The PALMATEER

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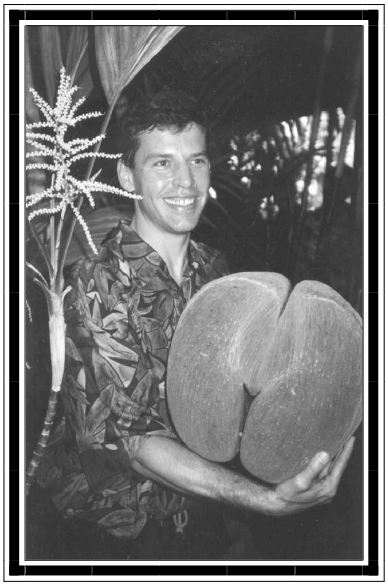

Roy Works holds the famous "double coconut" of Lodoicea maldivica*, at Dr. U. A. Young's Tampa garden, visited during the March meeting. See also picture on page 8.*

Palm Paradise and the March Meeting

By Marilyn Bachmann

It was a beautiful spring morning and we were privileged to visit the 35 year old garden of Dr. and Mrs. U.K. Young in Tampa as the first of two gardens we would see that day. The garden occupies an acre of land (Dr. Young was able to purchase five lots when the garden was begun.) in a residential neighborhood in Tampa south of the airport. Many of the palms and cycads were acquired on collecting trips by the Youngs. The garden has many impressive large palms, including a large *Arenga pinnata* which was in flower.

Our visit to Dr. Young's garden included a walking tour led by Roy Works. We estimated 80 - 100 people turned out to take advantage of the opportunity. Roy was formerly the Youngs' gardener so has both a historical view of the garden and a wealth of experience with caring for palms and cycads. As Roy took us around the garden, he identified the palms and cycads we saw, told us the history of that particular plant and commented on the cold-hardiness of the species and other aspects of its biology and culture. Of course, living in north-central Florida and (like most of us) pushing the limits of what species grow there, we were very interested in Roy's cold-hardiness comments.

We were particularly interested to learn that plants can differ in their susceptibility to bud vs trunk damage and to see examples of trunk damage.

He also commented on the difficulties with repeated freezes; for ex-

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PalmFest 2000: A Celebration of Florida Palm Lovers

By Marilyn Bachmann

Roger and I really enjoy going to our palm society meetings, both to see the wonderful gardens of our members and friends and to meet and talk palms with so many interesting people. So, when PalmFest 2000 was announced, we thought what a great idea and immediately made plans to attend. We were not disappointed.

We arrived at the Sheraton in West Palm Beach the night before, since Gainesville is a long drive for an early morning meeting. Of course, this allowed us to enjoy the Sheraton and to eat dinner at our favorite West Palm seafood restaurant that evening.

On Saturday, we arrived for registration and a tour of Ruth Sallenbach's garden. A good crowd was already gathering when we arrived to register. It was fun to find that a small palm (our choice of several

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IN THIS ISSUE

Treasurer Mike Merritt, clutching moneybags? No, give-away coconuts at the Moodys' in Palm Fest. Geri Prall approaches, left. The bent figure behind Mike's shoulder is the Editor, haranguing some unfortunate. Norm Moody gave a demonstration, a few minutes prior to this picture, of how to split open a coconut using two shovels. No one expected this revelation of a surprising skill.

Dates to Remember!

September 9—East Coast meeting, around Melbourne, details to be worked out, possibly two days. This is the weekend following Labor Day. The September issue of *The Palmateer*—which is scheduled to arrive at the very beginning of September—will have a map and list of stops. Anyone wishing to learn in late August what, exactly, is planned should get in touch with Charlene Palm, Neil Yorio, Richard Lundstedt, or Mike Dahme (illustrious Brevardians all).

October 28—Central meeting, Groveland, the garden of Hersh and Jackie Womble. Details and directions in the September newsletter.

January 20, 2001—Pilgrimage to Montgomery Botanical Center, Miami. (Visiting the candy store.) Details later.

Absolute deadline for September issue of The Palmateer is August 7, know ye all!!

Cycad Workshop in Vero Beach

Dr. Bijhan Dhegan, a cycad expert in the Dept. of Ornamental Horticulture at the University of Florida, Gainesville, will give a special workshop on "The Florida Coontie and Other Cycads" on June 29 at 7:30 p.m.

His presentation is sponsored by the Eugenia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, and will take place in the Boathouse of the Florida Medical Entomology Lab (FMEL) in Vero Beach. For further information, call Judy Avril, Eugenia Chapter president, at (561) 567-1565.

—John Kennedy

March meeting in Tampa

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ample, the effects of another bad freeze coming before a defoliated plant has recovered.

We also found the discussion about the identity of *Sabal* "Riverside" interesting. Of course, the garden has other interesting plants such as the pink-flowering T*abebuia*, but our focus was on the palms and cycads.

Among the large and impressive palms pointed out by Roy was a hybrid L*ivistona chinensis* / *L. decipiens* and a very large *Livistona drudei*. He was less enthusiastic about a climbing *Calamus* whose spines have caused him several injuries. Many large cycads were also growing in the Youngs' garden. There were large *Encephalartos*, including a nice large *E. horridus* and a *Dioon merolae*.

We saw a nice triangle palm which was a replacement for the one Dr. and Mrs. Young used to decorate with lights for Christmas. Other palms included a *Jubaea/ Butia* cross and a large multi-trunked *Hyphaene* which was collected by Dr. Young in Zimbabwe. A large *Bismarckia* from before 1989, several *Phoenix*, including a large *P. rupicola*, a tall *Washingtonia filifera*, and large specimens of *Sabal causiarum* and *Livistona saribus* were among the species pointed out by Roy. A large *Hyphaene* had extensive trunk damage and was wired to keep it semi-upright. Roy pointed out the damage and commented that they keep the crown size down to help reduce the weight on the trunk. There were many more palms and cycads which were discussed as Roy took us through the garden. In contrast to the big and impressive plants was the sight of a *Nannorhops ritchieana* planted about 30 years ago which was not much more than 1 foot high! That plant is a true example of a "slow-growing palm"!? We hope our foot-high plant in Gainesville doesn't follow that example! Lastly, we were fascinated by the Double Coconut (*Lodoicea maldivica*) plant and seed (the largest plant seed in the world), which we had not seen before.

