



Pup Talk

February 2025

THE SADDLEBACK VALLEY BROMELIAD SOCIETY

Volume 32, Number 2

We Will Meet: Thursday, February 6, 2025, 7:00 pm.

**At the Norman Murray Community & Senior Center
24932 Veterans Way, Mission Viejo, CA**

Special Event: This month we will have a “member’s plant table.” Please see page 2 for details.

Featured for February: Program on bromeliad natural history and their unique adaptations.



Sandy Masuo will present an overview of bromeliad natural history and some of their unique adaptations. Like most plants, bromeliads have evolved to function as part of a complex web of life. In cultivation, most of these connections are absent because humans take over many of the relationships that would exist in habitat. In the wild, these charismatic plants often act as mini biomes, providing resources for menageries of creatures, from microbes to a range of vertebrates. Explore the worlds of life that bromeliads host with this presentation.

Sandy Masuo is an editor, educator, author, and conservationist on a mission to enlighten and to inspire wonder in the world around us. She currently serves as the botanical content specialist at The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. Prior to that she was the associate editor in the Los Angeles Zoo publications division for 18 years. In 2016, she published her debut novel (as Rosana DuMas). *Unnatural Selection: Life and Death on the Paper Trail* is the story of a horticulturist/detective investigating the dubious death of a zoo docent. She has taught fiction and business writing as well as a variety of classes from succulent gardening to bird watching at local community colleges. She holds a BA from Brown University and an Ed. M from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

DIRECTIONS: Meetings are the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Norman Murray Community and Senior Center, 24932 Veterans Way in Mission Viejo. Visitors Welcome! Where is that? Off the I-5 take the La Paz exit. Go east on La Paz past Marguerite Parkway to Veterans’ Way. Turn left. The parking lot is at the road’s end. We are in room Sycamore B.

This Meeting Includes:

Bromeliads and More Wonderful Bromeliads:

- * **Show & Tell** – A meeting highlight. Bring in your bloomers, show stoppers, interesting plants, questions, even disasters. Help all of us learn and enjoy while you get a free raffle ticket.
- * **Raffle Table** – A chance to add to your collection.
- * **Silent Auction** – We usually have special plants for you to bid on.
- * **Library & Information** – Want to learn even more? Check out a book and read up!
Or ask our bromeliad experts that question that is bugging you! We love to talk bromeliads!



Upcoming Events (mark your calendars):

February 1 — Board meeting at 1:00 p.m. Saturday at Patti Dunn's home. All are welcome. See your membership roster for address.

February 2 — South Bay Bromeliad meeting in Palos Verdes.

February 6 — Our meeting with slides on bromeliad natural history and adaptations.

April 5-6 — Our Spring Garden Show and Sale at Sherman Gardens (Please see page 8).

April 14-18, 2026 — World Bromeliad Conference, Costa Mesa.

February Refreshment Signups: Sue Campbell, Melissa Rapp, Mike Herbolich, Sue Goldberger, and Faye Jacobs. Thank you!



Member's Plant Table: If you have been collecting bromeliads for awhile, you probably have plenty of extra pups. Here's your chance to "share the wealth" by donating two or three plants to our February plant table. The plants can be potted or bare root and should be clean and pest free. Newer members probably do not have surplus plants and, of course, you do not need to contribute. A "member's plant table" usually has a large variety of unusual plants, so don't miss this chance to add to your collection.



Board Meeting: Hopefully you will receive this newsletter in time to attend our February 1 board meeting at Patti Dunn's house. Even if you aren't on the board, you may attend if you are interested in how the society functions or have some new ideas that you would like to share. This is an important meeting for planning our April show and sale and we will also be planning the 2026 World Bromeliad Conference.

Member's Corner: We are planning to create an opportunity for members to offer an item/plant for sale, offer to purchase an item/plant, or solicit help with their gardening. A form will be available to our members on our website (bromeliadsociety.org).

No Backyard Fruit Please: There are quarantines in Orange County (see page 8 for information).

Checking out our plant table during the refreshment break.

Our January Show and Tell Featured:

Cristy Brenner

Aechmea fulgens discolor X *Ae. ramosa* #1

Billbergia sanderiana #2

Neoregelia 'Hannibal Lector' #3

Vriesea 'Sunset' #4

Kate Guerra-Hershey

Tillandsia aeranthos on luffa #6

Tillandsia duratii #5

Tillandsia exerta X *T. velutina* #7



January Show and Tell, continued

Bruce Jeske

Billbergia hybrid #8

John Marsolino

Tillandsia secunda #9

Paphiopedilum orchid

Michael McGuire

Billbergia 'Darth Vader' #11

Carolyn Parsons

Wallisia cyanea #10



Thank you to Hank Bruce for his great photographs of our show and tell plants each month.



