



Newsletter of the

Hawai'i Bromeliad Society

VOL. 39 NO. 8

HONOLULU, HAWAI'I

AUGUST 2016

TILLANDSIA DOS AND DON'TS FROM THE HIDANOS

Our guest speakers for July were Judy and George Hidano, well known in orchid growing circles for their award-winning hybrids and displays, and avid cultivators of *Tillandsia*. Though they acquired their first *Tillandsia—ionantha*, of course—well over ten years ago, the Hidanos have been devoting increasing amounts of time and energy to growing their collection. *Tillandsia* are now a central part of their gardening life.

Program cochair Gail Ishihara introduced the Hidanos. She had met Judy on morning walks, heard them talk at an Aiea Orchid Society meeting, and thought that a presentation by the Hidanos would be a great opportunity for HBS members to learn more about the joys of *Tillandsia* cultivation—and was she ever right!

Growing *Tillandsia* is very much a team effort for the Hidanos (though George usually gives the talks). Along with the wide variety of plants they brought in for show and tell, Judy and George provided a very helpful and thorough handout on *Tillandsia* cultivation, summarizing much of what they have learned over the past decade.

One of the most attractive aspects of *Tillandsia* cultivation for the Hidanos is that it is a very forgiving genus. Indoor, outdoor, over a wide range of conditions, it's hard to kill *Tillandsia*, George pointed out, "unless you really mangle the plant." They are relatively easy to grow. In nature they are epiphytes (plants that grow on other plants without harming them) and aerophytes (plants that obtain water and nutrients from the air and rain), so there's no need to search for the right kind of soil or potting mix.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Gail introducing George Hidano.



2016 OFFICERS OF THE HAWAI'I BROMELIAD SOCIETY

PRESIDENT

Terese Leber

TREASURER

Dolores Roldan

HOSPITALITY

Susan Andrade

NEWSLETTER/RECORDING SECRETARY

Stanley Schab

VICE PRESIDENT/PROGRAM CHAIR

Gail & John Ishihara

MEMBERSHIP

Open

LIBRARY

Karen Gollero & Tessie Labra

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

Karen Rohter

www.hawaiiibromeliadsociety.org

AUGUST MEETING

This Saturday, August 27,
we meet at **Lyon Arboretum**
at **12:30.**

Our hospitality hosts are
Karen and Tessie.

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF JULY 30, 2016

Lyon Arboretum

ATTENDING: Susan Andrade, Merrill Cutting, Marcy Doseo, Karen Gollero, Naty Hopewell, Gail Rabideau Ishihara, John Ishihara, Tessie Labra, Terese Leber (presiding), Larry McGraw, Ed Nishiyama, Dolores Roldan, Jaime Roldan, Stan Schab, Lynette Wageman, Randy Wong, Val Wong. GUESTS: David Leong, Linda McGraw, David & Keiko, and Misha

CONVENED: 12:50; ADJOURNED: 2:45.

Terese welcomed everyone to the meeting, with special thanks to Naty, Marcy, and Stan for providing food and drinks.

TREASURER: Dolores reported that the April auction earned \$263 and the June auction a whopping \$377, providing us with a balance of \$9,997.65.

PROGRAMS: Our speakers for August will be our own Larry McGraw and Ed Nishiyama. Ed will talk us through how he makes such great displays and mountings—always eagerly awaited at the auctions—and Larry will talk about resources for bromeliad cultivation—where he gets the various things he uses for planting, growing, mounting, and displaying his plants. The September program will feature guest speaker John Kawamoto, and will focus on plant oddities, such as *Ceropegia*.

HOSPITALITY: Our August hospitality hosts are Karen and Tessie.

ANNOUNCEMENTS—HALAWA XERISCAPE GARDEN SALE: Tessie reminded everyone about the Annual Unthirsty Plant Sale, to be held August 6, from 9 to 3, at the Xeriscape Garden; she and Karen will be showing and selling at the event.

ANNOUNCEMENTS—FREE POTS: Lynette announced that she has lots of small plastic pots to give away; interested members should contact her.

OLD BUSINESS: YEAR-END PARTY: Terese reported on two options for the year-end HBS party: a pot-luck gathering at Ho‘omaluhia Botanical Garden, where in years past we have reserved a pavilion, and a lunch at Willows Restaurant, as we did after the BSI conference in 2014. Lunch at the Willows costs \$37 for adults and \$33 for seniors; Terese suggested that HBS could subsidize a portion of the cost. Members voted to

hold the 2016 year-end party at Willows Restaurant, on Saturday, December 10, at 12:30, with members paying \$15 each, and HBS covering the rest of the cost.

OLD BUSINESS—BY-LAWS: Terese thanked Naty for her excellent work in updating the HBS by-laws (last amended over twenty years ago). The draft by-laws will be circulated prior to the August meeting; please read them so that we can discuss and vote on them at that meeting.

