

Bromeliad Society

Read your bulletin!



NOVEMBER 2025 Volume 58 Number 11



The President's View

By Michael O'Neal,
BSH President

moneal37@gmail.com



Our **October elections** are complete, and we now have **another great team** of officers and board members ready to lead us into the coming year! I've already had conversations with our new board members, **Ross and Mitch**, and I know they'll bring **fresh ideas and new perspectives** to help us continue growing and evolving as a society.

A heartfelt **thank you** to our outgoing board members, **Frank Lee** and **Linda Whipkey**, for their dedication and contributions over the past three years. They've both been a **great force for change and growth** in our society, as well as a **tremendous help to me**—especially during my first term as president. I'm deeply grateful for all they've done. And thank you, members, for your continued trust in me to guide our society for another year.

My "View"



I call this column *The President's View* because I try to share my perspective on **what's happening, what we need, and where we're going**. And what I currently see is a **thriving, active group of bromeliad lovers** who bring life to our society
President's View (continued on page 3)

November Meeting

We will be holding the November 2025 meeting, at Shirl and Gordon Stowe's home. (maps on next page)

It will be on November 15
from 1:30—4:30

A relaxed 3-hour meeting at Gordon and Shirl Stowe's home on **November 15th**, featuring a presentation on greenhouse construction, social time, and a raffle

Hospitality is by letters A–M.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

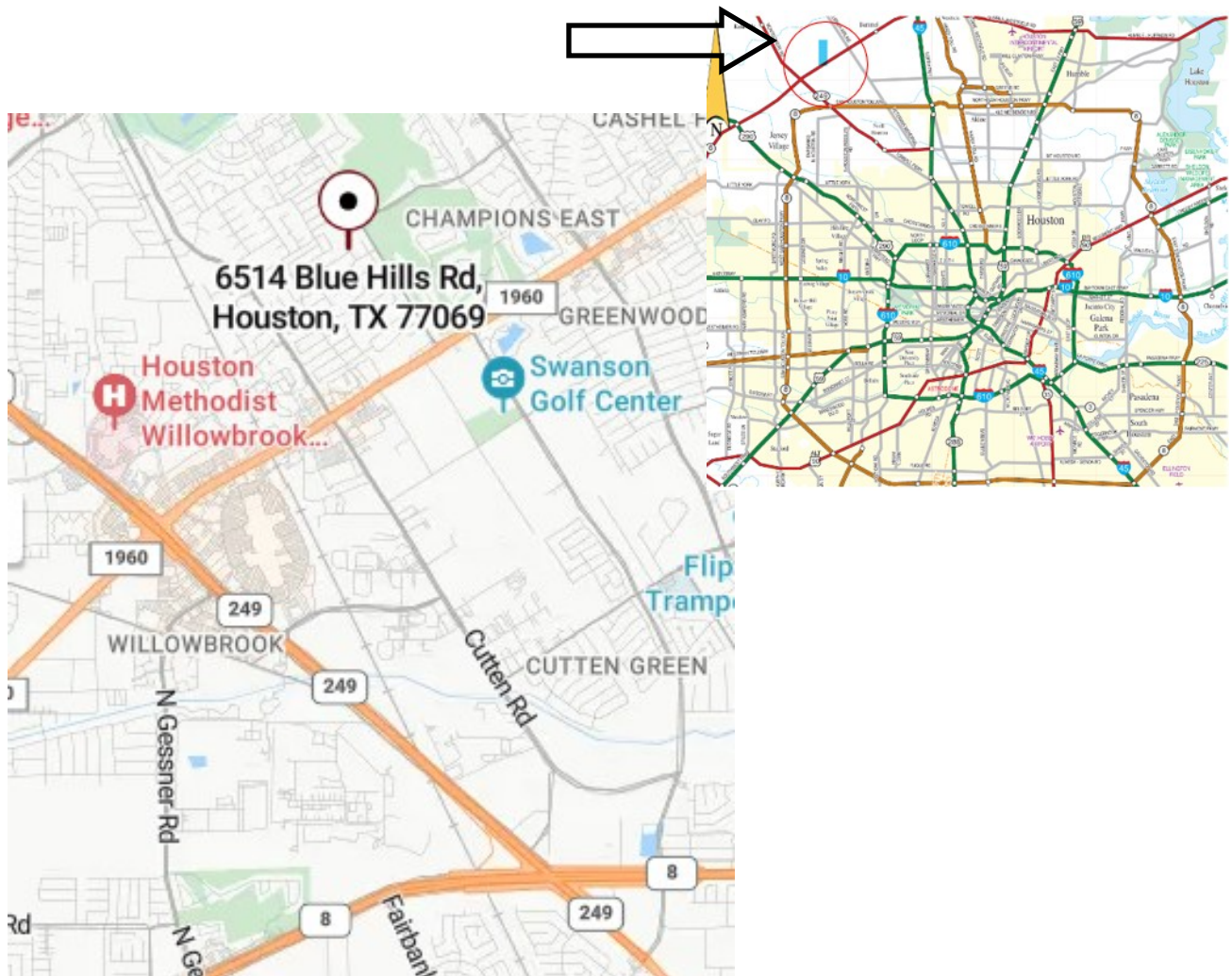
[Mercer Arboretum](#)
[Reminders](#)
[Cultural Tips](#)
[Christmas Dinner and Auction](#)
[More Reminders](#)
[Rules for Arrangement Challenge](#)
[Birthdays in November](#)
[Ask the Editor](#)

