

# The PALMATEER

*Volume 19, no. 2*

*June, 1999*

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By John Kennedy

**Fifty brave** souls appeared in Vero Beach for the March 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. The weather discouraged anyone driving from a distance (or even from close by). The area was under tornado watch for the entire day. Winds blew at 35-40 mph much of the time, with heavy dark clouds that seemed to promise immediate unpleasantness. A cold front was sweeping quickly down the peninsula, dropping temperatures into the 60s (though it felt colder in the wind).

**Picture-takers usually** prefer that palm fronds remain still in the sunshine. Instead, leaves in constant motion against a black sky were the norm for the day. Despite the ominous skies, there was no rain until early evening—vigorous, if of short duration.

**Hard-core palm-lovers** are not easily deterred and, so, looked closely at all the goodies at Ed and Joyce Carlson's house. *Archontophoenix tuckerii*, the dwarf Malayan coconut palms, the two magnificent *Pseudophoenix sargentii*, the large *Wodyetia*, the unusual cycads (including *Encephalartos gratus*) were on view. Ed took tour parties around, answering many questions. Every palm and cycad was labeled; Ed could relate a brief history of each plant.

**The next** stop was at Ken and Lynn Macht's. Ken is chairman of the Indian River County commission and also a potter (interesting combination!). The grounds contain the remnants of an extensive palm collection assembled by Mr. DeKold who worked at McKee Jungle Gardens in the 1930s. (McKee, which closed as a tourist attraction in 1975, will re-open soon as McKee Botanical Garden.) At the Machts' is a *Latania* sp. (probably *L. lontaroides*) that predates 1936, a *Hyphaene* sp., an unidentified *Attalea*. There is a row of *Roystonea regia* that somehow escaped the fate of other royals in Vero Beach that died in a series of freezes in the 1980s; survivors were mostly finished off in the 1989 Christmas freeze.

**After a lunch break**, palm visitors assembled at the Earring Point property of Joe and Anne Michael. Here, on the Indian River side of the barrier island, the wind seemed to pick up force. The leaves of the two big *Borassus flabellifera*s, the *Bismarckias*, the *Corypha umbraculifera*s were all in constant motion. Only about 25 people were left to admire the Michael collection and to eye the offerings at the palm (and cycad) sale. Others had left early for the long and difficult drive home.

**The three** gardens were all very different. The Carlsons have the kind of collection that everyone might reasonably hope to have, given sufficient time and money: a young and interesting assortment of palms and cycads. The Machts have the remnants of what must have been a considerable collection; long ne-

## MRS. BO BLOWING IN THE WIND



*The female Borassus flabellifera at the Michael place, Earring Point, Wabasso. If you look closely, you can see the cannonball-size fruit just under the crown. It is immature here, won't be ripe until late summer.*



*Greg and Charlene Palm get a look at what's behind the palms behind the Carlsons' house. Remember, this is the palm-and-plane garden. Ed is the pilot, the name of the small subdivision is Vero Aerodrome. A grass airstrip is beyond the house and hangar. A notable feature: crime is almost unknown. The county sheriff also lives in Vero Aerodrome.*

glected, the palms survived in a favorable microclimate until the present owners once more provided proper attention. The Michael palms are awe-inspiring: mature, lofty, huge trees that date back to 1960s. Had we all started with palms when we were young, O

## WHAT WAS DISCUSSED AT MARCH BOARD MEETING IN VERO

Minutes of the first quarter meeting of the Central Florida Palm and Cycad Society

Date: March 14, 1999

Location: Residence of Ed Carlson, Vero Beach, FL  
Board Members Present: Neil Yorio, John Kennedy, Tom Broome, and John Bishock

Guests: Edgar Hall and Janice Broda

Minutes Prepared By: Neil Yorio

1. Reading of minutes from fourth quarter 1998 meeting as prepared by Mike Dahme. Minutes were approved unanimously by board without corrections.

2. Committee meeting of January 5 summary was presented by Neil outlining the following:

New computer purchase which occurred on January 5, 1999 to be maintained at the residence of John Kennedy (CFPACS editor) for sole use of preparing the CFPACS bulletin.

Voting procedure amendment made for allowance of the 1999 board election to occur during the first quarter 1999. All future elections will occur during the fourth quarter of each year. Candidate bios are submitted and published during the fourth quarter of each year.

By-laws amendments were also discussed and included the suggestion to include the nominations committee chair to be an appointed board member. Discussion of the board concluded that the position should remain a non-board position because it had only a single, defined function. Therefore, no action was made on this suggestion. Finally, the suggestion to remove term limits on two board positions was discussed. The positions that were considered were that of secretary and treasurer. It was felt that there is a certain level of institutionalization with these posts that would likely be disrupted by ending a particular person's post by term limits. A motion was made to remove term limits for these two posts, and it was unanimously passed. All other elected board members would retain the one year term with a two year limit.

3. Officers reports were given by the sitting board members and are as follows:

John K. (editor) gave an update on the latest troubles with creating the latest bulletin issue. One of the major concerns was the method of payment for the printing services. With the printing shop chosen by the editor, it was suggested that we pursue an account with them so that individuals don't have to burden the cost and be repaid by the treasury. John K. and the treasurer will look into this matter.

The central VP was not in attendance, but an abbreviated update was given by Neil. We are on for a meeting on June (12 or 13) at the gardens of Dave Witt, Dave Besst, and Gordon Smith.

The west coast meeting update was given by John B. and was essentially that we were on for a meeting in conjunction with the French chapter of the IPS. This meeting will occur on the weekend of November 13 and several gardens were discussed for the venue.

The PACSOF Palmfest involvement was discussed and all board members approved our further involvement and potential hosting at a to be determined future date. This meeting will occur on the weekend of September 4 and 5.

4. Old Business was discussed as follows:

The chapter's *Principes* collection was missing a handful of issues, mostly from the early '80s. It was suggested and approved by the board to maintain a full set of *Principes* for the chapter, available by request to any member, and that the missing issues would be procured to fulfill the set. Neil has volunteered to investigate the availability of the missing issues.

A membership flyer (rough draft) was distributed to board members to use as a tangible method for increasing membership. Several useful improvements were suggested by the board and will be incorporated into a final 3-fold flyer with some useful horticultural information as well as the membership application.

A rough draft of the updated by-laws was distributed for input with the goal of approval by the second quarterly meeting

5. New Business was discussed as follows:

(Continued on page 15)

## CFPACS AT THE SPRING U.S.F. PLANT FESTIVAL IN TAMPA

By Tom Broome

The Central Florida Palm and Cycad Society participated in the spring plant festival at the University of South Florida on April 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> this year. We had a good turnout of members this year, and had a near record sale as well. We passed out a lot of applications to our society, and even signed people up on the spot. Edgar Hall and Lou Norris brought free Sabal palms to give away, even to people that did not buy any other palms or cycads. I would like to thank them especially for that.

I would like to thank Edgar and Lou for taking on the cashier duties on Saturday, and Hersh Womble for being the cashier on Sunday. As always, I would like to thank our vendors, Frank and Jennie Tintera, and David and Geri Prall. Also, I would like to welcome and thank a new vendor, Alan Bennett. I hope you will be able to come to more sales in the future. I would also like to see more vendors at our sales. If anyone would like to be a vendor for our next sale in October please get in contact with me.

I would like to mention that the garden has a new director, Brad Carter. This will be a full time job now, where before the post was just a part time position. Brad will be improving the garden and there may be plans for some new buildings as well some day. Brad is an I.P.S. member from California, and is now living here in Florida. Some people may recognize his name from the California palm journal several years ago. I would like to take this time to welcome him to Florida, and welcome him also as a new member of our society. He has also invited us to have a meeting at the garden someday.

We look forward to participating in the next sale, and I hope to see everyone there.



*No, this isn't the U.S. F. plant festival, but an earlier sale at Leu Gardens, Orlando, on March 28. Seated, smiling invitingly at the palm browsers, is membership chair Dave Witt.*



*Above, CFPACS prez (Neil Yorio: note blue shirt with palm trees) pulls west coast vice-president (John Bisbock) out of the rough on Newport Dr., Vero Aerodrome. The Famous Yellow Cadillac carries John and Faith to palm events all around the state.*

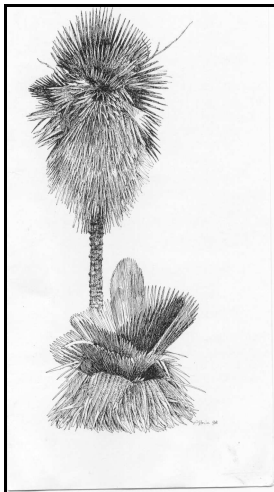
*That's the Palmet right, youngest visitor at the March meeting, thinking about flying Ed Carlson's plane. Mom (Charlene Palm) assists at the controls for persons a tad too short to reach them.*



**WHO CAN TOP THIS?  
7-HEADED SABAL PALMETTO**



*Geoff Stein, below, draws another favorite palm. But is Copernicia macroglossa all that common in California? Where did he see it?*



**By John Kennedy**

**A four-headed** *Sabal palmetto* that has developed seven heads is a traffic-stopper in Gibsonton, near Tampa. Its owners believe it to be 25-30 years old. The picture clearly shows the four trunks emerging from a single trunk at about 5 feet above the ground. Look closely at the trunk on the far left: near the top, it has divided into two. The same division has occurred on two other trunks not visible in this picture.

**A picture and** feature in the *Tampa Tribune* some years ago brought many people to see this unusual palm. The owners have received a number of offers to buy the palm, ranging from \$500 to \$10,000. They are very fond and proud of it, however, and have refused to sell.

**Double and** triple-headed *Sabal palmetto* are occasionally seen in Florida, the result (it is thought) of injury. Seven heads, however, is probably a record. While the original four heads in the Gibsonton palm may be the result of injury, there has been no further damage to cause development of the additional heads. (We need some palm scientists from *Palms*—formerly *Principes*—to set us straight on the matter.)