The second part of the day was spent at Frank Tintera's garden in Tampa. A nice large *Bismarckia* inside his circle drive and a large, neatly trimmed *Phoenix* caught our eye as we arrived. Frank's residence is also his nursery so there were many potted plants to see in addition to his garden which had many tropical plants as well as palms, giving it a "jungle atmosphere". A catered lunch (lasagna and salad) was set up on the back patio and tables around in the garden. It was a very pleasant way to eat a tasty lunch! The group enjoyed eating, visiting and wandering around Frank's garden until time for the plant and seed sale and auction. As usual the auction was fun as was the sale. Among the donated plants were a group of seedlings (*Oncosperma tigilarum* and *Bactris setulosa*) from Montgomery which were given to members.

We came back to Gainesville with several young palms and seedlings to enjoy raising.

*Above, Roy Works gives visitors to Dr. Young's garden the guided tour; our Prez Neil Yorio rolls in some palms (*Chamaerops humilis*) for the sale, held at Frank Tintera's, the second garden , also site of the luncheon at the March meeting in Tampa.*

Not the Palm House at Kew, but the shade house at Dr. Young's, thronged with visitors at the March meeting in Tampa.. Wouldn't we all wish to have as big and beautiful a structure for our palms and cycads?

The second garden visit was to Frank Tintera's home and nursery . Left, Jennie and Frank Tintera are shown with a group of the CFPACS visitors.

Right, youthful palmateer races past silvery—Brahea armata*? Florida's biggest, onliest? No, it's a remarkably beautiful* Hyphaene coriacea (natalensis) *at Dr. Young's during the March meeting.*

Saltwater *Livistona* in Vero

By John Kennedy

Janice Broda e-mailed me in early February about an unusual palm she had spotted at FMEL (Florida Medical Entomology Laboratory) on the south side of Vero Beach. She thought that it might be *Livistona decipiens*, and urged me to go look at it. A few days later, I stood in front of the palm, wondering about its identity. It was clearly a *Livistona*, but which one? Janice had noticed it because it was in fruit, fruit clearly not that of a *Sabal palmetto*. Individuals of that species were everywhere around and anyone looking casually, rather than closely, at the unidentified palm would have assumed that it was just another *Sabal*.

The palm is about 15 feet high overall, with costapalmate leaves, and is approximately 12 inches in diameter at the base. Petioles are armed with small black spines. Five stalks carried black fruit larger than the native *Sabal*. The trunk still holds all its leaf bases and is tightly fibered. Hurricane Irene, last October, was probably responsible for the battered look of the leaves, for the palm is growing in full sun in the open, just above a finger of the brackish Indian River lagoon. Growing all around it are native saltwater plants: sea oxeye daisy (*Borrichia frutescens*), giant leather fern (*Acrostichium daenifolium*), and white mangroves (*Laguncularia recemosa*). The location is about 50 feet from the Boathouse, now FMEL's air-conditioned meeting room.

The proprietor of Borassic Park was, of course, intrigued when he learned of Janice's discovery. So, Mike Dahme and I went to inspect the palm and to collect its seed for our seedbank. Mike cut off dead leaves and a few more to gain access to the fruitstalks. He also came equipped, usefully, with a ladder and a copy of Rodd's monograph on *Livistona*. As Mike cut, I read aloud the description in the monograph of *L. benthamii*. The palm before us, its size, fruit, and location fit perfectly with Rodd. In its native Australia, *L. benthamii* grows in full sun, amid mangroves, along saltwater creeks. We could see no apparent sign that this palm had flowered or fruited previously; there were no old flowerstalks on the palm or on the ground around it. We bagged more than 5,000 fruit; the seed was offered by our seedbank over the Internet.

Bill Bidlingmayer is the source of all unusual palms that turn up at FMEL Bill worked there as a scientist for many years before his retirement in 1987, and was an early member of The Palm Society, precursor to the IPS, and my own mentor in palms. Contacted by e-mail at his present home in Monticello, near Tallahassee, Bill was unsure of the species and asked that he be sent a list of *Livistona*s. Provided with this, he was amazed at all the unfamiliar—recently described--species. However, Bill did pick out *Livistona benthamii* as the correct name. The seed was obtained at Fairchild, Bill believes in the mid-70s. All the better planting spots around the Bidlingmayer house, then located in what is now the clubhouse parking lot of the Garden Grove subdivision, had been taken, so Bill looked farther afield. There were originally two palms planted, the one at FMEL and another in the extreme southwest corner of the Bidlingmayer property. The second individual is not apparent in a tour of the subdivision and may no longer exist.

Livistona benthamii*, discovered at FMEL, Vero Beach. Though a little battered, the palm is more attractive than indicated here. The Editor provides scale and wipes his eye (tear of joy at the discovery?).*

Thinking over Bill's account, I realized that I had accompanied him on that expedition to Miami which, I believe, took place possibly seven years later than he dates it. Thus, if I am correct, the FMEL *Liv* would be about 18 years old. I also realized that I, too, have a palm of the same species, originating from the same source. Mine, however, is not so large. In fact, it has a trunk only about 24 inches high with, of course,

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SALTWATER *LIVISTONA*

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much smaller leaves on long, arching petioles. But the distinctive protruding hastula is the same, as is the densely fibered trunk; its emerging leaf has the same crowded look of its large sibling five miles away at FMEL. My *L. benthamii* was planted in partial shade (which has grown denser) in a relatively damp area of the kind that many other *Livistona*s like—but not this species.

The *L. benthamii* at FMEL has survived not only complete neglect for many years, but also (unprotected) the infamous Christmas freeze of 1989 when it would have been quite a small plant. The low temperature would have been a few degrees below 20°. I can't recall exactly when I planted my own little palm but I do think it was in the ground, covered by a pillowcase at that time; I have a faint memory of being surprised at its lack of damage. But my *L. saribus,* then about 15 feet tall, was completely undamaged at the same time, as was a same-size *L. drudei.* (My *L. drudei* does not match the description of the species of that name in the Rodd monograph; it flowers but does not set fruit. Visitors to Stacey Peacock's property near Avon Park have seen two similar individuals, all originating from the same Fairchild sale in the early '80s. Stacey's *L. benthamii* has been badly damaged in freezes and he believes the species only hardy into the mid twenties.)

