

Bromeliad Society

Read your bulletin!



AUGUST 2025 Volume 58 Number 8



The President's View

By Michael O'Neal,
BSH President

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Surviving the Heat

Whew! It looks like we've officially entered the hottest stretch of the year. Triple digits are creeping into the forecast, and I hope your bromeliads are faring well in the heat. Do you track which plants handle the extremes better than others? Which needs more water or more shade during the day? It's helpful to know the differences to keep some of them from burning up while others love the sun and keep from making the same mistakes over again.



Tracking your plants can be a little work, but it pays off. Whether it's bloom time, genus, heat tolerance, or survival rates—it all tells a story. I love stats, so I track my collection in a spreadsheet that helps me organize and see patterns, like which genera dominate (no matter how many times I tell myself to diversify and stop buying Neos). I have over **150** now when my whole collection was not quite 40 varieties when I joined the society.

President's View (continued)

Bromeliad Events Coming up:

August Program:

**Dr. Sylvia Dee (Rice University) -
Climate Change in General and its
Effect on People and Plants**

August 19, 2025

Hospitality for August

Names beginning in N-Z

donate goodies.

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A Custom Plant App?

A few years ago, I built a small app on my phone to access my spreadsheet on the go. Unfortunately, the platform I used is now too pricey to keep using. So I'm considering **building a new standalone plant tracker** that I could share with others in the club!



Would you use an app like that? What would you want it to include?

- Tag by genus or species?
- Photos of each plant?
- Bloom tracking?
- Care notes or weather log?



Send me your ideas (email me or post it on

our Facebook page) — I'd love your input.



Farmer's Market Fun

We'll be back at the **Farmer's Market August 9** with some new ideas to draw attention—centered around our **"Cool Plants"** theme. We're trying things that spark curiosity and invite more folks to discover the world of bromeliads.

Stop by, or just enjoy the crowd—whatever you do, we hope to plant a few seeds of interest!



Showcasing at TACSS – October

We're also excited to represent the society at the upcoming **Texas Association of Cactus & Succulent Societies event** this October at **Mercer Botanic Gardens**. Our plan? Display **bromeliads with succulent characteristics**—like *Dyckias* and *Hechtias*—as well as showier genera for the general public.

President's View (continued)

Summary of July program

On Zoom, Aaron Davila presented a comprehensive look at Tillandsia's. He covered the two types of photosynthesis that the plant can have and how we must pay attention to them for the plant's sake. He also verified that it is difficult to grow Tillandsias indoors.

He finished the program with a Show and Tell of some of the plants he is most proud of.



July Raffle

Donors:

Cherie & Frank Lee
Troy Merchant
Rick Richtmyer
Linda & David Whipkey

Winners

Marianne Canevaro
Vickey Gurka
Dru Anne Lundquist
Mike O'Neal
Allyn Pearlman
Sheila Ross
Audrey Van Wright
Debbie Taylor
Ross Thyer

(President's View)



It's a great chance to reach new audiences who already love unusual and drought-tolerant plants.



Thinking Ahead: Our Show Venue

We're exploring a few options for a **new show venue**—somewhere that maintains everything we love about our current show but might offer even more visibility or space.

Nothing is changing yet, but if we find a great fit, we'll keep you in the loop!



Planning for Winter? Already?

Yes, it's hot—but I'm also thinking ahead. Last winter's rains and snow made me consider building a **stronger cover** for my plants to protect them from collapse in heavy down-pours. *A little prep now could save a lot of stress later.*

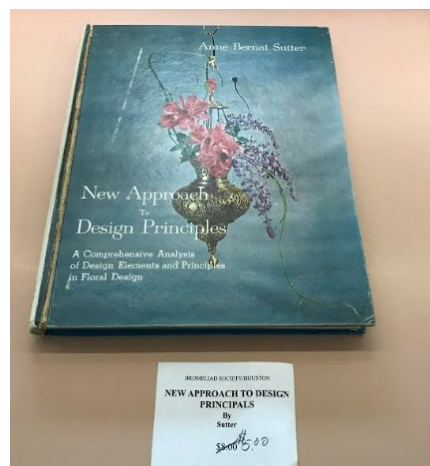


Snow Day
Mike's "greenhouse"

