Bromeliad Society HOUSTON Inc.

JANUARY 2025 Volume 58 Number 1

2025 WELCOME

This year promises to bring new activities for the members of Bromeliad Society/ Houston. Along with the ABC's, the Spring Sale, and the Annual Show and Sale, there will be opportunities to build our community with Dutch luncheons and crafts for displaying our plants. There will also be collaborations with the Cactus and Succulents Society.

2025 presents itself as a time to volunteer for the good of the society. It's time to think about volunteering to give a program for a meeting. Take some time to think of an interesting program for the membership. The show and sale will be in May. Lend a hand this year for one or two days. You'll learn a lot about plants and more.

Take pictures of your plants for the bulletins. Identify genus and species and give a bit about how you grow it. Volunteer to write an article for the bulletin. It can be technical or entertaining. Get the .doc file and/or .jpeg file to me: lindawhipkey@ymail.com by the Monday of the previous month. For February's issue, the deadline is January 27th.

Finally, our membership is growing. Take some time soon to introduce yourself to our new members. The directory provides e-mails and phone numbers for reaching out to old friends and new acquaintances. Let's make 2025 exceptional.

The Editor

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Uses of Bromeliads

- **Ornamental plants**: They are popular for landscaping, as houseplants, and in floral arrangements.
- **Air purification**: As houseplants, they can purify the air indoors. According to a study by NASA, bromeliads are one of the best air-purifying plants. They can remove up to 80% of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from the air, including formaldehyde, benzene, and xylene. Bromeliads can also help to improve the humidity in your home. By increasing the humidity, it can help to prevent dry skin, nosebleeds, and other issues caused by low humidity.
- **Wildlife habitat**: In the wild, they provide homes and food for many different animals.

- **Medicinal uses**: Bromeliads can be used to treat a variety of ailments. The leaves of the bromeliad contain a substance that is known as bromelain, which is known for its anti-inflammatory properties. Bromeliad leaves have traditionally been used to treat respiratory diseases such as bronchitis, asthma, and coughs. The leaves are boiled in water to make a decoction which is taken orally to relieve congestion and coughs. The active ingredient in bromeliad is bromelain. It is a natural enzyme that helps to break down proteins. This makes bromeliad an effective treatment for indigestion, heartburn, and other digestive problems.
- **Food**: Bromeliads are not just pretty plants – they're also a source of food and fiber! The leaves of some bromeliads, such as pineapple, can be eaten raw or cooked. The flowers of others, such as the Aechmea bromeliad, are often used in salads.
- **Fiber:** The fibers from the leaves of some bromeliads can be used to make rope, baskets, and other woven goods.
-

from Harry Luther, 2023
PLANT PAT

REMINDERS

- ***Dues expire in February.***

Individual - $20
Family - $30

Checks to:

Allyn Pearlman
BSH Treasurer
6422 Bankside Drive
Houston, TX 77096
or
Zelle to:
deliboys@comcast.net
713-858-3047

Perks of membership include:

- Participation in the Annual Show as an exhibitor
- Participation in garden tours
- Participation in ABC's
- Participation in Dutch luncheons
- Attendance at Annual Christmas Party
- Participation in bromeliad sales
- Receipt of seedlings
- Receipt of monthly bulletins, email reminders and the society directory

Deadline for bulletin articles and pictures for February is JANUARY 27.

- Participation in other society activities

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

The annual holiday display at the National Museum of Natural History features a colorful 'tree' composed solely of bromeliads.

The President's View

Welcome to the new year! I hope your holidays were enjoyable and have set the stage for a fantastic 2025. A new year often brings change and renewal—a chance to reflect on the past and look forward to new opportunities. As always, our society is transitioning to new officers and board members. I'm honored to serve as your president and excited to collaborate with the new board and all of you.

When I joined the Bromeliad Society five years ago—on something of a whim—I had no idea I'd one day be president. At the time, I had recently rediscovered my interest in bromeliads. My collection of about 30 varieties (and hundreds of plants) had been neglected for over a decade, with many in need of attention. I attended my first meeting with no expectations beyond enjoying a program and getting some advice about my plants.

To my surprise, I was warmly welcomed. Several members engaged me in conversation and made me feel at home. Some even remembered my dad, who had been a member years ago. Their kindness and enthusiasm put me at ease and made me want to return.