November Meeting

November 15, 2025

1:30 - 4:30 pm

**6514 Blue Hills Rd,
Houston TX**
It's northwest of Houston proper.



through curiosity, enthusiasm, and connection.

This group is **smaller than we'd like**, so **growth remains a priority**, but we've also **really increased our activities** this year—and to me, it's felt **more energetic and vibrant** than ever. I'd love to hear the **perspective of any and all members**—your ideas, your experiences, and your vision for **where our society can go** in the coming years. The more we share, the better we can shape the future together. □

October Adventures

We started the month off right with our **Sunday October luncheon**, a great opportunity to relax, catch up with friends, and enjoy good food and conversation before our busy schedule of events kicked in.

Margo Racca's Greenhouse Visit (Louisiana)

Soon after, we took a wonderful road trip to **Margo Racca's home** in Louisiana, where we toured her greenhouse overflowing with stunning bromeliads. Afterward, we enjoyed a delicious **gumbo lunch** and even left with a **Neoregelia compacta 'Bossa Nova'** gift plant—an unforgettable day of plants, people, and good food!

If you didn't get your plant that day and still want one, **contact me**—I have a few extras that **Margo kindly sent back with me** for anyone who missed out.



Texas Cactus & Succulent Society Conference – Mercer Botanic Gardens

The following weekend, our booth at the **Texas Cactus and Succulent Society Conference** at Mercer Botanic Gardens drew **steady traffic** throughout the event. We showed off our **new table runner**, displayed a diverse range of smaller bromeliads, and sparked plenty of interest—especially in our *Neoglaziovia* (which several tried to buy!) and the always-popular *Billbergias*.

A warm welcome to all our **new members** who joined us there! We look forward to helping you **develop the same love of bromeliads** that so many of our members already share. We hope you'll stick around, get involved, and come say hello at our **November meeting**.

Meeting Highlights



We capped off the month with our October meeting featuring **Dennis Cathcart's** riveting program on *Tillandsias*. He spoke for nearly **two hours**, and honestly, we could've listened twice that long. From taxonomy to travel tales to his experience sending **hundreds of thousands of Tillandsias** to Singapore's *Gardens by the Bay*, it was a talk that reminded us why we love these remarkable plants.

Looking Ahead



As we move into the final stretch of the year, I'm filled with gratitude and excitement for what's ahead. Our society continues to grow—not just in numbers, but in energy, creativity, and friendship. Whether you're new to bromeliads or a seasoned grower, there's always something to learn and share. Let's keep that spark alive—bring a friend to a meeting, share a pup or a story, and help us keep spreading the joy of these amazing plants. See you soon, and until then, **keep growing!** Mike

Mercer Arboretum for the Cactus and Succulent
Sale and Conference.
Oct. 18, 2025



Reminders

- ◇ There will not be a December issue of the bulletin.
- ◇ Be sure to check your email (spam folder too) for announcements.

Pruning in the Fall

Consider a sharp pair of shears

Protect your hands from thorns with a pair of puncture-resistant gloves

Collect garden scraps and compostables in a lawn garden bag. Empty the bag into your compost pile if it has no diseased plants in it.

Your Houseplants in the Fall

From Gardening Know-How

Shorter days and dry air can take a toll—learn how to adjust watering, light, and care routines to keep your houseplants thriving.

