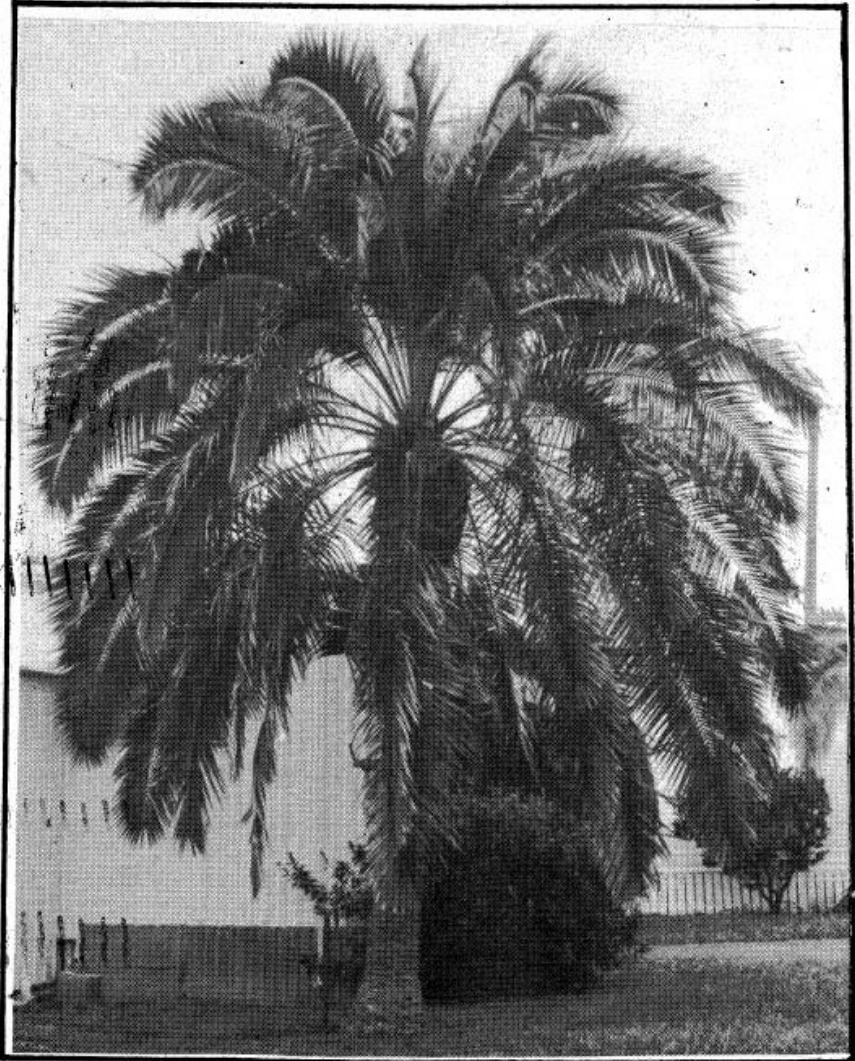


CENTRAL FLORIDA PALM BULLETIN

VOL. 11 NO. 2

APRIL 1991



SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: THE CLIFF DATE: PHOENIX RUPICOLA

THE CENTRAL FLORIDA PALM SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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FIRST CLASS

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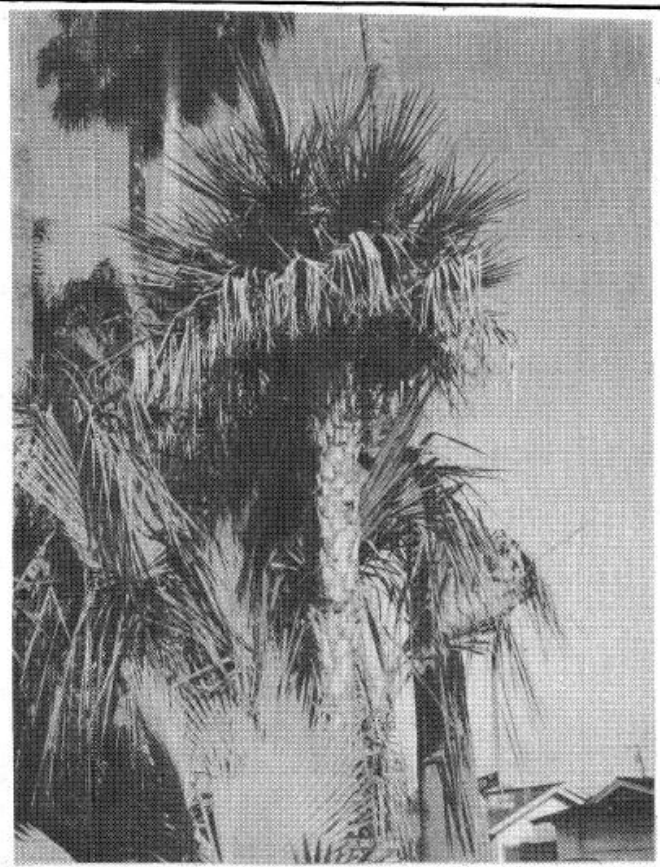
ALACHUA..BREVARD..CITRUS..DESOLO
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SARASOTA..ST LUCIE..SEMINOLE..
SUMTER..VOLUSIA

The Central Fla Palm Bulletin is published four times annually and is free to members of the Int'l Palm Society living within the free service area of the CFPs. We exist and operate solely on the goodwill of this membership. Your support is needed and encouraged.

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ARTICLES & NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS: Send to Stacey Peacock, Editor; Rt 2 Box 168; Zolfo Springs, FL 33890....phone 813-452-2798. Calls welcome!
ADDRESS ALL CHANGES OF ADDRESS, DONATIONS, AND SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ED & NANCY HALL 1111 GLEN GARRY CIRCLE, MAITLAND, FL 32751.

REMOVE THIS STAPLE ONLY



Editor's Comment

SEARCH FOR NEW NEWSLETTER
EDITOR BEGINS

By Stacey Peacock

It's Spring and we're all looking forward to the next 8 months of growing time, a chance for our gardens to really shine after avoiding any damage from this winter's weather.

With this issue of the newsletter come a few minor improvements. Although it may not be that apparent, most of the print is larger by at least 6%. Our old standard for reduction was 76%, our new standard has increased to 82% of normal size. Improvement has also been made in titling of the individual articles. It finally occurred to me that I could enlarge things as well as reduce, (duh!) and so we now have larger titles. There has been a lot of comment lately on improving the newsletter even more. I'm not convinced of the need to go beyond a certain point of expenditure. After all, this is only a chapter newsletter...its not intended to do much more than pull us all together. To expect Principes quality manuscript is somewhat overzealous. During the past few years, I have worked hard to provide our membership with a bulletin that was informative of local events in a hopefully enjoyable way. The issues have grown consistently larger and more expensive. We must also remember the size of our group (about 250). For our relative membership, I feel that we have a newsletter comparable to groups of 3-4 times our size....and even more enthusiastically supported by our members in a participatory way than most.

From a more personal standpoint, I'm beginning to feel like an old dog that doesn't want to learn any new tricks. This is my third year as editor of the CFPB and the effort is beginning to take its toll. The newsletter you've become accustomed to has become a more predictable routine...one designed to simplify the production process so as to take me only 50 hrs of time to get out each issue. I'm comfortable with the style I've developed and don't foresee a change to center stapling till after my retirement. Speaking of which, the door is always open if anyone is interested in becoming the editor. Please call me at 813-452-2798 and we'll discuss it. I plan to give up my editorship sometime in 1992.....a new editor by next January is certainly within possibility if an interested party comes forward. Ask not what your chapter can do for you...ask what you can do for your chapter.



TOP PHOTO: From the Jan 1989 California Newsletter. This is *Copernicia alba*. It has been grown from a seedling outdoors since 1967 in the garden of Ralph Velez.
BOTTOM PHOTO: Members of the CFPB pose before the Bok Singing Tower in Lake Wales at last summer's meeting. Photo thanks to Melodie Knapp.

LIVISTONA DECIPIENS PLIGHT DRAWS RESPONSES:



PHOTO: Bernie Peterson (Below:)

Dear Mike,

Enclosed is a photo of some *Livistona decipiens* at Fairchild Tropical Gardens in Miami. Notice the spiraling curve in the tree in the center. F.T.G. has another *L. decipiens* specimen which has an even more pronounced twist. Whether those twists are caused by the same thing that caused your trees to twist I don't know, but at least they have become quite attractive.

At the time of the freeze of Dec '89, Rockledge Gardens had close to 150 *L. decipiens* in 15 gal pots with no protection at all and all were damaged, but none died, in fact they recovered quickly. Three of the 150 grew back in a twisted and deformed manner and still have not resumed a normal character. I think I will try the micronutrient drench you mentioned, other than that I don't know what to recommend.

BEST WISHES, Bernie Peterson

Dear Stacey,

As a follow up to my letter and picture which you printed in the last issue, enclosed are two salient letters. One, from Bernie Peterson, came with a pic of a mature *Livistona decipiens* at Fairchild with a very twisted trunk.