Quick Tips for our Newer Members by Cristy Brenner, Editor

Our society is very fortunate to have quite a few enthusiastic new members who have joined in the last year. They are eager to learn how to care for their newly acquired bromeliads. It is difficult to generalize



about bromeliads because they form such a large plant family. There are over 80 genera and over 3,700 species of bromeliads, and thousands of hybrids. They are New World plants, although one species somehow escaped to west Africa (maybe on a bird feather?). Their habitats are found from the Southern United States and the Caribbean islands, to subtropical Chile and Argentina at elevations from sea level to over 14,000 feet (left). They inhabit steamy tropical rainforests, some of the driest deserts, and everything in between. Some are very forgiving about their conditions, and others have very specific temperature and water requirements. So, again, it is difficult to generalize about bromeliad care. However, most of the plants that you will see at our meetings are easily grown and acclimated to our Southern California climate.

I will try to answer some of the most commonly asked questions below. We are also thinking of identifying our more experienced members (perhaps on their badges), so that you can ask them about a plant that you just acquired in the raffle or silent auction. Please don't hesitate to ask our members about plant care.

Puya raimondii, the largest bromeliad species, at 14,000 feet in the Peruvian Andes.

Frequently asked questions about new plants:

1. **Where do you live?** Coastal locations have higher humidity, frequent fog, and smaller temperature extremes, which are ideal for most bromeliads. Inland locations may require more water and more protection from sunlight and frost.
2. **How much light?** General rule: Dark green, thin leaves need low light; light green, thicker leaves may even tolerate full sun. Shade cloth or a slatted patio is ideal for most bromeliads. Too much sun may result in round brown burn spots. Too little light may result in loss of leaf colors, and the development of long, narrow, dark green leaves as the plant reaches for more light. Silver Tillandsias do well in full sun, while those with darker leaves require more shade (right).
3. **What type of soil?** Everyone seems to have their own mix, but the most important thing is that it must drain well. Soggy soil will rot the bromeliad roots. My mix is 1/3 potting mix, 1/3 orchid bark, and 1/3 perlite or pumice. Some people grow bromeliads in lava rock, hydroponic clay pebbles, and one person claimed to use a pot full of pine needles!



Silver Tillandsias at right grow in full sun, while the darker leafed plant requires filtered sun.

4. **How should I grow my bromeliad?** In nature, is the plant an epiphyte (growing in trees), a terrestrial (growing in the ground), or saxicolous (growing on rocks)? Epiphytes use their roots to attach to trees and you may grow them on a tree branch (strips of nylon stocking work well to attach them because it will not girdle the tree). In habitat, most Neoregelias (right) and Aechmeas grow epiphytically, but people generally grow them in pots with a well-draining soil or in the ground. The majority of Tillandsias (air plants) must be grown epiphytically and will rot if they are planted in soil. Terrestrials such as Dyckias or Hecthias must be grown in soil.
5. **When should offsets (pups) be removed?** When they are 1/3 to 1/2 the size of the mother plant. If you accidentally break off a tiny pup, place it in the water of a bromeliad tank (not clean water), and it will eventually produce roots.



Neoregelia attached to a pine branch with nylon stocking strips.

I hope that some of your questions have been answered. Surely, you have many more questions about this amazingly diverse plant family, so join us at our meetings and ask our Bromeliad experts. We also have a large library of great bromeliad books and a new librarian who would love to lend them to you. When you acquire new plants search for information about them on the internet. Some suggested websites are listed below:

- Encyclopaedia of Bromeliads (bromeliad.nl)
- Bromeliad Society International (bsi.org) (Shown below)
- Bromeliad Photo Index (www.fbcs.org)
- Bromeliads in Australia (bromeliad.org.au)



Photos and resources of all Bromeliad species.

[Bromeliad Species Database](#)



The official International Registry of Bromeliad hybrid and cultivar names.

[Access the BCR](#)



View and word search all things about Bromeliads since 1950!

[BSI Journal Archives](#)

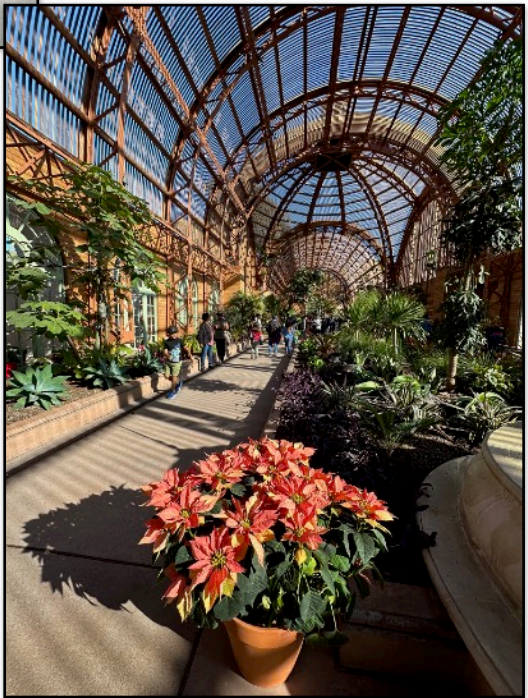
Bromeliad Sale: The San Diego Bromeliad Society held its semi-annual plant sale in Balboa Park on December 21. It was well-attended, even though it was in the middle of the Holiday rush. At least five Saddleback members attended and Carolyn sold her beautiful art cards and her new bromeliad art book.