Our chapter had a two-day meeting in Vero Beach in March, 1994. On the Saturday night we went to FMEL to watch Paul Craft's slides of improbably beautiful palms in Australian botanical gardens. Florida Medical Entomology Lab is a 38-acre unit of IFAS (Institute of Food & Agricultural Sciences), a division of the University of Florida. FMEL studies mosquito life cycles and mosquito control: Indian River County is home to 24—or is it 27?—species of mosquito.

Our sharp-eyed member, Janice Broda, is a computer consultant who also works at FMEL and directs the adjacent 298-acre Oslo Riverfront Conservation Area (ORCA), a joint venture of Indian River County and the St. Johns Water Management District. Another 66 acres were added in April. FMEL has coordinated public access to the property. Among numberless other activities, Janice is the former state president of the Florida Native Plant Society and is a commissioner of the Indian River Mosquito Control District. She has agreed to keep a lookout for other Bidlingmayer palms in out-of-the-way spots at FMEL, having alerted us last year to fruit on a *Coccothrinax argentata* there.

BILL BIDLINGMAYER REMINISCES. . .

"I have been asked by your editor to describe how my interest in palms began. Fortunately, that is easier to address than why.

Late in 1954, my wife and I moved south from Savannah, Georgia. Our first impression was that, indeed, Vero Beach was 'Where the Tropics Begin'. Massive Indian banyans, with heavy limbs supported by a score of aerial roots, were widespread; Schefleras had foot-thick trunks. Common guavas grew wild and lined many miles of canal banks. The northern skyline of south U. S. One (just before it turns west on 21st Street) was dominated by a towering Poinciana; when in bloom it was visible for nearly a mile. Tall royal palms, along Royal Palm Boulevard, McKee Jungle Gardens, and elsewhere were common. An arcade of coconut palms shaded a two-block residential section just south of State Road 60. That's correct; coconut palms. All this prior to any hint of global warming.

Moving into our new residence a year later, I planted a couple of coconut palms on the bank of a small pond and a number of royal palms in the surrounding hammock. I felt these, plus the existing cabbage palms, would take care of the palm component in the landscape quite nicely.

This plan, as well as the aforementioned exotica, ended abruptly in December, 1957. Assuming such catastrophic freezes were rarities, the palms were replaced only, except for a few royals, to succumb again a few years later. Noting that *Arecastrum*, *Phoenix* and some others were local survivors, I first added these, then anything else that would grow thereabouts, and finally most everything I could lay my hands on. In the decades that followed successive freezes would keep the collection at about 80 species."

Bill B: Mosquitoes, Palms & Cacti or, Vero to Monticello

By Moffie Bidlingmayer

Bill was first hired by Dr. Maurice Provost (founder of FMEL) on a summer job in the Orlando area (studying the *Mansonia* mosquito, a freshwater breeder) while still at the University of Florida. In 1950 when Bill finished his class work for his Master's Degree, Dr. Provost hired him full-time and sent Bill to Panama City on a temporary assignment (Dr. Provost was recuperating from a medical problem). Bill was to study dog flies on Panama City's beach. During Bill's 3 month stay in Panama City, we met and were married in late 1950. From there Bill was assigned to Sanibel Island (near Ft. Myers) to study the salt marsh mosquitoes. We had a six month honeymoon on Sanibel Island (in the lighthouse quarters!) until the Korean War (through the Marine Reserve) caught up with Bill. Bill had seen combat on several occasions during WWII (Iwo Jima, etc.) so welcomed an opportunity to accept a commission in the U. S. Public Health Service--thus satisfying his requirement for military duty and at the same time working in biological research. We spent the next four years in Savannah, Ga. In late 1954, Dr. Provost moved to Vero Beach which was the beginning of FMEL [Florida Medical Entomology Lab]. Bill was one of the first hired. We moved to Vero Beach in late 1954--within one year we had found "our property and moved in at the end of 1954--in time to get homestead exemption." Bill retired in 1987 after we sold our property in Vero Beach and we purchased this property in Monticello.

Here in north Florida, a palm collection was not feasible. However, Bill has shifted his interest to cacti and has been--perhaps remarkably--successful! He prefers to avoid greenhouses and unnatural conditions. His "desert garden" has been created completely outdoors--using various techniques for super drainage,. He now has about 250 different cacti. Personally, I am not fond of plants with spines (except roses).

However, I find the flowers of the cacti most interesting and include them in my slide programs for garden clubs, etc. (As a Master Gardener, I have a community commitment...) RETIREMENT IS GREAT!!!

A juvenile leaf of Beccariophoenix, *not in North Florida, but near Bill B's old stomping ground: Ed Carlson's garden in Vero Beach.*

Bill B comments on *Trachycarpus*

[This came in response to Phil Stager's experience with Trachycarpus *in St. Pete in the last issue (March) of* The Palmateer*]*

As a Vero Beach resident I watched while, over the years, nearly a score of *Trachycarpus*, both *T. fortunei* and *T. wagnerianus*, died lingering deaths. On one occasion a single specimen produced several feet of trunk in just a few years, only to die later. Splitting the trunk open revealed blue streaks within, most probably a fungus. Now living near Tallahassee, large *T. fortunei* are fairly common here; however, some (most noticeable in small plants) suffer varying degrees of stunting. The symptoms are premature mortality of the oldest leaves accompanied by a reduction in size of those newly emerged. These symptoms can appear in plants of all ages but, strangely, the decline can be interrupted. I have seen a blighted mature plant recover, prosper for a few more years, and then relapse.

My best specimens, whether in sun or shad, appear to favor moist, sloping, and dark heavy soils that consist mostly of clay. Under these conditions some specimens of 13 year old *T. fortunei* have attained 10-12 feet of trunk and *T. wagnerianus* 6-9 feet.

A healthy *Trachycarpus* is a handsome tree and well worth growing. In their native countries a palm's actual habitat can be restricted to particular soil types. In Florida, light sandy soils may harbor pathogens to which *Trachycarpus* are susceptible. This might apply also to other species unhappy here. Those wishing to experiment could try planting several specimens upon a large clay mound and subsequently remove promptly those plants showing the least amount of vigor.

CFPACS Endowment Fund

By Mike Merritt

In December 1990, a donor who wishes to remain anonymous provided $5,000 to the then-unincorporated Central Florida Palm Society to establish an endowment "to support the improvement of our newsletter". In a letter to then-President Ed Hall, the donor specified that the club should match the donation with an equivalent amount, and that the interest be used to improve the newsletter, but not to defray ordinary or routine expenses (typing, postage) in producing the newsletter. The donor also recommended that the club use part of the annual interest to increase the size of the endowment.