Since then, I've become deeply grateful for the many people whose efforts make this society so vibrant—those who set up meetings, greet attendees, provide refreshments, run the raffle, showcase their plants, and share their knowledge. These contributions, big and small, are the result of hard work and generosity. They've created an environment where learning, connection, and fun thrive.

For me, every time I've volunteered, asked a question, or met someone new, it's made my experience richer and more rewarding. I encourage you to get involved too—start small if you like! Attend a meeting and take home a seedling. Buy a few raffle tickets (you might win a plant!). Donate a plant to the raffle. Send Linda a photo of a bromeliad in your garden, or better yet, include a story with it! Bring a plant to Show and Tell. Comment on our Facebook page—or if you're not a member yet, join us there! Submit a plant for judging at the show. Volunteer for an hour or two. Invite a friend to join you and share these experiences. Most importantly, don't hesitate to ask how you can help.

My goal this year is to increase awareness and engagement among our members. I want to make your involvement in the society as rewarding as possible. If you're already active, I hope you'll enjoy the benefits of having more members participate alongside you. I'd love to hear your ideas: What activities sound fun to you? What would you like to try? What's something new we could do that would make you

The President's View (continued Page 4)

excited to join? Don't be surprised if I reach out personally to ask for your input—or your help!

I also want to acknowledge that this past year has been challenging for some of our members. Health issues, family obligations, and even weather have kept a few long-time attendees and volunteers away. If that sounds like you, how can we support you? Could a group help move your plants in or out? Do you need a ride to meetings? Are there ways we could enhance the Zoom experience for you? Please let me know—we'll do what we can to help.

Since joining the Bromeliad Society, I've discovered that the more I put into it, the more I get out of it—many times over. That's why I'm here as your president today. This society has brought me wonderful friendships, fascinating plants, and invaluable knowledge. I'm excited to give back and to help all of you experience the same rewards.

Here's my wish for 2025: that you try something new, learn something new, and volunteer for something new. I hope you'll find inspiration and joy in your involvement with the Bromeliad Society. Let's make this a banner year for the BSH, for you, and for your bromeliads.

I look forward to seeing you at the next meeting! Come say hello—or better yet, share your thoughts with me.

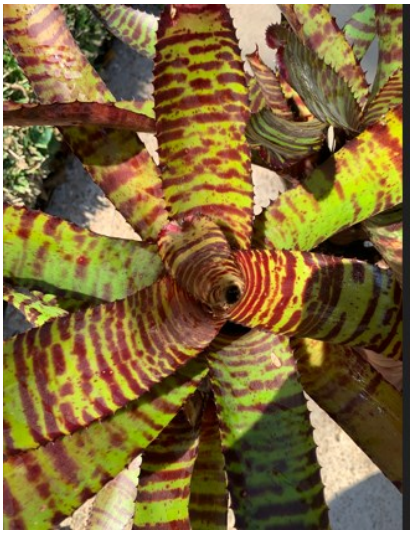
Mike

moneal37@gmail.com

IDENTIFY ME

I have several bromeliads that I don't know the name of. Many are Neos that came from the last of Odean Head's collection and I would love to get help identifying them. This one is currently known to me as Neo #10 OH. I have posted it on our Facebook page with a description at https://www.facebook.com/groups/105841562777246. Please join the conversation with your thoughts and comments there. If you are first to identify it, I will gladly share one with you too!

Mike O'Neal



January Program
Jan. 21, 6:30 pm

The World of Cryptanthus Bromeliads
Presented by
Ruby Adams & Margo Racca

Don't miss the January 21 meeting of the Bromeliad Society Houston. Members Ruby Adams and Margo Racca will share information about the Cryptanthus Society, how it is affiliated with Bromeliad Society International, and how it has continued to welcome members from all over the world.

In their own right, Ruby and Margo have spent years collecting and nurturing "Earth Stars". They will share their techniques in the "care and feeding" of these beautiful bromeliads to help the rest of us find success with those plants that have found their way into our collections.

We can look forward to a small Cryptanthus silent auction during their presentation!!