Carolyn's art cards made from her watercolor paintings of bromeliads and her book that contains a selection of her bromeliad paintings.



Several of us also visited the newly renovated Balboa Park Botanical Building that was originally built in 1915 (see page 8 for historical information). Over twenty million dollars was spent to rebuild this unique structure. Many bromeliads and other plants were recently planted and more will be added in the future.



Botanical Building Background



The Balboa Park Botanical Building was built in 1915 as part of the Panama-California Exposition and is one of only four structures that were designed to remain as permanent features in the park. Recognized as one of the largest wood lath structures in the world, the building was designed to showcase the importance of horticulture and is home to hundreds of plants, including rare, tropical and indigenous fauna.

The building underwent a major renovation in the 1950s with smaller projects completed in the 2000s. This project is designed to restore the building to its original 1915 design.

Backyard Fruit Quarantined in Orange County: Two different fruit tree infestations are present in our area, so we ask that you do not bring your extra fruit to share at our meetings. Huanglongbing (HLB) citrus tree disease is now in Mission Viejo (right) and it will kill your citrus trees! There has also been an outbreak of Oriental Fruit Flies in Santa Ana and Garden Grove and so that area has been under quarantine. So, please leave your fruit at home.

Citrus disease detected in Mission Viejo



The deadly citrus tree disease Huanglongbing (HLB) has continued to spread in Orange County with a quarantine in place throughout parts of the region – including Mission Viejo – to protect the state's iconic fruit.

Spring Plant Show and Sale Flier Now Available: The color version is shown below for you to copy and send to the other plant societies that you attend. A black and white paper version will be available at the next two meetings that you can share with your friends.

BROMELIAD PLANT SHOW & SALE

Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society

Saturday & Sunday April 5-6, 2025, 10:30 am-4:00 pm

Sherman Library & Gardens
2627 Pacific Coast Highway
Corona Del Mar, CA 92625

Admission \$5.00 (members free)



Meetings 7:00 p.m on the first Thursday of the month @ Norman Murray Center in Mission Viejo

bromeliadsociety.org



Come and see our lovingly home-grown BROMELIADS, including Tillandsias (air plants), and also receive growing information.

2025 Society Officers/Committee Heads

President:	Chris Bruce	<i>Pup Talk</i> Editor:	Cristy Brenner
Vice President/Programs:	Jeff Sorensen	<i>Pup Talk</i> Team:	Pete and Patti Dunn
Secretary:	(open)		John Marzolino
Treasurer:	Mary Kermani	Refreshments:	Launi & Tony Cory
Fundraising:	Yvonne Wilson		Mary Kermani
Librarian:	Kate Guerra-Hershey	Supplies:	Amy Uyemura
Membership	Nada Chatwell	Webmaster and Zoom	John Marzolino
Plant Table:	Michael McGuire		



Where did the phone numbers and email addresses go?

Now that *Pup Talk* is on a website that is accessible to everyone, some board members are concerned about the security of their personal information. If you are a member, be sure to keep your membership roster that has all of the contact information.

Our Web Address: bromeliadsociety.org

Aechmea recurvata.
Photo by Ed Voelker.



SVBS 2025 DUES/MEMBERSHIP

Dues are \$15 per membership (for one person or for two or more at the same address). Please send a check & info to: Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society 24891 Camberwell Street, Laguna Hills, CA, 92653

Membership Name(s): _____

Newsletter via: [] email (dues \$15/year) or [] USPS (Dues \$20/year) or [] **Both** (Dues \$20/year)

Street: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone Number(s): (____) _____ - _____ (____) _____ - _____

Email: _____

Pup Talk, February, 2025
Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society
1068 Santa Cruz Circle
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

FIRST CLASS PLEASE!

Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society

Pup Talk

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The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society next meets Thursday, February 6, 2025, at 7:00 PM.

Festivities include a:

- * **Program:** Bromeliad natural history and their unique adaptations.
- * **Plant raffle and silent auction** (Bring a show & tell plant to receive a free raffle ticket!);
- * **Show & Tell** with lots of our plants to see and enjoy;
- * **Lending library** for books you need to learn;
- * **Friendship; and Information.**

A big thank you goes to all who contributed information, writing, photos, and production of this newsletter including Cristy Brenner (Ed.), John Marzolino, Pete and Patti Dunn, Chris & Hank Bruce, Jeff Sorensen, and Ed Voelker.

Pup Talk is a publication of the Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society. Any opinion expressed herein is not necessarily that of the Society. Send comments, inquiries, and articles to: cbrenner4@cox.net. Deadline is mid-month before month of publication. When credit is given, nonprofit publications may reprint from us.

The Saddleback Valley Bromeliad Society is an educational organization promoting the study and cultivation of bromeliads and fellowship among those who do. We are an affiliate of the Bromeliad Society International.

