



# The Bromeliad Blade

Newsletter of the  
San Diego  
Bromeliad Society

November 2021

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## President's Message

By Morlane O'Donnell

Happy November everyone. It was so good to finally meet last month in our regular meeting place in Balboa Park. We had a pretty full house. I hope to see you all again this month. Thank you all for wearing masks. Please continue to wear them at the meetings in the foreseeable future. We have quite a few new members who have joined during the pandemic. Remember to get your new member packet from Eloise Lau or Al Evans. Don't forget that all memberships are due to be renewed Jan. 1st unless you recently joined, or your membership expires in 2022 or later. Your membership allows you to receive the newsletter (The Blade) and be able to take part in the Plant Table and all other activities of the SDBS. Dues are - individual: \$18 per year, \$27 for two years and dual: \$22 per year, \$35 for two years. Al Evans will be happy to receive your payment. If you are unsure if you need to renew, see Charles Oelsen. Here is a reminder to check out our San Diego Bromeliad Society website



*October 2021, the first in-person meeting since the pandemic*

for additional information for current and past news and upcoming events. Scott Sandel has worked hard for several years to make it happen. I'd like to thank all those who brought plants in for last month's Show & Tell. That's always one of the highlights of our meetings. I'd like to especially thank Andy Cuffel, Juliana Raposo, Robert Kopfstein, and Al Evans for their part in the program by speaking in depth about the plants they brought. Andy spearheaded a discussion (which I hope we can delve into further detail at a future meeting) about whether or not a hybrid with the same parentage should be given only one name despite the fact that all

seedlings from that cross do not look alike. Don't forget that we are having a sale in Room 101 on Sunday, Dec. 19th. It will be one day only. See me to reserve your table/tables if you are planning to bring more than ten plants. I will also email you the guidelines. Many tables have been

reserved already. This month is election month. Make sure to attend the meeting if you wish to vote. Kerry Nelson will have the ballots. While you're at the meeting, make sure to check out what's for sale at the Ways and Means table. Many new items have been added. This meeting will give you the opportunity to increase your collection. Our speaker will have some of his plants for sale. We will also have our usual Plant Table and auction. Our auction will consist of four more beautiful Shiigi Vriesea hybrids that are not usually available. I wish all of you a Happy Thanksgiving. Safe and happy growing in the meantime.

# November Program

By Jeff Moore

Photos by Jeff Moore



## Bromeliads from a Succulent Enthusiast's Perspective

Saturday, November 13 @ 10am in Balboa Park, Casa del Prado room 104

The talk will be basically that: I will discuss and show images of how those of us that are primarily succulent enthusiasts incorporate bromeliads into our gardens and collections. I will admit right up front to your group that most of them know their bromeliads in more detail than I do, but like most succulent enthusiasts, my bromeliad focus has always been on the very durable and almost cactus-like terrestrials: dyckias, hechtias, puyas, followed by some of the most forgiving aechmeas. But over time I (we) have learned to incorporate some of the more 'tropical' broms into our yards



after realizing that, at least within the coastal zone, they tolerate sun and neglect as well as most succulents. I will show examples of succulent gardens that incorporate broms, nice color contrasts, flowers, and even outliers that we collect

such as tillandsias. There will be some examples of just straight succulents to highlight that they can have the same ornamental appeal as your favorite plants. I will bring my books and plants to sell and have my own cash box and Square for cards.

# Nidulariums for the Garden

Article and Photos by Andrew Wilson

New neoregelias bombard us with their startling colors and foliage displays. Hybridizers have done amazing work and the forms and patterns continue to multiply. A genus that is similar but does not receive the same attention is *Nidularium*. It's not that the genus is new. It got its name back in 1854 and has stayed out of the headlights ever since. It's not that it is unattractive; it's not that it is difficult to grow. Nor is it because it won't take cool nights; it is just as cold hardy as nearly all neos. Maybe its name sounds too difficult.