The reorganized Central Florida Palm and Cycad Society was incorporated in February 1997. In January 1998, the endowment fund existed as a Certificate of Deposit, but still had not been fully financed by the chapter's contribution because of a lack of funds in previous years. The chapter Treasurer, Dave Besst, proposed to the board to add the necessary amount to complete the chapter's matching contribution upon maturation of the CD, and the motion passed unanimously.

When I started as Treasurer in April 1999, I began a study of mutual funds, about which I previously knew very little, in the expectation (shared by other members of the board) that they would provide an avenue of investment that would be more productive than a Certificate of Deposit. I contacted a broker for advice, and read many pages of dismal statistics. When the CD matured in January of this year, Neil Yorio and I made the trip to the bank to redeem it. Within a month, we had purchased mutual fund shares in the amount of $10,000, divided equally between two funds. For the present, all dividends and capital gains are going to be reinvested. Eventually, they can be used to enhance the journal by, for example, the purchase of more advanced equipment and software.

For those members of the chapter who like to follow stock and mutual fund prices in the newspapers, the following information is provided so that they can have fun following the chapter's fortunes in the market. The chapter's fund choices were quite conservative. One fund is the American Funds Group Washington Mutual Investors Fund. (In the paper, look for "American Funds A", then look for "WshMutA".) This is a growth and income fund, in that stocks in large, well-established companies (banks and utilities, for example) are chosen not only for their growth potential but also for their ability to provide reliable and ample dividend income. The other fund, the Putnam Investors Fund, is a slightly less conservative growth fund that invests in large, well-established companies with growth potential. (Look for "Putnam Funds A", then look for "InvA".)

A wider view of the picture on the front page. The leaf of the Lodoicea maldivica *is over Roy's head at Dr. Young's in Tampa..* *—photo by Mark Grabowski*

If you wish your name not be published in the CFPACS membership roster (to be issued later this year), contact:
Dave Witt, Membership Chair
His mail address, e-mail, phone, fax are listed on page 27.

Board Approves Henderson Funding Request

The CFPACS Board has approved a request for funds by Andrew Henderson, who intends to explore in Panamá for a possible new species of *Synechanthus*. Dr. Henderson, senior author of *The Field Guide to the Palms of the Americas,* asked for partial support to cover the expenses of the trip.

He has agreed to supply palm, and maybe cycad, seed—if possible—for distribution by our Seedbank. The species will be determined by circumstances in Panamá.

Dr. Henderson will provide an account of one of his Amazonian palm excursions for *The Palmateer*. He may also speak in Florida at a future function.

The amount asked for is $500. The text of the proposal is printed below. Evandro Ferreira is a graduate student who will accompany Henderson.

—John Kennedy

.PROPOSAL TO THE CENTRAL FLORIDA CHAPTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY PROJECT: COLLECTION AND STUDY OF A POSSIBLE NEW SPECIES OF SYNECHANTHUS (PALMAE)

Submitted by: Andrew Henderson & Evandro Ferreira
New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458
phone 718 817 8973; email ahenderson@nybg.org

Synechanthus is one of six genera in the tribe Hyophorbeae (Uhl & Dransfield, 1987). Moore (1971) recognized two species, and this treatment has been followed by all subsequent workers (e.g., Henderson et al., 1995). Synechanthus fibrosus is found from its southern extreme in Costa Rica at 10.23?N to its northern extreme in southern Veracruz, Mexico at 17.10?N. It occurs at 15-1555 m elevation in lowland to montane moist forests along the Atlantic slope of Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize, and Mexico. Synechanthus warscewiczianus is found from its southern extreme in Ecuador at 3.2?S to its northern extreme in Nicaragua at 13.5?N. It occurs at 5-1450 m elevation in lowland to montane moist forests along the Pacific slope of Ecuador and Colombia, and Atlantic and Pacific slopes of Panama, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua. Along the Atlantic coast of Panama, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua it overlaps with S. fibrosus.

On a recent visit to Panama, in May 1999, we were shown very unusual specimens of Synechanthus, originating from Cerro Campana. These appeared allied to S. warscewiczianus, but unlike that species they had procumbent stems less than 1 m long and small inflorescences with only 2-4 flowering branches. Synechanthus warscewiczianus usually has an erect stem about 2.5 m tall and an inflorescence with an average of 45 flowering branches. Unfortunately we only saw these unusual specimens one day before we were due to leave the country, so we had no time for further investigation.

Subsequent examination of these specimens (borrowed from the herbarium in Panama) in New York, and comparison of them with other material, convinced us that these unusual plants merited taxonomic recognition. We decided, however, to carry out a statistical analysis of variation in the whole genus in order to justify our decision.

Such research is desirable for the following reasons. Palm taxonomy has often been subjective in nature. Palm taxonomists have historically disagreed on the numbers of species in any particular genus. At least in the Neotropics, there has been a recent tendency for recognition of fewer species. Nevertheless, there still remains a dichotomy between the lumpers and splitters. Henderson and Borchsenius (1999) considered that a more rational basis was desirable for delimiting taxa. Borchsenius' (1999) study of infraspecific variation in Geonoma represents the first attempt to delimit taxa using a rigorous scientific method, i.e., multivariate statistics. Such techniques

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PROPOSAL

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have been widely used to investigate interspecific and infraspecific variation in plants. In this project we are using similar methods to investigate variation within Synechanthus.

We have begun using multivariate statistical techniques to investigate Synechanthus. We have measured 22 variables taken from 236 herbarium specimens, and have carried out preliminary analyses of this data. In order to complete this project, however, we need more material of Synechanthus, particularly of our "new" taxon. We have only 10 herbarium specimens of this taxon, and many of these are from the same locality (Cerro Campana), and many are missing data on stem size and orientation (i.e., procumbent or erect), and none have flowers present. In Panama we plan to collect material from the two sites where the new taxa is known to occur (Cerro Campana and Fort Sherman). We plan to carry out population sampling (based on the methods of Borchsenius, 1999), and look for any evidence of overlap in the range and habitat of our new taxon with S. warscewiczianus. We will also attempt to introduce these small, attractive plants into cultivation in Miami.

