

# BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO



## JUNE 2011

# NEWSLETTER

Our next meeting will be held on **Thursday, June 16, 2011** at 7:30 PM  
Recreation Room, San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

### June Program

#### Cloud Forests of Oaxaca and Chiapas

**T**his month **Ted Kipping**, one of our own members, will be our speaker. Ted is a life member of SFBS and many other botanical and horticultural societies. Although an arborist by trade, he is interested in the full spectrum of Natural History and has travelled to many remote areas of the world with his camera to study first hand. This look at the Cloud Forests of Oaxaca & Chiapas will remind you of the vast storehouse of botanical treasures awaiting the discerning eye. Please join us for a rare look at a seldom visited part of the world.

There is a good chance that some of the unsold plants at our June sale may find their way to the plant raffle table. Many bromeliads are in flower now, so bring yours in to share with the membership.



Ted provided this cloud forest photo but it looks much better when blown up to full size.

### June Refreshments

**No one** signed up for refreshments this month.

## May Meeting

**M**ario Vega was a great host for our visit to the Conservatory of Flowers last month. All of the plants are very happy and many of the bromeliads were in flower or were coming in to flower. Since our last visit the plants have become more established and appear very vigorous. The plants in the pool room were especially lush – perhaps because the roof coating has washed away with all of our rains this year. The rotating exhibit of poisonous plants was excellent and many of our experienced growers learned new facts from the text accompanying the plants.

## Question and Answer

This article is reprinted from the November 1987 newsletter of the South Bay Bromeliad Associates.

**A**re there a maximum number of offsets that bromeliads will produce, if the first, then consecutive juveniles are removed?

There is no reliable rule to this assumption. Some genera like *Cryptanthus* may be very fruitful in replacing the offsets that may be removed early; likewise, *Cryptbergias* and some of the more prolific *Billbergias* also may produce several additional offsets.

However, some genera, such as the *Vrieseas* and *Tillandsias* are not as rewarding. Removing the offsets too soon, so that they are more likely to rot while attempting to root them, could mean that you lose the only offset that the mature plant produces.

## Bromeliad Cultural Hints

This article by Kathy Door is reprinted from the August 1985 newsletter of the Bromeliad Study Group of Northern California

**H**ow many times have you walked through your greenhouse or passed a pot tucked away in the corner of your garden and noticed a ripe *Aechmea* berry, but lacked the time to pick, clean, and sow the seed in a fresh soil mix? Lacking the time to do it right, you tell yourself, tomorrow will be soon enough. Then, when you remember, it is too late. The berry is dried up or eaten by some bird.

The alternative – picking the berry, cleaning the seed, and drying them for temporary storage - has its problems. The seed of many of the berry-forming bromeliads, (i.e., *Aechmea*, *Billbergia*, *Neoregelia*, and *Nidularium*) do not take well to drying. They are slower to germinate, increasing the time in which fungus organisms can start forming, and a larger percentage will fail to germinate.

This problem is especially severe when dealing with the seed of an established hybrid. Genetic weaknesses seem to appear in successive generations of a hybrid, frequently resulting in a gradual loss of the ability to produce viable seed. And to this genetic defect and the negative effects of storing dry seed and the chances of successfully raising many plants are greatly reduced. The only answer to these problems has been to take the time to immediately sow ripe seed without regard to inconvenient timing.

Some years ago, Joseph Carrone, Jr. discovered an alternative which does not appear to have become widely used. He found that refrigerating thoroughly cleansed ripe seed in water resulted in a very high germination rate within a few days of sowing, despite storage for about one month. If refrigeration in water does not harm the seed, then it would seem that refrigeration of the ripe berry would cause no serious harm.

Thus, a possible answer to the busy grower: pick the ripe berry and place in the fresh vegetable section of the refrigerator.



*Aechmea racinae*

photo by  
Reginaldo Baiao

*Aechmea racinae* photo is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies



*Aechmea mariae-reginae*  
male

*Aechmea mariae-reginae* photo is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies



*Aechmea warasii v. intermedia*

*Aechmea warasii v. intermedia* photo is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies



*Aechmea magdalenae*  
Panama

1993 Panama  
© Wally Berg

*Aechmea magdalenae* photo is courtesy of the Florida Council of Bromeliad Societies

**BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF SAN FRANCISCO (BSSF)**

The BSSF is a non-profit educational organization promoting the study and cultivation of bromeliads. The BSSF meets monthly on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 7:30 PM in the Recreation room of the San Francisco County Fair Building, 9th Avenue at Lincoln Way, Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. Meetings feature educational lectures and displays of plants. Go to the affiliate section of the BSI webpage for information about our meetings.

The BSSF publishes a monthly newsletter that comes with the membership. Annual dues are single (\$15), dual (\$20). To join the BSSF, mail your name(s), address, telephone number, e-mail address, and check made payable to the BSSF to:

Harold Charms, BSSF Treasurer, 255 States Street, San Francisco, CA 94114-1405.

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**BROMELIAD SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL**

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**We will explore the cloud forests this month!**