Cryptanthus is a genus of flowering plants in the family Bromeliaceae, subfamily Bromelioideae. The genus name is from the Greek cryptos and anthos. The genus formerly had two recognized subgenera: the type subgenus and subgenus Hoplocryptanthus Mez which has been raised to the separate genus Hoplocryptanthus. Wikipedia
Scientific name: Cryptanthus
Family: Bromeliaceae
Size: 3 in. to 3 ft. thespruce.com
Genus: Cryptanthus; Otto & A.Dietr.
Kingdom: Plantae

Come, Learn, and Enjoy!

January BS/H Meeting

Jan. 21
West Gray Multi Service Center

6:30 pm

Dyckias! Dyckias! Dyckias!

Presented by
Bryan Wyndham

Exciting news for our **February 18, 2025** Meeting.

Bryan Wyndham, our neighbor and member of the River Ridge Bromeliad Society, will be visiting Bromeliad Society/Houston and sharing his expertise in growing and propagating world class Dyckias. Bryan has won multiple awards for his Bromeliads and he is willing to share details about his collection and how he grows them with such success.

COME ONE, COME ALL
YOU CAN'T MISS the FEBRUARY MEETING!

Bryan will bring plants for a sale following his presentation.

(Cactus lovers… these are PRICKLY plants too.)

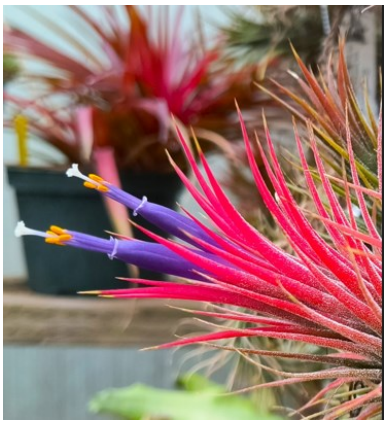
From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

***Dyckia** is a genus of plants in the family Bromeliaceae, subfamily Pitcairnioideae.*

The genus is named after the Prussian botanist, botanical artist and horticulturist The Prince and Earl of Salm Reifferscheid-Dyck (1773–1861).
Dyckias, with stiff and thorny leaves, prefer rocky and/or sunny areas and have a natural tendency to clump leading to thick, large mats.
The subfamily Pitcairnioideae contains several "terrestrial" members of the Bromeliaceae, with cultivated genera including Dyckia, Hechtia, Pitcairnia and Puya. They are endemic to arid and high-altitude regions of Brazil and the central part of South America.

JANUARY BROMS
Cinotto-Edmonson

***Aechmea* Carrone's #2**



Tillandsia ionantha

Tillandsia fasciculata

Aechmea recurvata

Tillandsia tenuifolia

***Billbergia* 'Kumu Hula'**

Tillandsia chiapensis

JANUARY BROMS
Whipkey

***Aechmea* 'Chocolate'**

***Neoregelia* ' Grant's Serendipity'**

Tillandsia ionantha

***Tillandsia* 'Really Red'**

Aechmea recurvata x A. orlandiana
'Green Clone'

JANUARY BROMS
O'Neal

***Aechmea* 'Blue Tango'**

January Broms
Gurka

Tillandsia **‘Silver Trinket’**

Aechmea recurvata **var. ortgiesii**

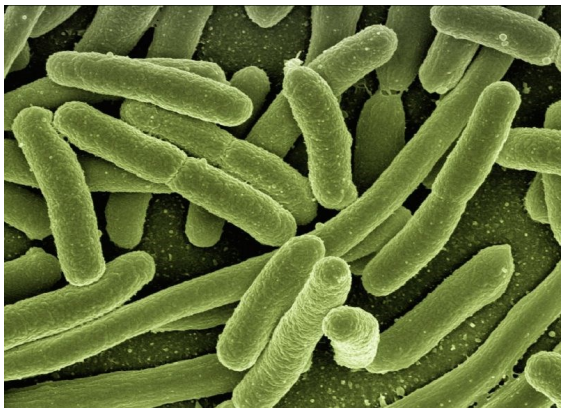
Identify Me please

From *Mother Earth News*

The Original World Wide Web
By Robert Turner
Excerpts

An entire world exists underground, inhabited by tiny creatures with complex, mysterious lives. Just as the new James Web telescope is opening vast expanses of the universe to human eyes, scientists employing high-powered microscopes are digging deep into the dark recesses of the earth to unlock its subterranean secrets. What they are revealing is a vast communication network that connects microorganisms in the soil with plants aboveground, allowing entire ecosystems to share nutrients, minerals, water and even warning of impending danger.