**PACSOFF 1999  
CALENDAR**

June 7, 7:30 PM, Fairchild Tropical Garden, Miami - SF

General Meeting

**June 13, Orlando, 10 a.m. - CF General Meeting (see p. 9 for details)**

**June 19 & 20**, Fairchild Tropical Garden, Miami. Palm Symposium: 2 days of talks presented by Florida and international palm enthusiasts and professionals. Talks will be on a wide range of topics including horticulture, recent taxonomic changes in popular landscape palms, and palm related travelogues. A tour of Fairchild's collections will be offered Saturday evening, June 19 at 5 pm.

**June 26**, SWF General Meeting

**July 7**, 7:30 PM, Mounts Botanical Garden, West Palm Beach - PBC General Meeting

**July 22**, 7:30 PM, Ft Lauderdale. BC General Meeting

**August 2**, 7:30 PM, Fairchild Tropical Garden, Miami. SF General Meeting

**August 4**, 7:30 PM, Mounts Botanical Garden, West Palm Beach. PBC General Meeting

**August 7, 8, 9, & 10**, times TBA, Fairchild Tropical Garden, Miami. Cycad '99 (Fifth Interna-

*(Continued on page 14)*

## 06 JAN 99 FREEZE EVENT REPORT FROM TAMPA, NORTHWEST HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY, FL USA USDA ZONE 9B

By Jerald Crawford

The following freeze report is for the cold weather event of 05 JAN 99 - 06 JAN 99. Weather recording station is a Davis Instruments Weather Monitor II with a computer interface. Temperature humidity sensor is mounted 8 feet off the ground in my back yard. Wind reports are from wind sensors mounted about 7 feet above the peak of my roof with no vegetative or other obstructions interfering with wind flow. All temperature reports are in degrees F and times at Eastern Standard time (24 hour format).

The night of 04-05 JAN 99, the temperature hit 35.1 for a low at 07:45. With a steady northwest wind of about 5 miles an hour with gusts into the teens the temperature rose to only 45.5 at 14:15 on 05 JAN 99. Since I moved to Tampa in NOV 92, this was the coldest daily maximum that I have recorded. Skies were party to mostly cloudy on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

Skies cleared off later in the afternoon on the 5<sup>th</sup> setting us up for a radiational cooling event. Winds did remain a factor as they were a steady 2-4 miles an hour during the night and early morning. The dew point began a steady slide all evening and was in the middle 20's all night. The lowest dew point occurred at 06:15 on the 6<sup>th</sup> with a reading of 23.1. The winds may have kept the temperature up several degrees from what it may have been if the winds were calm.

At 01:30 on 06 JAN 99, the thermometer reached 32.0. It reached 30.0 degrees at 04:15 and the low of 29.3 at 06:15. This was also the occurrence time of the minimum dew point. There was a light frost as well. The temperature rose to 30.00 at 08:15 and 32.0 at 08:45 under clear skies. The maximum temperature was 61.1 at 15:00. We did *fall to* 39.8 at 23:00 before a slow rise began overnight.

Palm Damage Report noted on Saturday, 09 JAN 99 and updated as of Wednesday, 20 JAN 99

**Palms with** a rating of Zone 10A or greater are reported. All Zone 9B palms were undamaged except where noted. Size is overall height from ground to the top of the leaves. All palms are planted in the ground unless otherwise noted. All palms were in open areas unless otherwise indicated.

*(The tables containing the freeze data are on pages 7 and 8. The first box gives the palm species or cultivar and its recommended USDA zone. The second box lists the size; the third, how protected. Fourth and fifth boxes provide location and the observed damage several weeks later. —Ed.)*

|   |     |                                 |   |   |
|---|-----|---------------------------------|---|---|
| Beccariophoenix madagascariensis (10B?) | 2'  | completely covered              | north side of house under eaves             | 50% leaf burn   |
|   | 2'  | completely covered              | north side of house under eaves             | no damage   |
| Chameadorea elegans (10B) - two plants  | 5'  | not protected                   | north side of house under eaves             | no damage   |
| Wodyetia bifurcata (10A)                | 14' | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking                                | 10% leaf burn on horizontal surfaces  |
| Caryota mitis (10B) - two clusters      | 10' | not protected                   | west side of house next to wall             | 10% leaf burn, especially on the tallest growth above roof line – cosmetic only   |
| Latania loddigesii (10B)                | 4'  | completely covered              | back yard                                   | no damage   |
| Dypsis lutescens (10B)                  | 3'  | bases wrapped                   | south side of house under coconuts          | Slight browning of a few leaf tips 2 weeks  |
| Hyophorbe verschaffeltii (10B)          | 6'  | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking                                | 50% leaf burn, especially horizontal leaves   |
| Hyophorbe verschaffeltii (10B)          | 6'  | mummy wrapped except for leaves | in pot on open deck                         | 80% leaf burn including spear leaf, new damaged spear leaf opened within 2 weeks  |
|   | 16' | mummy wrapped except for leaves | south side, next to house                   | 50% leaf burn, especially on horizontal leave and above roof line. Growing well.  |
| Cocos nucifera/green (10B)              | 8'  | mummy wrapped except for leaves | back yard                                   | 90% leaf burn, especially on horizontal leaves. All leaves except spear leaf dead. Continuing to grow well  |
| Cocos nucifera/yellow (10B)             | 8'  | mummy wrapped except for leaves | south side, next to house                   | 10% leaf burn, where leaves were above the roof line. Growing well  |
| Phoenix roebelenii (10A)                | 4'  | not protected                   | south side between two coconuts             | no damage   |
| Bismarckia nobilis/silver (10A)         | 8'  | not protected                   | back yard about 10' from temperature sensor | 75% leaf burn. Note that this palm is identical in appearance to my other Bismarckia which had relatively little damage. This one has always been much more cold-sensitive. |

| Palm/Cultivar (USDA ZONE)                      | Size | How Protected                   | Location             | Damage  |
|--|------|---------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Adonidia (formerly Veitchia) merrillii (10B)   | 8'   | mummy-wrapped except for leaves | west side of house   | 90% leaf burn except where covered by blankets, damaged spear leaf opening 2 weeks later.           |
| Bismarckia nobilis/silver (10A)                | 8'   | not protected                   | west of house        | 10% leaf tip burn, especially of horizontal leaves  |
| Howea forsteriana (9B)                         | 2'   | base wrapped                    | northwest front yard | older horizontal leaves discolored and died 2 weeks later. Newer leaves and spear leaf growing fine |
| Dypsis (formerly Neodypsis) decaryi (10B)      | 9'   | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking         | Occasional leaf tip burn noted 2 weeks later-cosmetic damage only                                   |
| Dypsis (formerly Neodypsis) leptocheilos (10B) | 8'   | mummy wrapped except for leaves | north parking        | 80% leaf burn except where covered  |
| Archontophoenix alexandrae (10B)               | 8'   | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking         | 25% leaf burn, new spear leaf opened within 2 weeks without damage                                  |
| Roystonea regia (10A)                          | 16'  | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking         | 25% leaf burn, especially lower, older leaves   |
| Ravenea rivularis (10A)                        | 9'   | not protected                   | west parking         | 50% leaf burn, especially tips  |

| Palm/Cultivar (USDA ZONE)                     | Size | How Protected                   | Location                                    | Damage  |
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| Archontophoe-nix alexandrae (10B)             | 8'   | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking                                | 25% leaf burn, new spear leaf opened within 2 weeks without damage  |
| Roystonea regia (10A)                         | 16'  | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking                                | 25% leaf burn, especially lower, older leaves   |
| Ravenea rivularis (10A)                       | 9'   | not protected                   | west parking                                | 50% leaf burn, especially tips  |
| Hyophorbe vershaffeltii (10B)                 | 6'   | mummy wrapped except for leaves | west parking                                | 50% leaf burn, especially horizontal leaves   |
| Hyophorbe vershaffeltii (10B)                 | 6'   | mummy wrapped except for leaves | in pot on open deck                         | 80% leaf burn including spear leaf, new damaged spear leaf opened within 2 weeks  |
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## Member Profile

### Francisco Bermudez

**By Mike Dahme**

Visiting Puerto Rico again recently, I was able to pass some more time in company of Francisco Bermudez, a donor to the chapter seedbank, and CFPACS member, first met in Miami in '95. He had shown me his palm plantings on an earlier visit, which are different from those of most of us, not just because his climate permits completely tropical plantings. Instead, it is because his house lot [in a gated community] is so small that the land available for planting would have to be measured in square inches to sound like a normal yard.

Rather than abstaining from a palm hobby, however, he

*It's all uphill or downhill (which ever way you want to look at it) for Francisco Bermudez of Guaynabo, Puerto Rico. Living in a condo, Francisco has been forced—by the zeal of maintenance workers—to plant palms only where lawnmowers and string trimmers will not go. In this case, it means steep “waste” areas in the landscaping. In the upper photo, Francisco stands at the top of the slope. In the lower photo, he looks downslope beyond the chainlink fence.*



has dealt with this adversity by adopting public grounds, in one case an “island” of significant size [and elevation over roadway] between an exit ramp, an urban expressway, and the overpass road and—later—the community park of his condo association. It's been a few years since I saw the highway plantings and I no longer recall the number of species he'd set out, but I remember vividly the need to more sharply across the ramp road lest we be rendered road-kill. Because this piece of urban greenscape was so high [20 or 30 feet over the freeway] lack of water, when rainfall wasn't regular, was a real problem for him there.

Another was the municipal [San Juan] lawn maintenance crews, for ever though Francisco had permission of sorts for his activity that didn't mean much to the men holding the string trimmers who, often enough, ignored the piles of rocks that he constructed around his plantings. The final, and insurmountable, problem with this location, however, was theft of many of those palms that succeeded to the point of standing out.

So these days he contents himself with planting in the park that is commonly-owned by the homeowners of his community. Since this is only a block from the house [and cars aren't traveling 60 mph], this site has obvious advantages over the former, but his palm-planting efforts are not without travails. The lawn-maintenance workers remain a threat, and because the condo association board is continually creating and recreating pathways, tennis courts, ball parks, walls, etc., no place is really safe in the long run. So Francisco has resorted to using the steep slope of one of the park's boundaries for his plantings. [A parallel to the only survival areas, outside of national parks, remaining to the island's mountain palm, *Prestoea acuminata*.]