Looking through a plant list recently I came across a new cross by Chester Skotak. The plant was not a new neo; it was a new nid. We all recognize the dark patterned, heavy leaved and fearsome hybrids that Skotak has created with names to portray their terrifying character - Hannibal Lector, Norman Bates, Crouching Tiger. This nid is a new, bright light in the Skotak spectrum, with its soft leaves and tiny spines. It has a red inflorescence with white flowers. The leaf variegation is unusually pronounced for *Nidularium*. The botanical name stems from the nest-like appearance of the inflorescence. (*Nidus* means nest in Latin). Has Chester turned to more lovable labors? Not by the name he chose.

*Nidulariums* are not difficult plants to grow, whether in pots on the bench or as landscape subjects. They will take sun in our climate but not direct sun. They pup readily and enjoy a light humus-rich soil. In nature they



*Nidularium 'Mayhem'* in late afternoon sun (Photo by author)

are usually found growing epiphytically. Below is one example, *N. atalaiense*. It occurs near Cabo Frio in Restinga vegetation in southern Brazil but, according to Leme, is nearing extinction there. Grow it!



*Nidularium atalaiense* growing terrestrially in light shade. Leaf coloration is richer after our summer and early fall heat wave. (Photo by author)

# From the Library

By Eloise Lau

New to the library and ready for check out:

**Starting with Bromeliads, A guide to the Growing of Bromeliads by Robert Reilly and The Bromeliad Society of Queensland, Australia.**

This new second edition has been updated in 2021. It was sent as a gift by Narelle and Greg Aizlewood.

The perfect book for the beginner who may have many questions about Bromeliads and how to grow them. The book starts with general information on what a bromeliad is followed by "Quick Facts" on the 9 most common genera that are in cultivation. There are 2 pages of explanation with colored photos of Aechmea, Alcantarea, Billbergia, Guzmania, Neoregelia, Pitcairnia, Portea, Tillandsia and Vriesea. There is a chapter on propagation, s, with well-illustrated explanations. Also included are sections on care, landscaping with bromeliads and a glossary.

**Alcantarea Giant Bromeliads from Brazil edited by Leonardo M. Versieux. January 2021**

Professor Versieux gave the first Zoom presentation to the SDBS on Alcantarea in 2021. A book for the botanist and non-botanist, and the definitive book on Alcantarea. Alcantarea are only found in Brazil mainly growing on rocks on the granite inselbergs. There is a chapter on Alcantarea cultivation and use in landscape gardening. Most of the book is devoted to descriptions and illustrations of 42 Alcantarea.

## SDBS December Sale

Attention SDBS members: there will be a one-day-only sale on Sunday, December 19th in Balboa Park in Room 101. We decided the start time will be 10am with a hard stop at 4pm.

Those who wish to participate and have more than 10 plants will need to reserve a table. Reservations are made by sending me (Morlane) an email with the number of tables needed. I'll make this announcement Saturday and during the December meeting and will have a blurb in the December newsletter. Guidelines will be sent to all vendors.

## SDBS Holiday Potluck

It's back! Our annual Holiday Potluck is back after a year's hiatus. It will be a Holiday Brunch starting at 10am. There will be a sign-up sheet this Saturday for members who wish to attend to write down what delectable goodies they will bring. The event will kick off with the brunch (served by our awesome Board members), followed by the popular plant exchange where participants will bring a bromeliad related item (\$20 value) colorfully wrapped so no one can see what it is. Every member who attends will also get a free bromeliad. Be sure not to miss this fun-filled party!

## SDBS 2020-21

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## THE BROMELIAD BLADE



Newsletter of the San Diego  
Bromeliad Society

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To send material for publication,  
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Make sure to submit your  
contribution before the 20<sup>th</sup> of  
the month for inclusion in the  
next newsletter.

### SDBS MEETING

The club meets on the second  
Saturday of the month at 10am in  
Balboa Park, Casa del Prado,  
room 104.

### SDBS WEBPAGE

[www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org](http://www.sandiegobromeliadsociety.org)

# DK ORNAMENTALS

## BROMELIADS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES

**Tillandsia  
Neoregelia  
Vriesea  
Orthophytum  
Bigenerics  
and more!**

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