



S.F.V.B.S.

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BROMELIAD SOCIETY APRIL 2014 NEWSLETTER

OFFICERS

Pres & News: **Mike Wisnev** V.P.: **Mary K. Carroll** Secretary: **Kathleen Misko** Treasurer: **Mary Chan**
Membership: **Nancy P.-Hapke** Health & Wellness: **Georgia Roiz** Web Page: **Kim Thorpe**
Directors: **Steve Ball, Bryan Chan, Richard Kaz -fp, Dave Bassani-fp**

Saturday April 5, 2014 @ 10:00 am

Sepulveda Garden Center 16633 Magnolia Blvd. Encino, California 91316

AGENDA

9:30 – SET UP & SOCIALIZE

10:00 - Door Prize – for members who arrive before 10:00

10:05 -Welcome Visitors and New Members.
Make announcements and Introduce Speaker

10:15 –Speaker: Bryan Chan

Program title: “Dyckia Hybrids and Their Culture.” Longstanding SFVBS member Bryan Chan will present a general talk on the culture of the genius Dyckia. The topic of Dyckia hybridizing from the perspective of Bill Baker and Bryan Chan will be included.

Bryan Chan has been a long time member of the San Fernando Valley Bromeliad Society and also holds longtime memberships in other plant Societies. Bryan’s interests are diverse – in addition to being a plant collector and hobbyist grower, he is a singer/songwriter. He grows many different things, and his Bare/Bear Dyckia hybrid line has gained interest here in the United States and in other countries abroad.

11:15 - Refreshment Break and Show and Tell: Will the following members please provide refreshments this month: **Don Misumi, Shawn Newmann, Stacey Phelps, Chris Rogers, Georgia Roiz, Steve Rudolph** and anyone else who has a snack they would like to share.

Questions about refreshments? Call Joyce (818-705-3224) or Kathleen (818 402-6031).
Leave a message - they will call back.

Feed The Kitty

If you don’t contribute to the refreshment table, please make a small donation to the **(feed the kitty jar)** on the table; this helps fund the coffee breaks.

For Show and Tell – Each member **please bring one plant**. You may not have a pristine plant but you certainly have one that needs a name or is sick and you have a question.

11:45 – Mini Auction: members contribute

12:00 – Raffle: We need each member to donate

12:15 - Pick Up around your area

12:30 –/ Meeting is over—Drive safely **

Hope to see you all at the meeting by 10:00 am...

REMEMBER – THERE IS NO REGULAR MAY MEETING> YOU are encouraged to attend the La Ballona Bromeliad Show and Sale at Veteran’s Memorial Hall at 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City. Just take the 405 south, get off at Culver Blvd and go west about a mile or so – there is a parking lot on the right side of Culver just before Overland. If you can’t make it Saturday, it is also open on Sunday. Among others, Bryan Chan and Ray Van Veen usually sell Bromeliads there. The Sunset Cactus and Succulent Show and Sale will be at the same location, and Artie, Kim, Steve, Duke and Kaz will be selling plants.

President's Message

Last month's meeting was wet, and dark. I hope everyone checked their emails, and didn't try to attend. Burbank Blvd often closes during the downpours – I've seen TV news reports that show the water at the top of the traffic lights. And the staff may not open the building. Given all that, we thought it best to cancel – our apologies for any inconvenience.

This month we'll hear from Bryan about *Dyckia* hybridizing. We've all seen the gorgeous *Dyckias* he brings in to the show and tell, and we can learn how he grows them, as well as his hybridization techniques. Don't miss it! Since Bryan is talking about *Dyckias*, this Newsletter is mainly about them.

Remember that there is no regular May meeting. Instead, I hope you will all try to attend the La Ballona Bromeliad Show and Sale – see more about it under Announcements. If any of you are attending and think you can bring some of our other Club members to the La Ballona Show, please let us know at the April meeting.

Lastly, make sure you keep your Bromeliads well hydrated!. Since we didn't have a winter, they are likely to stress quite a bit earlier this year.