As for my *L. decipiens*, the one pictured in the last issue has not changed and may be dead. The other which has been treated with nutrient sprays, now appears to be twisting in the opposite (180°, now to the east rather than west when first noted) direction, and I will be attaching ropes to the new petioles and resuming spraying.

Best Regards, Mike Dahme

Response From Don Evans (FTG):

Dear Wesley,

.....Regarding the *Livistona decipiens* photo of your friend in Vero Beach (Mike Dahme)...

We have had similar conditions occur in several *Livistona* and *Coccothrinax* spp. and it appears to be the result of some nutritional deficiency. Unfortunately we have not determined which is the lacking element. We have, though, been able to correct the condition in most cases by frequent applications of minor element sprays such as Keyplex or Liquid Green.

In severe cases like the one pictured I have found it necessary to cut away some of the leaves and petioles from the center of the head, as the twisted petioles of preceding leaves keep the emerging leaves in a spiraling pattern, eventually making the bud area so tight that the new leaves cannot push out, and strangulation is the result. I hope this bit of experience will be helpful.

Sincerely, Don Evans
Fairchild Tropical Gdns

MIKE:

Thanks for sharing those ideas that other members took time to share with you. We're in need of a place to have a summer meeting (JULY?). We are overdue for an east coast rendezvous. Any ideas..hint, hint.

Stacey

BRANCHED PAURUTIS IN WINTER HAVEN



A FAUROTIS WITH A BRANCHED TRUNK

Recently we noted a *Paurotis* (*Acoelorrhaphe wrightii*) with one of its trunks branched at a height of about six feet. There were about seven aerial meristems that were clearly living and about seven more showing no obvious signs of life. The specimen is located on the SW corner of the headquarters building at the Division of Plant Industry Citrus Arboretum in Winter Haven, Florida.

Merrill Wilcox

A first for me.
Thanks Merrill.
Stacey.

Saturday, April 13th will see us meeting in Gainesville for a joint gathering with our members and the Fla First Coast Chapter. An interesting day is planned with tours of two locations. Starting at the Uni of Fla, Noel Lake will lead the group on a selected tour of the University grounds. Formerly in charge of the overall grounds and now Landscape Architect for the University, Noel has long been an influence in the growing and changing landseape of Florida's premier University, and its campus is certainly the better for his efforts. Be advised that the UF tour will involve a fair amount of hiking around and is not recommended for the faint of heart. During the 80's UF's palm flora has been reduced somewhat by the severe freezes of that decade, but considering the latitude there are still some surprises to be found.

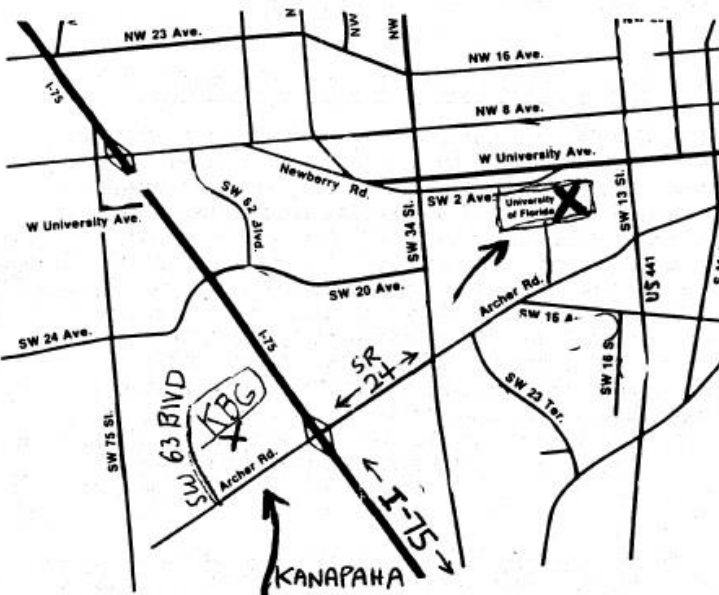
Next we'll head off to the young and progressing Kanapaha Botanical Garden. It is a sizable garden (although not all is developed) and has a lake, Lake Kanapaha. Dr. Dan Goodman, Director, will lead us on a Garden tour. Kanapaha is a collection of sub-gardens and the palm area is called the "Palm Hammock". It has been officially decided to dedicate the "Palm Hammock" to the "Charle Raulerson Palm Hammock" in honor of Mr. Raulerson, a long time Gainesville palm enthusiast who died several years ago. The dedication is scheduled immediately following the tour by Dr. Goodman.

ITINERARY FOR APRIL 13

- 10-10:30 A.M. Members will gather at the REITZ UNION on the UF Campus, for a tour of palms to be conducted by Noel Lake, a man who has positively influenced the course of UF landscaping efforts for the past 25 years. THE TOUR MUST BEGIN AT 10:30 SHARP if we are to maintain the afternoon schedule. Since the tour will require extensive walking, some spouses or friends may prefer to stay at the Reitz Union where there are facilities in such event. As for parking, the campus police do not check the meters on the weekend in the lot adjacent to the UNION.
 - 12:00 NOON Picnic lunch or lunch on your own; there are picnic areas on the UF campus as well as Kanapaha Botanical Gardens.
 - 1:30 P.M. Partial tour of Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, including palms and other attractions, conducted by Dr. Don Goodman, Director of KBG.
 - 2:15 P.M. DEDICATION OF THE "CHARLES RAULERSON PALM HAMMOCK" AT KBG.
 - 2:45 PM (App) Tour of remaining sections of Kanapaha: Aquatic, Carnivorous Plant, Rock Garden.....also conducted by Dr. Don Goodman
 - LAST EVENT: 3:30 PM or so, Chapter Meeting Palm Sale. Members are encouraged to donate a plant or two. Reimbursed sales will need to be properly tagged. Donations should be priced to eliminate confusion. SUPPORT YOUR CHAPTER...PLEASE!
- PALM SALE INFORMATION FOR REIMBURSED SALES: Sellers who wish to sell plants at 80%/20% split with the chapter must tag all plants as we do at Public Sales. For Tags and more Info call Stacey Peacock at 813-452-2798 (evenings)

We look forward to seeing everyone in Gainesville on April 13th. SPECIAL THANKS TO DR. MERRILL WILCOX FOR ORGANIZING THIS MEETING, PROVIDING MAPS AND THE ABOVE ITINERARY.

GAINESVILLE

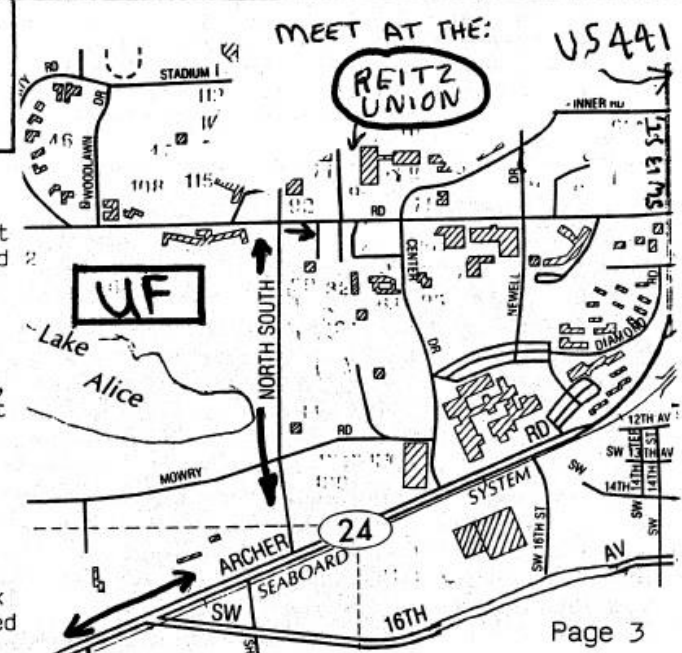


We Look Forward To Seeing
Members Of The
FL FIRST COAST CHAPTER

DIRECTIONS

Coming from the south on I-75, exit at SR 24 (Archer Road) and go east toward the UF Campus. Turn left onto North-South Dr. and proceed to Museum Dr. and make a right. The Reitz Union is located a block or two down Museum on your left. If you miss North-South Dr, proceed on to Center Dr. and turn left before Shands Hospital (but past the parking garage). Again proceed to Museum Dr but now make a left. The Reitz Union will now be ahead on the right.

To get to Kanapaha, go back to Archer Rd and pass under the Interstate. Look for SW 63 Blvd. and turn right. Proceed down this till you reach the Garden.



REPORT ON WINTER BUSINESS MEETING

By Ed Hall

Rumor is, we need to stop having a winter meeting.. It seems each meeting brings a cold front to Central Florida. This year the worst cold front of the year (I hope) occurred the day of the meeting. Fortunately it did almost no damage to the plants, but caused our attendance to drop.