Literature cited

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1. Application for collecting permits for Panama from Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, June 2000
2. Trip to Panama by Henderson and Ferreira for 10 days in June 2000.
3. Analysis of data by Henderson and Ferreira from July to September 2000
4. Submission of manuscript for publication in October 2000

Budget

Two round trip airfares New York-Panama City..... .....$1586.80*
Four-wheel-drive vehicle hire for 7 days in Panama.....$ 630.00
Per diems for 10 days (two people) @ $60.00 per day.....$1200.00
Collecting permit.....$ 100.00

Total Budget.....$3516.80

Total amount requested from Central Florida Chapter.....$500.00

*Prices quoted by World Travel Service, May 2000

HOW MUCH IS YOUR TROPICAL LANDSCAPING WORTH? $ VALUE IN THE EYE OF SELLER AND BUYER $

By Thad Magyar
Santa Rosa, Texas
(This article was published in the Palm Society of South Texas Bulletin, Winter, 1998, and is reprinted with the permission of the editor, Rich Travis, and of the author.)

In my profession, as a real estate appraiser, I am often asked, "How does landscaping affect the value of my property?" Many people wonder what the dollar return is, when they spend large amounts of money landscaping their yard. We, as palm nuts, wonder if we will ultimately reap a monetary reward for our lengthy hours of dedication to our hobby.

Looking at palms in a nursery, sometimes we come across a large pot of *Rhapis excelsa* and see the whopping price of $1000 or more for a single cluster. We may have several similar clumps of these palms stuck in an obscure corner of the yard. Will this add $1000 per clump in value to our property? How about all of the small palms we have grown from one gallon pots which were planted many years ago, and now these palms are 30 to 40 feet in height? How does the cost of the movement of large palms (at great expense) into our gardens affect the overall value? What about rare or exotic palms that are really collector's items? Let's look at the facts. To examine the worth of this landscaping, there is need to understand some basic valuation principles.

When any property is appraised, three separate approaches to value are considered. The first approach is the cost approach. What this approach does is reconstruct the cost of the improvements as if new, then depreciate these improvements, and, finally, add the value of the land. (Besides the main house, improvements include the site improvements, such as driveways, walks, wells, septic systems, or whatever.)

So far, it sounds as though the more you put into the property, the more it is worth. Wait a minute. Let's look at step two, depreciation. Depreciation comes in several forms. First, there is physical depreciation. This is the depreciation which is caused by normal wear. It can also consist of items which require replacement periodically, such as water heater, carpets, and vinyl flooring. These items should be replaced periodically to prevent **excessive** loss due to their deterioration. The second type of depreciation is functional. This type of depreciation is created by lack of utility (usefulness), or problems built into a property. Examples could be bedrooms without closets, additions which create poor floorplans, garage conversions which leave properties with inadequate parking, a single bathroom in a community which typically has two bathrooms, and even simple problems associated with inadequate electrical switches or outlets.

Beautiful, yes? But what is this landscaping worth when the property is sold? (Tampa scene, from March meeting)

The third type of depreciation is economic. This depreciation is caused by problems outside of the property. A few examples are a smell from a nearby dump, noise or heavy traffic from a factory or commercial establishment adjacent to your homesite, and can even be an eyesore from an abandoned or unkempt property on the same street. These negative factors all need to be taken into consideration when valuing a property. At this time, we have not addressed how landscaping affects the value, and we will soon discuss this, but let's go on to get an understanding of another approach to value.'

The second approach is the comparable approach. This approach compares your property to others which have sold in the area recently. This approach is based on current market activity, and this is the approach that most appraisers rely on for typical residential properties. Here is an example of how this approach works. Several houses have sold that have the same characteristics, such as size, location, age,

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Landscape values

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and condition. Your house has a one car garage. Three recent sales are virtually identical, with the exception of garages. Sale#1 has a two car garage and sold for $75,000. Sale #3 has no garage and sold for $71,000. Your house lies in between the sale prices and would most likely be worth $73,000 since you have a one car garage. This is an oversimplification, many sales are required to develop a pattern, but what it shows is that market is the driving force rather than cost or depreciation.

The third and final approach is the income approach. It is generally applied to income property and, in the residential market, it involves rental properties. The rentals are matched and the value is virtually backed into, based on sales of rental property. In other words, if a house sells for $75,000 and the typical rent on that property can be established at $700 per month, and you have a property which rents for $900 with little vacancy, a value can then be backed into which should indicate that your value is above $75,000. This is the least reliable of all the approaches since data is scarce. It is rarely used by appraisers to evaluate a property unless the subject property is or will be a rental property. What this approach does show, however, is how much a renter will pay for certain amenities.

Let's now look at the landscaped yard and see how it fits into the three approaches. First, it is necessary to establish that this feature must be attractive or desirable to have a positive reaction to the real estate market. A professionally landscaped yard is an attraction to the eye. It softens the hard straight lines of brick homes, frames the property, and generally provides an appeal of basic nature which we predominantly share. A poorly landscaped yard can have an opposite effect. A hobglob of plants stuck into a yard with little planning or forethought may create a weedy appearance or a nuisance as far as any potential purchase is concerned, and this potential buyer may balk at the property. Neglect is as bad as overgrowth, in most cases. Keep in mind that here are various types of potential purchasers. Some may have an eye for plants, others may not see beyond the kitchen cabinets, but some may see the large clumps of *Arenga* or *Rhapis* and realize the high costs and the time involved in growing these plants. They may see that with some clearing, this overgrown yard can easily be made attractive by leaving the best of the plants, removing the excess, and if necessary, supplementing plants of their own desire.

A young Cyphophoenix nucele, *one of the several species of New Caledonia palms that may be grown in Florida. Photographed in Jardin Carlson, Vero Beach.*

I am sorry to say, however, that most potential buyers don't see this. One thing to point out is the general attitude to palms that I have experienced. Typically, when people first visit or move from the north into our area, they fall in love with the palms. After a few years, the palms fall in place with the other plants. We must realize that many of the people who have lived in this area for a long time (maybe all of their lives), look at the palm with disdain. To many, the palm is an unattractive creature with thorns which holds roaches, and dies at the first sign of a freeze. They believe that trimming the trees is a must, and they consider the palms as totally ugly unless they are skinned to the bone. Trimming is costly since the foliage is too far from the ground. The only palm they recognize is the Mexican fan palm. You can write most of this group of people off of your list as potential buyers.