- ⇒ Reduce Watering as Growth Slows
- ⇒ Move Plants Closer to Light Sources (except for Christmas Cactus)
- ⇒ Stop Fertilizing Until Spring
- ⇒ Clean Leaves and Pots
- ⇒ Check for Pests, Especially After Summer Outdoors

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

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.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Question

Do any of you have Japanese Maples in your garden? If so, let me know. I wanted to set a couple out, but I'm not sure how much of the Texas sun they can take.

The Editor



Cultural Tips

For our
tropicals

It finally happened. In late October, the first real cold front blew through Rosehill. One day the high was 94 degrees, and the low was 71. The next day the high was 73 and the low was 46. I'm glad we didn't get a freeze. Welcome to Texas!

Hopefully everyone has already started preparing for winter. Just in case anyone hasn't, let me refresh your memory about what to do. First, look at your plants. Remove any dead or damaged leaves. Cut out dead or declining mother plants. This will allow the pups room to grow without being distorted. Carefully check each plant for pests and disease. Treat any problems you find before you move the plant into winter storage. If the plant has outgrown its current container, repot it before putting it into winter storage.

Speaking of winter storage now would be a good time to clean and make any needed repairs to your facility. If you are considering building a greenhouse, you don't want to miss the November 15 meeting. It will be held at the home of Gordon and Shirl Stowe. The program will be about putting together a greenhouse. It promises to be very interesting and informative.

Last month I talked about my Bromeliad Toolbox. I concentrated on the "Cutters". This month I want to showcase the "Grabbers". They are all used to grab things. These tools come in handy when you are grooming plants. I use mine to pull hard to reach weeds out of pots, to remove damaged or diseased leaves, and to extract debris from hard to reach areas. I have multiple sizes because the tools that work well when I am grooming a large *Bromelia* are not appropriate when I am removing leaves from a clump of *Tillandsia ionantha*.

Generally my grabbing tools fall into 2 broad categories: Hemostat Forceps (tools A – E) and Pliers (tools F – G). The hemostats I use range in size from tool A measuring 12.5 inches down to tool E at 5 inches. The tips can al-

so differ. They can be straight and pointed as

in tool A and tool E. Or they can be curved and pointed as in tool B and tool D. They can even be straight and flattened as in tool C. Big plants require big tools, but it is easier to use smaller tools if you can. Sometimes a straight tool works great until you need a curved tool to reach around a stem to get that last weed. The problem with hemostats is that they can't handle the tough tasks. In those cases I often use a pair of pliers. Slip joint pliers, tool G, can handle most tasks, but a pair of needle nose pliers, tool F, can be used to reach into narrow spaces.

Grabbers and cutters are not the only objects that I carry in my Bromeliad Toolbox. It also contains monofilament fishing line that I use for hanging *Tillandsias*. There is also a short piece of wooden dowel that I use for tamping down the potting medium when I am potting a plant. A soup spoon comes in handy for putting potting medium into hard to reach places, and of course plant labels, and a pencil. You might want to create your own toolbox. It is a great way to keep everything you for working with your plants in one place.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at the November meeting.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G
12.5	10	9.5	6	5		

Bromeliad Society Houston Holiday Dinner

Time to celebrate another year of taking care of our bromeliads and sharing with one another.

Location: Los Tios Mexican Restaurant
9527 Westheimer Rd.

When: December 6, 2025
6:00 pm Cash Bar
6:30 pm dinner

How much? \$35 per person

What? Beef and Chicken Fajita Buffet

For Special Dietary Requests, email Allyn, deliboys@comcast.net

Deadline for RSVP? December 1, 2025

Pay: Cash, Check, Zelle or Credit Card



YOUR BROMELIADS NEED YOU -- NOW!!!

by the Editor

Time to get ready to protect your bromeliads from coming cold, damp winter we get in Houston.

Consider November as a transition month when the average high temperature at beginning of month is usually in the mid-70s. As time goes on, temperatures fall to high 60's. With lows approaching the 40's, if you haven't taken precautions, your bromeliads are in danger.

Precautions include:

- **Sheltering plants** - Most important measure to protect from colder temperatures. Many people bring bromeliads into the house or garage. Due to their primarily tropical nature, almost all bromeliads will need to be brought inside.
- **Inside micro-climates** differ greatly from what they are accustomed to outside in the summer.
- **Check for pests** anytime you bring in a plant inside from outside, especially on undersides and at axils where leaves meet the stem.
- **Keep brought-indoor plants separate from usual house plants for a few weeks.** Remove pests such as scale or mealy bugs by swabbing them with rubbing alcohol. Rinse the plant with water and allow it to dry.
- **Clean pots.** Wash each pot with soap and water, rinse with a diluted bleach solution, let dry completely, and then rinse again with water.
- **Cut back watering.** In the house,

the warmth can stress the plant. Furnaces and heaters rob the air of water vapor. This doesn't mean that you water more often. It means plants will go through a period of very slow or absent growth. Thus, watering can be cut back. When you do water, soak the container thoroughly and allow excess water to run out. You do not want potting soil to remain soggy, or the plant could suffer from root rot. Broms can act like succulents, and some are.