The meeting started at Leu Gardens where Ed Hall led a tour to view the outdoor plantings. The most important palm viewed was the *Arenga pinnata*. This had survived the December 1989 freeze.

Next the group moved to the House of Beef where 28 members gathered. After lunch, the new Presidents, Tony & Karen Rudgers, were introduced, the new East Coast VP, Bernie Peterson was elected, the treasurer gave a brief report & upcoming events were discussed. Then Hersh Womble & Ed Hall gave a slide presentation on the 1990 Biennial convention held in Hawaii. Several palm T-shirts were sold and lastly the door prize, a Needle palm donated by Pam Vest, was won by Bob & Anita Lee.

TREASURER'S REPORT

3/16/91

Bank Balance-	\$1573.19
Cash on Hand-	362.03
Total funds:	\$1935.22

Recent Expenditures-

Palm Sale at Leu Gardens	\$ 179.04
Last Newsletter	436.54

Status of Fund Raising

On 1/2/91 two CD's were purchased:

One \$4000 CD for 5 yr. @ 7.75% and
One \$4000 CD for 1 yr. @ 6.90%.

The income from these CD's will be utilized to improve the CFPS publication. It should be noted that the interest from the one year CD is \$276; over 50% of the cost of one issue of the newsletter. At the beginning of the year these were the best interest rates available.



PHOTO LEFT: Members mingle among the palms for sale at the Gizella Kopsick Palm Arboretum in St Petersburg last October at a chapter meeting sale.

ANNOUNCING

FIRST ANNUAL USF PALM SALE

Please mark your calendars for the important date of April 20th, the date of CFPS's first attempt at a west coast palm sale. The one day sale will take place at the University of South Florida in northern Tampa from the hours of 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. It promises to be quite an event with an almost unprecedented selection of palms (at least 200 species hopefully). SO DON'T MISS THIS ONE!!!!!!

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED! We need local area members to help out at the sale for a variety of tasks: cashiering, tag clipping and counting at checkout, assisting customers in selection with your palm knowledge and etc. My experience with various palm sales are that they are great social events with lots of palm talk and information exchange. SO COME HELP OUT AND HAVE FUN DOING IT!!!!

LARGE SELECTION OF SPECIES ANTICIPATED

Vendors scheduled to participate at the USF Sale on April 20th are:

ALOHA PALMS, ROY WORKS, DAVID & GERI PRALL (who will have those beautiful palm "T" shirts for sale), PAUL CRAFT (Cricket Creek Nursery), GARY LITMAN (Fond of Fronds), STACEY PEACOCK and TED LANGLEY.

ATTEND THE USF PALM SALE SATURDAY APRIL 20 TAMPA

HOW TO GET TO USF: Take I-275 or I-75 to the Fowler Ave exit (582) Go west from I-75 or east from I-275 to 30th St and turn to the north (Left from I-275 or Right from I-75). Go 1/10th of a mile on 30th St to Pine Dr. and turn right. Pine Dr. passes next to the Botanical Garden of USF after just a short distance.

PLEASE NOTE: If Saturday is a total rainout, the sale may be held on Sunday as well...but hopefully not.

REPORT ON THE RECENT LEU GARDENS SALE IN ORLANDO:

The 3rd Annual CFPS Palm Sale was recently held on March 9-10th at Leu Gardens in Orlando. Although we didn't set another record in sales (mainly due to a very rainy Saturday), we did increase the number of species represented by several fold to have the widest selection ever offered by the CFPS. Our palm booth was the best ever thanks to some old vendors and new. Paul Craft, President of the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society as well as operator of Palm Nuts (a seed service) was largely responsible for the increase of species (over 150 on his part)....and he will again be participating at the USF Sale. MANY THANKS TO THE VENDORS WHO HELPED MAKE THE LEU SALE A SUCCESS: Hersh Womble, Aloha Palms (Donna Livenspire & Michel), Stacey Peacock, Wirt's Point Nursery (Doug Morrison), Charles Meister and Paul Craft of Cricket Creek Nursery. Also thanks to the volunteers who helped out: Randy Schuster, Nancy Hall, Ed Hall, and Tony Rudgers, among others.

PHOTO CALL...PALMS IN GROUPS



With *Phoenix rupicola* behind us (see article beginning on pg 11) the call now goes out for pictures of palms in groups. The beautiful scene above was submitted by Pam Vest and shows how even the commonest of palms (in this case: *Washingtonia robusta*) can provide uncommon beauty in our daily landscape. Scenes of *Sabal palmetto*, *Butia* or whatever are sought for this production. I was a little disappointed at the response to the call for *P. rupicola* (only 3 of the photos were submitted by members), and perhaps it may have been too uncommon. But no one can claim that defense here. SO SEND IT IN!!

MUSINGS ON ACROCOMIA & THE LIKE by Ed Brown

The recent article on the Florida *Acrocomia* stirred much thought. The result of this is this article. The Florida *Acrocomia* article by Mr. Peterson was nothing short of excellent in its observations and it raised an important concern relative to the classification of the genus *Acrocomia*. The author reported that there are two species of *Acrocomia*--- the acaulescent form formerly *Acanthrococcus* sp. and the arborescent form---*Acrocomia aculeata*. Formerly, *Acrocomia* was differentiated in to as many as twenty six species *A. aculeata*, *A. totai*, *A. media*, *A. mexicana*, *A. quisqueyana* to name just a few. A July 1990 article in "Principes" suggested that the genus was being revised into two species----but said little else about the reclassification.

Like Mr. Peterson, I am curious about the classification. I further question if the genus can be differentiated into only two species solely upon trunk habit. I am a longtime palm observer and frequent traveller to the Carribean. From these modest credentials, I would like to introduce my two cents worth into the forthcoming fray. Granted I have not catalogued all the many species but I wonder if they can be listed into a mere two. If they are listed as such. I would like to know the botanical reasons for this.

To get to the heart of the problem we have look at the definition of the word "species". The simplest definition is that it is a reproductive unit. Organisms of the same species are capable of sexual reproduction together. Organisms of different species can not.

Consider the following example, the alley cat (*Felis domesticus*) can not reproduce with a lion (*Panthera leo*). Even if this unusual union could somehow be consummated. There are physical and biological differences in the chromosome character, perhaps even number etc. to preclude fertilization, meiosis, and subsequent development of a viable offspring. Therefore the alleycat and lion constitute separate species.

Granted, there is a certain flair within the hobbist community to class species based upon superficial characters such as a different leaf size. Certainly this is exacerbated by grower pride.-- We see such examples of it as *Sabal texana*, *S. louisiana* etc. Certainly, this adds quite a bit of confusion to the nomenclature. Yet, it seems counterproductive to limit and reduce so many species to a mere pair for the sake of taxonomic consolidation and and in my estimation oversimplification.

I wonder... Do the different species of *Acrocomia* hybridize? --this would certainly give credence to the taxonomist position for grouping the formerly different species together? Is there palontological relationships or paleoecological theory for concluding that all the many species of *Acrocomia* in the Carribean and Latin American can be grouped into a lonely two? This, I would like to see.

Before I precede further into my argument, allow me to digress momentarily in an exposition of the genus *Phoenix*. The various species of *Phoenix* are classified into a multitude species that physically appear very different. These species freely hybridize among themselves. This hybridization is so promiscuous that date palms are usually not listed

as a species but rather "Phoenix reclinata" type, "Phoenix canariensis" type, "Phoenix sylvestris" type. These palms fail the strict definition of the term species.

Acrocomia media (of Puerto Rico) distinguishes itself among the Acrocomia in that it possesses a very massive trunk. Similarly, Phoenix canariensis distinguishes itself from other species of Phoenix with the same attribute; a very large massive trunk. The very keen observations of Mr. Peterson suggest that he sees two apparent differences between the Florida representatives of Acrocomia. I, myself see very marked differences between the Acrocomia media and the other narrow trunked species of Acrocomia just as I see differences between Phoenix canariensis and P. reclinata. Like the difference between the Acrocomia common in Florida. As an example between the cat and the lion, the differences are very marked. This should certainly be obvious to the taxonomist.

I certainly would be at a loss to distinguish between the Argentine Acrocomia totai and its Dominican cousin A. quisqueyana. However, of the thousands of A. media that I have seen, there is not one that I would confuse with any other species of Acrocomia I have seen. In similar fashion, I am not an art critic but I have no problem telling a Picasso from a Van Gogh. The difference between some species of a genus are no less subtle.

Proceeding along this logical vector, one could argue that if P. canariensis can be classified as a distinct species then one must surely conclude that A. media is a separate species. Additionally, the two palms share the commonality of being endemic to a single island: the Canary Islands for P. canariensis and Puerto Rico for Acrocomia media.

I submit this article as an invitation...an invitation that someone from the taxonomic community give a good argument why the genus Acrocomia should be classified solely into two species. I can not speak for the rest of my hobbyist colleagues, however I would like to know why certain plants are classed as different species while others are ranked together. Certainly the classification of the palms should rest upon the learned pronouncement of academic authority. However, the pronouncement from the academic authority should be based upon the truly scientific and apparent morphological evidence rather than opinion and authority alone.

