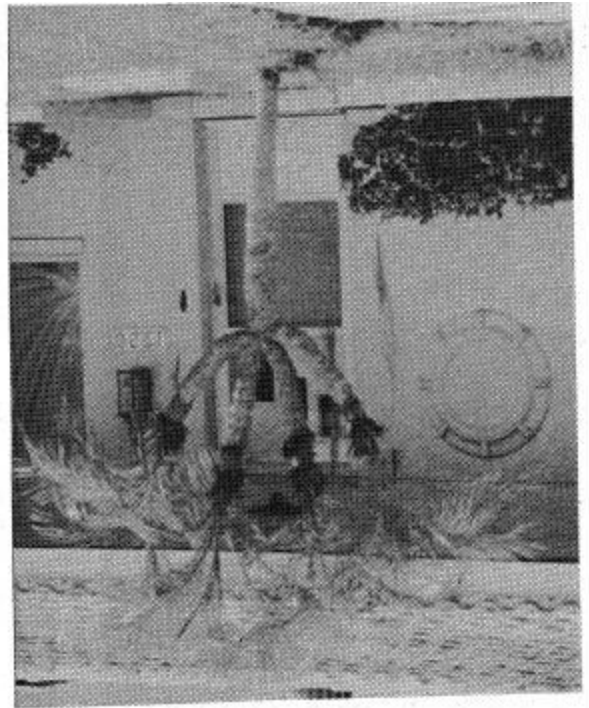


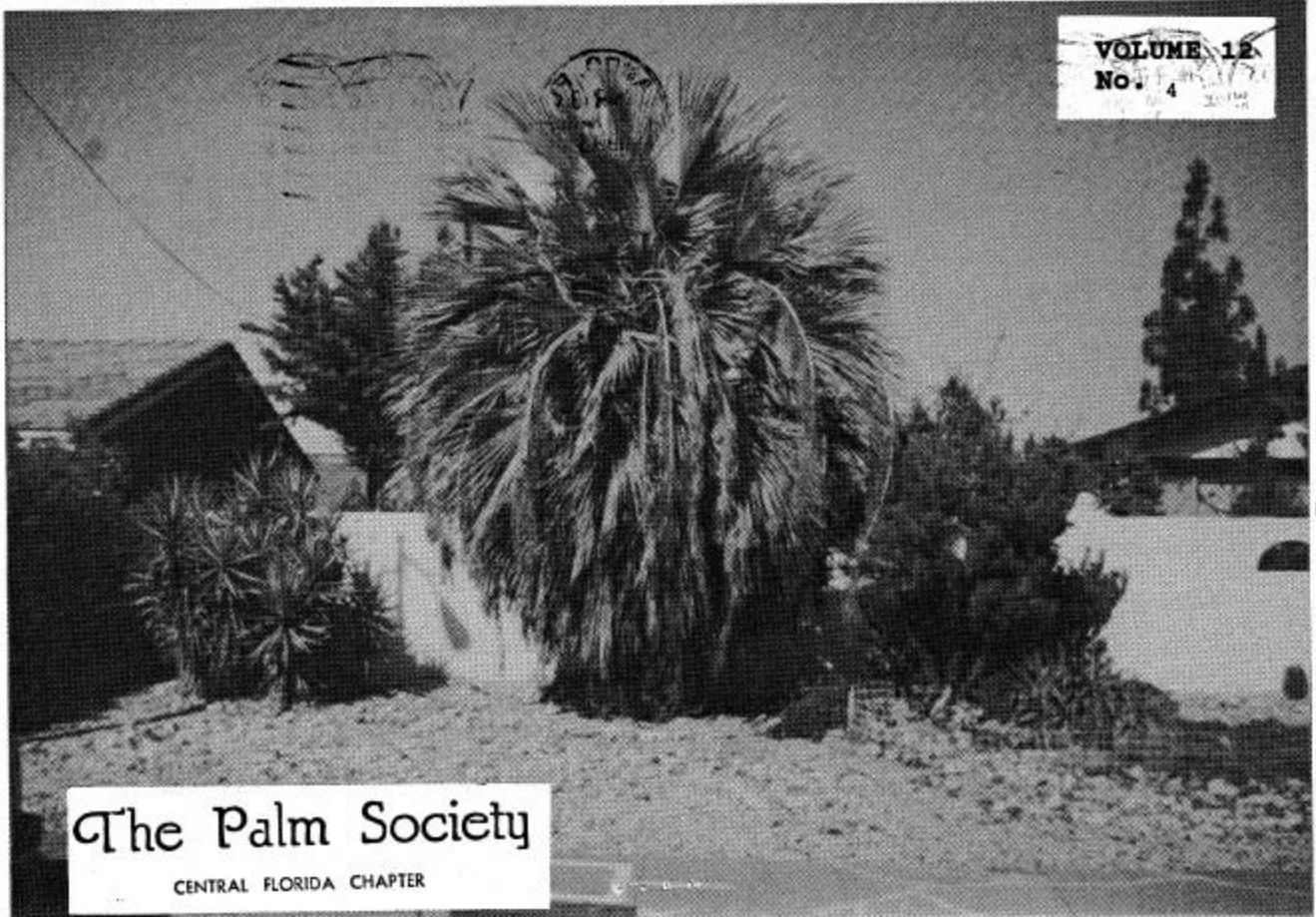


THE MUCH SOUGHT AFTER P. ROBELENII "CANDELABRA"
- PARTS UNKNOWN (CLASSIFIED). "I'D SORTA LIKE
TO HAVE THIS ONE MYSELF" JAKE FREJE, CLEARWATER
FLORIDA



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FIRST CLASS



The Palm Society
CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER

VOLUME 12
No. 4

FLA REPORTED DATE PALM
CULTIVARS

the weekend's events with our open chapter palm sale. The selection of plants