*(Continued on page 27)*

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**TO JOIN CFPACS,  
SEND CHECK FOR  
\$10.00 MADE OUT TO  
CFPACS. MAIL TO  
MEMBERSHIP CHAIR  
AT THE ADDRESS ON  
THE LEFT**

The CFPACS seedbank: Mike Dahme P.O. Box 89, Grant, FL 32949, (407) 724-8417  
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## Another Member

### PANYA RAKTAENGAM

By Mike Dahme

*[See photos on opposite page.]*

Another IPS member toiling in obscurity and, as with Francisco, in the absence of a local chapter is Panya Raktaengam of Phu Ket City, southern Thailand. Although the recent IPS biennial was entirely within Thailand for two weeks, and the post-tour on Phu Ket for three days, I don't think that any of the Thai IPS members, aside from host Kampon Tansacha, participated. Certainly Panya didn't, and we only

"discovered" him by serendipity. On the last day of the post-tour, with no activities scheduled, two of us were being shown the sights by island resident Tim, one of which is the beautiful hilltop—at 285 meters, second tallest in the city—Tunk-ku Restaurant owned by Tira Tiramard, from which not only can be seen the entire south coast, but also numerous "white elephant" palm plantings [*Kerriodoxa elegans*] as well.

On our descent, Tim drove through a commercial street at the hill's base, an older, non-touristy part of town, when Mark Wuschke and I noticed a yard that was utterly bristling with palms, no better way to describe it. Frantic shouts of "stop" [which Tim was to become accustomed to hearing] obtained the desired result, and thus we met Panya, who lives in the house with extended family and operates a small retail nursery business adjacent.

An hour later, after a tour of the perhaps one-third acre yard, it was clear that, with the exception of Kampon Tansacha himself, we had chanced into the person with the most exotic species of palms in all of Thailand, many, many hundreds of them.

And all were in buckets, terracotta pots of all sizes [no ugly plastic pots in Thailand that we noticed].

It wasn't clear what his plans were for them—there

*(Continued on page 27)*



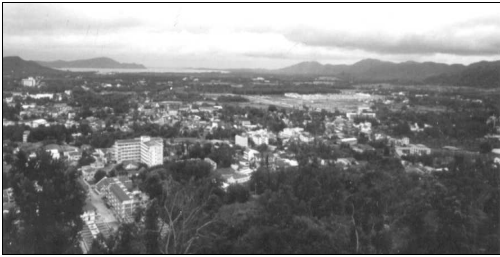
*Left in the picture is a *Sabal mexicana* planted in 1927 at the USDA in Mayaguez, PR. Now the sole survivor of the three planted that year, the hurricane actually helped this palm by destroying several *Phoenix canariensis* whose crowns had enveloped the Sabals.*

*Below, the effects of Hurricane Georges in Sept., 1998 are still apparent in the following January. Wind speed was greatest in the mountains of the Puerto Rican central cordillera, where tornadic action within the hurricane occurred.*

*Photos and comments by Mike Dahme*



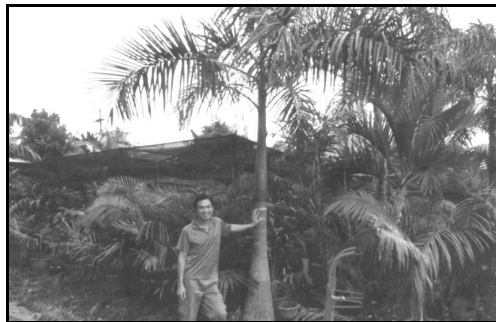
## SOUVENIRS OF THAILAND: GLIMPSES AFTER THE BIENNIAL



*Above, view of Phu Ket City on the Thai resort island of Phu Ket in the Gulf of Thailand, looking south toward the coastline. Taken from the terrace of the Tunk-ku Restaurant.*



*Right, restaurant owner Tira Tiramard (with well-known Brevard County bon-vivant) standing before one of the many Kerriodoxa on the grounds. Reportedly, he joined the IPS immediately upon hearing about it, driving to the airport to get the application form from departing members.*



*Panya Raktaengam, left, the only IPS member resident on Phu Ket, here at the rear of his house lot.*

*Below are the two sides of Panya's front yard. The species may be different from those in Central Florida but the, um, look is familiar: palms on 2-foot centers. (Neighbors don't always approve. Too bad.)*



## PALM & CYCAD NAMES

Compiled by  
Cindy Broome

*Ceratozamia norstogii*—  
This cycad named after  
Knut Norstog, contem-  
porary American re-  
search worker specializ-  
ing in cycads.

*Encephalartos cupidus*—  
This name means  
“desirable and attrac-  
tive,” in reference to its  
being sought after by  
poachers.

*Chamaedorea robertii*—  
This palm honors Don  
Hodel’s son, co-  
collector of this type of  
palm.

*Dypsis prestoniana*—This  
palm’s name honors Mr.  
Paul Preston, President  
of McDonald’s Restau-  
rants Ltd. (UK), who  
sponsored the 4-year  
*Palms of Madagascar* fel-  
lowship.

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## PACSOFCALNDAR

(Continued from page 5)

tional Conference on  
Cycad Biology). Talks  
on a wide variety of top-  
ics presented by Florida  
and international cycad  
enthusiasts and profes-  
sionals. Talks will cover  
topics such as horticul-  
ture, conservation, and  
biology. There will also be tours  
of Fairchild’s and Mont-  
gomery’s cycad collec-  
tions.

**August 28**, time and  
location TBA. SWF  
General Meeting

**September 4**, time and  
location TBA. PBC an-  
nual picnic

**September 11 & 12**, time  
and location TBA. Cen-  
tral Florida Palm & Cy-  
cad Society

**September 23**, 7:30 PM,  
Ft Lauderdale. BC Gen-  
eral Meeting

**October 4**, 7:30 PM,  
Fairchild Tropical Gar-  
den, Miami. SF General  
Meeting

**October 6**, 7:30 PM,  
Mounts Botanical Gar-  
den, West Palm Beach.

PBC General Meeting  
**October 9 & 10**, 9:00

AM - 4:00 PM, Mori-  
kami Park, Delray  
Beach. PBC Fall Sale

**October 23**, time and  
location TBA. SWF  
General Meeting

**November 3**, 7:30 PM,  
Mounts Botanical Gar-  
den, West Palm Beach.

## McKee Restoration Begun

By John Kennedy

According to the Spring newsletter of Indian River Land Trust and McKee Botanical Garden, sitework and building construction were to begin in April in Vero Beach. A leading tourist attraction in the 1930s and 40s, McKee Jungle Garden closed not long after Disney World and I-95 helped change the itineraries of Florida winter visitors. Now, after some years of fund-raising by the Indian River Land Trust, which owns the property, the first major changes are in the making that will eventually see—in a year or so?—a fully-fledged botanical garden open to the public.

The 8-month initial stage involves making roadways, parking, trails, waterways, installing irrigation, and some basic landscaping. This follows clearing of Australian pines (hurray!) and selective removal of some Chinese Fan Palms (!) to facilitate truck and equipment access. Later in the year, depending on funding (especially a major State grant), visitor amenities will be added.

The CFPACS toured McKee, then a virtual jungle, in March, 1994. We hope that Vero Beach residents and snowbirds will be able in the future to visit McKee Botanical Garden to see the many species of palms that may be grown in the area.

Janet Alford, the executive director (and CFPACS member), last summer preserved the fruit of McKee’s big *Acrocomia aculeata* on U.S. 1 so that the chapter could use the seed in fund-raising. (Only a year later: the seed will not have germinated yet—at least another year?—in Australia, New Zealand, and other exotic places to which it was sent.)

## ELECTION RESULTS

Thirty-five ballots were returned by the stipulated date, April 15, with results as follows:

For President: Neil Yorio 35

For East VP: Jim Crouse 34

For Central VP: Eric Schmidt 34

For West VP: John Bishock 32

For Treasurer: Dave Besst 33

For Secretary: Chuck Grieneisen 34

There was one write-in vote each for Treasurer and West VP.

Thus, the persons listed were duly elected to serve as officers of the CFPACS for 1999.

(Ballots were counted by Mike Dahme. Dave Besst subsequently resigned. See President’s message on page 15.—Ed.)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**We're half** way through the year already, and there is lots of stuff going on with the CFPACS. Those who managed to challenge the impending weather threat during the March 13 meeting were treated to three wonderful gardens, summarized in a meeting review in this issue. The board meeting last quarter was eventful and items addressed include production of a tri-fold membership brochure (something we have been trying to get going since the re-organization of the chapter), and finalized chapter by-laws. Additionally, be looking forward to our own web site managed by Jody Haynes of the South Florida Palm Society and web master for PACSOF. Finally, I would like to personally thank Janice Broda of the Florida Native Plant Society for her very interesting and useful suggestions regarding handling of membership for the chapter.

**Another noteworthy** happening is the appointment of a new treasurer. Mike Merritt of Geneva will be replacing Dave Besst as treasurer for the society. Dave has served the chapter very well and it is with great sincerity that his efforts are appreciated. Dave has been kindly training and transferring the duties over to Mike recently, and I have no doubt that Mike will handle the job nicely.

Be looking forward to the PACSOF PalmFest event during the weekend of September 4 and 5 (Labor Day Weekend). This will be hosted by the Palm Beach Chapter and certainly be not only a great event, but also a historic one, as it is the first ever meeting involving all Florida palm society chapters.

**As always**, I personally invite anyone interested to participate in the board meetings that precede the first garden tour of each quarterly society gathering. If anyone has ideas, actions for the board's consideration, or just curious about what we do, please attend. If you have any questions regarding the functioning of the CFPACS, please feel free to contact me.

