck contribution. Listed below are a few dish suggestions some already have names committed to them. **Call if you need a suggestion.** You are welcome to bring your favorite drinks of soda, beer or wine.

## Appetizers

Asst. Cheeses -  
Asst. Fresh Fruit -  
Chips & Dip - **Leni**  
Chips & Dip - **Max**

## Salad

Green Salad -  
Vegetable Salad - **Nancy**  
Cole Slaw - **Bob Friedman**

## Main Course

Tri Tip -  
Chicken - **David & Sue**  
Hot Links -  
Ribs - **Bryan**

## Side Dishes

Baked Beans - **James**  
Corn casserole -  
Green Vegetable -  
Potato Salad - **Kathleen**  
Sw Potato Casserole -  
Mac & Cheese - **Georgia**

## Bread

Dinner rolls & butter -

## Desserts

Baklava - **Mohammed**  
unknown - **Chris**  
unknown - **Mike & Ana**  
unknown - **Gloria Friedman**

## Beverages

Sodas - **James**  
Sodas & Water - **Kim**  
Beer & Wine - BYO

## Misc Supplies

**(All Provided by the Club)**

Large dinner plates,  
Dessert plates, Napkins,  
Forks, Spoons, Knives  
Cups - Hot and Cold

*The following people plan to attend. Mary Chan will let them know what is needed closer to the date*

Adrienne, Joyce, Rosemary,  
Steve, Mary K.

## Ramblings about Better Growing

### - The three S's - Soil, Sun & Sustenance

A couple years back, I heard a talk about growing at the San Gabriel Cactus and Succulent Club. I could swear he called it the three C's. While I remember a lot of it, I can't remember what the C's stood for! So, now it is the three S's. This column briefly introduces these three things, keyed for the real novices in the plant world.

For those of you just starting out in the plant world, I'd suggest keeping it simple to start. As you feel more comfortable, you can change things around. As to those of you who already grow cacti and succulents, but are new to the Bromeliad world - feel free to try anything below, but in general I think you can grow your Bromeliads the same way you grow your cactus.

So here are some pretty basic and simple suggestions for novices, and anyone else. Or ask another club member what they use - preferably someone who lives nearby and has a similar growing environment. And if you are already happy with your results - ignore all these suggestions! That is all they are - suggestions - so pick and choose as you think makes sense for you.

**Soil** - First, in general, don't pot your Tillandsias. You can pretty much pot anything else! There are lots of different soil mixes you can use. I get two different products - 1) Supersoil Palm and Cacti Mix, and 2) Earthgro Decorative Ground Cover Bark. Why do I use them - others suggested them, and they seem to work for me. You can buy them in large bags quite inexpensively at Home Depot, and probably most every other nursery or garden center. I am sure many other similar products will work

just as well, and maybe better. I am mentioning these specific products for only one reason - someone inevitably asks!

I mix the two about half each for most Bromeliads. I have bought plants from others potted in all soil, or all orchid mix, so there is a lot of variation. For Dyckias and Hechtias, I would suggest more soil, and less bark, or if you have pumice, maybe a mix of half soil and half pumice. For you cacti/succulent growers, I have also grown tank top Bromeliads in a soil/pumice mix and can't say I have noticed any different results than a soil/bark mix.

**Sustenance**. I think it is pretty safe to water about once a week most of the time. Maybe every other week in winter, perhaps more in hot summer months. If you get some good rain that week, don't bother to water. Make sure you have water in the tank for *Aechmeas*, *Neos*, *Billbergia* and others with tank tops.

**Fertilizer** - this can be a controversial topic, and many disagree quite a bit! So, I'll address that later ... maybe!

**Sun**. To start out, I would suggest moderate or filtered sun. Most won't grow well in full shade, and can burn in full sun all day. As I suggested last month, you may have more options than you think, so try a few different places if you can and see what works for you. As an incredibly general comment, Dyckias, Hechtias and other thick leaved Bromeliads tend to take more sun than others.

Others may have very different thoughts. I'll try to discuss each of these S's in more detail in later articles, and I'd love to include your suggestions. So send an email and I'll include them in a later article.

Good Growing !