NEW BUSINESS—EAST-WEST CENTER CRAFT SALE FUND-RAISER: Terese reported that the East-West Center craft sale, which has served as a good fund-raiser for HBS, will be held early in December this year. Members should start looking over their gardens for plants to donate to the sale. Try and plan on bringing your plants to the October meeting; plants that will fit in five or six inch pots work best. Gail displayed some pot coverings that she will contribute to the sale; they will definitely spruce up the pots, and should make for some good sales—and money for our Willows lunch.

NEW BUSINESS—MEMBERSHIP AND FUND-RAISING: Gail suggested several good ideas for “growing” HBS by increasing the number of members and our visibility, including creating gift memberships and flyers or brochures that could be displayed or handed out at appropriate events and businesses. The publicity material should emphasize the benefits of membership, such as our events, field trips, speakers, and newsletter—and especially our great auction deals (see page 4).

SHOW AND TELL, AND AUCTION: A big mahalo to Ed and Gail for supplying a variety of beautiful plant for auction, including assorted *Guzmania*, mini-*Neoregelia* mounted on wood and on coconuts, *Vriesea* ‘White Cloud,’ and *Aechmea zebrina* and *Aechmea* ‘Samurai.’

TIPS ON *TILLANDSIA* CULTIVATION

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Even their roots are not necessary for survival, but instead anchor the plants in place. The most important thing for *Tillandsia* cultivation therefore is watering, which George does by hand. It takes several hours, and about 400 gallons of water, two or three times a week. The Hidanos live in the Pearl City Palisades area, so they experience neither the regularly wet conditions of Mānoa Valley or dry heat of East Honolulu. As more proof that *Tillandsia* are forgiving plants, George acknowledges that daytime watering is best, so the plants have hours to dry out and are less susceptible to rot, but his work schedule prevents it, so he waters in the evening, and if necessary will empty out the plants later that night or the next morning. He has found that misting, even on a regular basis, is not sufficient for *Tillandsia*; they need a good drenching. In-house *Tillandsia*, for example, can be dipped in a bucket or sink—just don't allow them to stand in the water.

The Hidanos grow most of their *Tillandsia* (but not the *funckiana*!) under 50 percent shade cloth or in trees that provide regular shade. Morning sun is preferred, but more than a couple of hours of direct sun can lead to a good case of sunburn, which won't kill the plants, but will make them look bad. Indoor *Tillandsia* need light, but shouldn't be kept too close to windows, which magnify the effect of the light. Most *Tillandsia* will thrive indoors—including in globes and terrariums—and if a plant is close to blooming, moving it out in the sun (for limited periods) will help it turn red.

As to the always debated question of fertilization, George comes down on the side of regular, low doses of fertilizer. He uses a 13/3/15 formula developed by Michigan State University for orchids, which he has shipped to Honolulu on pallets and applies through a water injection system—the same technique he uses on palms and anthuriums as well. He uses the fertilizer at about a 16 to 1 dilution. He also applies an insecticide (Bayer 3-in-1) and fungicide (dithane) about every three months.

As George explained, once *Tillandsia* start propagating, they can develop into never ending balls, with lots of keiki, so you don't even notice the parent plant has died. He uses a lot of different techniques for mounting *Tillandsia*—basically for holding them in place until their roots take hold. He often mounts his plants on guava or cherry wood that he has soaked for three to four months, taken off the bark, and cut to size. He uses green tie wire (which he buys in 50 lb coils), soft aluminum wire, electrical wire matched to the color of the plant, and even fishing line. The trick is to keep the wire taut enough to hold the plant, but not so tight it will cut the plant; once the roots take hold, the wire can be cut away. He also attaches the wire to the wood with a waterproof glue (E6000), so it won't fall off before the roots attach—and he's sure to keep his labels, because at a certain point, *Tillandsia* “all look alike.”

The Hidano's brought a great variety of *Tillandsia* to exhibit, including samples of *albida*, *balbisiana*, *bulbosa*, *capitata*, *duratii*, *rothii*, *streptophylla*, *stricta*, and *xerographica*, and the *ionantha* cultivars 'Druid,' and 'Peach.' Their plants and displays can regularly be seen and purchased at orchid club showings, and twice a month at the Aloha Stadium swap meet.



BARGAINS GALORE!

Just to remind folks what bargains can be found at our monthly auctions, here are some photos from the past year or two. Varieties range from the *Tillandsia* Larry and Tessie are displaying, to giant *Portea* and *Aechmea* like the 'Del Mar' Tom is holding, to Ed's *Billbergia* and beautifully mounted *Neoregelia*, to *Vriesea*, *Guzmania*, *Dyckia*, *Orthophytum* . . . you name it, you can probably find it at an HBS auction, with prices ranging from \$1 to a never to be forgotten \$135—and all for a good cause, to support HBS activities. And don't forget, all (well, almost all) our auction plants are labelled, sometimes on the leaf itself. Many thanks to all who have contributed plants, and to all our volunteer auctioneers. See you at the next meeting—dollar in hand.