Mike Wisnev

Announcements

1. **Happy Birthday to:** Chris Rogers – April 4 and Ray Van Veen – April 12
2. **Rewards System** – This is a reminder that you will be rewarded for club participation. Bring a Show-N-Tell plant, raffle plants, Refreshments and **donations for the auction**. Members will be rewarded with one Raffle ticket for each category. We realize not everyone has pristine show plants but each of us certainly has sick or unidentified plants that can be brought in. **Each member, please bring one plant.**

• What can you do to help our club?

1. First and foremost we need **members to plan to attend all meetings**. What we ask is for people **to try not to plan anything else on our meeting day.** Look at our calendar below before you schedule.
2. You can **donate an occasional plant for the mini-auction or the raffle**. You can **also participate by buying raffle tickets or by bidding** on a plant in the auction.
3. Food and Drink – everyone is encouraged to bring in something for our great lunches, and feed the kitty if you don't. .
4. Newsletter – you might contribute a short (or better yet, long) article – a paragraph would be great.

Be Prepared

By: *Mary K. Carroll*

Time to start getting ready for our Bromeliad Show June 14 & 15

Remove large pups in March

Donate Sale Plants

Donate Material for the Raffle

Volunteer Time as Guide

Volunteer Time at Reception Table

Help with Set-Up & Break Down

Bring Show Plants

Now is the time to get your plants prepared. Make a commitment to prepare one plant a month. If you do that, each member will have 3 plants to add to the June Show. Remove pups that are half or 2/3 the size of the mother plants. Wear long sleeves and gloves when handling the Aechmeas. Add rocks to the pots to keep them from falling over. Use proper potting mixture. Pot the plant and if necessary use chopsticks or small rocks to brace the pup upright; pup's root faster when you keep them steady and prevent them from moving around. Place the pot on a bench or in an area where it will receive bright diffused light. Make sure the leaves don't touch other plants so they don't become scared.

Before the show wipe off the leaves and flower pots with a damp cloth. In 15 minutes you will have 3 plants ready to show. Your extra pups can always be donated to the club sale.

UNDERSTANDING DYCKIAS by Constantino Gastaldi

Thanks to Mary K who forwarded this article by Constantino Gastaldi, along with this introduction.

Many of our members have heard of the famous Constantino Gastaldi (The Dyckia King) from Brazil. We have often seen photos of his plants being shown by Nels Christianson, Steve Frieze and others. I don't seem to have much time for the internet anymore but recently a friend spotted this short article written and posted by Constantino on his blog, then he forwarded it to us. Since our April meeting will feature Dyckias we thought it would be nice to share this article with you so maybe you can see how passionate Constantino is about his country and his plants.

Portuguese is Constantino's native language. He gave me permission to make a few English corrections so long as I didn't change the context of his work; I think I was successful; hope you all enjoy it. maryk

“UNDERSTANDING DYCKIAS”

***written by: Constantino Gastaldi –
March 2014- Joinville Santa Catarina - Brazil***

Brazil has lots of fantastic looking plants and many have been seen by a very few eyes, others have yet to be seen for the very first time. In the Amazon we find plants never seen before by human beings! This alone makes us think about the vastness of the Brazilian territory. We have no deserts, no ice fields, no ultra-high mountains, simply every square kilometer here is perfectly habitable any time of the year.

Presently we are finding new mammals and tribesmen who have never been met before, not even once, let alone plants and this is 2014 not 1814! Bromeliads just recently caught our eyes and Dyckias and allies are a most recent curiosity. Science relied on collectors and bush men and our Dyckias were the last to call any attention. Orchids and cacti were the prime "beef" to science and most of the scientists never left Europe or US

offices and their homes. Some Brazilian plants were described as being Mexican so big and confused were the collectors luggage. Most scientists were much more interested in their mentors and their own celebrity than any plant.

Dyckia dawsoni and fosteriana (type) were simply extinguished from nature in order to forbid any other "scientific" eyes to see them in nature. Now real plant lovers are doing a good job in order to make these wonderful plants known.