I have seen many people who claim to hate palms, but even these haters can often be turned around when they see the lushness of a well planted yard, especially during a bleak drizzly winter. My point of this conversation is that if we are looking for the top return on our property, we must realize that when we place our particular objects of affection into our yard, many people will not have the same appetite.

There is a potential buyer for every property. In mar-

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LANDSCAPE VALUES

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keting your property, forget the palm haters and plan on selling to a newly arrived Northerner or plant lovers. There are plenty of both to create a potential market. Just remember, keep your landscaping attractive. **Attractiveness of the overall scene is a must for there to be additional value. The additional value is based on their desire to purchase your property over other unattractive parcels.** Also remember this: the more of an untypical item that we place into our yard, which individualizes our property, the more of a loss in value is possible. Let's face it, exotic palms freeze. Dead trees require removal. Removal is hard work and costly.

Make sure that the base plantings for your yard consist of hardy plants with a few exotic knock outs for the salt and pepper. Don't put in a costly yard full of palms unless you are content to lose your investment at the time of sale. Thousands of dollars of unusual palms will have a small return in value. This is one of the real estate fundamentals based on a valuation principle referred to as "diminishing returns," which states that there is an increase in value with additional amenities to a point of saturation. At this point, additional amenities return a lesser amount. If additional amenities are added after this point, a total loss may be expected.

Palms will hit this saturation point fast. This is generally calculated as functional obsolescence due to the overbuilt nature of the property. This would be reflected in a similar problem of owning the largest and best quality house in a subdivision. It would be difficult to market this overbuilt house and expect the same value as the same property would return in a neighborhood where all of the houses are as large and similar in quality.

To express the extreme, try selling a house with two swimming pools. The second pool would add no value unless you would be in a market where two pools are common or considered desirable. Little chance. In a valuation concerning a palm collection, most appraisers would simply not include the cost of the palms when calculating the cost approach since this value would have to be subtracted for functional obsolescence, and this loss would be difficult to describe or measure. **Summation: The cost approach indicates that palms generally add little additional value to your property.**

Next, let's consider the market approach. Since all three approaches should indicate approximately the same value, we are not off on a good start. I have a

The angle here emphasizes the trunk girth of a Washingtonia filifera*, which is not all that common in Florida.. Mark Grabowski shot this at Dr. Young's in March.*

short story to tell regarding the market approach. I appraised a property in Los Fresnos to secure a loan for a sale. The property had a beautiful view of a resaca (an oxbow lake). This yard was filled with palms which were planted several owners ago. Trying to keep my subjective attitude about plants in the background, I could not help but look and admire the attractiveness of this yard. My tendencies were to give additional credit to the property due to the lushness of the tract of land. I gave the property every benefit of the doubt and mentioned the palms and plants several times throughout the appraisal. Plants are not necessarily permanent. Two weeks after the property closed, I drove by the house and, to my dismay, the palms were all cut down and the beautiful shrubbery had all been removed. The owner was in the yard with several workers, and they were cutting the remains of the palm trunks into small sections so they could be loaded onto a truck for disposal. I couldn't resist stopping and asking the new owner, "Why?" He told me that the plants were a nuisance. He wanted a yard which was easy to mow with no objects to obstruct the job. I still can't believe it.

If I would have added value to the property for the landscaping, the additional value attributed would have been gone. If the house would be repossessed, there could be a problem with the value that this per-

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son had paid for the property. This place had gone from beautiful to ugly. There is a loss in value to this property, the neighborhood, and as far as I am concerned, to the valley. I still am disappointed by this homeowner's actions. It, of course, is his property and I hope he enjoys the electric bills which he surely will incur due to the loss of shade and protection from the wind which would be provided by the plants.

Anyway, this is a rather bleak example and an exception, however Alice Garza and Mahandron had a similar situation when they sold their previous home which was landscaped to the fullest. A large portion of their plants were removed, leaving a bleak landscape. In most cases, thank heavens, this does not happen, and generally new owners enjoy the planting and care of the plants surrounding their new castle. When comparables are available which have beautifully landscaped yards, additional value can be allocated from sales which are similar.

Keep this in mind. A standard house will not be compared to a mansion just because both are landscaped. The properties must be similar in many aspects other than their yards. The mansions often require landscaping and are often discounted for a lack thereof. This is generally found in the market on this type of home. Simple properties often have little more than a couple of shrubs and a cottonwood tree. When the subject property lacks sales of landscaped yards, landscaping is not given much consideration in performing an appraisal. The upper end of the indicated range is about the best that can be counted on for additional value. Thus, if three comparable sales indicate a value of $90,000 to $100,000, the upper end would seem reasonable and a value of $100,000 would seem reasonable if all other factors concerning quality, condition, age, and living area are similar. If you sell your home to someone, and typically financing arrangements are needed, an appraisal will be required. Rarely will the planted yard be given much, if any, additional value in an appraisal.

If a plant person is lucky enough to sell his property to another plant loving person, and additional value for the plants is considered in the sales price, the property may not appraise at the negotiated value. Any value above the appraised value must be paid in cash or the contract will need to be renegotiated downwards. Landscaping, for appraisal purposes, is best evaluated when the comparables all have equally good landscaping. The best test for any individual item in the comparable approach is to find comparables that have the same similar item and extract this information if possible. These factors vary from neighborhood to neighborhood and from one day to the next. The market is difficult to assess since different people require different amenities and this requirement is forever changing. **Summation: The market approach offers little relief from the bad news found in the cost approach.**

One of the sights at PalmFest: Mauritia flexuosa, *high, dry, and happy at Ruth Sallenbach's. Usually, this is a palm that grows in swamps.*

The final approach based on income is the last approach. We aren't going to dwell much with this approach. It is used so seldom in appraisals that little weight can be given to this method. One thing that should be considered in this approach is the amount of rent which can be obtained from a piece of property. Would a renter be willing to pay additional rent for a palm enclosed yard over a yare with few or no plants? He may be, but if he does, he will not want to work in the yard to maintain the attractiveness. This would leave the gardening up to the owner and maintenance can be costly. The added expense would then be deducted from the income and virtually no additional income would be derived. **Summation: Looks like your landscaping isn't worth a darn, based on all three approaches.**