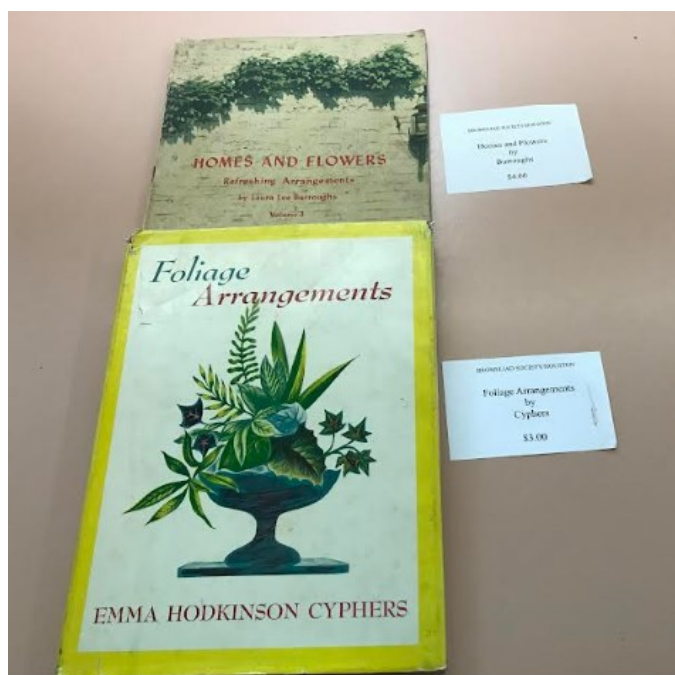
Stay Cool, Keep Growing and I hope to see you at the **August meeting** which should have a very interesting presentation!

Mike

Library Opportunity



New Approach to Design Principles is hardback but the spine is in poor condition. \$5.00



Homes and Flowers is a paperback (1942 antique quality). \$4.00

Foliage Arrangements by Emma Cyphers is a hardback with a cover in used condition. \$3.00

Or ... ALL THREE BOOKS FOR \$10

More about Landscaping

Tips from Popular Mechanics

Think about location—direction of sun and wind

Take time to consider the sun and shade. When does the area get the most sun? When does the area go into shade? How long does it last?

Add color and texture of various plant species to enhance visual appeal.

Consider adding gravel paths or walls to enhance the overall look of your space.

Build a mound that you can cover with a rock or flower garden. Berms add color and texture to an otherwise flat, plain lawn with colored stone, flowers, or foliage. They can also add height by being built as a mound. You can place them anywhere, although they're especially effective in corners of the lawn.

Create curved lines instead of straight ones. Installing the edging in creative curves instead of perfectly straight lines adds appeal and character.

Illuminate focal points and sidewalks. Attractive landscaping deserves to be seen after hours, which is where landscape lights come into play. The lights play many roles, from adding to the home's attractiveness to illuminating steps and sidewalks for safety to showcasing points of interest in the landscape. Placing lights alongside paths and walkways is one of their most common uses, although that doesn't mean they have to be set in straight lines at prescribed intervals.



Neoregelias and Sansevieria



Low voltage lighting

Reminders

Spring Branch Farmer's Market

We will be at the market:

- ☐ **Location:** St. Christopher Episcopal Church
- ☐ **Address:** 1656 Blalock Road, Houston, TX
- ☐ **Time:** 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

August 9

☐ **Donate Plants**

We're asking for **around 5 beginner-friendly plants** from genera like *Aechmea*, *Neoregelia*, *Tillandsia*, *Billbergia*, *Cryptanthus*, or *Dyckia*. Eye-catching and easy to care for is ideal!