—Neil Yorio

## MARCH BOARD MEETING

*(Continued from page 3)*

The issue of installing a new treasurer was discussed and Mike Dahme (Nominations chair) had approached Mike Merritt of his interest in the post. A motion was made by the board to place Mike Merritt to replace Dave Besst as treasurer. The motion was unanimously passed. Dave will begin transfer of duties to Mike at a date convenient for both of them. Suggestions were made to get ourselves on the internet website of PACSOF, at the request of Mr. Jody Haynes, webmaster of the PACSOF site. Neil and John K. volunteered to offer input to Jody to get this up and running.

Discussion about CFPACS involvement at the Leu Gardens spring sale were carried out by the board. Questions about the usefulness of the sale were brought up. It was suggested that even though it is not as monetarily fruitful as other sales or the seed-bank revenue, it was a great method to promote the society and increase membership. It was motioned and passed to continue involvement in this sale. Finally, Janice Broda of the Florida native plant society addressed the group on ways to improve membership for our chapter. This was an extremely informative information exchange and she had many useful suggestions for the group, many of which will go directly into the generation of the membership flyer.

Minutes Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Neil Yorio, President Central Florida Palm and Cycad Society

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Palms in the Southeast (not in Florida): Excerpts from *The Palm Reader*

### **Compiled by the Members of The Southeastern Palm & Exotic Plant Society**

(Boldface emphasis in the original. Quoted by permission; printed from <http://ces.uga.edu/Agriculture/horticulture/Palmreader.html>)

This is a booklet about selecting and growing palms outdoors in the southeastern United States. The plants described in this book are well-adapted to growing conditions in what is traditionally known as “the Deep South.” In horticultural terms, the Deep South can be described as an area roughly coinciding with those parts of the USDA Hardiness Zones 7 and 8 that lie between Chesapeake Bay and the Mississippi River. This area includes the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi (except for some mountainous areas), and most of the Florida panhandle.

\* \* \*

### **Some Myths About Palms**

**“Palms Are Tropical Plants.”** The truth is that *most* palms are tropical or subtropical. But there are somewhere between 50 and 100 palm species that will take temperatures below 20° F. A few will handle temperatures below 0° F.

**“Palms Are Too Delicate for Ordinary Landscapes.”** The truth is that palms are tough plants. In coastal areas of the Southeast, cabbage palms are often the only trees left standing after hurricanes. In Nagasaki, Japan, palms not at “ground zero” started into new growth a few weeks after the city was leveled.

**“Palms Are ‘Exotic Plants.’”** The truth is that palms are native to coastal plain and lower piedmont of the Southeast. Palms are native. Boxwoods, evergreen azaleas, and daffodils are exotic.

**“Palms Don’t Have Showy Flowers.”** The truth is that *some* palms have very showy flowers. Two good examples are the native dwarf blue palmetto and the Blue Hesper Palm (*Brabea armata*).

**“Palms Will Make My Yard Look Like Carmen Miranda’s.”** Not unless you want it to look that way. Palms can be found in courtyard gardens in Savannah and Charleston, in somber temple gardens in China and Japan, in dozens of famous gardens in the British

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## CYCAD WATERING: THE THIRD VARIABLE

By Tom Broome

The quality of your water source is just as important as the soil and the fertilizer used in growing your cycads. If you grow cycads in containers, you can change the brand of fertilizer, or change the soil mix, but many times you are stuck with the available water supply. In fact, when choosing a location for a nursery, after, “Is this land prone to flooding,” your second question should be, “What is the quality of the available water source?” I have seen two nursery owners buy the same seedlings, use the same soil and fertilizer, but get totally different results. These two nurseries were only two miles apart, but the water supply was different.

**Water can** contain elements such as iron, sulfur, calcium, magnesium, sodium, and chlorine, as well as carbonates and bicarbonates. If concentrations of any of these chemicals are too high, there can be trouble. Compensating for these chemicals can be expensive and time consuming.

**If your** water contains sulfur, the pH can get on the acidic side. If so, add some dolomite. If you have alkaline water, which is very common in south Florida, add some sulfur to the soil. Iron doesn’t really hurt your plants that much, but the build-up will stain the leaves badly. There are various chemicals that can be used in an injector system to dissolve iron buildup. If drip irrigation can be used, at least then the leaves won’t be stained. If your water contains high concentrations of calcium, magnesium, sodium, or chlorine, things can get a little more complicated. These elements are salts that can cause many different problems. Build up of salts can bum roots and kill your plants. Before discussing remedies, a few things need to be explained.

**Dissolved nutrients** in the soil, fertilizers, and certain chemicals, such as sodium, in the water are all types of soluble salts. Water is attracted from areas of low salt concentration, to areas of high concentration. The concentration of salts in the root system of plants causes water to move from the soil into roots. When salt levels become so high in the soil, water can be drawn out of the roots. Salts can be absorbed by roots as well as by leaves. If these salts accumulate to toxic levels, roots and leaves can be burned. High levels of sodium can cause other nutrients such as calcium and

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## EXCERPTS FROM THE PALM READER

(Continued from page 16)

Isles, and many other kinds of gardens around the world. Palms are adaptable to any style of landscaping.

\* \* \* \* \*

### What do palms want?

The short answer to this question is easy: **Palms want to be in Florida.** The long answer to this question takes a little more time. Just why are palms so happy in Florida, after all? Well, for starters, **it's plenty hot in Florida**, which is very much to the liking of most (though not all) palms. Second, **Florida gets a lot of rain during the hot part of the summer**, which is when many palms are in their most active period of growth. Third, much of Florida is covered with **sandy soil underlain by limestone**, both of which are conducive to the growth of many palms. Last, but certainly not least, is that **temperatures in Florida do not go below zero degrees Fahrenheit.** *(The emphasis, the boldface, is in the original. —Ed.)*

*The complete document runs to 15 printed pages and provides basic information on palm botany and ecology, planting instructions, weathering the winter, cultivation and watering, palms in the landscape, etc. There is a discussion of areas within the Deep South and what palms may be planted (or not) in each. A list of suitable palms, with pictures and good details, includes Rhipidophyllum hystrix, Sabal minor, Trachycarpus fortunei, Sabal palmetto, Chamaerops humilis, Butia capitata, Serenoa repens, Washingtonia filifera. Other, related palm species and untested cold-hardy palms (Nannorhops ritchiana, Trithrinax campestris and T. acanthacoma) also are mentioned. Sources for more information and the address of the Florida First Coast chapter and the Gulf Coast chapter are given. Everything here is intelligently done and helpful to those first yielding to the lure of palms and wondering how on earth to find out more.*

## CYCAD WATERING

(Continued from page 16)

magnesium to be leached out, causing nutrient deficiencies in plants. If your water contains high salt levels, drip irrigation can at least keep the salts off the leaves. Newly emerging leaves on cycads are particularly vulnerable to burning.

**As you** water your plants, nutrients and salts are being leached out. As you fertilize, salts are being added. The secret to all this is the balance between the adding and leaching of salts. Soils with coarse materials in them, such as pine bark, can cause water to flow through too quickly. Soils with fine textured materials hold water longer, helping the leaching process. This is one reason why I suggested the soil mix in a previous issue. If salt levels are high in your water, another way to compensate is by using a time release fertilizer. That is why using Nutricote can be beneficial. Many people like to keep cycads on the dry side when it comes to watering. When salt levels are high in the soil, the reduced water levels intensify the effects of salts on roots. Watering for shorter periods of time, but on a regular basis, will help with this. If salts are not being leached out properly from normal watering, once-in-a-while watering for two or three times longer than normal may be necessary.

**While we** are on the subject of water, I have noticed that one of the most common ways that people kill cycads is by rotting the stems or roots. Several years ago, I was talking to Larry Bussell about our native *Zamia* (*Z. integrifolia*), and he told me what would be the single most important clue in growing cycads: "Zamia likes to be uniformly moist, not dry, not wet." I have noticed at more xeric habitats that the apex of the plant was one foot below the surface. The soil was almost pure sand. The wetness of the rain never really reached the stem, but the capillary action of the sand drew down a uniform moistness. At the same time, at that level the sun never dried the soil completely. I have also observed *Zamias* growing in marginally wet areas. The bottom of the tuber would rot, harden off, then pull the apex below ground level. As the plant grew above the surface, the process would repeat. Even though you can't generalize about all cycads, if you keep your growing medium "uniformly moist," I think most cycads would benefit.

**Here in** Florida, growers of *Zamia integrifolia* have noticed that plants grown in full sun have a tendency to have curled leaflets. In the shade these same plants will have flattened out, out attractive leaflets. When the

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Now that we are a palm and cycad society, there have been many new cycad people joining our group. As with anyone who is new to something, these people are looking for information on cycads. They are

finding out that there is not a lot of good information on cycads available. For this reason we are starting this new column.

If you have a question about cycad culture of any kind, whether it be hand pollination of cones, or just a simple question on fertilizers send it in. I will only use first names after the questions, so please don't be afraid to send one in.

—Tom Broome

*Should Dioon seeds get any cold treatment (put in the refrigerator for 3-4 months) or any other treatment for better germination? I ordered some (Dioon edule and D. spinulosum) and got 65-75% germination from just planting them. (which I was happy with) I also got some local (fresh) Cycas revoluta seeds and just planted them. (after taking the sarcolemma; that reddish outer layer off) and only got 15-20%.*

Chuck

Chuck,

There is a good reason why the *Dioon* seeds germinated fairly well, while the sago seeds did not. The secret to cycad seed germination is the holding period from the time the seeds drop from the cone, and when you should plant them. Each genus and even some species within a genus will have a different holding period. What happens is, when the seeds drop from the cone the embryo inside may not be full size yet. If you plant the seed before the embryo is full size you have a chance of rotting the seed. *Dioon* seeds are held in the cone for a year or longer. This means that there will be hardly any waiting time at all. I have known of *Dioon spinulosum* seeds that germinated while they were still in the cone. Sago seeds (*Cycas revoluta*) are held for around six months in the cone. This means there is a waiting period. Many times if you plant a sago seed too early, it will absorb moisture and split open as if it is going to germinate, and then it dies. Usually in Florida, sago seeds will drop around Christmas, and the time to plant is around May or June. Your results should have

## ASK TOM ABOUT CYCADS By Tom Broome

been more like 80% germination on those seeds. I would bet you just planted them too early.