Another point: Most of us believe or were induced to believe a Dyckia species will present the very same look year round, all the time and all its members look the same. This is not just a mistake but an error! Some species present just one pattern, one look but the huge and vast majority is not so. Individuals can be smaller, bigger, whiter, darker, paler, reddisher, greener, than others. Some can bend more, some can arch their leaves more than others and present narrower and thicker leaves or bigger spines and so on and on.

Dyckias are able and pruned to make any speed horseman fall from his horseback. Why? Because Dyckias are plants undergoing a final transformation, a last play, they present all their cards on the table... They are disappearing and naturally being eliminated from the face of the planet. Their role in nature is finished, it is done and over. Long ago we had fields of Dyckias everywhere in Brazil. We had no grass fields instead we had fields of Dyckias. Mountains were formed carrying Dyckias with them, lifting them up. Dyckias were not born up on the hills and mountains! Mountains were formed after them! They are there for they are Sun lovers and growing up the hills, on rocks and close by the sea are the only sunny resorts to them. Only the sunny ones.

Dyckias are among the very first plants to appear and make soil to bushes and trees. They are colonizer plants. We know almost nothing about Dyckias and their history on Earth. We are just beginning to unfold their mystery. Here in Brazil we have a very few brilliantly minded botanists who study and search this matter and soon brand new discoveries will be shown. <>

Many thanks to Constantino and MaryK!

Speakers

Do you have any ideas for Speakers about Bromeliads or any similar topics? We are always looking for an interesting speaker. If you hear of someone, please notify Mary K. at 818-705-4728 or e-mail rango676@aol.com

2014 Membership Dues

Pay at the meeting to:
Membership Chair - **Nancy Pyne-Hapke**
or Treasurer - **Mary Chan**

or **Mail to:**
SFVBS membership
Attn: **Nancy Pyne-Hapke**
P.O. Box 16561
Encino, CA 91416-6561

TIME TO RENEW..... *Yearly Membership Dues* \$10.00 for a single or couple

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please Put These Dates on Your Calendar

Saturday, April 5, 2014	SFVBS Regular meeting - Bryan Chan
Saturday, May 3, 2014	No meeting - Field Trip to La Ballona Bromeliad Show & Sale
Saturday, June 7, 2014 ??	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Sat & Sun - June 14 & 15	SFVBS Bromeliad Show & Sale
Saturday, July 5, 2014	SFVBS Regular meeting - Gregg DeChirico
Saturday, August 2, 2014 ??	SFVBS meeting and Field Trip
Sat & Sun August 2 & 3	South Bay Bromeliad Show & Sale
Saturday, Sept 6, 2014	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, Oct 4, 2014	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, Nov 1, 2014	SFVBS Regular meeting - STBA
Saturday, Dec 6, 2014	Holiday Meeting & Brunch 10:00 – 2:00

Dates with **?? to be discussed at a later date**

STBA = Speaker To Be Announced

Taxonomic Tidbits Dyckia ‘Soldena Gold’ – sibling of Dyckia ‘Naked Lady’?

By Mike Wisnev, SFVBS President (mwisnev@sbcglobal.net)

San Fernando Valley Bromeliad Society Newsletter – April 2014

I've been fortunate to strike up an email correspondence with **Derek Butcher**. If you are not familiar with that name, you should be! He has written extensively on Bromeliads and is fondly known throughout the Bromeliad world as Uncle Derek. More about Derek later in this article. Derek has provided me with some great information, and I attempt to reciprocate by sending him interesting pictures I find, especially Bromeliads blooming at the Huntington Botanical Gardens (“HBG”). That's where the story starts.

Dyckia ‘Soldena Gold’. I asked Derek if he wanted pictures of any Bromeliads I had previously photographed, one of which is *D. encholirioides* x *D. brevifolia*?, HBG 26817. He responded that he had lots of pics of *D. ‘Naked Lady’*. *D. ‘Naked Lady’* often seen as ‘Nude Lady,’ is quite unique in that it has no spines! It is pictured on page 10.