- ☐ **Please coordinate (text) with Scherie Townes as soon as possible** to arrange drop-off at the church: **281-772-7556**

☐ **Volunteer at the Booth**

Love talking plants? Scherie could use a couple of extra hands at the booth. It's a great way to connect with fellow plant lovers and share your bromeliad enthusiasm.

Let's show the Spring Branch community how fun and fascinating bromeliads can be!



After the August market, we will be continuing at other markets.

Bring your colorful donated plants to the meeting on August 19 for Scherie.

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Membership dues in the Bromeliad Society Houston are \$20 for individual \$30 for family. The membership goes from January to January.

To join, send your check to:
Allyn Pearlman
6422 Bankside Drive
Houston, TX 77096

With your check, include your address, cell phone/home/work phone numbers; your birthday month and day and your email address. The email allows you to receive the monthly bulletin and important communications. Also, designate a phone number to call in case of an emergency cancellation of the meeting.

For those of you who want to join the monthly meeting on zoom, this is the link and passcodes:

Monthly Zoom Meeting Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85266221495?pwd=KM2UwUzh4LXcmRasBLizYlQWKYuauc.1>

Meeting ID 852 6622 1495

Passcode is 625577

Hospitality is handled by N-Z for August.

Deadline for bulletin articles and pictures for September is August 25. Send me those pictures of your broms (they don't have to be blooming). Send a jpeg to me. I need your pictures for the bulletin.

lindawhipkey@gmail.com

I always look for news about bromeliads.
Here's some you may already know

Mary Ellen Ellis
Gardening Know-How

.While some plants, like citronella, might help keep mosquitoes away, these problematic plants might be drawing them in or hosting mosquitoes in your garden.

Bamboo is a fun and easy plant for the garden. It grows quickly, providing a privacy screen and shade. On the other hand, bamboo is notorious for collecting water in its hollow stalks. Each stalk can then become a desirable breeding ground for mosquitoes, and there's no easy way to get the water out. If you're having issues with mosquitoes, or it rains a lot in your garden, you might want to control their spread.



Bromeliad plants are tropical, warm-weather plants that many people grow indoors. They have colorful flowers and unique leaves. You can grow them outside in summer, but beware. Like bamboo, these plants collect water. The leaves and flowers grow in rosettes, creating a little cup that holds water. Either avoid bromeliads outdoors or keep them out of the rain and water at the soil level to avoid standing water. Empty the tank often.

The fact that they are invasive is already a good reason to avoid growing Japanese honeysuckle bushes in your garden. They outcompete native species and provide wildlife with berries that are less nutritious than native options. Honeysuckle plants attract mosquitoes because these bushes grow densely and create ideal microclimates for mosquitoes with shade, cool, still air, and plenty of moisture.

There is no reason you can't enjoy container plants in the garden without attracting mosquitoes, but there is a caveat: don't let standing water pool. One of the most common ways this happens in containers is with those that sit in trays.

Using potted plant saucers or trays can keep a space tidy and clean, but they hold water and create an ideal environment for mosquito breeding. If you use saucers, let water run through the plants and then tip out the excess.



Cultural Tips

For our
tropicals

Let's start this month's article with some facts. August is Houston's hottest month. It has the highest average daytime high temperature – 94 degrees, the highest average nighttime low temperature – 74 degrees, and the record daytime high temperature – 109 degrees. To top things off, August is when hurricane season shifts into high gear. Unfortunately, most of your Bromeliads as well as most people are not going to enjoy August. Not much we can do about it except wait for October.

To make the situation more bearable for me, I try to work with my plants in the morning, or in the evening when the temperatures are milder and the sunlight is less intense. You will probably need to water your plants more often than you did in the spring and early summer. Continue to remove dead leaves and spent blooms. You might notice that the color of some of your plants has faded. Don't worry as the plants will brighten up in the fall as temperatures drop. Some plants might react to the high temperatures by developing off colored patches on some of their leaves. These patches are not sunburn which is something that you also need to watch out for. I call them heat damage. Not much you can do to avoid it unless you add air conditioning to your yard.