If you are not sure about when to plant a seed, you should cut one seed open, and look for an embryo. It will start in the center of the seed, and grow towards the

outside. If the embryo is in the center, then you will need to wait at least a couple of months. You should see a hollowed out area in the middle of the seed with an embryo that is attached to a suspensor. This is a thread like "umbilical cord" that coils up and compresses as the embryo grows. When the embryo is full length, it is time to plant your seeds.

You asked about refrigeration of seeds. If you have a seed that needs to be stored for a long time, people have found that storing them in the refrigerator will help keep a higher viability. Usually a good place would be inside an air-conditioned house, in a container that will let the seeds have some sort of airflow. If stored in a plastic bag, the seeds can get a fungus and rot. There is no particular need, however to give these seeds a cold period like some of the northern trees might need. I hope this helps.

*What is the food, diet, of the beetle that pollinates the Coontie? What do they feed on during the year?*

Steven

Steven,

There are two insects that are known for the pollination of coontie cones. They are a weevil, *Rhopalotria slosoni*, and a beetle, *Pharaxonotha zamiae*. The insects are eating the starch rich pollen, found in the male cones. After the *Zamia* pollen has been eaten, the beetle feeds on pollen from

other plants during the year. These beetles have been found on *Serenoa repens*, and other palms in Florida. I have found these insects in the male cones of other, non-native *Zamias* that produce pollen at different times of the year. The weevil on the other hand will go dormant in the cone material. It has been known to exist in the old, decayed cone material for as long as a few years.

This question is a little out of the scope of the experiments that I have performed myself. I try to

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## LOOKING AT PALMS IN NORTHERN INDIA: NOT FOR THE FAINT OF HEART

By René Coativy



For some time I had been reading, not without some wistfulness, Martin Gibbons' travelling reports from throughout the world. Then one day I read about his plan to take 12 fellow intrepid travellers to share the experience of northeastern India, and, though I was about to leave for Costa Rica, I could not wait to sign up. While I was gone I received a message to immediately return my wife's phone call, and thus learned that our home on the Riviera had been burgled and [more importantly] that we'd been accepted to travel to India with Martin. Two problems at once, I thought, and reminded Dominique of her terror when confronted with such as a mouse or a spider, as well as of her allergy to any kind of bacterial agent, but found her decision was to make the trip, so let us go!

As departure was from London, we arrived one day early to fulfill a long-time dream to visit Kew Gardens. On a beautiful sunny day [yes it happens in London on occasion, even as early as April], we took the subway and after a nice little walk we were there to enjoy this unique and wonderful garden amid

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*Above, left, Trachycarpus martianus at Nokhalikai Falls, Cherrapunjee (1600m elevation). Above, right, a row of Phoenix rupicola in Darjeeling. Below, a wild remnant of Wallichia densiflora in Kalimpong, Sikkim.*



## RENÉ IN INDIA

(Continued from page 19)

the large metropolis. Not only the palms of the palm-house, with too many species to name [including a few I had never seen before, such as *Ceroxylon quindiuense* and *Chamaedorea cataractarum* in particular], but the old *Encephalartos alstenteni* in its wooden box. I also admired the *E. ferox* and *E. villosus* nearby. I had seen all of these species at the Villa es Cedres in Saint Jean Cap Ferrat, but they had not that old charm! After admiring the Anne Marie North paintings, some of them featuring landscapes of the areas we were going to, we left with unforgettable memories.

**The next** morning, Wednesday April 16, we were at Heathrow Airport Terminal 3 by 8 30, on time and a bit anxious to meet our, for the most part, unknown travelling companions. Check in was at the Air Canada counter to board a Royal Jordanian flight to Berlin, from there to Amman and its mundane airport. Departure was 90 minutes late and it was a long flight to Calcutta that we finally reached at 7 AM local time.

[Dominique was upset because men were served first on the plane, as it was to be throughout the trip - actually, I did like it!] The ramshackle international Calcutta airport calls the tune but after a rather efficient luggage delivery and customs clearance we exited through a funny back door past our first pathetic, but very professional, group of beggars to our air-conditioned bus. [Our guides Sanjoy and Bost tried hard to keep them away.] The morning weather although hot is very pleasant, and on the way to the city we saw beautiful trees, a lot of jacarandas, and palms, mostly coconuts and what look like *Phoenix sylvestris* growing in between dilapidated buildings.

Getting closer to the city we hit the Calcutta slums: among all that poverty and distress I was amazed to see how the women are so neat and well-dressed in colorful saris and, let us say it ...so beautiful!

**After our** check-in in an old English style [but Calcutta-like!] guest house, we were happy to cross the street [at our own risk] to a modern and nice restaurant in a good-looking hotel. [I felt we were "budget travellers" to use that guest house across the street.] We were on our way to the botanical garden where we were welcomed by Dr.

Pikey and proceeded first to the *Ficus religiosa* that covers 8,5 acres after some 240 years of life. The original trunk is 4 yards in circumference and the plant has some 600 additional trunks around it. There used to be a palm on that spot before the ficus predated it as an epiphit to start and then killed it outright! A coconut vendor seated nearby was quickly ousted by our guide for an impromptu talk about the origins of the garden, which Dr. Pikey said was set-up in 1786 by the English. Over 100 palm species had been introduced at one time, but sadly the development and the maintenance of the botanical garden are not the priorities of modern day Calcutta. Most palms and trees are old specimens and there are few to none new introductions.

Nevertheless, one can see *Acoelorrhaphe wrightii*, *Arenga sp.*, *Calamus sp.*, *Caryota sp.*, *Corypha utan*, *Elaeis guineensis*, *Cocos nucifera*, *Dypsis lutescens* and *madagascariensis*, *Hyphaene thebaica*, *Latania sp.*, *Livistona jenkinsiana*, *Ptychosperma sp.*, *Phoenix rupicola* [maybe an hybrid], *Roystonea regia*, and *Veitchia merillii* among others. The few *L. jenkinsiana* were the focus of our attention as none of us except Martin had seen it previously.

However, they were too tall to appreciate the crown characteristics and seed-wise we left with only a few *Hyphaene thebaica* seeds that wouldn't germinate.

**The a/c** bus was soon back among the traffic and cows en-route to the city center and an interesting tour of the old colonial buildings. By dinner time some of us were a bit nervous to discover that when it comes to the menu trust is essential, but our group leader as always led the way with a healthy appetite! Everyone was still alive and well on the following morning, April 18th, a testament to the chef. That day was a Muslim holiday and there was no traffic and nobody in the streets except the white-dressed Muslim devotees. The contrast with the previous day was amazing, and we reached the national airport, and our flight to Gawahati [and from there our final destination Bagdogra] in no time. Nothing is straightforward in India, however, and we began to understand how it does not work! The plane

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## CYCAD WATERING

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newly emerging leaflets are soft, they will curl to reduce the amount of surface facing the sun, thus reducing the loss of water in the leaflets. I have experimented with severed plants and found that extra watering while new leaves are still soft will flatten out the leaflets. Once the leaflets harden off, they will stay flattened. This procedure will make your plants a lot more attractive.

**Sometimes I** will have plants that push new leaves, but these leaves will abort before reaching full size. In particular, I had a group of *Cycas micholitzii* in my hot greenhouse that would abort leaves on a regular basis. Last summer, I noticed they were all pushing new leaves again. One of them was pushing two leaves, and the first leaf to emerge was already half shriveled. I brought the plant into the shade and started watering it twice a day. The bad leaf started growing and hardened up beautifully, except for the few leaflets that were already damaged. After repeating this procedure on the

rest of the plants, all leaves came up and hardened off normally. Since then, I have had six species of cycads try to do the same thing, and I have saved all the leaf flushes after repeating this procedure. I have noticed that plants growing in a well-drained potting mix have a tendency to abort leaves more often. Sometimes, the aborting of leaves can be a sign of a reduced root system due to fungus, or a high water table, if the plant is grown in the ground.

**This is** the last article of a series of three. Once you have mastered the balance of soil, fertilizer, and water, everything else in culture becomes easier. There are many ways to speed up growth and to produce more seeds. Some of these techniques may not work for you unless this balance can be maintained. Keep in mind that certain soil components and fertilizer brands may not be available in all parts of the country. Also, climate can alter individual results, but the basics of these three articles should help all growers. If you are not all that concerned with fast growth, you will at least lose fewer plants. In many cases, some of these cycads are hard to find. At least by reducing the mortality rate of

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## RENÉ IN INDIA

(Continued from page 20)

seemed in good shape and once on board, to my surprise, I noticed that the average Indian weighed about 100 lbs more than his counterpart on the streets of Calcutta! It proved to be hot and sticky at Gawahati airport where we waited an extra two hours for our next flight to Bagdogra. To make it even funnier I'll tell you that Bagdogra is much closer to Calcutta than Gawahati! Finally we arrived and our host's son Mahendra welcomed us at the airport. Soon we were on the road and once past the Hell-lookalike city of Saliguri we started climbing a beautiful road through a monkey-inhabited forest. After a while it was time for a picnic along the canyon where we meet the first *Calamus erectus* and possibly *Phoenix rupicola* far away on the cliff edge. The scenery was beautiful and after a few more hours drive along the last mountainous spurs we arrived, after dark, at Kalimpong in a remake of a Michael Jackson clip "thriller" thousands of moving shadows in candle lights. Surreal, fantastic and frightening! After a mile or so of this surrealistic superproduction we reach the Ganesh Guest House with the generator on to produce the electricity at least [but we do not yet know in the main, building only]. The Pradhan family's welcome at the Orchid

Retreat was extremely warm and the owner-hostess HONEY delicious. It is a great place to forget the modern world's frustrations.

**Saturday April 19.** After an exquisite night in our bungalow in the middle of the very steep garden I got up in the pre-dawn to view the sun rising over the hills. The most interesting palms in the garden were some large remnant *Caryota urens* ["himalaya"], uncleared from the original woodland, a good-sized clumping *Wallichia densiflora* and planted *Trachycarpus latisectus* and *Cycas pectinata*. Also interesting were the propagating houses for orchids, which is the major activity of the retreat. It was only 8 a.m. when we boarded the bus for Gangtok the capital of Sikkim.