seems to improve with every meeting. **ONCE AGAIN...A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**



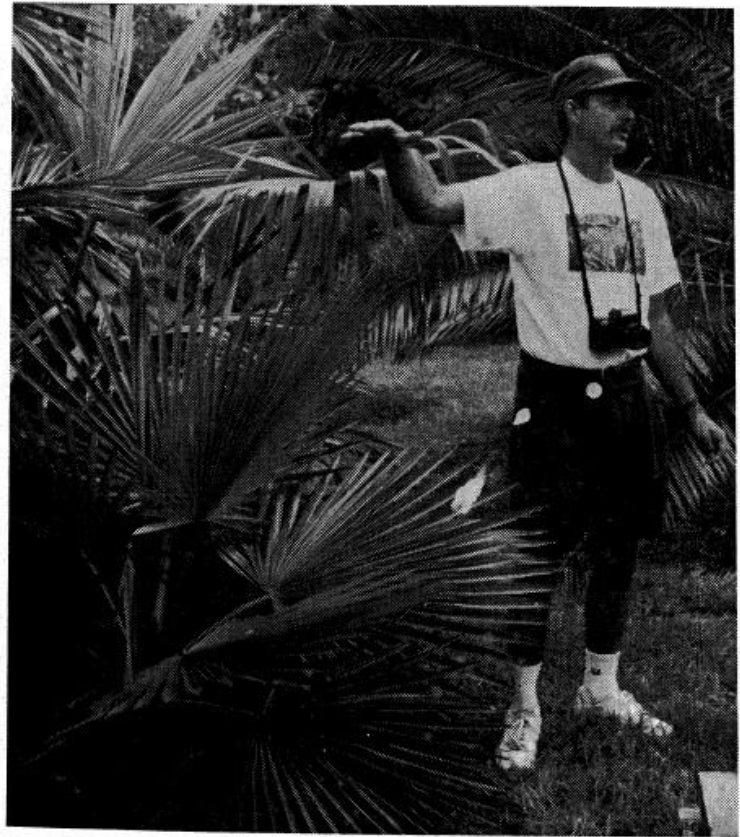
PHOTO ABOVE: Members pause to admire two of Ali & Ted's beautiful *Syagrus/Butia* hybrids. These are among 15 specimens of this hybrid in their collection.
 *****More On The Tampa Meeting Follows*****

**ATTENTION@#@*!!!! LEU GARDENS SALE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
 ATTENTION!!!!!!!! PALM SELLERS.....BUYERS...ATTENTION!!!!!!**