Final Considerations

Then why in sam hell should we bother to landscape the yard and to spend large portions of our lives toiling in this hot Texas sun? I will tell you why. I am both an appraiser and a palm nut. Not only do I grow palms, I have an assortment of tropical fruit trees that some day will freeze and I will chop every dead plant to the ground with my reliable, unforgiving chain saw. Wow, that sounds optimistic. Not only that, I have built aviaries, bird pens, outbuildings, palapas, outside

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U. S. F. Spring Sale Wrap Up

By Tom Broome

On April 8th and 9th, the CFPACS had their spring sale at the University of South Florida in Tampa. I think this season's sale was the best we have had in the last 5 years. The group thought that the drought might have kept people from buying plants, but we were all pleased that even in the first couple hours, most of us had some large holes in our plant areas. **After the** first day, we all were looking at new records for first day sales. Many people came out to see the plants and just talk about palms and cycads. Some people just came out because they had questions about their plants that were already in their yard. We always have people helping to answer anyone's questions, and to give out information to new people. We handed out quite a few of our chapter applications that also have lists of palms and cycads that can be grown in our area, and the cultural specifics for all of these species. We also passed out many of the new IPS flyers that have just been distributed.

I would like to thank Edgar Hall and Lou Norris for helping with the money on Saturday, and Mike Merritt for helping out on Sunday. I'd like to also thank Ray Hernandez for helping the cashiers and answering questions. Lastly I would like to thank Frank and Jennie Tintera, as well as Frank and Linda Brandt, because without our vendors none of this would happen.

I think everyone who came out had a good time, and we look forward to the Fall sale. If there is anyone who wants to be a vendor, try to get a hold of me during the year.

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showers, bridges, patios, and an unending sidewalk that have the same addition to value as my palms have. Each has functional obsolescence to the point of no return. The reason I have this is because I love it. This is a way of life. I am in paradise. I love the sweat, tears and frustrations that Texas weather throws at us. I love the look of parrots peering through the rods of a bamboo palm. I love strolling through my garden wondering what plant will be in bloom today. The sounds of the parrots' calls, the creaking of the bamboo, and the wild pandemonium of the chachalacas is intriguing.

People spend thousands of dollars taking cruises to exotic places. I live in one. All of us spend our money to live the kind of life we want. People who take cruises rarely ever have any return on their dollar, either. So watch me. Every time I have a spare buck, I will invest it in my lifestyle. I will continue to build the bizarre. I must say that I am not alone. Come to the palm meetings and you will see, we are all a bunch of bananas, some are just more ripe than others.

Final Thoughts

The best manner for the palm collector to retain the value in his palms is to do three things. Keep your expensive palms in pots or large containers. These are then considered personal property and you can take them whenever you sell your house. Also, if they are in pots or containers, they will not receive the stress which ground removal would cause, if you wanted to take them when you relocate. (They cannot be removed if they were planted in the ground since this considered real property.) If you do not want to move these potted palms, you can sell them. Note: Large palms in pots are commonly sought and they can always be sold to Gunter if a nursery won't buy them. Second: When planting, buy small palms and place them in the ground. Keep the overall investment low, thus any loss will be insignificant. The planting of palms may be the bait that sinks the hook into the potential buyer.

Although values are not greatly improved, someone may not be able to live without your yard, making negotiations easier, and also marketing time may be greatly reduced. The third and final recommendation is to advertise your property in a palm journal, gardening magazine and/or a retirement publication when you plant to move. Many people planning on retiring have their eye on the south. They love the thought of a palm filled yard. Most retirees do not have the time to start their yard from scratch, and often they deal in cash, thus an appraisal is not essential. Remember this. Gardening is not for monetary purposes. Gardening is for the health, health of both body and mind. It is extremely rewarding, so keep it up. Build your Shangri-La right here in Texas.

$$$

Pictures in this issue of The Palmateer *were provided by Roger Bachmann, Mark Grabowski, Michael K. Dahme, Ed Carlson, Peter Mayotte, and Moffie Bidlingmayer. The Editor invites others to send pictures. On the back, please identify the subject and give your name.*

PalmFest 2000

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species) was given to each registrant. Tours of the garden were led by several people, so the group we went with was small enough for us to hear the guide and to ask questions. It is a wonderful garden with many species of palms and cycads, some very large.

Ruth's husband, Hank, started collecting palms about 30 years ago. Our guide was able to tell us a great deal about the plants, some still unidentified since Hank had not always labeled the plants. Apparently, many were still in pots when Hank died and Ruth has been working to get them into the ground. The day was warm but not uncomfortable and soda and water were available for everyone throughout the morning. At noon a sack lunch was provided and we all sat among the palms and enjoyed the food, the surroundings, and the conversations.

After lunch, we headed for the garden of Ann and Norm Moody. What a wonderful "jungle"! We loved the big old palms, cycads, and other tropical plants. Upon arriving, we were met by Ann and Norm and welcomed to their garden. Once again, we followed a knowledgeable guide and trekked through the forest, learning about the diversity and history of the plants and asking question. Norm and Ann, we were told, "pioneered" the property, building their own house and planting a wide variety of plants. Everyone's comfort was aided by the availability of soda and bottled water and, no less importantly, by Norm's invitation and directions to restrooms, if needed.

Returning to the hotel, we relaxed at the pool and enjoyed talking with other palm and cycad enthusiasts, including several we had not met before. One couple came all the way from Houston, Texas! We had further opportunities for "palms" conversations at the social before the banquet. A variety of snacks and a cash bar kept the conversations going until time for the banquet.

Following a very nice meal which included shrimp cocktail, stuffed roast Cornish hen, and a yummy dessert, we listened to Don Hodel tell us about "The Palms of New Caledonia." Most of the palms shown were new to us, and we found the talk very interesting. He opened the talk with an introduction to New Caledonia, (including where it is for those of us hazy on its location), with a description of the island and its geography. The island has a ridge along its axis, separating dry and wet sides, providing diverse habitats and thus a variety of palm species. Don took a taxonomic organization to introduce us to New Caledonian palms, describing and showing slides of the species in each genus. Following the talk was the drawing for door prizes. Even though our numbers were not called (I had my eye on one palm), we enjoyed seeing the plants, the objects, and books go to happy winners. Don's book, *The Palms of New Caledonia*, was one of the raffle items and also available for purchase.