*Mike Wisnev*

## *Be Prepared*

By: *Mary K. Carroll*

**Are you almost ready for our  
Bromeliad Show on June 14 & 15 ?  
It is not to late!**

Remove large pups now  
Plan to donate Sale plants  
Donate your time providing info at the show  
Volunteer Time at our Reception table  
Help Set-up and Take down

### **Prepare one plant a week**

We still have time to get our plants ready. Make a commitment to **prepare one plant a week**. If you do that, you can 2 plants to add to the June Show. Remove pups that are half or 2/3 the size of the mother plants. Wear long sleeves and gloves when handling the Aechmeas. When potting tall or large plants, you can add a few rocks or broken pottery to the pots to keep them from falling over. Use proper potting mixture. Pot the plant and if necessary use chopsticks or small rocks to brace the pup upright; pup's root faster when stable and you prevent them from moving around. Place the pot on a bench or in an area where it will receive bright diffused light. Make sure the leaves don't touch other plants so they don't become scared.

## **Help us to improve our Membership**

**Tell people about your hobby !  
Let apartment dwellers know  
these plants can be grown  
inside or on a balcony !  
Give them a plant !  
Invite them to a meeting !  
Reach out to visitors and new  
members, make them feel  
welcomed !  
Let us hear your ideas to  
improve membership.**

### *Speakers*

We have some interesting speakers lined up for the next few months of this year but it is never to early to start planning for 2015. Let us know if you have any ideas for Speakers about Bromeliads or any similar topics? We are always looking for an interesting speaker. If you hear of someone, please notify Mary K. at 818-705-4728 or e-mail [rango676@aol.com](mailto:rango676@aol.com)

### **Please Put These Dates on Your Calendar**

Saturday, June 7, 2014	<b>SFVBS Summer Picnic</b> at Bryan & Mary Chan's home
Sat & Sun - June 14 & 15	<b>SFVBS Bromeliad Show &amp; Sale</b>
Saturday, July 5, 2014	Speaker - <b>Gregg DeChirico</b> – “Travel with Gregg to learn about Bromeliads of Peru”
Saturday, August 2, 2014	Speaker – <b>Andy Siekkinen</b>
Sat & Sun August 2 & 3	South Bay Bromeliad Show & Sale
Saturday, Sept 6, 2014	Speaker - <b>Larry Farley</b> – “Bromeliad Blooms by the Month”
Saturday, Oct 4, 2014	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, Nov 1, 2014	Speaker – <b>Pam Koide</b> –
Saturday, Dec 6, 2014	Holiday Meeting & Brunch 10:00 – 2:00

**STBA = Speaker To Be Announced**

# Taxonomic Tidbits –

## *Aechmeas* and their varied Inflorescences – Part II.

By Mike Wisnev, SFVBS President ([mwisnev@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mwisnev@sbcglobal.net))

San Fernando Valley Bromeliad Society Newsletter – June 2014

This month we will continue the discussion of *Aechmeas*, and look at some of the ways their inflorescences vary. Let's look at another inflorescence. The picture below shows the long stalk like part called the peduncle, the pinkish sepals and blue petals.

### *Aechmea gamosepala*.



Before continuing, it is worth noting one item regarding Bromeliad literature. Apparently, the early Bromeliad experts misused a number of terms, and these labels have continued in present usage. For example, you may see the peduncle referred to as a scape. This is fine if you only collect Bromeliads, but a real problem if you are a botanist trying to read about Bromeliads, or if you previously collected other plants and then read about Bromeliads. An article about this appeared in the Journal of the Bromeliad Society in 2008. It is available online on the FCBS website – on the home page, click Bromeliad Information, then the Glossary and then Appendix I. I also recommend the Glossary if you come across terms you don't know and want to learn what they mean.

Returning to the picture, you can see it is very different than *Ae. fasciata* shown last month. Its shape is not a pyramid. The flowers are not very dense – technically this is called “lax.” The floral bracts are so small you don't even see them in this picture. Though not visible here, the reddish-pink sepals are fused together for about half their length. *Ae. gamosepala* is part of a subgenus characterized by these “connate” sepals – In fact; this is what the name, *gamosepala*, refers to.

