



BROMELIAD SOCIETY OF GREATER CHICAGO

# THE BSGC NEWS

January/February, 2015

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Lori Weigerding

We hope you will be able to make our first meeting of the year on March 8<sup>th</sup> at 2 pm in the Annex at the Chicago Botanic Garden. We all will have a lot to share.

## President's Column

*Well this winter is starting out pretty mild, but I'm sure one day soon it's gonna hit! I hope that your holidays were pleasant and uneventful! I know my plants can't wait until it's warm again. I think I'll try putting them out again on my front porch as that's the only place they won't be exposed to the sun all day.*

*Didn't you just love all those pictures in the last newsletter? There were some beauties in there! I wish my plants looked like those! One can only dream, right!*

*Well I look forward to seeing you all in March. I hope you all are doing well.*

*Lori Weigerding*

In November, I purchased the book, Under the Spell of Succulents by Jeff Moore who gave the program at our Cactus and Succulent Society Meeting. It is available on his website: [www.solanasucculents.com](http://www.solanasucculents.com) It covers a nice variety of succulents including terrestrial bromeliad- puya, deuterocochonia, hechtia and dyckia. At Christmas, I was happy I didn't receive the alien pot made by his brother Jim. (Maybe Next Year Dear!)



Picture from Jeff Moore's book Under the Spell of Succulents Pot was inspired by the movie *Invasion of the Saucer Men* 1957 Frank Gorshin was the only big name in the picture playing a character who was killed by the Aliens.

I was happy to receive the book Air Plants- The Curious World of Tillandsias by Zenaida Sengo and photos by Caitlin Atkinson at Christmas. The author is an artist who works at Flora Grubb Gardens in San Francisco. In this book she gives us not only the basics- classification, habitat and care but also gives us ideas on how to use them in our homes. She tells us that in their natural habitat, they tend to bloom at the start of the dry season

when their seeds won't be washed away by the heavy rains. To encourage yours to bloom she suggests that you give them the maximum allowable light besides sufficient water and fertilizer.

I found her explanation of sun exposure very illuminating. She compares our homes to a cave where plants would struggle to grow. She says that they should receive as much bright indirect light as you can give them. They can take direct sun for short periods of time, one to three hours if it is during the morning or late afternoon. If you grow your Tillandsias outside, they need to be hydrated if they are getting direct sun.

She enjoys rotating her plants from their ideal growing location to feature on her coffee table or nightstand. She leaves them at the low light location for only a week.

She lists the three ways of watering your tillandsias- misting, soaking and dunking. She suggests that you find the method that works best for you. She has a chart on the three methods which lists advantages, disadvantages and who should

use that method.

Some other areas she discusses are fertilizing, removing dead leaves and pests and diseases. In her guide to buying Tillandsias she lists twelve and gives their features, use and care. There is a fairly extensive section on companion planting.

The second half of the book is about displaying Tillandsias. She has so many wonderful ideas, including attaching them to red dogwood branches with wire, using them as wall art, suspending them from the ceiling, using all kinds of containers and a few others. She mentions that if you make a display in a terrarium, since there is no air movement, the plants will deteriorate and you will need to take the display apart and make a new one with new plants. She shows you what containers you can use, the tools needed, the medium to use and how to water them.

The pictures are very good at illustrating how to mount your plants on wood. She also shows how to make a ceramic frame garden. Some of the whimsical ideas were using tillandsias in a gift bow on a present, adorning barrettes and on a hat. It is a great book for learning the basics of tillandsias and getting ideas for displaying them.



David Klein uses suspended driftwood as mounts for his Bromeliads.



Very nice use of space for Bromeliads!

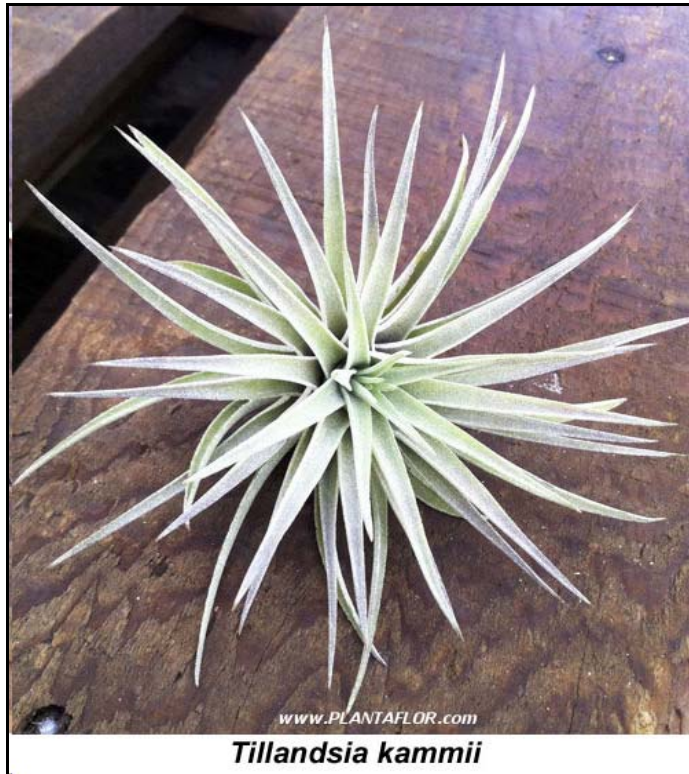
At the Southwest Guild, we went on a tour of David Klein's two greenhouses, one was for his bromeliads and the other one was for his cacti and succulents.