Ed Brown, Jacksonville

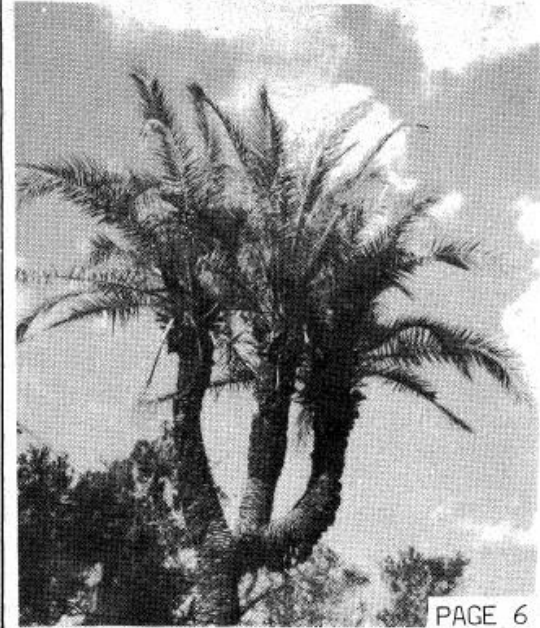
THANKS FOR THE GREAT ARTICLE, ED, I agree...Editor.

Please find the photos of two multi-headed date palms I recently saw in Eustis. Both palms are located on the north side of Fahnstock Rd.

The first one (photo below) appears to be a true date palm. This was the best shot I could get. The sucker is about 15-20 ft. off the ground. I look forward to visiting this palm in the years to come.

The second palm is even more impressive! (see two photos of same palm to the right) It appears to be a hybrid between a Canary Island Date and a P. reclinata but who can say for sure. Both palms are obviously cold hardy being that far north.

Randy Schuster



JOHN SMALL IN CENTRAL FLORIDA
by Bernie Peterson



FIGURE 1. In a hammock on the edge of the Everglade Keys west of Kendall, Florida. Plants of *Sabal Jamesiana*, showing the large flat leaf-blades with the very numerous ribs and correspondingly numerous relatively short pliable drooping lobes. By these leaf-characters, the short spadix, and the much depressed fruits, *Sabal Jamesiana* may be distinguished from *Sabal Palmetto*, which also grows in and about this hammock as it does also in the other hammocks where the James Palmetto occurs.

Sources:

Small, John. "Journal of the New York Botanical Garden, various articles vol. 23-32.

Anonymous. "Principes" vol. 1 p.4 oct 1956.

Publications by John K. Small on Native Palms

John Kunkel Small was a botanist who worked with the New York Botanical Garden during the first third of the Twentieth Century. Beginning in 1904 he wrote many articles for the N.Y.B.G.'s Journal about his botanical explorations in Florida. During the course of his career Small wrote about every palm native to Florida, as well as *Sabal mexicana* from Texas, and *Washingtonia filifera* from California.

Small made his trips through Florida mostly in the winter months. Reading through his articles one gets the impression that he relished the chance to get away from the cold northern winter to do some botanizing down south. Small and company crisscrossed the state several times each winter on their collecting expeditions. At times he traveled by rail or boat but mostly they used their own car, which was dubbed the "Weed Wagon" by those along the roads which it frequently traveled.

Reading the accounts of some of Small's travels made me appreciate some of the difficulties which botanists face in describing new species. Small visited the same areas many times to observe plants at different times of year or to catch a particular species in bloom or with seeds. Some of Small's favorite Central Florida spots were: the Daytona area, where he was particularly interested in the vegetation to be found on the many coastal shell middens which could then be found in that area. Small found that these huge shell heaps, created centuries ago by native Americans, radiated warmth during cold spells, due to their porous nature, thus allowing them to support a much more tropical-type vegetation than the surrounding area. Merritt's Island as it was then called, in Brevard County was another favorite stopping place on Small's travels. He was intrigued by the tropical flora to be found on the southern end of the island, more like that of the Bahamas or South Florida than Central Florida. Small theorized that the warming influence of the Indian river to the west was responsible, this is still very evident today as the southern end of the island is known as Tropical Trail, and is consistently one of the areas in Brevard County least affected by cold. Small also collected intensively in the area of Avon Park, Sebring, and Lake Nancessee (Jackson). He marveled that the pure white sands which seemed incapable of sustaining vegetation, actually had a "greater diversity than elsewhere".

Small noted the palms of Florida throughout his travels, and wrote more than 20 articles on our native members of the palm family. His articles use the accepted botanical and common names of the day and are very interesting, descriptions are given of; the plant, it's habitat, and the history of it's discovery and nomenclatural changes. In addition detailed footnotes provide biographies of the botanists who described our native palms.

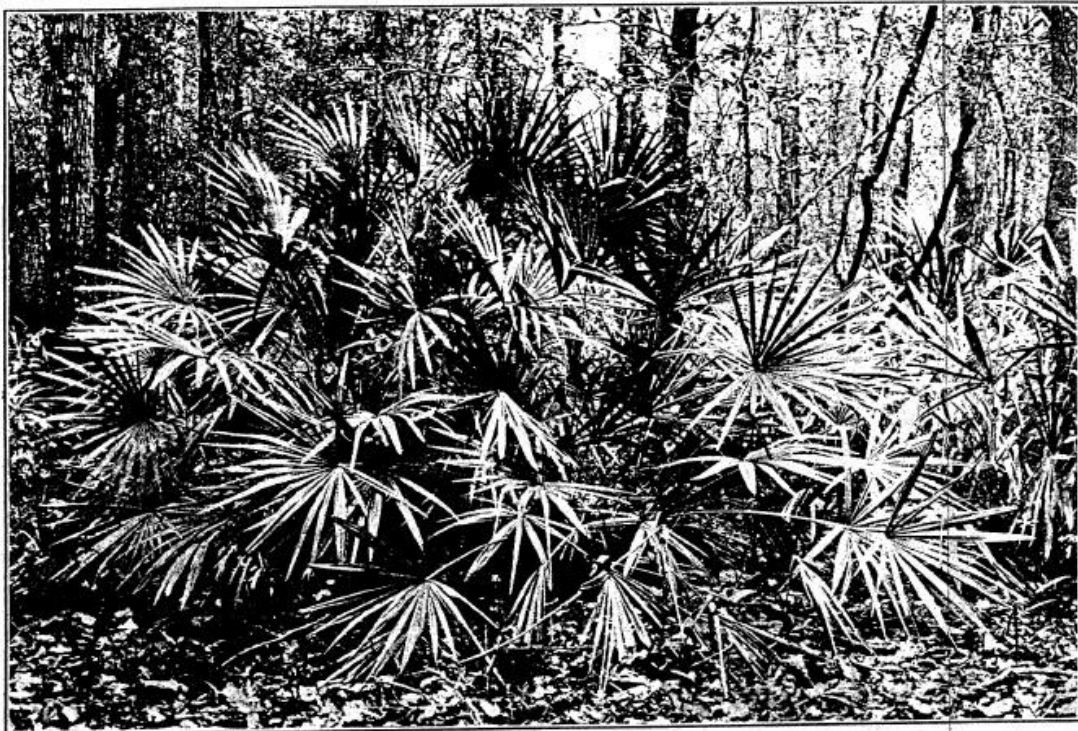
As well as writing about already established species Small described two new species, both of which are now considered to be synonyms of previously existing species. One of these, *Sabal jamesiana*, is Sabal palmetto deformed by growing in a heavily shaded hammock. Such deformed cabbage palms are common in shady wooded areas. The other palm Small described was *Sabal deeringiana* from Louisiana. It was named after Small's benefactor, the wealthy industrialist Charles Deering. *Sabal deeringiana* is considered to be a synonym of *Sabal minor*.

JOHN SMALL IN CENTRAL FLORIDA/PETERSON CON'T:

My own favorite among Small's articles on Florida's palms is the one on the Needle Palm. Small called it the most graceful of our native palms. A reprint of this article was the first ever published in "Principes", it was printed in Volume #1 page 5, along with a list of Small's articles on palms.

Small's work was by no means confined to palms, or even to Florida, he also wrote about fern, cactus, zamias, irises, and really any plant encountered on his travels. Aside from his articles in the "Journal of the New York Botanical Garden" Small's major works include Manual Of The Southeastern Flora and Ferns Of The South-eastern States.

Some of our larger libraries may have copies of Small's articles in reprint form, and I highly recommend them. I would especially like to thank Pam and Mike Vest for steering me towards the used book stall at the Fairchild Tropical Garden ramble this past December. I was fortunate to be able to buy a number of reprints of Small's articles at a very reasonable price.