Planning for the Leu Gardens sale will have to be last minute if it takes place at all. Sellers who wish to sell palms if it takes place and palm buyers who might not otherwise hear a date for the sale in their local media are asked to send a Self Addressed Stamped Envelope to Ed Hall, 1111 Glen Garry Circle, Maitland, Fl 32751. When plans are finalized or not we will return your SASE indicating the result. Please write whether you are a Seller or Buyer so the appropriate response can be made. **THANK YOU!!!!!!!!!!**

↑ IMPORTANT ↑ NOTICE ↑ ↑

A SPECIAL THANKS TO TED LANGLEY



— With another 2-day CFPS meeting under our belts (our third in three years) I feel it is time to give some special recognition to a tireless organizer...one of the west coast's more important movers and shakers... the infatiguable Ted Langley. The photo above is Ted leading the tour at his place at our most recent meeting. I first met Ted at a Leu Gardens sale about 3 years ago and since have been glad to call him friend. He was an indispensable ally when I was the newsletter editor and thanks to his enthusiasm everyone residing in the Tampa Bay area has benefitted from his key role in organizing palm sales (USF is really his baby) and all three 2-day meetings in that area. What would the west coast be without him????!!!!!! All we need now to balance out the CFPS is someone like him on the east coast.

OUR HATS ARE OFF TO YOU MR TED LANGLEY

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

Parting thoughts from the Tampa Meeting:



PHOTO ABOVE: Our parting shot is yet another glimpse of a palm in Ted Landley's collection...a remarkable and extremely variegated Sabal palmetto. Ted is fond of variegation in palms and is always seeking new ones to add to his collection. In the background can be noticed even more of Ted's "hybrids". The photographer caught in mid exposure is Bernie Peterson of Cocoa.

APOLOGIES.....

Look for my article on the cultural observation of palms at Palmhead to continue in the next issue of the bulletin. The holidays and an early deadline are responsible for too late a breaking story.

Thanks..... Stacey P Peacock

Stacey P Peacock



FALL MEETING

PHOTO ABOVE: James Mayer leads the CFPS on a tour of his plant and palm collection. Also pictured: Donna/Aloha Palms.

After our wonderful morning at the Mayer residence we then continued north to Lutz and the home of Ali and Ted Langley. Knowing that the Langleys are relatively newcomers on the palm scene (3-4 years isn't long in palm years) I was expecting to see a relatively young albeit enthusiastic collection of palms but boy and I get a wrong number. Ted must be the king at wrangling a deal out of someone for a mature and often rare specimen. Because of this the Langley collection would give the appearance that it had been coming along for 12-15 years or more. What a pleasant surprise! The most striking part of this collection is the large number of Syagrus/Butia hybrids lending an extremely tropical ambiance to a fairly northern clime. Ted tells me that he has 15 of them on the grounds and most of them are good size and maturity. At any rate the preparation that went into getting ready for our visit was pretty apparent. The place looked great! After leading us on a comprehensive tour of the collection (which Ted confessed to me later that he did not get to say all that he wanted to in spite of being tired of talking), we proceeded to conclude

TAMPA MEETING

After a full day of touring, there was still more to come. Several speakers awaited us at the Holiday Inn on Fowler Ave on Saturday night. First, Dr. Merrill Wilcox came down from Gainesville to talk to us about "Hybridization in the Syagrus Alliance". The possibilities are fascinating within this genus and much work remains for current and future research. Next, Roy Works gave an overview of growing palms and especially cycads in the Tampa area. He was responding to the many questions he gets about his experiences with the cold hardiness of cycads...and many of us learned a great deal about an often unfamiliar subject. Many thanks to both speakers....your efforts were appreciated.

Sunday morning saw us heading to northern Tampa...more specifically to the home of James Mayer. James has become a familiar face at CFPS palm sales in recent years so this gave us a chance to see what he's been up to with all the palms he's been buying. While there are a lot of palms in his yard, there are many other types of plants as well. Everything was pruned to perfection and it was really amazing how James managed his canopy up, up and away. The turnout was large and a tour seemed to be unmanageable but we pulled it off in spite of the threatening skies. Fortunately the rain held off and let us do our thing. Thanks for sharing your place James!!!

PHOTO BELOW: Members are dwarfed by the palm studded canopy of James Mayer's home. Forgive the darkness of the photo....due in part to darkened skies that day.