We have known for a long time that healthy soil is teeming with life and that the presence of bacteria a archaea (all microbes) in agricultural soils boosts crop yield—an average of 10-20% for many field crops. Yet, despite their importance for food production, we know surprisingly little about soil microbes' daily lives.



Science has historically focused its attention above ground, perhaps because of limitations. Centuries of research unlocked the miracle of photosynthesis, whereby plants bind together hydrogen atoms from water with carbon dioxide molecules from the air to create simple carbohydrates, like glucose. But more recent advances has shown that while plants turn atmospheric carbon into usable energy, they actually store a lot more carbon sugars underground. This soil carbon become the glue that binds and clumps soil together, boosting water storage capacity and overall soil health..

All life forms on our planet are carbon-based and we need to continually consume carbon atoms to maintain our physical bodies. Whereas plants can source carbon directly from the air, microbes have evolved over hundreds of millions of years to earn their carbon by partnering with plants for mutual benefit. In a symbiotic relationship, a plant exudes sugars from its root system to attract and feed bacteria in the soil. The bacteria reciprocate by making sure the plant gets enough water and nutrients

Compare the exchange to the human gut. Just as intestinal bacteria help us digest and process food, plants depend on soil microbes to help them break down or "fix" the nutrients they need including nitrogen and phosphorous As if the deal needs sweetening, some bacteria colonize a plant's roots and aboveground surfaces to ward off pests and pathogens.

At the same time bacteria are partnering with plants, mycorrhizal fungi are partnering with plants, nestling among plant roots, creating a spiderweb structure of mycelium that effectively extends a plant's root system using microscopic filaments called "hyphae". The surface area can be up to 100 times greater that that of a plant's roots, creating a secondary root system. The mycelium draws in valuable nutrients and water that otherwise are unreachable for the plant and in return mycorrhizae receive carbohydrates from the host plant.

For information about how plants "talk", refer to *Mother Earth News*, January 2025 edition

ASK THE EDITOR

What do I do with all those cardboard boxes I got from Christmas?

Usually, you have to choose between fast, cheap and good. Cardboard achieves all three. Fast: it requires no special tools. Cheap: It's free of charge. Good: It's a no-till, chemical free way of taking down overgrowth and planting your gardens. Just place the flattened cardboard over the weeds that are already there. Then cover with wood chips, mulch or straw. The best part is that cardboard decomposes adding biomass and nutrients to the soil.

From *Use Cardboard in Your Garden*
Mother Earth News, Jan. 2025

What is allelopathy?

Allelopathy is a fascinating biological phenomenon where plants release chemicals (called allelochemicals) into their environment to influence the growth, survival, and reproduction of other plants around them. This can be a way for plants to compete for resources like light, water, and nutrients. Some common examples include:

Black Walnut Tree: This tree releases a chemical called juglone, which inhibits the growth of many plants within its root zone.

Sunflowers: They produce allelochemicals that can suppress the growth of nearby weeds.

Sagebrush: Known for releasing volatile chemicals that can affect the growth of surrounding vegetation.

What seedling do we get at the meeting this month?

January Seedling is Neoregelia 'Lila'

To FOIL or Not to FOIL

It’s common practice for nurseries to put colorful foil plant pot covers on plants, especially around the holidays. Poinsettias often don this festive wrapping, but you can find just about any holiday plant wrapped in aluminum around Christmastime. Many mini Christmas tree varieties like lemon cypress and dwarf Alberta spruce, as well as more unique holiday plants like hellebore often fall prey to this seasonal tradition.

Yes, foil looks festive, but it doesn't exactly create an ideal environment for your plants to grow. So should you remove foil on plants as soon as you get them home or is it ok to leave it on for the holiday season?

Nurseries wrap foil around plants because it makes them more attractive and festive. It hides the inexpensive green, black, or brown plastic pot that most plants are grown in. However, those foil-wrapped plants often die after only a couple of weeks. There are many reasons why a foil-wrapped plant may die. There are plenty of poinsettia care mistakes and other plant mistakes that are easy to make. But once you've ruled out the most common issues, it's time to look at the foil wrapping.

The foil around plants is often to blame for the early demise of the plant. The problem is that water catches in the foil because it has nowhere to go. As a result, the bottom of the pot sits in the water and the plant soon rots because its roots are sopping wet and unable to breathe.