In the swamp of Little River, Gadsden Co., Fla.—The needle-palm (*Rhapidophyllum hystrix*) grows in rich alluvium in the hammock where the cow-oak (*Quercus Michauxii*), the dominant tree, contributes generously to the supply of humus in the soil by its very numerous thick leaves. In this soil the needle-palm and the blue-stem (*Sabal minor*) thrive luxuriantly. The plants are much more foliose than those of the blue-stem, and the leaf-segments are more numerous.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Once again an excellent article from Bernie Peterson. The 2 photos submitted with the text were photocopies of fine quality, but I'm not sure how they'll reproduce. Please forgive me if they don't.

NEW OFFICERS: Congratulations are in order for all our new officers installed at the last meeting. Tony and Karen Rudgers of Orlando are our new President, Jerry Shrewsbury is our 1st V.P. (St Pete) and Bernie Peterson became our 2nd V.P. (Cocoa). I'm sure we'll be hearing from these folks in upcoming issues..Hint.

FIT DIRECTOR: Congratulations to Bernie Peterson for his installment as one of the FIT Gardens Directors. An important palm collection and an important palmophile!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

April 13: Next Chapter Meeting in Gainesville.

April 20: USF Palm Sale Tampa . Hrs 10 to 4

May ?-?: Palm Sale at Flamingo Gardens in Broward County...So Fl Chapter

May 18-19: Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society Palm & Cycad Sale at Mounts Botanical Gardens....West Palm Bch

June 28-29: (Fri-Sat) Cycad Symposium is Planned in West Palm Bch.
Contact Paul Craft of Loxahatchee (see Roster) for more info.

SUBMITTING AN ARTICLE TO THE CFPB: We will accept whatever you send in any form you send it. But if you do decide to type something up please adhere to the following parameters (necessary to have the larger 82% print): For the standard 8½X11 page, leave 1¼ in borders on each side and 1 in borders on the top and bottom. PLEASE....ALWAYS SINGLE SPACE YOUR LINES.

WE WANT TO BE YOUR OPEN FORUM: Member exchanges are always encouraged within our pages. Have a problem? Tell us. Have a great photo? Share it with us. EXPRESS YOUR OPINIONS HERE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

DEADLINE NEXT ISSUE:

JUNE 15, 91

I am sure palm enthusiasts worldwide are familiar with the wonderful palm hybrid known originally in Florida as the "Cocos Cross" (*Butia capitata* x *Syagrus romanzoffianum*). The source of the name "Cocos Cross" comes from the old nursery trade names for the two parents i.e. *Cocos australis* (*Butia*) and *Cocos plumosa* (*Syagrus*). This plant has been on the scene in Florida since the mid 1950's. What follows is a reconstruction of events which occurred leading to its eventual distribution over the state. This reconstruction is based entirely on oral communications.

Back in the 1950's nurserymen at Southern States Nursery in Macclenny, Florida began noticing rather unusual looking individual palms in their fields of *Butia capitata*. *Butia capitata* has been grown in the nursery fields of Baker County around Macclenny and Glen St. Mary for many years. The palms that began showing up in the fields were atypical of *Butia capitata* and some were thus selected out and replanted near the office at Southern States Nursery. The first three were planted just outside the office. Later, several others were planted, alternately with *Butia capitata*, as avenue trees across the road from the office for a distance of about 100 yards. In both locations the plants thrived and grew through the 60's, 70's and early 80's. Being keen horticulturists, the people at Southern States, including the late Florida Senator Edwin Fraser and his brother Ernon, began trying to figure out what they had and where it came from. The source of most of the grown *Butias* was trees in the local area germinated in the nursery. However, for several years in the 1950's, the company bought established young palms (liners) from the old Florida Nursery & Landscape Company in Leesburg, Fl. Sure enough, the unusual palms were traced back to the seedlings grown at the Leesburg nursery. Once alerted to the occurrence, nurserymen in Leesburg began noticing the occasional different palms in their *Butia* seed beds and liner growing areas. At this point the late senior plant propagator at Florida Nursery & Landscape Co., Ross Lafler, began trying to figure out where the plants (seeds) might be coming from.

By this time interested persons were beginning to notice some resemblance to Queen palms as the first trees were maturing. When the rather complete picture of intermediate characteristics was finally clear, people were willing to "stick their necks out" and proclaim the plants to be hybrids of *Butia capitata* (*Cocos australis*) and *Syagrus romanzoffianum* (*Cocos plumosa*). Thus the "Cocos Cross" was introduced to Florida. Of course the problem of where the seed came from and would it be a reliable source was still to be solved.

Across the street from the office and growing areas of Fla Nsy & Landscape Co. on US 441/27 in north Leesburg an area of specimen plants in an overgrown production area persisted. Within this group of overgrown material were numerous mature palms including *Butia capitata* and *Syagrus romanzoffianum*. It was from these trees that seeds were gathered for propagation in the nursery. *Butia* was determined to be the seed parent of the hybrid offspring since all of the hybrids were showing up in lots of *Butia* seedlings or

liners. Mr. Lafler personally told me that no attempts to cross pollinate the two species were ever made prior to the time the hybrids began appearing. He was also unsuccessful in many attempts to make the cross himself. One must assume then that the cross occurred by natural means in the old nursery area. Personal observations of these two parent species indicates insect pollination is common to both and further that they bloom concurrently.

Thus the story is complete. The numerous hybrids that appeared on the landscape scene in Florida during the 1960's and 1970's came from that one location in Leesburg, where the two parent species were co-located, by way of the growing fields of Baker County and ultimately into the trade. I do not presume to suggest that this was the only scenario. Other nurseries in other parts of the state, no doubt, also obtained hybrid seedlings from Leesburg. There most certainly were other sources in addition to the nurseries of Baker County.

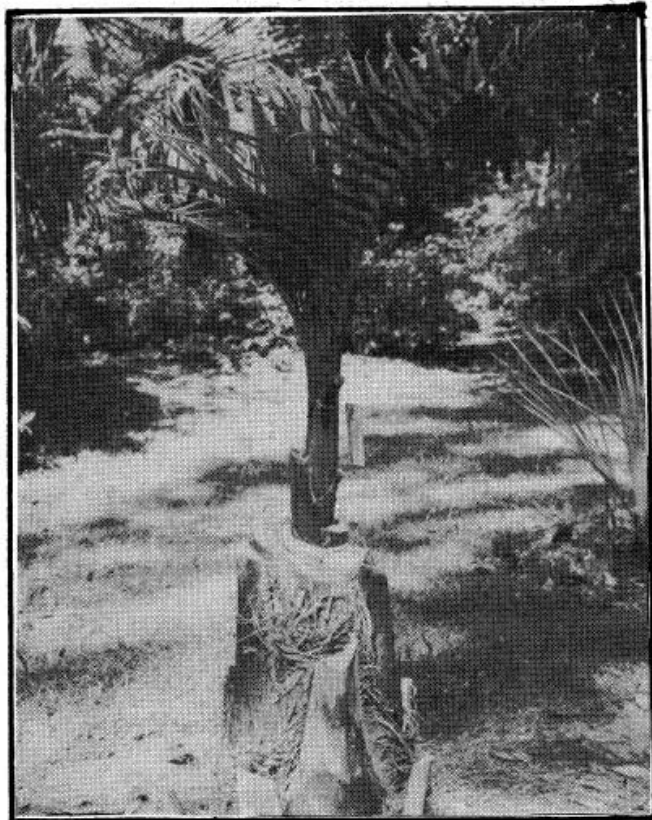
Several questions concerning the hybrid come to mind. Has the cross ever been successfully made by hand pollination by a palm enthusiast? Yes, it certainly has. The only one I know of, personally, to have done this is Dr. Merrill Wilcox of Gainesville Florida. But that is another story for another time. Why has the supply of hybrids in the trade dwindled down to practically none? The old Florida Nursery & Landscape Co. location in Leesburg has been converted to a shopping center so the original source is now gone. Are hybrids very cold hardy? They are certainly more cold hardy than Queen Palms but less hardy than *Butia*. To my knowledge all plants of the cross were killed here in Baker County area by the Christmas Freeze of 1983 when an unofficial temperature of 5°F was recorded at Southern States Nsy. Among the casualties were my own five specimens which had survived at North Glen from 1974 until that infamous freeze. During those ten good years the plants had survived the deep freeze of 1977 (remember the snow in Miami) and a 12°F freeze in 1981. The crowns were completely frozen both times but the stems survived untouched. Not so in 1983 when the wind blew so incredibly. Some individuals did survive in Jacksonville, 30 mile to the east, and Gainesville, 50 miles to the south.

Enough years have passed since the horrible winters of 1983 and 1985 that I have taken the big step of reintroducing the hybrid to North Glen. Two beautiful robust young specimens are gracing our grounds once more. We look forward to watching them mature in the years to come.

KYLE BROWN
NORTH GLEN

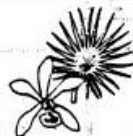
EDITOR'S NOTE: Thanks for the great article Kyle. Merrill Wilcox tells me that he has submitted an article to the Proceedings of the Fl State Hort Society detailing the steps to produce seed with 100% outcome of hybrids and will submit it to our bulletin as soon as published.