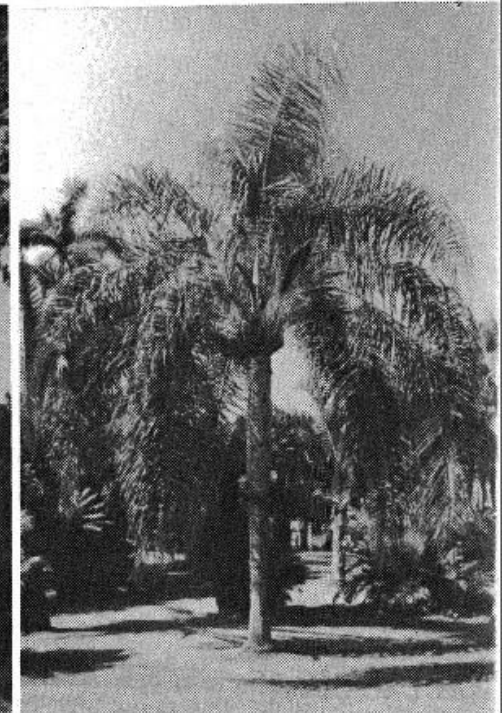
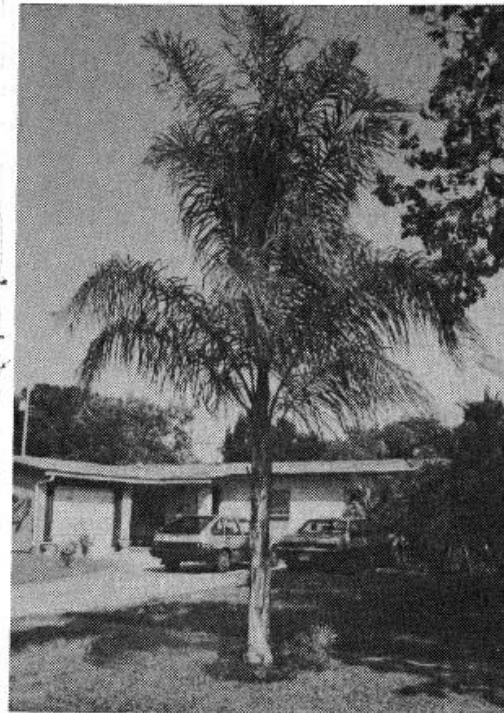
PALMS: COMING OF AGE

By Bernie Peterson

Most people enjoy watching living things grow, whether its a puppy or a palm tree. As Palm Society members we are particularly interested in the latter. The purpose of this article is to share some observations on the growth characteristics of certain palms, particularly the elongation of the stem or trunk.

After it germinates from a seed a palm goes through different stages of development during its life. The author of THE STRUCTURAL BIOLOGY OF PALMS, P.B. Tomlinson refers to these stages or phases as: Seedling phase, Establishment phase, Adult vegetative phase, and Adult reproductive phase. Tomlinson is careful to point out, however, that these phases are not well delineated from each other, and that progression from one phase to another is usually gradual. This article is concerned with the transition from the adult vegetative to the adult reproductive phase. For the sake of simplicity I will refer to these two phases as adolescent and reproductive respectively.

During their adolescent growth phase many of our favorite palms grow upward more quickly than at any other time of their development, and in many cases they are also at their most attractive during this phase. Syagrus romanzoffiana, or Queen palm, is the most common cultivated palm throughout much of Central Florida, and so is easy for most of us to observe. Aside from its many other fine qualities Queen palm is prized for its rapid upward growth much of which occurs after a short establishment phase, and before flowering or reproductive phase begins, or in other words during its adolescent phase. The record of the growth rate of a given mature reproductive Queen palm, as well as many other species, can be seen in the spacing of the nodes or leaf scars on its trunk. On the trunk of a well grown Queen palm the leaf scars on the lower portion may be spaced as much as 8-10 inches apart, therefore we know that the palm's height increased 8-10 inches each time a new leaf was produced, during the time the palm was beginning to build its trunk. Since a well cared for Queen palm may be expected to produce at least six leaves in a single growing season, its height may increase as much as 5 feet per year during its adolescent phase. Once our Queen palm has reached its reproductive phase, that is when it begins to flower and produce fruit, its upward growth slows dramatically. The leaf scars produced on the trunk of a reproductive Queen palm are quite close together, usually less than an inch, since the number of leaves produced in a year remains about the same upward growth is reduced to less than a foot.