- **Increase humidity.** Use a humidifier or group plants together in pebble trays to create the surroundings with higher humidity.
- **Light.** In the house, chances are they still are getting some light. In the garage, plants have to adapt to the amount of light they get. Ensure they receive bright, indirect light, adjusting the plant's location as the angle of the sun changes. Open the garage door on warm days to get light in.

**There is a raffle at the
November BS/H meeting.**

NEW MEMBERS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR ARE:

JENN SMITH
MONICA DAY
DONNA JOHNSON
WHITNEY GRAY
CAROL H. GAAS
JERRI L. DUPLISSEY-DORR
MARILYN COCHRAN
ALLISON VALLESTEROS
RAVYN S. WALLACE
CARLOS DUROTEO
DAVID FOSTER
REN LAWSON
CHRISTINE HOOD

WELCOME. The raffle for free membership is takes place at the January meeting.

Rules for the Bragging Rights Challenge

1. You may use any plant material, fresh or dried.
2. Your artistic arrangement must emphasize bromeliads.
3. Your container may be natural or man-made material.
4. All bromeliads used must be properly named.
5. The picture (jpeg) submitted must have a neutral background. Nothing to detract from the arrangement.
6. The arrangement must stand on its own (have permanence).

Refer to the South African examples in September's bulletin.

Email me to say you will be participating. We need at least 5 entrants to make this work. Send me your picture by **Dec. 1**.

lindawhipkey@ymail.com

YOU CAN DO THIS!

Supplies you need for an artistic arrangement:

A container: a bowl, a basket, a pot, a vase or anything that can hold a plant

A plant: a bromeliad of your choice; one, two or a group of them

Foam: dry or wet foam to hold plants and leaves surrounding the brom in place

Greenery: leaves and stems from a green plant or bush to fill in holes in the arrangement

Or, use silk.

There's still time!!!! Look for the products in the January bulletin.

BULLETIN BOARD



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

James Billimek	11/10
Cristy Brenner	11/30
Elayne Kouzounis	11/9
Renee Lieber	11/3
Peg Raymond	11/28
Shirl Stowe	11/1



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



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



Summary of October Meeting

Dennis Cathcart took us on an extensive trip to South America and the Caribbean. We saw air plants from Peru, Argentina, Brazil, Belize Panama among others. Miles of rocky colonies and close ups of epiphytes. Of course, snakes. It was time well-spent traversing the

projected terrain searching for air plants and fondly remembering all the adventures that Dennis and Linda have had.



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

Officers, Directors, Committees

PRESIDENT
Michael O'Neal

SECRETARY
Don Green

VICE PRESIDENT
Gordon Stowe

TREASURER
Allyn Pearlman

PAST PRESIDENT
Scherie Townes

BOARD OF DIRECTORS-----

Through 2025
Frank Lee
Linda Whipkey

Through 2026
Vickey Gurka
Sheila Ross

Through 2027
Noreen Tolman
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
Shirl Stowe

BROMELIAD CULTURE
David Whipkey

MEMBERSHIP
Allyn Pearlman

COURTESY
Debbie O'Neal

SEEDLINGS
Allyn Pearlman

DIRECTORY and BULLETIN
Linda Whipkey

SHOW AND TELL
John Schmidt

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

GROWTH AND ENGAGEMENT
Linda Whipkey

BROMELIAD SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL-----

Don Green
Margo Racca

Cherie Lee
Daniel Wolf

ASK the EDITOR

Can I enter the show in May if I just joined in October?

Yes, you can enter the show as long as you have paid for the 2026 year. The Dues are \$20 for individual and \$30 for family. They need to be paid by February 2026.

The other requirement is that if you are entering a plant in the horticultural division, you must have had the plant for 6 months. So anything you buy in October/November is eligible for putting into the show for May.

If you are entering an artistic arrangement, the plants do not have a term of ownership. You can buy a plant and enter it immediately. Here are some of the plants from the 2025 show:

