

**No April Meeting
at West Grey**



April 2026 Volume 59 Number 4



The President's View

By Michael O'Neal,
BSH President

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What Kind of Collector Are You?

Do you have a favorite type of bromeliad? I've heard so many interesting collecting strategies over the years. Some people focus strictly on species. Others try to collect as many genera as possible—or even complete an entire genus. Some follow the work of a favorite hybridizer. And then there are those who simply chase whatever catches their eye.

What about you? Do you look for rarity? Certain colors or forms? Plants that are ideal for mounting? Is there a genus you just can't seem to get enough of?

For me, I've definitely gone through phases, and right now it's all about variegation. I find myself drawn to anything with interesting striping or patterning—it's hard for me to pass those up.



The Sale Plan... or Not!

That brings me to the upcoming sale. Do you go in with a plan? I always tell myself that I do. My plan usually sounds something like this: I'm only going to look for a few specific things—maybe some different Billbergi-

Attention

Because of the April Sale and the BSI conference in April, there will not be an April meeting.

However, The Sale takes place on April 11. If you are going to bring plants to sell, remember:

- Only Allyn Collects the money. The 80% will be refunded to you by Allyn after processing.
- Use two tags for each plant. Sales number on both, price on both, name of plant on one. Make sure plants are clean.
- If you do not have a sales number, Contact Allyn who will assign one to you.
- You do not need to bring a table.
- If you have a hanging plant, bring something to hold it.
- Prices start at \$5.00 in increments of a dollar.
- Bring a potluck breakfast or lunch side dish item.
- Allyn will supply luncheon meats, bread, cheeses, lettuce, tomatoes, condiments and pickles.

as, or a genus or cross I don't already have. I'm definitely not buying any more Neoregelias. And I'm only going to buy plants I actually have room for.

And then, of course, reality sets in. Somehow that "careful plan" has a way of turning into something like a large neo coming home with me anyway. It happens!



Step Up and Sell (Even Just a Little!)

While you're thinking about the sale, I want to strongly encourage everyone to consider participating as a seller—especially if you've never done it before. You don't have to bring a truckload of plants. Start small. Even a few well-grown plants can be a great way to get started and to see how the process works.

If you're thinking about selling, be sure to review the article elsewhere in this issue that outlines the requirements. And please let Allyn Pearlman know that you plan to sell so he can assign you a seller number. If you have a rough idea of how many plants you might bring, that's even more helpful.

If you're not sure where to start, reach out to some of our more experienced sellers. They are more than willing to share tips on cleaning, presentation, and pricing—and even help you decide what might be good candidates to bring. Don't be afraid to experiment. You really don't know what will sell until you try. I still remember my first sale—about half of my plants were gone before the sale even officially started.



Looking Ahead to the May Show

I also want to encourage everyone to think about entering plants in our May show. If you've never entered before, there is a novice division that can be a very rewarding place to start. It's a great way to learn, and you might be surprised at how well your plants do.

This year's theme for the artistic division is "**Bromeliads: Nature's Sculpture,**" and I'd love to see members embrace that concept with creative entries that highlight the natural form and structure of bromeliads. You might think in terms of mounted plants that highlight natural form, simple minimalist displays that treat a single plant as a focal point, or compositions that emphasize shape, line, and structure.

While you can enter up to 21 plants, don't feel like you need to go big your first time. Even bringing a single entry is appreciated and helps make the show better for everyone. And just like with the sale, our experienced exhibitors are a tremendous resource. Don't hesitate to ask questions or get advice—they are always happy to help.



Blooming Season Is Here

I hope your plants have been blooming well so far this year. Mine seem to be off to a great start. I'm seeing a mix of first-time bloomers along with some reliable performers. There are Billbergias blooming now, along with plenty of Aechmeas and Tillandsias. Another one of my Quesnelias is putting on a show, and my Vrieseas are still looking great. I even have a Dyckia or two sending up spikes, and it looks like the Neos are just getting started.

It's shaping up to be a colorful year, and I hope you're seeing the same in your collection.



Oak Season Strikes Again

If you grow your bromeliads under trees, you have my sympathy this time of year. With the oaks dropping everything they can, it can feel like a losing battle to keep plants clean and presentable—whether for display, sale, or show.

I recently spent an entire day re-cleaning a group of plants that I had already separated and cleaned less than a month ago. Not exactly how I planned to spend the day, but sometimes it just has to be done.



A Busy (and Exciting) Stretch Ahead

I hope you've been enjoying our programs and the schedule so far this year. We have a lot coming up over the next couple of months, and I encourage you to take advantage of as many events as you can. There's something for everyone, and it's a great way to stay connected and engaged with the society.

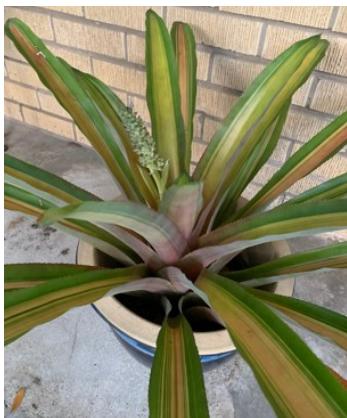
Also coming up before our next newsletter are the ABCs in May. This will be a great opportunity to tour Mercer Botanical Gardens and enjoy a private visit to the Mercer greenhouses as well. They continue to be very welcoming and are excited to have us back.

As some of you heard at the last meeting, we were unable to secure a booth at PlantCon this year to promote our show and sale. While that's disappointing, it also comes at a time when we already have a very full calendar. This may give us a bit of breathing room to focus on the events we do have and make them as successful as possible. Looking ahead, we can plan a more coordinated effort for next year.

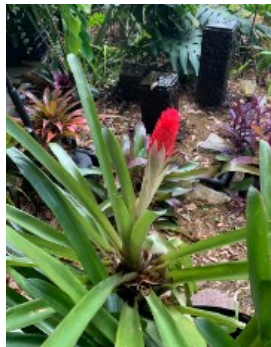
I look forward to seeing you soon—and seeing what you bring home (or bring to sell) at the sale.

Mike

Mike's April Pictures



Aechmea 'Alvarez'



Quesnalia quesnaliana



Tillandsia
'Showtime'



Vresia unknown



March Raffle Results

Donors:

The Whipkey's
Mary and John
Mitch Fontenot
Ruby Adams

Winners:

Paul Sobieski
Marianne Canevaro
Scherie Townes
Ade Oluyemisi
Mike O'Neal
Mary Woods
Mitch Fontenot
Mary Sobieski



Winner's Luck

Total \$84

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Editorial

It's Spring again!! That means better weather and more activities for the Bromeliad Society Houston. There are a total of 82 members in the society. It takes at least 30 volunteers to put on a show. Locally, we have about 57 members. I know I'm preaching to the choir here, but if you can get a few members together to help, it would be great and take away some of the burden on others who volunteer all the time.

The theme for this year's show is *Bromeliads: Nature's Sculpture*. We tend to think of sculptures as those from the Works of Greeks or the Renaissance in Italy: The Exquisite Perfection of Reality. Perfection of plants can be seen in the lovely crosses by Shiigi, Skotak, our Carole Richtmyer and many more. Hybrids are usually grown under exemplary conditions of temperature, water, Editorial (continued)

Editorial (continued)
sun and fertilizer.

In the wild, however, it may be hard to find a perfect plant. Variations in those factors contribute to poor color, asymmetry and stunted growth.

So it is in our "wild" conditions of the greenhouse, patio or landscape. As we learn more about our plants, we experiment in what might make the best growing conditions for our micro climate. Sometimes we succeed and sometimes not. When we do find the right conditions for a plant, we celebrate by taking it to the Show and Tell portion of our meetings or entering it in the annual Bromeliad show.

Now, let's turn our attention to another form of beauty. Far away from Greece and Italy, we find another concept of beauty. In the Japanese philosophy, we find *Wabi Sabi*. *Wabi is the appreciation of simplicity, authenticity and the natural world. Sabi is the beauty that comes with age, wear and the passage of time.* We can find Wabi Sabi in art, gardening and design. As you look at your plants, note the art of age and simplicity. Imperfection can be beautiful. This might be best seen in a mounted piece, where decomposition and wear are noticeable, making the piece a unit of authenticity. As below, the black decomposition of the



wood shows wear and age, adding to the simplicity of the piece. We even have a Neo that is named for the imperfection of beauty, *Neo imperfecta*.