TAMPA MEETING

Queen palms in both adolescent and reproductive phases have about the same number of leaves at any given time, but since the leaves of the adolescent palm are spaced more widely along the trunk it has a stretched out appearance, some have referred to this as "long-waisted". Photo #1 shows a Queen palm in the adolescent phase, note the relatively long area of trunk from which leaves are emerging. Photo #2 shows a Queen palm in its reproductive phase, note that the leaves emerge from a compact area at the top of the trunk. It is also interesting to note that both palms have about the same number of leaves, 14 or 15, this may of course vary with pruning practices and the health of the specimen.

Our native Sabal palmetto, or cabbage palm, is usually considered to be a slow grower, but it too has an accelerated upward growth during its adolescent phase. Any Floridian who has collected swamp cabbage will tell you that the best cabbage is collected from trees which are not too tall, but whose trunk has reached maximum diameter, a tree 4 to 8 feet tall with its trunk still clothed in leafbases is best. Sabals of this size have the long



thick, and tender bud typical of palms in their adolescent growth phase. Incidentally, the long, tender bud of adolescent cabbage palms makes them difficult to transplant. It snaps easily with rough handling, and is prone to drying and rotting when the roots have been severed. Very tall sabals with their compact crowns and tough resilient buds have a much higher transplant success rate. Interestingly Sabals often flower and produce fruit when they are still in their early stages of growth.

At this point it should be mentioned that not all palms have what I am calling an adolescent growth phase, and some may exhibit this phase only if conditions are favorable. Butias, Sabal minor, and Chamaerops are a few of the slow growers that never seem to have the spurt of upward growth that many of the tree-like species do. *Livistona chinensis* only does so in wet and/or shady conditions. As I reported in CFPB vol. 12 #2, Chinese fans grow upward very rapidly when grown in wet shady sites, this is also true, generally of the other Asian species of *Livistona*, such as *L. saribus*. The Australian *Livistonas* grow best when given sun and wet conditions. In a moist environment their upward growth can be quite rapid, some Australian *Livistonas*, can grow as quickly as *Washingtonia robusta*. Over a period of years I had the opportunity to observe a number of *L. decipiens* at the F.I.T. Garden in Melbourne. When I first saw these palms they ranged between 15 & 20 feet tall overall, green leaves covered almost the entire length of their trunks, at this time none of them had produced any flowers. In the spring of 1990 they all began to produce inflorescences and during the following summer the leaves on the lower 2/3 of the trunk turned brown. These leaves weren't affected by disease, nor had they been injured by cold, since