While you are tending your plants take a careful look at how they are arranged. Is it beginning to look boring? If so, rearrange your plants to give them a fresh look. There are many ways to get tips on how to rearrange your collection. Look at the collections of other gardeners. Go on garden tours. Visit botanical gardens and parks. If you want to bring some plants into your house, look at the interior landscaping in public buildings to get some decorating tips.

You might want to make a list of plants that might work well in various parts of your garden. To get some hints, try looking at the pictures you took at the last Bromeliad show. Which plants did you really like? Which of those would you like to add to your collection? Once you identify the plants you are interested in, talk to the people who entered them. Ask the exhibitors of award winning plants where they obtained them, and how they grew them. Most will be happy to share their sources and cultural methods with you. If you saw some plants that you liked, but they were awarded red ribbons, ask the growers how they might grow them differently in the future.

August may be hot and stormy, but do take time to enjoy your plants. Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting where we can visit and enjoy the AC.



August Broms



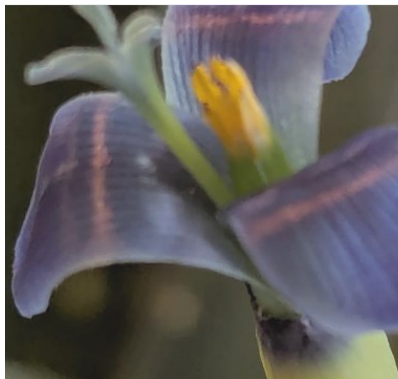
Aechmea fasciata

Linda Whipkey
Won on raffle table



Vriesea correia araujo

Frank Lee
Last year's seedling



***Billbergia* close-up**



***Neoregelia johannis* 'De Rolf'**
Mary Cinotto



***Billbergia* 'Grand Finale'**

Linda Whipkey

August Broms UNIQUELY BROMELIAD



Tillandsia aeranthos

Frank Lee



Ananas lucidus

Artistic Arrangement by Shirl Stowe



90 in. tall. 48 in. wide. Stem 5 in. in diameter.
15 years to grow!

Alcantarea odorata 'Silver'

David Whipkey
Flower right



Flower length about 4 inches.



Dyckia 'South Bay' var. 'Tibor'

Chris Nguyen

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AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Kim Merchant	8/20
Troy Merchant	8/24
Gordon Rowell	8/17
Scherie Townes	8/13
Joanne Woolsey	8/24

July Luncheon

The quarterly luncheon was held at Cheddars on US 290 W on July 12 with Shirl and Gordon Stowe, Rick Richtmeyer, Frank and Cherie Lee and Linda Whipkey. A good time was had over some good food.

The next one will be in September on a Sunday afternoon (Sept. 28). Location is at Escalante's Tex Mex in Meyerland Plaza. This will be the last one this year. Make plans to attend.



We have a large selection of Aechmea, Billbergia, Cryptanthus, Dyckia, Neoregelia, and Tillandsia. Please compare our prices and our quality.

15019 8th Street West, Santa Fe, TX 77517 ■ 409-925-6933

www.jimbosnursery.com

Houston Orchid Society

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Regular meeting first Thursday of month at 7:30 PM

First Christian Church | 1601 Sunset Blvd

YOU CAN GROW

C  **L**

 **PLANTS** 

WE WILL SHOW YOU HOW

Bromeliad



Society

Houston



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

Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

www.tgcfersoc.org

Regular meeting third Sunday of month at 2:00 PM

Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center

2020 Hermann Drive, Houston, TX 77004

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Daniel Wolf

More News

The Next Quarterly Luncheon

It will be held on September 28,
2025. That's a Sunday.

Location:
Escalante's Tex Mex Restaurant
590 Meyerland Plaza, Houston

12:30 pm
Let me know if you can make it.
lindawhipkey@ymail.com

Last one of the year!

XX



Encholirium horridum