"COCOS CROSS" ADDENDUM
by Kyle Brown



In the spring of 1989 a third hybrid was planted at North Glen. All three plants survived the devastating freeze of Dec 1989. Trunks were wrapped with several layers of hot water heater insulation and tape but with the foliage exposed. The two older specimens were completely defoliated and had to have "radical stump surgery" three times in late winter and spring before all frozen tissue was finally removed. Figure 1 (above) shows recovery of the largest hybrid as of mid-June, '90. Remarkably, the smallest, most recently planted individual had minimal leaf burn and required no surgery. The center spear remained green and emerged normally in the spring. Equally exposed, perhaps this one is going to be a "cut above" in hardiness.

KYLE BROWN/NORTH GLEN



DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY
220 BARTRAM HALL

Ms. Stacey P. Peacock, Editor
Rt. 2, Box 168
Zolfo Springs, FL 33890

Dear Ms. Peacock:

In a recent letter, Mr. Larry Burns discussed the confusion regarding the nomenclature of the "Queen Palm x Butia Hybrid." I have some additional information which may be of interest to your readers.

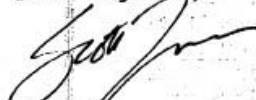
It is the common practice of plant breeders to list the female or seed parent first when designating a cross with an "x." This uncodified rule of thumb is widely used, but regrettably, this shorthand formula is contrary to the classical meaning of the "x" symbol. As Mr. Burns pointed out, the "x" signifies "out of." The formula "Queen x Butia" ("by Queen out of Butia") indicates that the Butia is the female parent, but most modern plant breeders would interpret it to mean that the Queen palm is the female parent. Thus, I'm afraid that confusion will persist unless the male and female parents are specifically indicated when formulae are used.

This palm hybrid was first described in the literature by A. R. Proschowsky (Revue Horticole 93:290-291. 1921). In his description of the hybrid, Proschowsky noted that Butia capitata was the female parent and Arecastrum romanzoffianum was the male. Proschowsky also gave the hybrid a name: x Butiarecastrum nabonnandii. The controversy could end here were it not for the recent re-assessment of the genus Arecastrum. Palm botanists now agree that Arecastrum is not distinct from Syagrus, and since Syagrus is the earlier name, it has priority. So now what do we call the hybrid?

A timely nomenclatural note was published last November by P. Vorster (Taxon 39(4):662-663. 1990) that may get us out of our bind. Mr. Vorster correctly noted that name of this hybrid palm, x Butiarecastrum nabonnandii, is no longer correct in light of recent botanical opinion. He provided a new name for the genus: x Butyagrus and "transferred" the species to the new genus. Hence, the proper name for the palm is x Butyagrus nabonnandii.

Incidentally, we must guard against misspelling the genus name Butia. The palm genus is always spelled with an "i." Butea is a genus of trees in the legume (bean) family prized for its showy flowers.

Best regards,



Scott Zona

Thanks for the clarification. Members who are responding to members is a larger goal for our newsletter...consider this your open forum. Ed.

By the way...its actually Mr.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

MORE ON THE "HYBRID"

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31 Jan 1991

THE CLIFF DATE, PHOENIX RUPICOLA IN CENTRAL FLORIDA



Many "Dates" grace the landscape of Central Florida. In fact they are a rather common sight along our traveled paths. But among the "herd" runs an uncommon steed that is more graceful and tropical in stature than most of the others. This is the "Cliff Date", *Phoenix rupicola*. Of all the genus, this species endears itself to me the most.

Phoenix rupicola is a native of India. The palm has only a single trunk if true to species, and tends toward the slender side. The crown has graceful arching fronds that display a "windowpane" effect when viewed from the right angle along the midrib (see various photos). The base of the crown is often quite swollen with fibrous matting (similar to *Phoenix roebilini*). The fronds are quite flexible and papery to the feel and give way to the touch. This characteristic lends a tropical nature not common among most dates, as well as the fact that this species has traded the exacting symmetry display by species like *canariensis*, *sylvestris*, or *dactylifera* for a more droopy, lazy lilt. In terms of ornamental beauty, the "Cliff Date" is a truly superb palm.

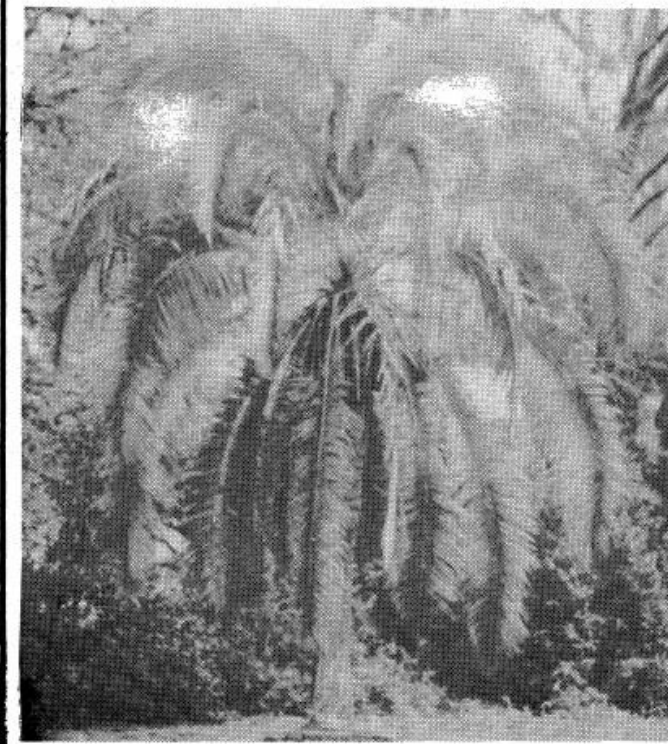
I think it could said that *P. rupicola* is a hardy palm with tender foliage. Personal experience from observations in Highlands, Hardee, and Polk counties has taught me that this is a plant that has taken the worst freezes of the 80's, always totally defoliated, but with a recovery speed so vigorous as to seem that they were barely slowed down. Because of this resilience from temperatures in the lower twenties for extended durations below 32°F with gusting winds, it certainly has to be called hardy. But be prepared to lose the foliage in the mid twenties for shorter duration and no wind. By late summer (with pruning of course) you'll have a new and vigorous palm.

I hope you will enjoy this look at a special member of the Phoenix genus. What follows is a collection of selected references in the available literature relating to *Phoenix rupicola* and photos of the species as represented in a number of Central Florida locations.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE WHO CONTRIBUTED PHOTOGRAPHS FOR THIS ARTICLE:

Bernie Peterson, Ann & John Kennedy, David and Jeri Prall.

Stacey Peacock



The Jan 1987 issue of *Principes* featured an interview with the man in charge of Huntington Botanical Gardens, Myron Kimmach. Interviewer Mike Vitkiewicz asked about palm hybrids being produced by the Garden. Myron said: "Bud Hallberg is in charge of all the palms. He has created several hybrids here, particularly with Phoenix. There is one of them; *Phoenix rupicola* x *roebilini* (mother?) which is very nice. It can be made over and over".