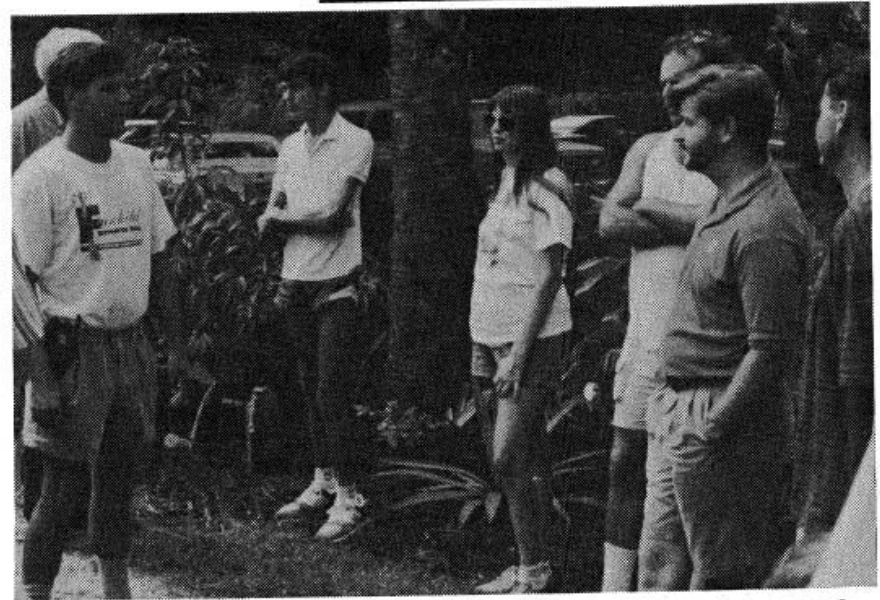
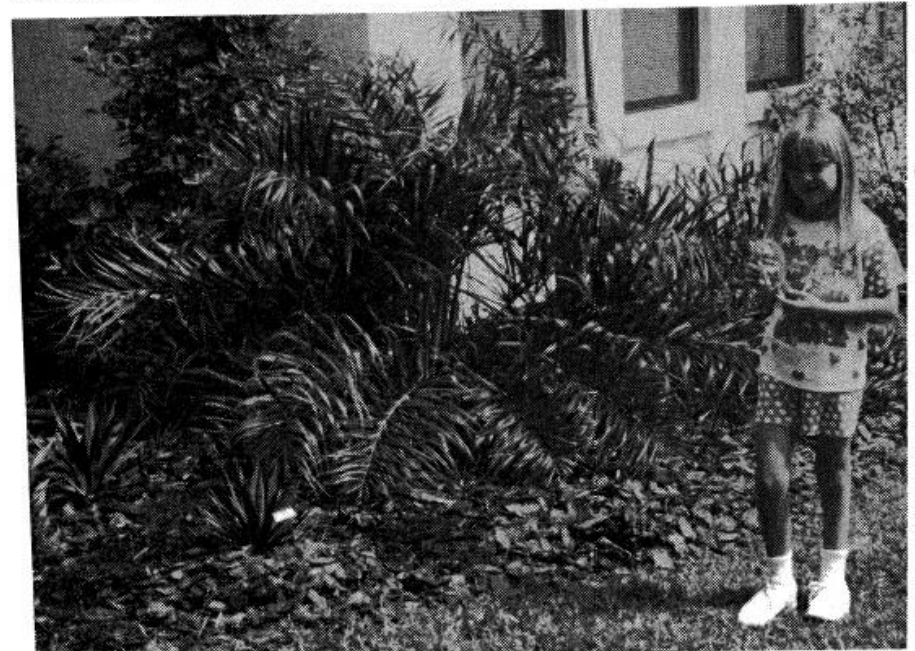


PHOTO ABOVE: Roy Works greets arriving CFPS members and prepares us for the tour at his beautiful "farm".

PHOTO BELOW: Brittany Prall of Cape Coral lends scale to a nice specimen of *Allagoptera arenaria* at Roy Works "farm". Fresh mulch in front of the palm and many others attest to the hard work that goes into preparing for a meeting.





FALL MEETING

PHOTO ABOVE: Donna Livenspire shows off her afterwork relaxing spot out back of the nursery. I think she said there's nothing better than a cold beer and babbling brook to cap off a hard day of work.

After our enjoyable morning at Aloha Palms we were off to Roy Works' "farm". Like many of us who have hosted a CFPS meeting, Roy looked as if he had been working hard in preparation for our arrival. The place looked great, The "farm" as Roy refers to it is actually a combination of plant collections and working nursery. Besides a keen interest in palms and cycads, Roy's taste is one for almost all plants (flowering trees & vines, succulents and more), so our plant palate was treated to a variety of exotic encounters. Everyone followed Roy on a detailed tour of the property and our guide's extensive knowledge of plants became quite clear to all who listened. After the tour members were treated to a private plant sale where many lingered late into the day.

Many thanks to Roy for an enjoyable afternoon and all the hard work in preparing for our visit.

the trees were well protected, these *L. decipiens* had simply passed from their adolescent phase to their reproductive phase, and their overall appearance had changed as a result. Stacey Peacock has made the same observation on two magnificent *Livistona drudei* on his estate "Palmhead", the two palms were growing rapidly and their trunks carried leaves on most of the length of their trunks. In the spring of 1989 they flowered for the first time, the lower leaves began to die at about the same time, these palms too had reached their reproductive phase. Photo #3 shows one of Stacey's *drudei*'s in the autumn of 1988, photo #4 shows the same palm in the summer of 1991. It is readily apparent that not only is the crown more compact on the later photo, but the tree has grown very rapidly in the intervening time, in this case the onset of flowering has not slowed the rate of upward growth.