I'm not saying that the plants you enter should be shoddy or ignoring basic procedures of cleaning and preparation. But,

remember, conformity is not always perfect. Color may be off. But your plant is a thing of beauty. Its simplicity is valuable.



SOME OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIETY

to extend **recognition of Bromeliads** as tropical plants that may be grown and propagated in environments outside their natural habitat.

to increase the knowledge of Bromeliads through **dissemination of information.**

to provide **forums** and media through which experiences in propagation, care, feeding and other treatment of Bromeliads may be reported, **discussed** and published for the common good.



THE BROMELIAD SHOW

The Bromeliad Society Houston was established in 1968. The first show was presented in 1969.

Due to Covid-19 and a couple other circumstances, several shows had to be cancelled.

2026 is the 52nd Show. It will be held at the Judson Robinson Community Center, 2020 Hermann Drive, Houston. Set up in on Friday.

Show on Saturday May 16 and Sunday May 17.

MORE...

At the Show, as a member, you will be able to display plants (horticultural) and artistic arrangements.

An important guideline is the show **Schedule**. It is put together each year by the show chair. It contains rules and procedures, classifications and awards to be given. You may obtain the Schedule at the March/April meetings.

The Schedule uses an Identification Key to identify your plants. Such a key is used with True or False Statements to classify according to Division, Section and Class.

MORE...

For each entry, you need to Identify a Category, Division, Section and Class.

For Example:

Category I: Horticultural

Division would be Flowering? Non-Flowering?
Single? Multiple?

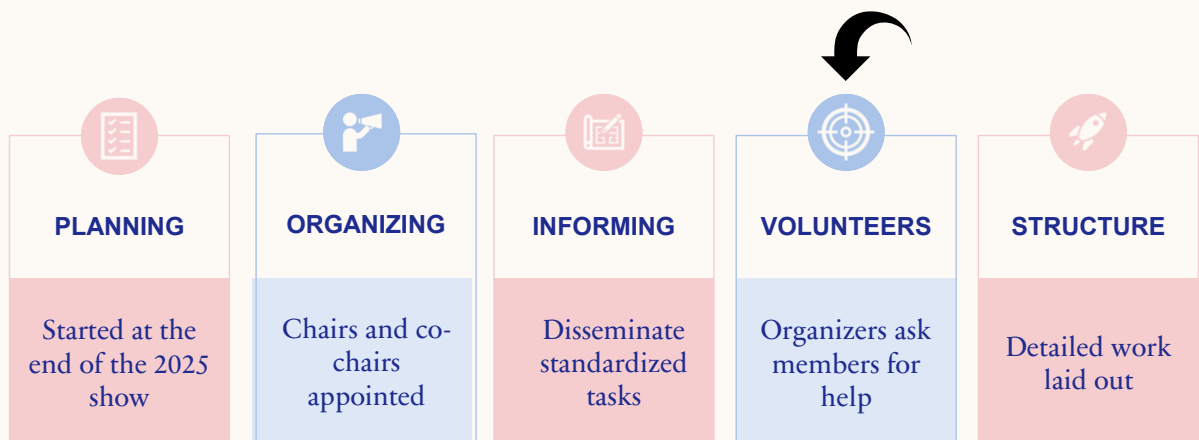
Section A or B as defined in the Schedule

Classes are according to Genus, as presented in the Schedule

COMMITTEES AND TEAMWORK



HOW DO WE GET THERE?



SUMMARY

Let's continue the tradition of a Bromeliad Show by working together.

Consider volunteering one or two days.

Come see the show.

Read the 2026 Show Schedule.

Start getting plants ready in April.

AREAS of VOLUNTEERING

There are many ways to volunteer that would not tie you up for a long period. Consider:

CLASSIFICATION ASSISTANT (FRIDAY)

HOSPITALITY WORKERS (FRIDAY, SATURDAY AND SUNDAY)

HOSPITALITY DONORS (FRIDAY AND SATURDAY)

PLACEMENT RUNNER (FRIDAY)

SECURITY (SHOW DAYS)

JUDGES CLERKS (SATURDAY)

RECORDS CLERKS (SATURDAY)

AWARDS PLACEMENT (SATURDAY)

SEE OR CALL CHAIRS FOR VOLUNTEERING: VICKEY GURKA, DON GREEN, RUBY ADAMS

Reminders

XX

Updating Your Contact Info

If your contact info in the directory has incorrect information, let me know so I can edit the directory. lindawhipkey@ymail.com

Don't forget to send me pictures of your plants. They don't have to be in bloom. For the MAY edition, get them into me by APRIL 23.

Conference registration includes access to all conference seminars, the bromeliad show, the auction, and early entrance to bromeliad sale. Included meals are listed below.



- Conference Opening Reception with All American Buffet (Wednesday evening)

- Plant Auction with Complimentary Appetizers (Friday evening)

- Keynote Address with plated Banquet Dinner (Saturday evening)

Bus tours and extra dinner tickets are optional and can be purchased for an additional fee. See BSI.org website.

Conference Registration – \$425 per person

All conference registration fees are final and non-refundable.

Witness the artistry of nature and the skill of dedicated growers! Our **judged plant show** will feature a stunning array of bromeliads, meticulously cultivated and presented for your admiration.

April Photos



Neoregelia 'Leo'

All plants by Mitchell Fontenot



Sighi *Vreisia*
hybrid



Neoregelia 'Stellar Explosion'



Neoregelia 'Hypershock'

April Photos

All plants by Mitchell
Fontenot

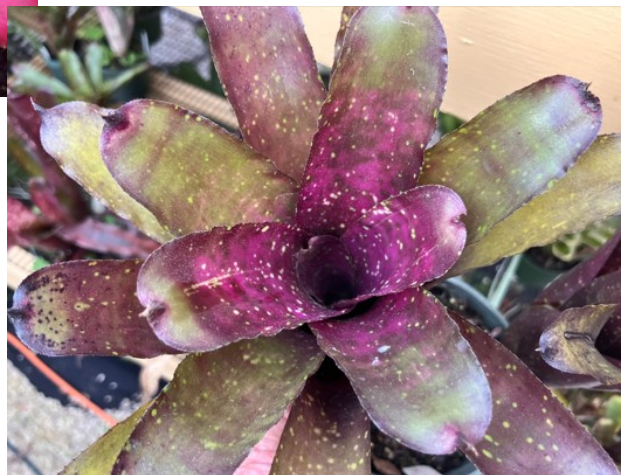


Neoregelia 'Chaos'



Neoregelia 'Treasure Chest'

Neoregelia 'Klingon'



More April Pictures



Neoregelia 'Merlot'

Quesnalia humilis



Achmea 'Blackie' (?)
May not be Blackie. Do
you have another idea on
its id?

Whipkey Pictures

Getting rid of grass in your Gardens

A personal favorite method of removing grass from flower beds uses some newspaper and mulch. Smothering grass is incredibly effective at eliminating large amounts of it in your flower beds. I have used this no-till method in my front garden to great effect; I killed my whole lawn and planted native perennials and annuals for my local pollinators. You can also use cardboard, paper grocery bags .

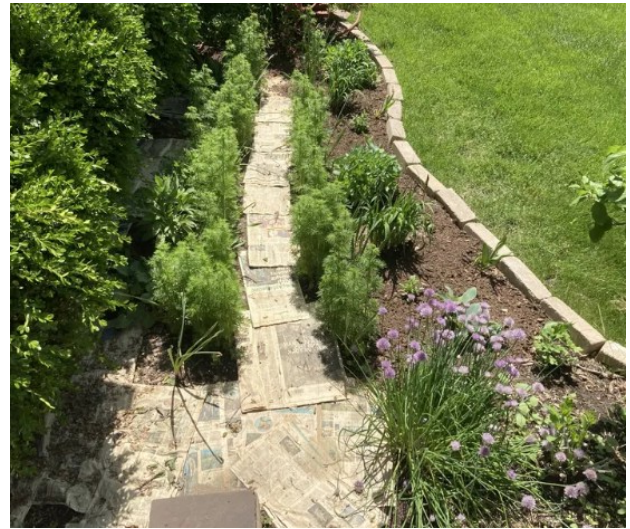
Lay a few sheets of newspaper or a flattened cardboard box over the areas grass is growing and wet them with your garden hose. This will keep your newspapers from blowing away in the breeze. Then layer 2-3 inches (5-7 cm) of mulch on top and say bye-bye to the grass! Be sure to overlap your paper products so there are no gaps the grass can grow through. The grass will be smothered under the newspaper and mulch and break down into the soil.