Frankly, I had forgotten that these same two *Dyckias* are thought to be the parents of *D. ‘Naked Lady’*. But HBG 26817 certainly isn't spineless, and Derek was surprised to see this different cross and suggested giving it a name. I asked **John Trager**, the Curator of the Desert Collections at the HBG, about it and he responded “HBG 26817 was grown from open-pollinated seed, in 1950, of HBG 5899, which came from Soldena Gardens, April 10, 1932, as *D. altissima* ... HBG 26817 is a tried and true plant in our garden since the 1950s and may therefore merit naming and introduction. If it is to be given a cultivar name, perhaps 'Soldena Gold' would be appropriate.

Interestingly, this same plant was listed in the Bromeliad Journal back in 1972! **Myron Kinnach**, Curator of the entire HBG, wrote an article called Terrestrial Bromeliads at the Huntington Botanical Gardens, 22(4) BSI Journal, p 82 (1972). One plant listed is “*Dyckia encholirioides* x *D. brevifolia*. A hybrid apparently originating at Huntington, grown from seed collected from our plants of *D. encholirioides*; the presumed second parent is *D. brevifolia*. A robust, good-looking garden plant forming large masses and worthy of wider cultivation.”

So, this HBG hybrid, with roots back to Soldena Gardens, has been registered by Derek Butcher on the Bromeliad Cultivar Register as *Dyckia* ‘Soldena Gold.’ Its heads are about 2 feet across, the longest leaf I found was about 14 inches long and 1.5 inches wide; the single inflorescence is about 2-1/2 feet high, with pretty orange flowers enjoyed by the ants. I wonder how the botanists actually measure the length – my hands would have been shredded had I actually attempted to measure from the base of the inflorescence.

***DYCKIA* 'SOLDENA GOLD'** does indeed look like *D. Naked Lady*, plus some spines.



The HBG 26817 records state that “many seedlings were ... raised and planted in other beds.” This particular one does not have a sign, though there is a small metal tag labeled 26817 1; and is located along the south path of Bed 26. Others with this 26817 number might be the same clone or grex-mates.

More pictures of D 'SOLDENA GOLD,' HBG 26817 1.



Finally, if you look closely at the first picture above, you can see another similar larger and somewhat darker green *Dyckia* surrounds Soldena Gold. It has longer leaves, but not as wide, some as long as 21 inches but only 1.25 inches wide. I couldn't find a tag and thought it might be a sibling, but after looking at the web and HBG records, I think this might be *D encholiriodes*, the seed parent of Soldena Gold. It is also listed as being in bed 26.



Below is **D. Soldena Gold** on right, possibly *D. encholirioides* (parent) on left.



D 'Naked Lady' This well-known cultivar is usually called D. 'Naked Lady', though it is also known as Nude Lady, and is considered as possibly a hybrid between *Dyckia encholirioides* and *D. brevifolia*. It is pictured on p. 10.

The BCR website lists it as 'Naked Lady (Nude Lady)' and says "[t]his cultivar has spineless glossy green leaves- note spines on scape bracts - plant grows to over 1' tall - Seaborn listed the plant as *altissima* X *sulfurea*(?) and called it 'Nude Lady'. Sept 2010 Dutch Vandervort advises it originated as 'Nude Lady' with cactus breeder Vivian [sic] Doney of Monrovia, California about the 1960's." The San Marcos Growers website adds that the "name was coined by Aloe hybridizer John Bleck."

Some of you may remember that John Bleck's garden was featured prominently in **Gregg DeChirico's** *Tillandsia* presentation in February. So I asked Gregg, who is the President of the Cactus and Succulent Society of America, if he could find out more. Gregg relayed "I spoke to **John Bleck** this morning about the plant moniker. He said that back in the day he visited **Vivienne Doney's** nursery with Bob Foster (a well-known cactophile who collaborated with Charlie Glass in life and in print. Vivienne showed them a variety of seedlings she produced and had planted in the garden, several of which were spineless. John jokingly suggested naming them Nude Lady or Naked Lady and advertising them for sale in "men's magazines" to which they all had a good laugh... John doesn't take credit for the actual naming. Just the amusing suggestion which Vivienne wound up using."