This inflorescence is also a simple indeterminate one, with sessile flowers. What does this mean?

There are all sorts of shapes and types of inflorescences in the plant world. Many of them have a technical name, and you might find that some of the terms are defined a bit differently in different places. I won't even attempt to cover most of them here. But I will introduce three basic concepts.

One very basic distinction is whether the inflorescence is determinate or indeterminate. A determinate inflorescence ends with a terminal flower which is the first to bloom. The plants flower from the top down. In contrast, an indeterminate inflorescence does not have a so-called terminal flower, and the flowers start to bloom from bottom to top.

Another breakdown is whether the inflorescence has branches or not. If there are no branches, the inflorescence is considered simple. If there are branches, it is a compound inflorescence. There are different kinds of both types.

Look again at the *Ae. gamosepala* inflorescence above. The flowers have opened from the bottom up. The bottom ones are all spent, a few towards the top are open, and the ones at the very top haven't opened up. This means it is indeterminate. From what I have read, all Bromeliads have flowers that open first at the bottom of the inflorescence.

The picture shows the whole inflorescence. You can see there are no branches, so this is a simple inflorescence. You also don't see any flower stalks or pedicels – the flowers are sessile. For good reason, a simple inflorescence with sessile flowers is called a spike.

Another breakdown is whether the flowers have a flower stalk or not. This flower stalk is called a pedicel. Many plants have "sessile" flowers – they don't have a pedicel but are instead attached directly on the peduncle or a branch.

Here is another one; this is **Aechmea Blue Tango** at the Live Art nursery, surrounded by some *Guzmanias*?? Unlike the ones above, this is a compound inflorescence – it is branched. The lower branches also have their own branches. This is called 'bipinnate' in Bromeliad literature (another wrong term, as pinnate refers to leaves!). The inflorescence is a bit like a *Vriesea* – each branch ends in a sort of flat paddle shaped structure with overlapping (imbricate) bracts. The way the flowers are arranged, one on each side of the paddle, is sometimes called distichous.





### *Aechmea lueddemanniana*

Above is *Ae. lueddemanniana*, found on Wikipedia. It is a member of a very small subgenus characterized by lepidote and pedicellate inflorescences. Pedicellate means the flowers have pedicels – they are not sessile. Lepidote means it is covered with white scales. In contrast, the inflorescences shown above are glabrous – they don't have these spots (and are not hairy). A lot of *Dyckia* inflorescences are also lepidote.

You can also see that there are a few branches at the bottom, but none at the top. This is also common – the inflorescence of many Bromeliads is typically is more branched at the base. If it didn't have these few branches, it would be a raceme - a simple indeterminate inflorescence with pedicels. Many inflorescences of *Ae. lueddemanniana* are much more branched. *Ae.* raceme with raceme-like branches is called a panicle.

On this page is the fairly common *Ae. nudicaulis*. Its inflorescence, which is a spike like *Ae. gamosepala*, shows various different features. Unlike many of those above, the peduncle is covered by peduncle bracts. Note also that the petals aren't even visible at the top. But the yellow sepals are quite pointed – this is referred to a mucronate or armed sepal, and is an important diagnostic tool to distinguish different subgenera and species. Sepals on some species, like *Ae. pineliana*, even have a fairly long spines. Lastly, note the way the flowers rotate around the lightly lepidote peduncle. The technical term here is *spirostichous*, though the Bromeliad literature usually uses *polystichous*.

Below is *Aechmea nudicaulis*



## **Aechmea maculata**

Here is *Aechmea maculata*. Again you see spirostichous flowers, but here they are quite dense not lax. And the shape is like a pine cone – the literature refers to this as “strobilate.” And all the white powdery looking stuff – they are actually fine hairs!



## **Aechmea Fantasia**

In case you hadn't noticed, look at the wide variation in colors in the photos above. To conclude, here is one last photo, of *Aechmea Fantasia*, to show the beauty of these *Aechmea* inflorescences!

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## *Broms in Bloom - Member Photos.*

*Well no one sent a plant photo in, so....*

*Here is *Hechtia caerulea* (says the label) at HBG. I wonder if it is in fact *Hechtia lundelliorum*.*

