

Bromeliad Society of Broward County

NOVEMBER 2020 SCURF

www.bromeliadsocietybc.com/



Alcantarea 'purple skotak'. Photo by Job Pallada Garden / BCR

BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF BROWARD COUNTY
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Alcantarea 'Purple Skotak' photo by P Tristram

Affiliations: BSBC supports the BSI, Cryptanthus Society and FCBS (2017-2020)



The Age of “Zoom” Meetings

Since the beginning of the COVID pandemic, bromeliad societies all over the world have had to shut down their monthly meetings to avoid large gatherings that could potentially encourage the spread of the virus. Societies with larger memberships and resources have worked hard to keep sharing information and inspiration from some of the world’s top growers and enthusiasts.

The Zoom conferencing platform has been used in the business world for sometime, but when forced to make “lemonade from lemons”, several societies and organizations have embraced this application as a way to stay connected with their members during the pandemic.

Through these online meetings, we are able to experience plant collections and hear from many pioneers and leaders in the bromeliad world that we may never have had the opportunity to experience otherwise. Thanks to the generosity of these societies who invite us to join in and “gate keepers” such as Barry Landau who edit and repost them on YouTube, you too can now experience the meeting in the safety of your home and at your leisure rather than staying up to watch live in a time zone that may not coincide with your schedule.

So here are links to several Zoom meetings from the La Ballona Valley Bromeliad Society located in southern California. Watch each when you have an hour or so to spend or binge watch all of them back to back to really get your bromeliad fix!

This LBVBS series featured Pedro Nahoum of Brazil. This Zoom meeting ran over 2 hours on initial airing because it covers so many fascinating areas from past travel and exploration to his current work on creating several new commercial pineapple strands.

Pedro has been a pioneer in not only discovery with countless tours to tropical ecosystems throughout South and Central America, but also an advocate for protection and education for the advancement and future of the bromeliad family of plants.

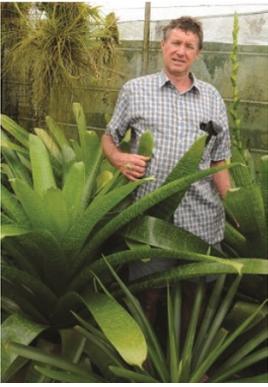
[Watch Presentation Here](#)



Australian Bruce Dunstan shares his gardens from down under and gives you an in-depth look at many of his secrets to growing and displaying one of the most diverse tillandsia collections you’ll see.

Bruce takes being an enthusiast to an entirely new level, but you’ll enjoy every minute of this stroll through his gardens. His dedication to tracking the names and background of each plant is impressive not to mention the overall organization and creative ways he displays!

[Watch Presentation Here](#)



In October, LBVBS had Peter Tristram as their guest speaker. Peter is another Australian who is no stranger to bromeliad growers and admirers worldwide.

Peter shares his tips from 40 years of growing, his vast nursery located on his well-manicured homestead, and his love of gardening in general. He admits that what started out as a hobby has grown into a wholesale business where he shares his plants and his knowledge with others around the world.

[**Watch Presentation Here**](#)

Just this month, the LBVBS had Chester Skotak live and in person for yet another grand slam Zoom meeting! When it comes to growing bromeliads and more specifically, hybridizing, Chester Skotak is likely the most well known and successful grower out there.

With over 550 registered plants and 100 patents to his credit, he's never lost his humble nature and says he's just getting started! In this meeting, Chester shares some of his journey with you and gives you a small glimpse into where he's going. Be sure to have a pen ready because you'll want to take note of plants you've likely never seen in circulation yet.



[**Watch Presentation Here**](#)



In this short video, Chester takes you through one of his personal shade houses to show you some of his latest creations. He shows a few of the hybrid groups and which specific traits he's selected for.

You can even see the progression of the hybridizing process in some of the groups which gives you a deeper appreciation for the effort and vision he has for each hybrid he creates.

[**Watch Presentation Here**](#)

Hopefully you're not "Zoomed Out" yet after watching these videos. We have to thank our sister society from La Ballona Valley for allowing us to be a part of their meetings and Barry Landau for making these videos accessible to everyone via YouTube.

Taking part in these amazing events along with enthusiasts from around the world might just be the one shining light as this pandemic continues to keep us apart.