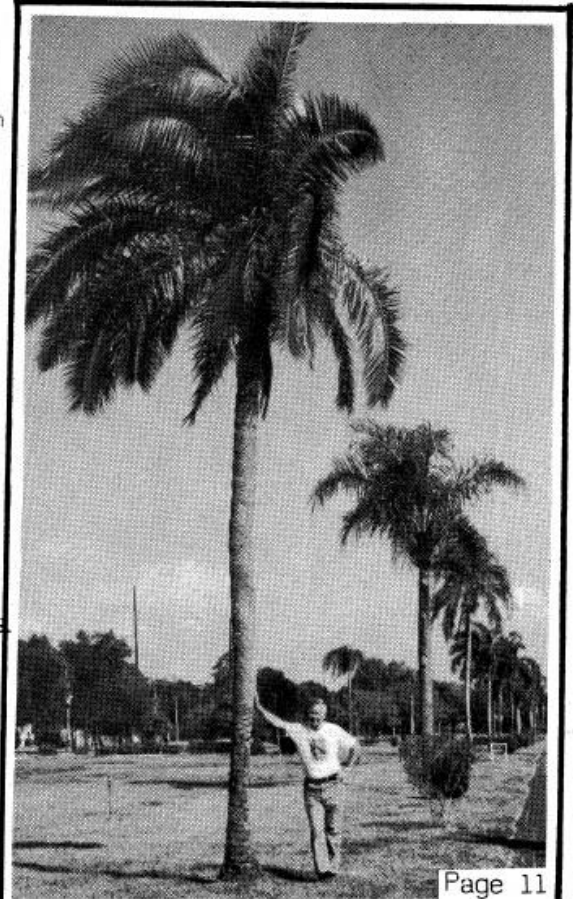
PRINCIPES Vol. 31 Pg. 7

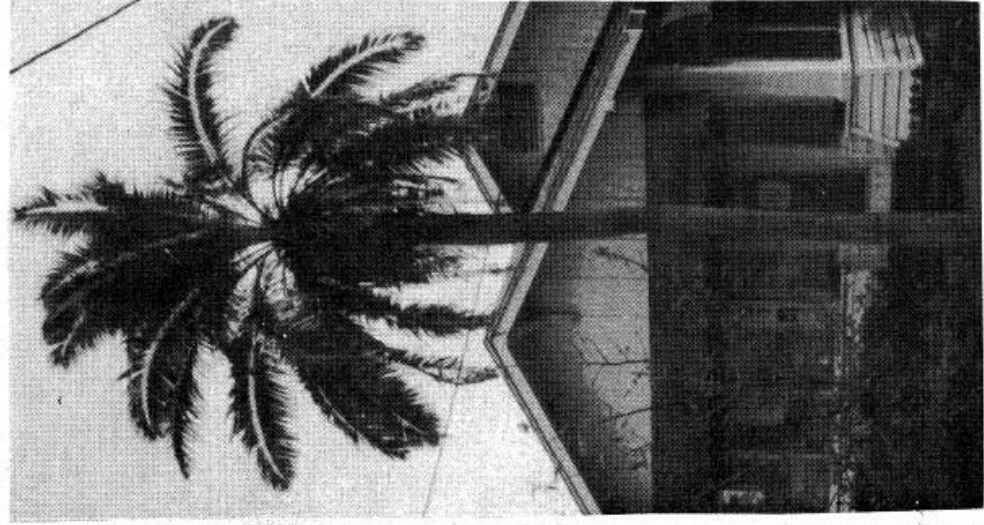
PHOTOGRAPHS

ABOVE LEFT: Palm labeled *P. rupicola* at FIT in Melbourne. This specimen may actually be a hybrid with *P. roebilini* as it combines elements of both species in appearance. Regardless, it is a beautiful specimen. Photo: Bernie Peterson

BELOW LEFT: Cliff Date on the eastern shore of Lake Jackson in Sebring. The trunk is approximately 12-15 ft high. Photo: Stacey Peacock

BELOW RIGHT: Hersch Womble poses with a tall specimen at a cemetery in St Pete next to Tom Pavlucik's home. The picture was taken at last October's meeting in Tampa/St Pete. In the row behind Hersch there are more "rupicolas" alternately planted with Queen Palms.





THE CLIFF DATE

PHOENIX RUPICOLA

PHOTOGRAPHS

TOP LEFT: A fairly tall specimen for the species located in Avon Park on SR 64 (Main St) just east of US 27. This photo really captures the "windowpane" effect along the midrib of the fronds.

TOP RIGHT: One of a pair of young Cliff Dates in front of a home in Avon Park.

BELOW LEFT: Another pair in front of a house between Lake Jackson & Lake Sebring, just to the north of Sebring. This photo shows the typical swollen mass at the base of the crown. The smaller appears to be of hybrid origin.

C O L D - H A R D I N E S S

In his article "Cold Tolerance of Cultivated Palms" Dent Smith reported that *P. rupicola* was undamaged during the winter of 1957-58 which saw these lows on these dates: 32°F/Dec 1; 25°F & 27°F/ Dec 12 & 13; 27°F/Jan 9; 32°F/Feb 4; 31°F/Feb 14; and this series 29°, 26°, 26°, 29°F/ Feb 17-18-19-20th. This would suggest that the foliage of the Cliff Date is hardy to 25°F, and from experience this is close to the limit, below which the foliage is blasted.

Pg 122 Principles Vol 2 #4 Oct 58

In a subsequent article written about the effects of the historic Freeze of Dec 1962, Dent Smith described the palms as "defoliated except for the leaves that were barely starting to emerge". Temperatures during the Dec 13-15th period were: 22°F/with 14 hrs duration below freezing; 26°F/11 hrs duration; 29°F/3 hrs duration. Although blasted, both palms were fully recovered 13 months after the freeze at the time of writing in Jan 1964.

"More About Cold Tolerance"

Pg 27 & 38 Principles Vol 8 #1 Jan 64

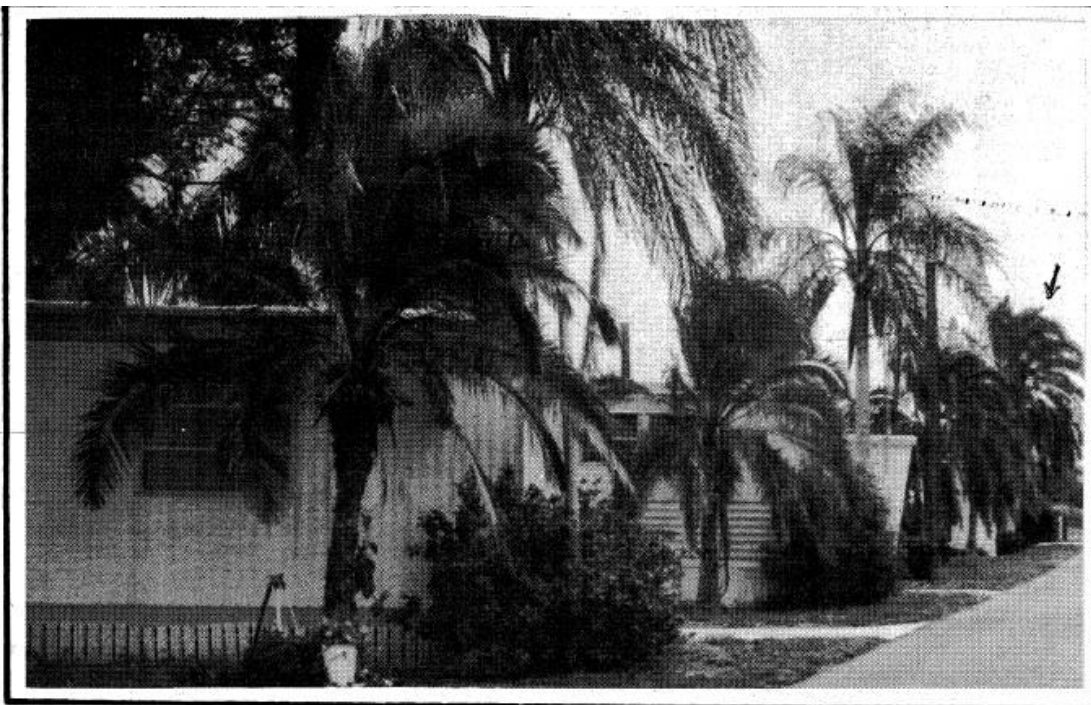
ATTENTION MEMBERS: Still feel free to send in your photos of *P. rupicola*. Only three photos were received for this article from members besides myself. W'd still like to yours if you'd like to share it.



In the article "Palms at the Jardin Botanique "Les Cedres" France", J Marnier-Lapostolle reported that the severe winter of 1956 did not damage *P. rupicola* "to any extent" even though there were temps in the lower 20's, and "thus could be considered hardy".
pg 106 Principes Vol 5 #3 Jul 61

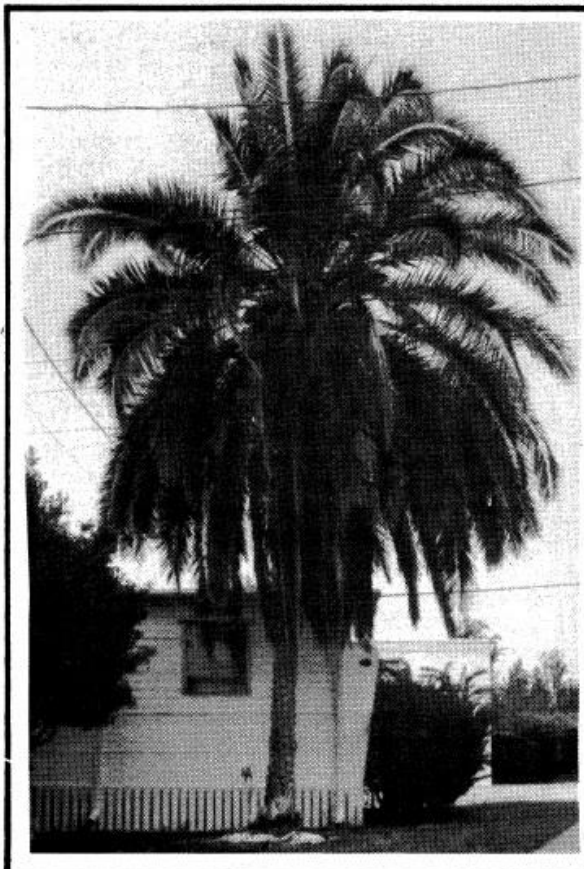
In "Observations of Frost Damage at a Palm Nursery", Otto Martens described the effects of the winter of 1968-69 in California on potted *P. rupicola*. Located in a lath house of 40-50% shade and otherwise unheated, they were undamaged by temp of 24°F with the overall freeze duration of 7-8 hrs.
pg 68 Principes Vol 14 #2 April 70

Editor's Note: My personal observations are that Cliff Dates are more hardy when planted in full sun. The plants are more robust and accumulate more overall mass which translates into ability to stave off the cold somewhat better. Recovery is faster in full sun too, allowing the plant to get back into stride more quickly. Shaded palms struggle back slowly and may take up to 2 years to return to vigor. In tropical places *P. rupicola* might make a good understory palm, but planting a Cliff Date in the shade in Central Fl is not recommended.