Many *Chamadorea* owners have observed the transition from adolescence to adulthood in their palms without understanding what was happening. This often occurs when the lower leaves of a pot of *C. seifrizii* begin to turn yellow and die rapidly, seemingly coincidentally the plant begins to flower at the same time, often producing many inflorescences at once. After trying to troubleshoot this "problem" for customers and our own plants at Rockledge Gardens for some time I realized that the loss of the lower leaves was part of the normal sequence of events in the life of a given *Chamadorea* stem. *C. microspadix*, a popular landscape palm in Central Florida, loses its lower leaves at reproductive maturity in the same way as *C. seifrizii*, it is important to note that both these palms produce multiple stems, each of which passes from the adolescent to the reproductive phase. Photo #5 shows two stems cut from the same plant of *C. microspadix*, the stem on the right has been producing flowers and fruit for several years, before they were cut for easier comparison it was 20 inches taller than the younger stem on the left. Once again the photo shows a much more compact crown of foliage on the stem which is reached reproductive maturity, and both stems have the same number of leaves 5. The lowest 8 leaf scars on the stem of a *C. microspadix* are spaced 5 to 6 inches apart as the stem matures they gradually reduce to about 1 inch apart. Of course not all *Chamadoreas* have a noticeable adolescent growth phase, *C. Radicalis* flowers when very small and leaf scars



are close together, except on the upright form of *C. radicalis*.

As we have seen, the old saying "about as exciting as watching grass grow", does not apply to palms; it is fun and exciting to watch palms grow. This is particularly true when one takes the opportunity to watch some particular specimens over a period of time.

Reference:

Tomlinson, P.B., 1990 THE STRUCTURAL BIOLOGY OF PALMS, Clarendon Press Oxford.

Producing Edible Dates in High Humidity and Precipitation

Larry Bains
360 Oak Ave, Umatilla, Florida 32784

The thought has been that edible dates cannot be produced in Florida, after compiling data the hypothesis is that this may not be true. A few varieties of Phoenix dactylifera are exceptionally tolerant of rain and humidity, but the majority being imported to Florida are not. However, varieties of P. dactylifera which have a low tolerance for rain and humidity could possibly be induced to ripen artificially.

Hardy and Ornamental

Since the devastating freezes of the 1980's observations have been made on cold hardiness of palms. With new information on cold hardiness many palm enthusiasts are planning their landscape around the most cold hardy in anticipation of another "once in a century freeze". A problem with some of the cold hardy palms is that they do not attain the height or have the grace of more tropical palms. The P. dactylifera however fits both categories of height and grace. In central Florida most P. dactylifera survived the freezes with only minor damage even in northern counties. North Florida suffered more damage but recovered in the cases that I am aware of.

Fruit Production

Beyond the ornamental and cold hardiness of P. dactylifera another important aspect is the fruit that it bears. Most commercial date gardens in the United States are located in the area of Indio and Thermal, California which is most like their native habitat. Most dates need a hot, arid environment in order to ripen properly. A few P. dactylifera produce edible fruit in Florida one being in Clearwater. Florida conditions provide enough heat but too much humidity and rain. Floridians may still be able to cultivate edible dates. According to the USDA and several other date research centers the following varieties are all said to be exceptionally tolerant of humidity and rain and some actually produce better fruit with rain and humidity. The varieties Dayri, Kustawy, Thoory, Halawy, Jozee, Tadala and Khadrawy are all humidity and rain tolerant. Could the few P. dactylifera in Florida that are producing edible fruit be one of these varieties? In 1989 I purchased a group of unnamed P. dactylifera from a central Florida nursery, and they are doing poorly. This group is actually smaller after three years in the ground from a three gallon container. Another unnamed group of P. dactylifera purchased from another central Florida nursery in 1991 has grown

TAMPA MEETING.....SIMPLY SUPER

by Stacey Peacock

Saturday October 10th saw us converging on Wimauma to convene our third 2-day west coast meeting in as many years.....thanks going once again to Ted Langley and his enthusiastic organizing talents. Our first stop of the day was at Aloha Palms in the fair city of our converging. This remarkable commercial operation is the partnership of two ladies who have become rather active in the CFPS over the past several yearsnamely Donna Livenspire and Michele

What is so remarkable about Aloha Palms is that it is a nursery almost completely devoted to palm culture and successfully so. Row after row of well kept palms of numerous species greet the eye upon arrival. After touring us around the grounds and greenhouses we all met next to the residence for a book and plant raffle before adjourning for lunch and the next stop of the day. Many thanks to Donna & Michele for their hospitality and their support of the CFPS Raffle with the beautiful Borassus donation.