From Gardening Know-How

Ground covers

Whether you've got a large area of soil to cover or simply want to fill in garden gaps to suppress weeds, [groundcover plants](#) can be raised from seed to give you great results for very little outlay. Some are [perennial groundcover](#) recommendations for a permanent transformation; others are annual groundcover plants for a temporary fix while you decide what to do with a tricky garden spot, or self-seeders that will spring up every year with minimal intervention from you.

Groundcover plants are a great way to cut down on garden maintenance but there's more to these low-growing beauties than purely practical benefits. They will add color and texture to your backyard in place of ugly patches of bare soil,



Ground covers

and many will happily thrive where little else will grow. Lots have a profusion of small leaves that will creep over paving edges or spill over retaining walls, softening hard landscaping and quickly making your garden look mature. Some are beautifully scented and can tolerate being walked on, so you can plant up pathway sides for a fragrant walkway. Using the same groundcover choice in a few different spots is such an easy way to tie your garden design together, too.

Spring is the perfect time to plant [groundcover gems](#). These may not be the star plants in your garden, but they are an essential element of your backyard line-up.

Moss Rose

Creeping Thyme

Dianthus deltoides

Sweet Alyssum

Dichondra repens

“Basket of Gold” *Aurina saxatilis*

From Gardening Know-how

BS/H

Coming Events

Spring Sale at West Grey	April 11
Mitch presents at Plaza Garden Club	April 13
BSI World Conference (California)	April 15-18
ABC's at Mercer	May 2
Annual Show and Sale (Judson- Robinson)	May 16-17
May General Meeting	May 19
Quarterly Luncheon	June 7
June General Meeting	June 16 Panel Discussion

Also Perhaps a Farmer's Market

Getting Ready for the BS/H Show

What should I be doing to prepare for the Show in May?

If you have questions, speak to the 2026 Show Chair, a local BSI judge, or a person who has previously entered plants into a show.

Horticulture (make sure that you have had the plant for at least 6 months)

- > identify possible show entries
 - almost mature plant or clump of plants
 - good color and markings
 - appropriate shape
 - minimal damage
 - no disease or pests
- > do a preliminary grooming
 - remove declining plants from clumps
 - remove dead or dying leaves
 - remove debris and water spots
- > repot if needed
 - use a clean or new pot
 - use new potting mix
 - set plant at appropriate depth
- > give them a little TLC
 - move to a prime location
 - rotate the plants on a regular basis
 - treat disease and insects as soon as noted
 - regular watering and fertilizing
 - watch for sunburn

Artistic

- > Ask the Show Chair for a list of the criteria and judging rules pertaining to the artistic section. As soon as it is available, obtain a copy of the 2026 Show Schedule.
- > Decorative containers
 - select a container
 - select a plant that complements (or contrasts with) the container
 - size
 - shape
 - color
 - texture
 - use the 'Horticulture' criteria shown above to assist you in choosing
 - do not move plant into the decorative container until shortly before the show
- > Artistic Arrangements (no limitation on ownership length)
 - learn the 2026 show theme is as soon as possible
 - examine your plants and artistic materials
 - sketch out several possible arrangements
 - refine your ideas
 - do practice assemblies
 - what could be improved
 - take pictures for future reference
 - look for materials that you could incorporate to improve your design
 - don't be afraid to discard a design that is not working

BULLETIN BOARD



April Birthdays

Mitchell Fontenot	4/17
Larry Friedman	4/23
Jan Liang	4/29
Gene Powers	4/30
Verna Powers	4/17
Lee Rowell	4/26
Chris Todd	4/11

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.



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



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

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Passover Begins April 1



April 5