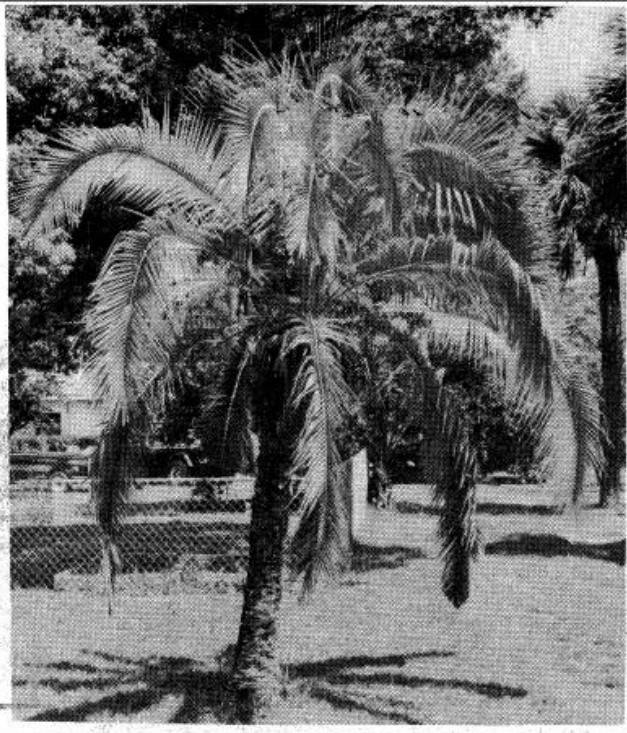
THE CLIFF DATES OF BRENTWOOD MOBILE HOME COURT

Just north of the small town of Avon Park lies the small lake of Lake Brentwood. Situated on its south shore is the older Brentwood Mobile Home Court. This all would seem quite ordinary if it weren't for the fact that this place is populated by the largest concentration of Cliff Dates I have ever laid eyes on. All of the photos on this page and the one on the front cover were taken at Brentwood.
PHOTO LEFT: The pictures here were taken in Oct 90, just 2 months prior to the killer freeze at Xmas. The specimen pictured was the largest and most robust of all in the court (but probably the most exposed to the wind) and sadly was the only casualty of that Xmas Freeze 90. All of the other *P. rupicolas* are now fully recovered.
PHOTO ABOVE: Parading uphill away from the lake is a row of 4 specimens. The arrow points to the specimen pictured left....now deceased. The third palm away from you is our COVER PHOTO.
PHOTO RIGHT: Bernie Peterson lends scale to one of two palms located in front of the owner's home by the lake within the "Court".



COVER PHOTO: This beautiful Phoenix *rupicola* is also located in Brentwood Mobile Court and is the third specimen in the row in the photo above.





PHOENIX RUPICOLA THE CLIFF DATE

PHOTOGRAPHS

TOP LEFT: One of two specimens at a home in the city of Ft Meade in Polk County.

TOP RIGHT: The other of the two palms in Ft Meade described above.

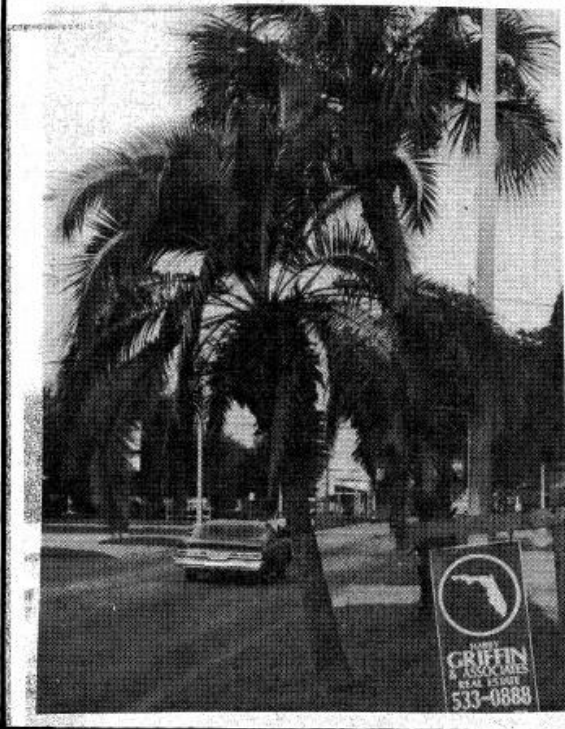
BELOW LEFT: A nice specimen graces Bus Hwy 60 in downtown Bartow.

BELOW RIGHT: A young specimen planted by David & Geri Prall at their home in Cape Coral.

Other 3 photos: S Peacock.

WHAT'S IN A NAME: Principes Vol 2 #2 pg 65. William Dress discusses scientific nomenclature and says:

Genus names are always nouns while species names may either be a noun or an adjective. When the species name is a noun it may stand in opposition to the generic name, like an attributive noun in English.... e.g. *Phoenix rupicola*, "the rock-dweller Phoenix".



In "Questions & Answers about Lethal Yellowing Disease" FW Howard and C.I. Barrant of the UF Research & Education Center in Ft Lauderdale charted various palm species and their relative susceptibility to L.Y. . *P. rupicola* was included with the 29 species susceptible but was classified as being of unknown susceptibility.

pg 165 Principes Vol 33 #4 Oct 89

SEED GERMINATION

Principes Vol 15 #4 Oct 1971 "Germination of Palm Seed" by Jack Koebernik of Key West. Listed germination time of 114 days with no mention of methods.

Principes Vol 16 #4 Oct 1972, "Studies of the Germination of Palm Seeds" by Basu & Mukherjer of the Indian Botanic Gdns in Calcutta described placing seeds in beds of washed sand, later dried in the sun. Seeds were planted with in 24 hrs of collection. Sand was never allowed to dry out or be overwatered. Planted at $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ in depth, the germination time was recorded when the very first seed shoot appeared above the soil....in this case...60days.



CLIFF DATE CONCLUSION

PHOTO TOP RIGHT: Came with this letter
From Ann & John Kennedy:

We bought the Phoenix rupicola in about 1977 at a sale of the old Palm Beach county chapter. It was in a 5-gallon container, cost \$12, and was at least four years old. The palm (a male), planted in 1980 at the unprotected northeast corner of the house, presently has a trunk that measures at ground level 60 inches around; the trunk is 50 inches high. Prior to the Christmas Freeze of '89 (the temperature dropped to 18°F on Christmas night), the Phoenix rupicola had sustained only minor damage during occasional earlier freezes down into the mid-20s. In early 1990, the palm was completely defoliated. At the beginning of the following summer it pushed up perhaps six wholly or partially damaged new leaves. (We had poured systemic insecticide and also fungicide into the cavity.) The first undamaged leaves are the lowest on the plant and are stiff, lacking the characteristic flexibility of this species. The crown, as pictured, is about half as full as before the Christmas Freeze. Because of its location, the palm has always been watered and fertilized on a regular basis; it has responded vigorously to such treatment.

Vero Beach freeze report: Allagoptera arenaria (two individuals) has also recovered well from complete defoliation. Livistona drudei and Livistona muelleri were completely untouched and Arenga engleri only lightly damaged. Rhapis excelsa was about 80% destroyed and has been slow to recover. A small Copernicia alba, not long in the ground, lost most of its leaves but came back very quickly. Miraculously, two very small Borassus flabellifer survived with minor damage. (We won't talk about our losses; R. I. P.)

We do miss Bill & Moffie Bidlingmayer, palm and bromeliad lovers, who have moved in retirement from Vero to Monticello.

--Ann & John Kennedy, Vero Beach

Matthew, Age 11
is 58 in high

BOTTOM PHOTO: Don Herndon and Deborah Forrester lend scale to a pair of mid-sized Cliff Dates located on the south shore of Lake Jackson in Sebring. The unusual shape of their crowns comes from it being a windy (quite) day.

Photo: S Peacock

CULTURE TIP: In central Florida, plant your "rupicola" in a sunny location and make sure it is well watered and fertilized. If you can protect it during its early years, the larger your palm grows, the more likely it is to survive to maturity. The extra initial effort will pay off!!! My personal feelings are that the swollen, fibrous area at the crown base (which houses the bud) insulates the growing point during freezing temps. Trimming and smoothing this area down to match the trunk shape would not be recommended (as I have seen done).

