

# Kendall District Gardeners Club Report

By Jim Lewin

After travelling to Landsdowne John welcomed everyone and introduced our hosts Bruce and Ann Cluff. There was around 39 members present.

## John introducing Bruce



Bruce talked about growing seedlings using a bucket set up for water wicking and showed us how well his vegetable seedlings had grown. We had a great morning tea with scones made by Ann (plain, date, pumpkin and savory).

Bruce showed us how to separate a pup from the mother Bromeliad. He advised that the pup should be at least 50% the size of the mother before separating. The life cycle of a Bromeliad is to flower,

produce pups, then die. Once the pup has been removed the mother can be discarded in the compost heap. Even if the pup has no roots, it will grow roots from the cutting point. It should be put in a pot just big enough for the pup - no need to repot as it gets older. There needs to be good drainage. So, put some woodchips into the pot first. The potting mix used is 4parts pine bark mulch, 4 parts quality potting mix, 1 part perlite and 1/5<sup>th</sup> part zeolite. A little water can be added to the mix to help firm it up. The Bromeliad does not like to be loose and wobbly so make sure the potting mix is packed in firmly around it. Bruce demonstrated how firm by showing how he could hold up the Bromeliad by the leaves without the pot dropping away.



The fertilizer must be low in nitrogen at most 4%. Bruce uses Searles Rose Food. Just put a healthy pinch in around the base of the pup.

Keep your older Bromeliads looking good by removing any dead leaves. In summer water once every 3 or 4 days and in winter about once a month. Bruce plants his Bromeliads in the ground inside the pot.

This enables him to remove dying/scruffy plants and put in replacements and the no need to worry about the soil nutrients as the nutrients are all in the pot.

With mulching covering the in-ground pot you do not realize that the plants are still in their pots.

Bruce also demonstrated tying a Bromeliad pup to a tree. Ensure the tree does not shed its bark. Place the pup so the cut part is against the bark and tie very tightly using stocking. In about 6 months the roots will have grown into the bark and the stocking can be cut away.

**Next meeting will be on 19 June.** Justyn will be talking about hydroponics.