PHOTO BELOW: Members scour one the immaculate greenhouses at Aloha Palms.





COVER: BRAHEA PHOTOGRAPHED IN FAIRFIELD CALIFORNIA BY WILLIAM BLACK

ABOVE: RUTH SMYTH WITH SOME OF THE EXOTIC PALMS RANSOMED FROM ROCKLEDGE GARDENS, WAITING FOR BERNIE, WHO PROMISED TO PLANT THEM ON HIS DAY OFF.

The Central Florida Palm Bulletin is published four times annually and is free to members of the International 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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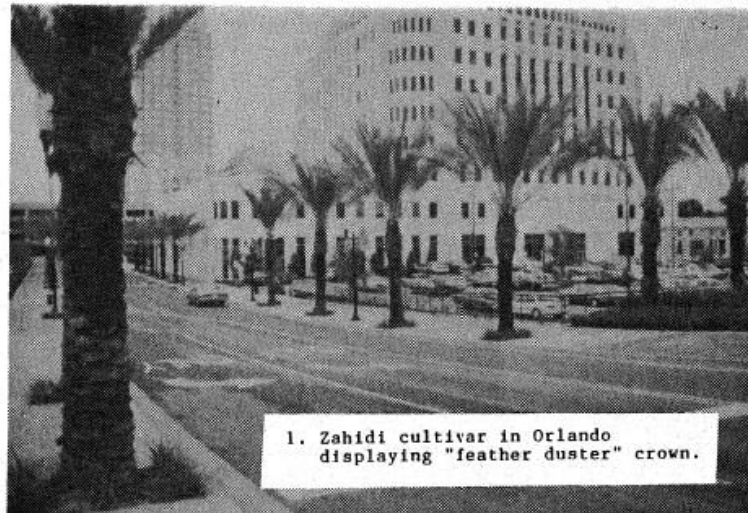
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1. Zahidi cultivar in Orlando displaying "feather duster" crown.

a measurable amount from a three gallon container. It appears that the palms doing well are cultivars that have a higher tolerance for rain and humidity. Humidity and rain seem to not only affect fruit production but the tree as well. These trees are too young to observe how the fruit will respond.

Less Tolerant Varieties Imported to Florida

Phoenix dactylifera are imported to Florida for landscaping purposes only. Cultivars with full crowns are generally preferred over open airy ones. Three main varieties are being imported; Deglet Noor, Zahidi, and Medjool. Surprisingly, Zahidi and Deglet Noor are among the least rain and humidity tolerant, data on Medjool has been limited. The ornamental value of Zahidi and Deglet Noor is subjective. Zahidi's older leaves die back making a crown like a feather duster (figure 1). The Deglet Noor has stiff short leaves. It is questionable why humidity and rain tolerant varieties are not being used in Florida.

Artificial Ripening

A pollinated female P. Dactylifera of unknown variety in Florida that is not producing edible fruit can possibly be made to do so with a simple procedure. The University of Florida's research field in Ft. Lauderdale has compiled information of P. dactylifera and has had success with the artificial ripening of dates. The study showed that most dates will mature in Florida but after that point will sit on the tree and ferment due to the humidity. A simple fruit drier/dehydrator has worked in giving the dates the environment needed to finish ripening. The drier/dehydrator procedure is for P. dactylifera that are not as tolerant to rain and humidity as the ones mentioned earlier in this article. The previously named varieties it is hoped will produce edible fruit directly from the tree. A follow up article will be written after a Halawy, Medjool and Dayri have been established in the ground for a while and Jozee, Kustawy and Tadala Cultivars are located. Meanwhile I would like to hear from others with any knowledge or observations on P. dactylifera. You may contact me at 360 Oak Avenue Umatilla, FL 32784 or call (407) 894-7766.

Acknowledgments

- * Ben Laflin of Oasis Date Gardens in Thermal, California for his expertise and the donation of the Dayri and Halawy offshoots.
- * Abdul-Wahab Naki of Safat, Kuwait and Abdul Aziz Naki of Miami for the tissue culture grown Medjool.
- * James Sharp of Damman Saudi Arabia for information and collection of seed from variations of P. dactylifera in Saudi Arabia.
- * Handy Abdel-Rahman El-Shakhs of Cairo, Egypt for much valuable information.

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