So, if you’re wondering if you should remove foil around plants, the answer is yes. You should remove foil as soon as you get your plant home.

If you want to leave that colorful foil in place a little longer and enjoy the cheery look it provides all season, just poke several tiny holes in the bottom of the foil, then set the foil-wrapped plant on a tray or saucer to catch the drained water. This way you can enjoy the pretty wrapper, but the plant has drainage it needs in order to survive.
You can also lift the plant from the foil wrapping. Water the plant in the sink and let it drain thoroughly before replacing the foil.

MARY H DYER
Gardening Know How

Christmas Party 2024

Tillandsia 'Red Robin'

Tillandsia 'Green Goblin'

BULLETIN BOARD

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Chris Nguyen	12/26
Bianca O'Neal	12/11
Gail Schmidt	12/4
Carole Speer	12/20
Audrey Van Wright	12/7

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Ellen Baskerville	1/15
Debbie Bragg	1/10
Sylvia Compton	1/27
Lynn Friedman	1/16
Betty Garrison	1/19
Bob Kirby	1/13
Karen Malinowski	1/23
Malcolm McCorquodale	1/17
Scott Sandel	1/3

Houston Orchid Society

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Regular meeting first Thursday of month at 7:30 PM

First Christian Church | 1601 Sunset Blvd

Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

www.tgcfernsoc.org

Regular meeting third Sunday of month at 2:00 PM

Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center

2020 Hermann Drive., Houston, TX 77004

Spring Sale at 1475 West Grey

March 15, 2025

Houston Cactus and Succulent Society

www.hcsstex.org

Regular meeting fourth Wednesday of month at 7:00 PM

Metropolitan Multi-Service Center

1475 West Gray, Houston, TX 77019

2025 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Michael O'Neal

SECRETARY
Don Greene

VICE PRESIDENT
Gordon Stowe

TREASURER
Allyn Pearlman

PAST PRESIDENT
Scherie Townes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS——————————————-

Through 2025	Through 2026	Through 2027
Frank Lee	tbd	Noreen Tolman
Linda Whipkey	Mary Cinotto (temp)	Malcolm McCorquodale

STANDING COMMITTEES——————————————-

PUBLICATIONS
Allyn Pearlman

PROGRAM CHAIRMAN
Gordon Stowe

STANDING COMMITTEES EX-OFFICIO
Cherie Lee & Margo Racca

PLANT SALES CHAIRMAN
Allyn Pearlman

COMMITTEES -

ANNUAL SHOW (TBD)

HOSPITALITY (TBD)

BROMELIAD CULTURE
David Whipkey

MEMBERSHIP
Allyn Pearlman
Sub-Committee:
Membership Development

COURTESY
Debbie O'Neal

SEEDLINGS
Allyn Pearlman

DIRECTORY and BULLETIN
Linda Whipkey

SHOW AND TELL (TBD)

EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS
Linda Whipkey

RAFFLE
Cherie and Frank Lee

GARDEN TOURS
Gordon and Shirl Stowe

REGISTRATION
John Sarkisian

HISTORIAN
David Whipkey

ZOOM COMMUNICATION
Michael O'Neal

HOLIDAY PARTY CHAIRMAN
Allyn Pearlman

BROMELIAD SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL————————-

Annette Dominquez
Margo Racca

Cherie Lee
Daniel Wolf

January Meeting Zoom Link

Bromeliad Society Houston 2025 Monthly Meeting
Time: Jan 21, 2025 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)
Every month on the Third Tue, until Nov 18, 2025, 11 occurrence(s)

Monthly Zoom Meeting Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85266221495?pwd=KM2UwUzh4LXcmRasBLlzYlQWKYuauc.1

Meeting ID: 852 6622 1495
Passcode: 625577

JANUARY BOARD MEETING ZOOM LINK
January 16, 2024

Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85454927012?pwd=KSnKIb83IE4RP04BTXNUmrJcYUSxmb.1

Meeting Id: 854 5492 7012

Passcode:667283

I have a spelling checker,
It came with my PC;
It plainly marks four my revue
Mistakes I cannot sea.
I've run this poem threw it,
I'm shore your pleased too no,
Its letter perfect in it's weigh,
My checker tolled me sew.