**Our journey** stopped after only five minutes, however, to look at a flowering *Trachycarpus latisectus* in a private garden, and then we continued our descent through open forest, bamboos, conifers, bougainvilleas and, more amazing, many flowering epiphytic orchid species. We crossed the Tista River at the painted Sikkim gateway to discover a *Dendrocalamus gigantea* 100' high at least, at which point we found that our visas did not allow us to enter the country by this

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## RENÉ IN INDIA

(Continued from page 21)

bridge! Why make it simple when it is so easy to make it difficult seems to be the rule in India. So, no viewing of *Phoenix humilis* colonies for the moment! We return over the bamboo bridge through the dramatic scenery to Rangpo Checkpoint where our visas were updated to enable crossing the bridge!

**Along the** way we can see *P rupicola* growing on sheer cliffs above the river. At the garden of the police station in Rangpo we admired two large cultivated cycads, *C pectinata*, and the roadside is lined with bougainvilleas of various colors. Soon after we stop for an hour among the local crowd to allow caterpillar tractors to reconstruct the road, which had fallen down into the river the night before! Through rugged scenery we entered Gangtok, the Sikkim capital, and the Tibet Hotel, which belongs to the Dalai Lama. Good news, for we were served an excellent lunch. After a visit to the "flower exhibit center", featuring orchids, mostly *Cymbidium*, we were on our way back on the dusty road. After a long drive we crossed at last the bamboo bridge to finally see the profile of *Phoenix humilis* covering the higher hills in the approaching darkness. After further examination - by flashlight - we decide to return sometime on the following Monday.

Oddly enough, in most parts of Sikkim the roadsides are covered with thought-provoking slogans, such as "lost time is never gained again!"

**Sunday April 20.** Bed tea at 6 a.m.! Breakfast at 7:15, that's the custom of Sikkim, no doubt a legacy of the English colonials? At 8:30 the three sturdy jeeps [that were built under Soviet licence] were ready to go. Why jeeps? Simply because the road is too narrow to allow buses of any kind. The weather was sunny and quite warm, though Kalimpong is at 1500 meters [5000'] elevation. We quickly stopped in front of the Bouthan royal family summer house, very modest for a king [but king of what?]. In front was a tall *Livistona jenkinsiana*. We again stopped at a little nursery at the outskirts of the city where there was a cultivated *Trachycarpus latisectus* that very much resembled *T fortunei* - which wasn't good for business! Nonetheless, the group bought all of the seedlings available just in case - \$1 each is a limited risk. Two of them are now planted in my yard in the shade

where they have been growing very slowly til now, but who knows what the future will bring?

We continued to drive all along the mountain, ever upwards towards Darjeeling. At 1800 m (6000') elevation we stopped in a dreamy spot among tea fields - did you know that the tea tree was a camellia brought illegally from China to India by a clever English smuggler? - to admire a group of mature *Phoenix rupicola* [a species I've sought for many years]. Nearby were two mature *Wallichia disticha*, one of which was in full flower and reseeding freely in the tea field. Also present were *Livistona jenkinsiana* and *Caryota urens*.

**After having** taken pictures of the women tea-leaf pickers we resumed our ascent only to get hit by a real hailstorm on our way to the Windemere Hotel in Darjeeling, where two mature *Trachycarpus latisectus*-looking palms framed the hotel entrance. There we met a group of Spanish travellers coming from Nepal and, after lunch, in a cold thick mist we explored the old English cemetery where more *T latisectus* stood as ghosts in the fog. We

then drove through hailstone-covered streets to the shopping area to buy expensive tea; in fact, far more expensive than in our own countries.

The last stop within the city was the railroad station to look at the narrow gauge rails and miniature locomotive built by the English to travel back and forth from the plains to Darjeeling. Our return led us through mountain sides covered with green tea bushes and breathtaking views until we stopped to look at *Pinanga gracilis*, *Calamus leptospadix* and *Plectocomia himalayana*. On return to our villa in Kalimpong we found the electricity off once again!

**Monday April 21** An "Off" day, but the men are already in the bus ready to go back to see the *Phoenix humilis* in daylight this time. At the city limit we saw the distant white cap of the world's third highest mountain, Kanchenjunga, some 8600 m or 28,600' high. [We'll climb that another time!] On the way by Meli-baraan we spot hundreds of *Areca catechu*, and, after a quick look at the snow-capped Hindu Kush we cross the bamboo bridge again to the first of the *P humilis* - which we found had been burnt the night before! The demographic pressure is so great that peasants are continually burning the native forest to establish new farming areas. Every night the hills

(Continued on page 23)

## CYCAD WATERING

(Continued from page 21)

your cycads, these plants can become more common.  
(Reprinted, by permission, from The Cycad Newsletter)

## Ask Tom

(Continued from page 18)

give advise from my own first hand experiences. Knut Norstog and Willie Tang are the noted researchers on this subject, and have published papers if you would like more details. I called Willie to confirm my understanding on this subject, and I would like to thank him for his help.

(Continued from page 18)

would like to thank him for his help.

## RENÉ IN INDIA

(Continued from page 22)

are ablaze with the fires. When extinguished nothing remains but the blackened stems of hundreds of *P humilis* [from which, however, soon emerge new green fronds]. Away from the blackened land a few *Calamus erectus* climbed in the pandanus.

**Further down** the river the hills are covered with thousands of *P humilis* in every phase of their life cycle. Some have stems of three meters and must be several hundred years old. Interestingly, they have very little vegetation left around them, just sparse trees to provide a light canopy. Unfortunately, no seeds were found ripe. I later bought a small seedling which I have planted in my garden: it has survived so far, but seems painfully slow, just one leaf a year at the moment! In the bright sun we returned across the bridge to look at more *Calamus erectus*, some with stems up to 5 m long. It has beautiful shiny green leaves for a palm, and they are thriving among the *Pandanus sp.*, ferns and *Bauhinias* as well as *Jacarandas* and *Erythrinas* of various colors. Lunch was already waiting when we arrived at the Morgan House Hotel, built near to a golf course. We took advantage of the afternoon to go shopping and touring Kalimpong. The

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**From:** Jody Haynes[SMTP:jlh@ICON.HMSD.UFL.EDU]  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 21, 1999 6:37 AM  
**To:** Neil Yorio  
**Subject:** palm & cycad logos

most interesting spot is undoubtedly the closed old English church and its garden with tall *Livistona jenkinsiana* and a *Phoenix sp.* [possibly *sylvestris* hybrids]. Dinner at our villa was excellent as usual, I highly recommend the Orchid Retreat if you ever visit around Kalimpong for any good or bad reason!

**Tuesday April 22** nd. 6:00 a.m., kidding, every morning little Milla, a young Indian girl from a poor family in Saliguri, awoke us with the rattling of "bed tea" cups, a good awakening indeed. Outside the mist surrounds the garden's plants; in front of our bungalow a mature *Caryota* is lit by the rising sun, but now an aside for an argument! According to our talented leader Martin, this is a *Caryota sp* "himalaya", an undescribed but distinct species and, since it is growing at higher elevation, he claims it should be hardier and resist freezes of -10°C [or 14°F] and thus thrive in ... London!! But what I see is a regular *C urens* and I have been told by the locals that the temperatures have never been below freezing in the past 50 years! I wouldn't bet a Rupee that this *C urens* is any hardier than the lowland ones.

**Outside three** jeeps were ready to go - a euphemism! One in particular concerned me somewhat for it's already steaming from the

(Continued on page 24)



*Left, that skinny little palm is Trachycarpus latisectus, Kalimpong, Sikkim. Anyone north of Orlando have one?*



*This, left, is Phoenix humilis, humble indeed, near the Titsa River in Sikkim. Can't tell, René, if it's male or female.*

## RENÉ IN INDIA

*(Continued from page 23)*

radiator: we load 5 gallons of water as insurance, and left Kalimpong at 8 a.m. waved on by crowds of colorful, uniformed school children. After a bumpy hour of somewhat frightening driving conditions [what about the brakes?], we stopped at Mirik Busty, a village of a few houses built with *Phyllostachys* [bamboo] and inhabited mostly by Nepalese. Natives, mostly women, stared at us while we begin walking towards our target, the elusive *Trachycarpus latisectus*. We passed a shy but smiling native woman, then two cows and there they were, straight in front of us, a few spread on steep slate rocky cliffs in full sun.

Most were mature and blooming but no seed and no visible seedlings. Clearly the woodland canopy had been burnt at one time or another and the shade that they had been growing in removed. which is likely why they do not seed any more. Doubtless this species is in extreme danger of extinction in the wild and will have to rely on cultivation if it is to be preserved.

**We walked** back to the village to meet with the natives, who were extremely friendly. We were kindly invited into their primitive houses, which lacked chimneys and I considered that the

inhabitants' lungs may be as sooty as their house walls! They offered us their local fermented alcohol drink and to share their lunch, but we didn't feel hungry enough to feel obliged to accept, and they laughed while Dominique was buying everything she could at the mini-store next door to give to the little kids. Everyone seemed happy to have us around, and an elder man, a Gurkka, asks me to handle one of their famed daggers. Then it was time to walk back to the jeeps and follow the climbing road until we passed the monastery of Pedong, where we stopped for a chilly picnic along the road on the return to Kalimpong. The afternoon was free and the evening featured a fantastic Tibetan banquet prepared for us by the Orchid Retreat staff and the Tibetan chef- what a day!

**Wednesday April 23.** No water or electricity this morning, which was my birthday! Furthermore, we departed at 3:15 a.m., carrying our suitcases under bright moonlight up the steep hill. Sadly, it was time to leave the Orchid Retreat and Kalimpong: for the last time we took the steep road down and, as we descended along the Titsa River, the temperature rose and soon we were at Saliiguri and Baghdogra Airport. This time the flight

*(Continued on page 26)*



## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK. . .