Markham Park Peek-a-Boo

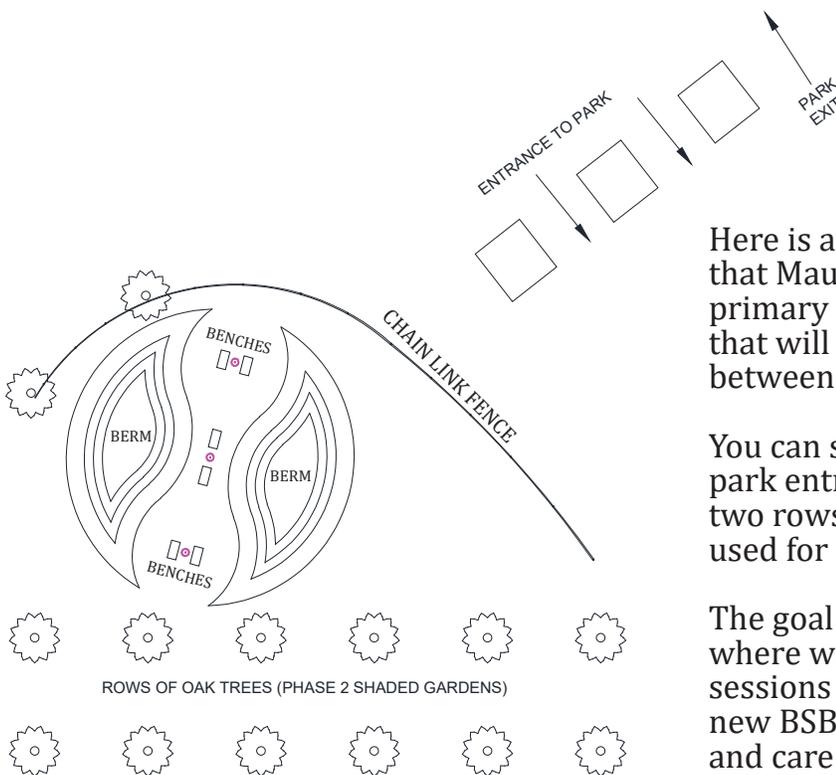
Even though the pandemic has put a hold on our monthly meetings, we are making use of this time to finalize the plans for the long awaited Markham Park project in southwest Broward county. We thought we'd share some preliminary images of the first area that we will tackle.

Brad and Maurice got together last month and went down to the proposed site and took some measurements so that they could start the design phase. The area chosen is located just northeast of the entrance and will be highly visible to everyone entering the park.



The colored area in this photo gives you and idea of where the gardens will be located. It's a bright sunny spot just beyond the row of oak trees and will include places to sit and enjoy the view.

You can see the entrance to the park just beyond the last tree on the right. This will be a perfect place for many of the plants we've collected and are now being fostered by several members who can't wait to have the space back for their own collections!



Here is a preliminary layout of the gardens that Maurice has created. The plan calls for 2 primary beds with free-form raised berms that will mirror each other creating an area between them for bench seating.

You can see the location in proximity to the park entrance as well as the area between the two rows of large oak trees which would be used for future shaded bromeliad gardens.

The goal of this project is to create a place where we can hold educational training sessions so that visitors to the park along with new BSBC members can learn how to grow and care for bromeliads.

PROPOSED SITE PLAN

This photo looks down the row of oak trees and towards the park entrance. This gives you some perspective as to the size of the areas that we've been allowed to consider for the initial garden and for future use.

There are restrooms just a short walk away and plenty of room for a variety of beds and plant types. The oak trees will provide much needed shade during the summer months where visitors can rest and relax while enjoying the gardens.

We are excited to finally get this project underway and will be reaching out to our members when the time comes to start.



Decoding the Mathematical Secrets of Plants' Stunning Leaf Patterns



The spiral pattern of an *Aloe polyphylla* plant at the University of California Botanical Garden. (Stan Shebs via Wikimedia under CC BY-SA 3.0)

BSBC member Harry Sperling shared a very interesting article by Maddie Burakoff and published in the Smithsonian Magazine.

In the article, she goes into the science behind various types of leaf patterns found in nature and how these patterns can be predicted using mathematical equations.

While the study doesn't mention bromeliads in particular, every brom lover appreciates the perfection in rosette formations in aechmeas and neoregelias in particular. You can read more on this fascinating study by following the link below.

[Read The Article Here](#)

November Birthdays



Neil Kolner

Rich Mediavilla

Elsa Snavely

Mel White

Tim Hendrix

Jane Von Waldgurg

From The Editor



I don't know about yours, but my bromeliad collection is loving the fall weather right now in south Florida! While we certainly received more rain than normal the past month, the colors are coming back to many of my plants that were left green due to over exposure this past summer.

Leaves that were burned have mostly dropped off and been replaced with fresh new growth. Many of my Neo's are coloring up nicely and my chantinii's are developing deep rich color in their bands adding even more contrast to my gardens. The cooler temperatures certainly make working outside more enjoyable so there is much to be thankful for!

Since social distancing seems to be the norm in 2020, I decided to adapt that same philosophy to my garden beds. I reduced my collection by over 100 plants earlier this month and the added distance between those remaining has allowed them to open up to the pleasant fall sun!

Many of my friends and neighbors who are just getting started growing broms were able to help in my desire to "downsize" my collection although I fear once they realize I've turned their hobby into an addiction they may not view my generosity in the same light!



My family and I decided to visit Flamingo Gardens in Davie, FL this year for Black Friday rather than risk exposure shopping indoors. The weather was perfect and their gardens and exhibits were a welcomed change to the walls of our home.

I managed to spy an *Ursulaea* 'MacVauhii' that was in full bloom so I had to snag a shot to share with you. I've got one of two that I grew from seed and it's twin is in the hands of another BSBC member since last year's fall auction.

Mine hasn't bloomed yet, but I'm hoping that 2021 is the year. And no, I didn't remove a seed pod from this one, but I have to admit it was tempting! If you haven't been to their botanical gardens and nursery lately, now's a perfect time!

We were so hopeful that the infection rates in our area would have dropped by now so that we could have a small holiday gathering at our home in Boca Raton next month. Sadly, the number of infections and positivity rates have once again reached record highs in our region and therefore we must take a more reasonable approach and postpone it for this year.

We will continue to pray for those affected and look to the New Year in hopes that we can finally come together again. It's hard to believe that we will likely go an entire year since our last meeting in February 2020.

*Until next time,
-Brad*