David Klein's Succulent Greenhouse

One of the items I acquired at the Southwest Guild auction was a bound copy of the *Tropiflora, Cargo Report* from 1991-2000. Dennis Cathcart had it bound for the late John Anderson. Dennis has a lot of information in this book. He says that there were seven *Tillandsia* species listed on the CITES appendix in 1992, *mauryana*, *xerographica*, *harrisii*, *kammil*, *kautskyi*, *sprengeliana* and *sucrei*. That required someone to get a permit to import them from the country of origin. He said that listing a plant as endangered does nothing to save the species if something is not also done to insure that it's habitat remains intact.

On the March 12, 2013 Bird Rock Tropical Blog, it says that *Tillandsia kautskyi*, *sprenseliana* and *sucrei* were removed from the list. They were removed because of the ease of growing them from seed.



From the [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org) website

The Bromeliad Society of Queensland's newsletter Bromeliaceae had the following (edited) in their 2014 third quarter issue.

### Bromeliads in CITES lists

Despite several bromeliad species being either extinct or possibly extinct in the wild, only a handful of tillandsias are listed. Further, that list has recently been reduced by removal of three species. Listed species are *T. Harrisii*, *T kammii*, *T mauryana*, *T xerographica*. These are listed endemic to one or other of Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and El Salvador. Species recently removed from the list are all Brazilian plants- *T sprenseliana*, *T kautskyi*, *T sucrei*. Removal ostensibly relates to the ease with which these species can be propagated from seed, and the export bans now in place on all plant material from Brazil. Certainly *T sprenseliana* and *T kautskyi* are available locally with at least a couple of plants of each on the rack at our recent shows. BSQ members Neville Ryan and Barry Genn have propagated both from seed. In 2013, a request came to Australia tillandsia growers to send seed of *T kautskyi* to Brazil to assist enlarging their population.

### Enforcement

Member countries are responsible for enforcing CITES. Most investigations are done by the Environment Department and the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service or the Australian Federal Police. Importation of plants to Australia is also controlled with a list of permitted species for importation. The list is referred to as ICON and all CITES species are on the list of permitted imports.



T. Mauriana from [www.fcbs.org](http://www.fcbs.org) website

### CITES Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the convention is questionable. Poverty and involvement of organised crime are major factors in illegal international trade.

### Tillandsia xerographica in Guatemala by Lieselotte Hromadnik

#### Summary

*Tillandsia xerographica* is one of seven *Tillandsia* species protected by the CITES convention. In recent years, after discovering imports containing plants extracted from the natural habitat, the EU plant commission put a ban on the import of this species. In 2003, a Dutch CITES commission travelled to Guatemala to gain information about the status of *T. Xerographica* in nature and in *Tillandsia* nurseries. The author, known as a bromeliad specialist was asked to join this commission. Seven of 22 nurseries licensed to produce *T. Xerographica* were visited by the commission. Unfortunately, only a few nurseries were able to demonstrate the amount of produced *T.xerographica* could be covered by their stock of mother-plants. Trading of illegally collected specimens was still frequent. In the habitat of *T. Xerographica* the University of Guatemala did a scening survey in the last two years. The results showed an average population density of one to seven plants per km<sup>2</sup>. *T. Xerographica* has to be classified as extremely threatened by extinction. Massive in-situ and ex-situ protection programs like bringing back seed into nature could possibly prevent this.

*Tillandsia xerographica* was added to the Appendix II of CITES (in total seven species of *Tillandsia*) because the natural population of this decorative species is now threatened after being collected for some tens of years for commercial purposes in Guatemala.

Officially, 190 tons of tillandsias were exported from Guatemala in 1996. The Netherlands were the leading exporter worldwide, followed by the USA and Japan, where the largest quantities went to. In the years 1999 and 2003 a large amount of plants collected in the wild were discovered in several huge import posts of some thousand *Tillandsia xerographica* plants that were declared as artificially propagated. These plants were confiscated. In August 2003 the plant committee of the EU put a ban on imports of this species.

There is evidence of changes to the regime of export and import of Guatemala plants which anecdotally at least suggests this level of exploitation has been reduced if not controlled. An additional factor is likely to be the lack of significant wild populations remaining to satisfy the trade. The stock of plants in nurseries exceed the scarcely distributed individuals in habitat.



Steve and I went to Las Vegas and enjoyed the conservatory at the Bellagio Hotel. They always do a great job and use a large number of bromeliads. This last time, they were not as good in labeling the plants. We are sure you will enjoy the pictures.



Please take the time to renew your membership now.

## Bromeliad Society of Greater Chicago Membership Application

New Member  Renewal

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