**This issue** marks an anniversary, my first as editor of CFPACS's newsletter. I haven't been bored, though sometimes nearly (?) hysterical. My computer literacy has increased, though the more I learn, the more it seems I need yet to understand. Humbling—or, maybe, just frustrating. Once again, Microsoft Publisher 98 was the obstacle to sanity. It wouldn't permit me to connect text frames. A text frame is drawn on the image of the page on the screen, then text/the article is put into it. When there is more text than will fit, a symbol appears at the bottom of the frame to indicate an overflow. This is the signal to create a new text frame, go through a couple of commands, then the overflow text is dumped into the new frame. That's the way it is supposed to work. However, nothing happened in response to the commands.

**Janice Broda**, chapter member, computer consultant/teacher, friend rode to my rescue. She came to my house, uninstalled the program, re-installed it. Bingo. Actually, it then worked twice. Janice returned, dug Publisher 98 out of the guts of the machine, and put it back in. I was then able to finish the issue, for the misbegotten program now permitted me to connect frames. (For how long? for the June issue, anyway.) Before the first of Janice's two performances on my computer, I had received a card in the mail. Gateway offered a free upgrade to Publisher 2000, to be sent in the summer. I replied, saying 'yes,' I did want the upgrade. I'm hoping for happier times, of course, while wondering what horrors Microsoft has incorporated into the newest version of my nemesis.

\*\*\*\*

**Adobe Photo Deluxe 3.0 Home Edition** is the object of my explorations just now. This program, installed on the computer, takes images sent from the scanner and allows many potential variations. Unfortunately, the program disk did not come with a brochure or booklet that explains it generally, then in some detail. There is a Help button, but this responds to problems with individual features: there's no overview. Photo Deluxe 3.0 appears to be a simpler derivative of Photoshop, mostly concerned with color photos and various artistic effects that can be brought about. (Experimenting, I came up with a picture of the lake at Montgomery Botanical Center that looked like a cross

between a negative and ground zero at Hiroshima.) Our money runs only to black-and-white pictures—if there are any sugar daddies out there willing to spring for the cost of color pictures, please contact me!—and most of you probably prefer to see the palm or cycad clearly, without artistic effect.

\*\*\*\*

**For those** of you writing for *The Palmateer*, it would be helpful if your contributions can be sent in the type size and font of the body or text type that is used. It is Garamond 10-point type. You've probably noticed that the first two words are put into boldface; this signifies a paragraph and saves space at the same time. Species names should be put into italics. Captions/identifications need to be written on the back of each photo. Please, don't send the only copy of a precious photo. It would save time if articles arrived already in standard format, transmitted to me electronically (or, at least, typed). If you are unable to do this, it's OK, but if you can—please! Remember that what appears in the newsletter is what I get. If I don't get *nuffin*, that's what appears. I've contacted several members, requesting they write on specific topics. The response has been encouraging, so I plan to broaden my appeal. If you are hesitant about your writing abilities, remember that I can help out.

\*\*\*\*

**The next** issue of the newsletter will be sent out to you at the beginning of September. Deadline for articles, pictures, memoirs, adventures (no rating higher than PG-13), etc., is 2 August. Further details are available from:

—John

*Kennedy*

## SEEDBANK REPORT

By Mike Dahme

**Recent seed** distributions [through April end] amounted to some 18 species of palms and cycads. Prominent among those to be thanked are Doris Smith, whose donation of 700 seed from her *Hyphaene* plant [many of which had been prematurely cut by her gardeners] all found a use at the Alaskan wood-carver's whose work was featured in *Principes* 41:4 [Oct '97], Charlene and Greg Palm for their continuing donations of *Copernicia alba* and two others, the Montgomery Botanical Center of Miami for donations of seven species [two were cycads that were greatly oversubscribed], and Jules Horwitz, whose surprise donation of over 500 seed of the Foxtail [*Wodyetia*] palm was very popular. These four distributions will net the treasury sums of \$100, \$201 [plus sales at March meeting], \$209 and \$207 respectively.

**Other seed** donators for the period included Hersh

Womble for 150 seed of a home-made cycad hybrid [400 plus additional seed were requested, in case anyone can produce seed on a *Cycas revoluta* using pollen from *C. taitungensis*], Daryl O'Connor of Downunderland for approximately 800 seed of *Linosyadix monostachya* ["Walking-stick palm"], the mystery donor from Louisiana for 50 more "Mule palm" seed [produced on *Butia* using Queen palm pollen], and Ken and Lynn Macht, from whose yard *Zamia furfuracea* ["Cardboard palm"] was donated during the March meeting.

**Special thanks** also to Doug Keene for fetching the *Hyphaene* seed from Doris Smith's in Daytona, two large garbage bags-full.

On another note one or two bags of seed sold as *Calyptronoma plumeriana* [from Haiti] during the March meeting at Joe and Anne Michael's were later found to have been misidentified [likely Royal seed]. If the individual [s] would call me [407-724-8417], refund[s] will be forthcoming.

## RENÉ IN INDIA

(Continued from page 24)

was no problem and on our arrival in Gawahati it was hot, dusty and sticky. Our morale was down when an antique bus arrived - we first thought it was a bad joke and could hardly believe our eyes. With much difficulty we squeezed the suitcases on and into the bus, the taller members of our party would feel uncomfortable for the next four hours! There were many palms to see on the way but with difficulty due to the extreme pollution of the city - we could hardly see the first *Phoenix sylvestris* through the smog. These were dark green and were soon followed by coconuts and *Areca catechu*, then, later along the road, there are frequent stands of *Caryota urens*. Finally we arrived at Shillong, the capital of Meghalaya, and the Polo Towers Hotel situated in the middle of a slum. After dinner a few of us crossed the road to a little shop to phone to Europe; while waiting, the others bought for two Rupees a betel nut "chew"! The night market is very active and we spent sometime among the natives, exploring the shops and feeling safer than we would were we home in Paris!

**Thursday April 24.** An easy, sunny day. Early, while the city is empty, Fritz and I went for a walk along the Shillong River, which is the sewer of

the entire city. The overall lack of hygiene is frightening. After a late breakfast at 9, we warriors walked to the lakeside botanical garden, established by the English as always [and, as always, in the good old days] Shillong being at altitude, the temperature is mild and the garden is a nice place to stroll around. After spotting an unidentified *Livistona* we passed by a beautiful *L. chinensis* and stopped in front of a stand of *Trachycarpus martianus* growing on the lake bank, roots in the water. They were flowering and had rather thicker stems and larger crowns than expected. We then passed an old *Cycas pectinata* and more *T. martianus* all different in appearance from each other. Before leaving the garden we saw another stand of elegant *L. chinensis*. Outside is a private garden with tall *Syagrus romanzoffiana*, *Caryota sp.*, *Butia capitata* and a possible *Butiagrus nabonandii*.

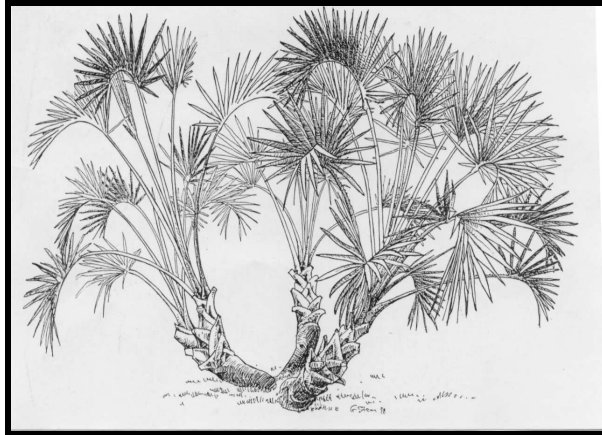
**Lunch** was set at the colonial Pinewood Hotel, which featured a nice *T. martianus* specimen at the entrance. I gathered seeds which I have since planted in our Riviera garden. Taking into account the state of the Shillong River, we declined the offer of the "catch of the day" when

(Continued on page 27)

**SEEDBANK**

*(Continued from page 26)*

Finally, so far seven sets of back issues [volumes 9 thru 16] have been sold, leaving three or four available. Donation amount is \$25, anyone interested should contact me as above.



**GEOFF STEIN** is the California artist, of course. If you don't know what this one is, you will be drummed out of the Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society. Hint: Florida bulldozers are familiar with this palm, to the distress of the Florida Native Plant Society. Still don't recognize it?

**RENÉ IN INDIA**

*(Continued from page 26)*

ordering - settling for rice instead! Back at the hotel, Martin went to the market place to buy all *Plectocomia* seeds he could find. These are normally eaten by the natives. We then drove to the Elephant Falls, nice but not so impressive. On the way back, while dusk covered the misery, we saw our last *T. martianus* of the day in front of a Catholic church!

**Friday April 25.** 6:30 a.m., it's back to normal! Some waiter was caught trying to sell Dominique a mineral bottle that had been refilled with tap water - we lived dangerously indeed! When boarding the ugly bus we were all surprised at being passed by a cab carrying in its trunk a slaughtered pig, the head hanging out! Outside town large granite boulders dominate the landscape but Rhododendron forest only remains in patches. Below 2500m elevation (8000') farmers have burnt the forests for grass to feedcattle and goat herds. Deep eroded trenches show the negative impact of this practice. Once past Cherrapunjee, the wettest town in the world with 40' average, we discovered man-made quarries and prehistoric charcoal production kilns. Here live the poorest of the poor in desperate conditions. At the far end of the plateau a spectacular

*(Continued on page 28)*

**PANYA RAKTAENGAM**

*(Continued from page 12)*

doesn't seem to be any retail market for obscure palms on the local economy—and I suspect that he was growing all these species just for his own satisfaction. They're all grown from seed obtained in the last five or six years from various Australian and New Zealand sources and, do you believe this, from Inge Hoffman! Now, where have we heard that name before?

**FRANCISCO BERMUDEZ**

*(Continued from page 10)*

**Here,** on terrain a mountain goat could appreciate, his palms are also subject to dehydration in time of drought [common enough in Puerto Rico], but he grows them in pots at his house to sufficient size to give them a good start. Francisco, address per IPS directory, is always looking for palm seed, especially tropical exotics, so if readers come by anything surplus, feel free to send on.