When I later spoke to John, he guessed that he visited Vivienne's nursery in the mid-1960's. She showed them two or three, or perhaps even more, different clones of a spineless green *Dyckia* in her growing grounds. His recollection is that Vivienne had grown them from seed off her *D sulphurea*, which has now been referred to *D brevifolia*. He didn't know what the pollen plant was. The Abbey Gardens catalogues in the mid-70s referred to it as Naked Lady.

Myron's article in the 1972 BSI Journal about Bromeliads at the HBG also listed Naked Lady - it was a "selection of *D. encholirioides* × *D. brevifolia* with spineless green leaves."

I thought that was the end of the story, but then realized there was another spineless *Dyckia* at the HBG - *echolirioides* × *brevifolia*, HBG 26167. John Trager advised that HBG 26167 was obtained from Vivienne Doney back in 1969, and it has a different accession number than D 'Naked Lady,' which is HBG 45209 from an unknown source.

The two plants seem to be different, although it could be different growing conditions. The HBG 26167 leaves are longer and wider, and the color is a bit more dull olive green rather than the brighter waxy green of Naked Lady. The longest leaves of 26167 are about 15 inches long and 1.5 inches wide, while those of Naked Lady are about 8-10 inches long. The upper surface of the leaves is slightly striated for Naked Lady, while those of 26167 aren't. Perhaps it is the grex-mate of Naked Lady – we will probably never know.

Lastly, each of these spineless *Dyckias* had one or two new offsets, and all them had spines!. I will have to see if they lose them over time.

Below is *Dyckia* 'Naked Lady' HBG 45209 (source unknown), at the HBG.



For comparison, below is
***Dyckia encholirioides x brevifolia*, HBG 26167**
(source Vivienne Doney 1969) at the HBG.



Below is a close up of the spiny offset on **HBG 26167**.
Note the dark color of the regular leaves, and the lack of striations.



In contrast, below are the concolorous striated,
brighter green leaves of 'Naked Lady.'



So now you know the real story, including some new information that at least one or more other seedlings from the grex were also spineless. Whether more than one of these has made it into circulation is anybody's guess.

Thanks to John Bleck, Gregg DeChirico, John Trager and Derek Butcher for their help.

For those of you who haven't checked it out, the Bromeliad Cultivar Register (BCR) is compiled and maintained by the Bromeliad Society International (BSI). The BSI is the International Cultivar Registration Authority for Bromeliads. Here is the BCR link – <http://registry.bsi.org/>.

Derek Butcher

More about Derek Butcher, for those who aren't familiar with him. Paul Isley's Tillandsia book has a chapter briefly discussing about 20 of the leading Bromeliad/Tillandsia figures in history – Derek is one of the three alive today. The Bromeliads in Australia website introduces him as follows:

“Derek Butcher, of Adelaide, Australia, has spent more than 20 years as a self-professed "pseudobotanist," working to unravel the intricacies of Bromeliaceae. He is well known in Australia for his book, "An Amateur's Guide to the Greyish Leaved TILLANDSIOIDEAE" to help interpret his favorite genus, and his checklist to keep order in the hybrids produced in his country. He is the first Australian to have a Bromeliad species named after him - *Puya butcheriana*. He also maintains the most comprehensive list of Bromeliad genera names, changes, and synonyms, stretching back to pre-Linnaeus (<http://botu07.bio.uu.nl/bcg/taxonList.php> maintained in Netherlands). For almost 100 years, Derek operated the "Cultivar Register" for the Bromeliad Society International (BSI) and loves nothing better than the challenge of piecing together "the story" behind any Bromeliad.”

On a personal note, I can add he has been incredibly helpful. In fact, every time I email him he responds with some great information. I send him these Newsletters, and I get his. So I am most appreciative for all his help! Here are some of his articles about various Bromeliad cultivars. <http://www.bromeliad.org.au/news/DD.htm>.

Broms in Bloom - Member Photos - Please contribute.

If you have a Bromeliad in bloom, take a minute to get a photo, send it to me for the newsletter. It doesn't even need to be in bloom, maybe it just has great color or form.

In the meantime, this Billbergia 'El Capitan' bloomed over the holidays last December, so we brought it inside to enjoy! We got this as one or two heads from the La Ballona show a few years ago - another good reason for you to attend that show in May.