## PACSOFCALNDAR

(Continued from page 14)

PBC General Meeting  
**November 6 & 7**, time  
TBA, Fairchild Tropical  
Garden. SF Fall Palm  
Sale

**November 13 & 14**,  
time and location

**TBA. Central Florida  
Palm & Cycad Society  
General Meeting**

**December 1**, 7:30 PM,  
Mounts Botanical Gar-  
den, West Palm Beach.

PBC Annual Holiday  
Party

**December 6**, 7:30 PM,  
Fairchild Tropical Gar-

den, Miami. SF General  
Meeting

### Abbreviations:

**SF - South Florida  
Palm Society**  
**CF - Central Florida  
Palm & Cycad Society**  
**BC - Broward Palm &  
Cycad Society**  
**SWF - Palm & Cycad  
Society of Southwest  
Florida**  
**PBC - Palm Beach  
Palm & Cycad Society**  
**FC - Florida First  
Coast Palm Society**

**PACSOFC - Palm &  
Cycad Societies of  
Florida**

## PALM & CYCAD NAMES

(Continued from page 14)

*Dyopsis concinna*—The  
name “concinna” is  
Latin for “neat” or  
“pretty.”

*Dyopsis forficifolia*—This  
species name is derive  
from the Latin “for a  
pair of shears or scis-  
sors,” presumably in  
reference to the forked

leaves, reminiscent of an  
open pair of shears.

*Dyopsis utilis*—The Latin  
name means “useful,” a  
reference to the piassava  
produced by the leaves  
and formerly exported  
for rope production.

*Marojejya insignis*—This  
species name is Latin for  
“outstanding” or  
“remarkable.”

**References:** *The Palms of  
Madagascar; Chamaedorea  
Palms; Cycads of the World.*  
Respective authors:  
Dransfield and Beentje;  
Donald Hodel; David  
Jones

## RENÉ IN INDIA

(Continued from page 27)

ridge was covered with rainforest - as it must have  
looked before man's deforestation.

*Trachycarpus martianus* with the Nokhalikai Falls just in  
front, pouring the water to Bangladesh below. The spec-  
tacular palms are scattered around the  
cliff, and their future questionable. A betel-chewing old  
woman selling drinks and candies sat at a stall while we  
looked at some large stands of *Caryota obtusa* far down in  
the valley. Midway were the shiny green *Plectocomia kha-  
syana* in scattered numbers. We were able to walk by to  
nearby younger *Caryota obtusa* to collect a characteristic  
palm [which Dominique is pleased to show]. After a pic-  
nic we proceed to more stands of mature *C. obtusa* with  
*Pinanga gracilis* and *Wallichia densiflora* among them.  
This species of fishtail palm is all over the hills, very im-  
pressive and beautiful.

**Now** the bus drove downwards to Bangladesh and we  
soon stopped in front of a cultivated *Wallichia disticha*;  
the land owner offered us the seeds and  
thousands of seedlings at the palm base while a crowd of  
kids gathered around us to laugh. Further down, almost  
at the end of the road, is

Ladsokhar: not so many Europeans have reached this  
place. Here too we were welcomed by a crowd of kids  
and some time was spent to take pictures and exchange  
addresses! There are more *W. disticha*, *Caryota maxima*,

*Calamus sp* and, of course, *Areca catechu* everywhere. It  
was dusk when we returned to Shillong.

**Saturday April 26.** Another four hours drive down to  
Gawahati through incredible roadway chaos. The truck  
pollution is such that by noon you cannot see the sky.  
We reached the airport glad to leave the nasty drivers  
and all of us alive. The plane was late and we got a  
complimentary lunch

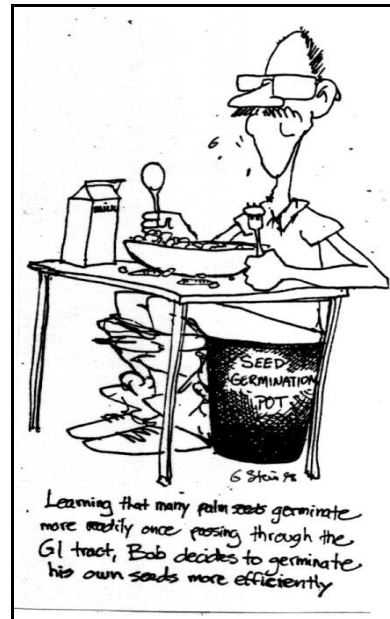
before flying west to Delhi, but in India anything can  
happen and after 90 minutes of flight we found our-  
selves to the east at the Burma border - the  
opposite side of the country from Delhi! No one had  
told anybody on the plane. That day we would reach  
our hotel only at 6:30 PM, a day lost, the  
second for the trip. At the hotel billions of Indian  
mosquitoes were already on duty. We used the phone  
to check room availability in town, but  
found none lower in price than \$432. plus 25% tax per  
room. No wonder so many natives sleep under the  
sky! After dinner and spraying one gallon DDT  
in the room, we fell asleep in temperatures of 40°C  
(105°F).

**Sunday April 27.** Early wake up? 4 a.m.!! While  
gathering in the lobby an hour later we found that the  
mosquitoes were taking a nap, and quickly  
reached the Delhi railroad station, crowded with hun-

(Continued on page 30)



**Geoff Stein**  
**BOB TRIES HARD WITH PALMS**



**Out-of-Staters Invited to Join Florida Tour**

[René Coativity has requested that the following notice be inserted. —Ed.]

**Join the French in Florida.** Manureva, the exotic plant association, invites you to join the French "crowd" starting November 5 (evening) in Miami till November 16, leaving from Miami in the late afternoon. In Miami on Saturday we will attend the Fairchild palm sales and visit the gardens with Dr. Scott Zona. On Sunday, Dr. Terrence Walters will show us the Montgomery gardens and Lester Pancoast, The Kampong. Paul Craft will be our speaker that evening. We then will drive north along the coast and visit the best private and public gardens up to the late Dent Smith's estate in Daytona Beach. Then to Orlando, Leu Gardens, and more. One day off to visit either the Universal Studios, the animal park, or anyone's choice!

**It will** be time to visit the Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Sarasota area for the next three days, with a lot to see: Gisella Kopsick Arboretum, Dr. Young's garden,

Sunken Gardens, and the Selby Botanical Garden, among others. A joint meeting is planned with the Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society at Mrs. Libby Besse's estate. We will then proceed to the wild hammocks of Central Florida to admire various *Sabal*, *Serenoa repens*, and *Rhapidophyllum hystrix* in their habitat. Our trip will end with more visits in the Vero Beach and Palm Beach areas.

**\$920 includes** deluxe coach, 11 nights in Best Western motels (price based on double occupancy), dinner in Miami on November 6, and farewell dinner at The Breakers in Palm Beach on November 15. The price also includes entrance fees to gardens (except for the free day). If you want to practice your French, you love France, but it is too far away, you "hate" the French, but don't know exactly why...yet! Embark with us. **Contact ASAP** for full programme: René Coativity FAX: 33 4 94 64 74 71, e-mail: manurevah@aol.com

Address: 6 Corniche Superieure, Gaou Benat, 83230 Bormes les Mimosas, France.

### **A Letter from Montgomery Botanical Center**

*(This letter was received by a CFPACS member in response to a donation after our February visit there. The recipient wishes to remain anonymous.—Ed.)*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

As Montgomery Botanical Center strives to develop scientifically-valuable cycad and palm collections, it is the generosity of special people like you that brings us closer to reaching these goals.

The Montgomery Botanical Center's Directors, Members, and Staff would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank you for your committed support and donation, as these greatly enhance the conservation and research value of MBC's cycad collections. Your recent donation of documented wild-collected *Sabal causiarum* is an outstanding addition to our research palm collection. As you know, do not have this taxon within our collection, but already have a site for a massive collection of the species.

I enjoyed having the members of the Central Florida Chapter of the International Palm Society last weekend. The turn out for the event was wonderful. It really was a pleasure on my part to offer a tour to such an interested and committed group of individuals.

Montgomery Botanical Center's Board, Members, and Staff look forward to future opportunities to collaborate with you. Thank you again for such a wonderful donation to our collection.

With my regards,

Terrence Walters, Executive Director

*(It should also be noted that Montgomery Botanical Center has been very generous in sharing its seed with our chapter.—Ed.)*

## RENÉ IN INDIA

*(Continued from page 28)*

dreds of beggars and people sleeping all over the place. Exodus could not have been worse.

We climbed onto the train, which was very quiet considering the pathetic environment.

The Shatadbi Express left to Agra - and the Taj Mahal! - at 6:30, and it was 43°C (110°F) by the time we arrived there. An a/c bus took us to the Taj Mahal, a breath-taking mountain of white marble gleaming in the hot sun. The chief architect was French, Catholic or Jewish. Anyway, the Taj owner first killed his family to feel his own despair and then executed the architect to make sure he would not build another one. After a first-class lunch at the local Sheraton [we had forgotten what first class meant] the train brought us back to the hotel and ...the angry mosquitoes. It turned into a new version of "tora tora", dreadful DDT again.. Some friendly guy told us that there was no malaria within Delhi city limits!

**Monday April 28.** Departure day, too bad for the mosquitoes, the alarm clocks were set at 3 a.m.. Hard to believe but true, everyone was happy to leave Delhi. The bus was almost at the airport when the engine blew, and we finish on foot pulling our suitcases - nothing could faze us anymore, we had become ironmen! The airport was already in chaos and the

Delhi average check-in time is 2 hours. Why, nobody knows, but we cleared the customs on time only to hear that our plane was ...two hours late. I was fed up with Indian "jokes" and in a hurry to return to the old world. Amman was no fun at all but suddenly London was in view and civilization with it. After goodbyes everyone was on their way home. **Thank you,** Martin, it was just great and unforgettable, especially those palms I wanted to see.

Well, at that point I thought I had flu and told Dominique so. "You know, that's the first sign of malaria." She's really lovely!

**JOIN THE CENTRAL FLORIDA PALM & CYCAD SOCIETY!**

For the amazingly reasonable price of \$10, you receive four issues of this fine publication, are put in contact with palm/cycad nuts, and advance public knowledge of these wonderful plants!

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