Below, the 'jungle' at the Moodys', second visited garden at PalmFest. The posed youngsters are unimpressed by the Kerriodoxa elegans *beside them.. The boys are Danny and Andy Palm, sons of Greg and Charlene Palm. Jasmine Nash, right, calls Mike Dahme "Grandpa."*

The next morning (Sunday), was spent in the lovely Ann Norton Sculpture Garden. We enjoyed seeing the large art pieces in a setting of our favorite plants. New palms are continually being planted and the garden is getting new walks. It was a lovely place to wander and become acquainted with some unusual palms (fortunately labeled). Rather than the common palms normally seen in a public garden, we were pleasantly surprised to see many rare and exotic species, including some of the New Caledonian palms Don Hodel had described at the talk the night before. Lunch at noon was much more than the advertised "box lunch." A variety of sandwiches, salads, fruits, and dessert was a veritable feast in the garden. Tables were available, as were benches in among the plants.

The auction followed lunch. A number of interesting plants were brought for the auction. However, we didn't stay for this, as we were continuing on south to the Keys for a conference which would last several days, so we couldn't take plants with us.

PalmFest 2000 was great! Our thanks to everyone who made the meeting a real success. We look forward to the next one. *[Not so far to drive, Marilyn, only to Melbourne for PalmFest 2001; see page 22.—Editor]*

ASK TOM

By Tom Broome

Hi Tom,

At what point should you begin to fertilize seedlings? I have several seedlings I have grown from seed and have their first leaves and I want to keep them happy.

There are basically two kinds of granular fertilizer. Top dress, and incorporation. A top dress is something that is made to be applied on top of the soil. It usually is a little hotter, and should not be used until the plant is established for at least a month. If you use a fertilizer that is incorporated, this is something that is mixed in the soil. When I pot anything up, I mix the fertilizer in the soil, and then put the plants in at once. Your time release fertilizers are usually a product that can be incorporated. Nutricote and Osmocote are types of time release fertilizers, and Pre-Mix with minors is a type of top dress that I have used in the past.

I am receiving an *E. gratus* (about 2-2.5 inch caudex) thru the mail and the shipper is sending it with roots, minus leaves. Should any special care be taken or should I pot it up as normal and wait for new leaves or will it
be more susceptible to rot? Thanks, Darin

I would say there isn't any special instructions, other than what you would do for any newly brought in plant. The important thing to remember is that there are no leaves, so the plant does not give off moisture. There is not that great of a need to water the plant until new leaves are produced. I would water it in if the soil were very dry, maybe once a week? I would keep the plant in the shade also, so the sun won't burn the bare stem.

What is the likelihood of mature cycad roots to lift up or crack cement driveways, sidewalks, patios, etc. if planted too close or near them, the same way big trees do? Thanks Tom! Mike

Encephalartos ferox *(male) seen happily growing at Ed & Joyce Carlson's in Vero Beach Aerodrome.*

If you give a cycad at least 2 feet of soil, I don't think you would ever have a problem. They don't have such a large root system to cause problems. Also, cycad roots don't get all that hard like Oak tree roots are *when they are near the surface. Concrete would be a lot stronger. What you really have to worry about is having the concrete too close to the plant, and having a problem with pH.*

Would concrete pots affect the pH of the soil (where cycads are planted in them)??? George

I think it would affect the pH a lot. The exchange of water would slowly leach out small amounts of alkaline material and could cause some problem with minor elements in the soil. I would suggest sealing the pots before you use them to cut down on this exchange.

OK, this is a quiz for those more knowledgeable than the Editor. Name this beautiful cycad seen in Tampa in March that came without an ID. The inflorescence is, in color, a stunning golden.

SERENOA REPENS: A WORLD IN ITSELF, POLLINATORS & PREDATORS

By John Kennedy

Dr. Mark Deyrup, research biologist at the Archbold Biological Station in Lake Placid, gave a presentation on the evening of May 18 to the Eugenia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS), in Vero Beach. His topic was "Pollination Ecology: Case History of Saw Palmetto." The hour-long talk opened with Dr. Deyrup's wry acknowledgment that we—scientists and the public—often know more about rare plants living precariously in threatened environments than we do about more commonplace, unthreatened plants about which lies no sadness of imminent loss. He didn't mention the chief threat to his subject, the bulldozer of development. However, not much is known about saw palmetto other than that its fruit is used in medications for the treatment of enlarged prostates.

Archbold Biological Station's 5000 acres of Florida scrub (including an 80-acre lake) is in the center of the state; its mission is to study the plant and animal communities in this highly specialized habitat. Generally speaking, the Central Florida scrub is super drained and hilly; shells can be found on its edges which were once lapped by the ocean eons ago. As an entomologist, Dr. Deyrup's research interest is in the insects that visit *Serenoa*, rather than in the plant itself, but he has learned, in the process, a good deal about the species.

Saw palmetto usually has undamaged leaves. Insects that might attack the leaves are deterred by the wax that covers them and by the fact that leaves are held upright: there's no foothold and any insect is immediately visible to its predators. Upright leaves also work to the plant's advantage in the periodic fires that are part of the scrub ecology. The waxy leaves catch fire easily but hold the fire away from the soft heart of the plant, sending the fire directly into higher growing plants—mostly pines. The sawteeth that give the species its common descriptive name are mostly at the petiole base, another protective measure.

Floridians are familiar with large rural areas covered with *Serenoa repens*. Individual plants can be very large, covering considerable areas. Their age, the Archbold scientists believe, can be estimated by measuring the usually recumbent stems. In most habitats, growth is 1.5-2.0 cm a year. Thus, many very large plants are hundreds of years old, possibly as much as 600 years old. (The Editor's one-gallon *Serenoa*, gift of Bill Bidlingmayer, has in 20 years grown arms to menace the driveway and the walkway to the front door. Some of the 16 individual arms or trunks are 6-7 feet long. But the plant is located in the front lawn downslope from the drainfield and has little competition aside from the neglected grass: water speeds up growth.)

Mary Carrington, another Archbold scientist, has done the first study of *Serenoa* flowers which is now moving through the steps (expert review, etc.) toward publication. Flowers stay open about four days and are not self-fertile. The stigma does not open when pollen is ready. Cross-pollinated plants have a higher fruit set though, even here, only 18% set fruit. Since there may be thousands of flowers on a plant, this may not be surprising.

***Serenoa* is** "a great place to live," according to Mark Deyrup. . . if you are a bug. He views the plant as a resource base that supports a complexity of systems, with insects visiting it for nectar, pollen, and for predation. Major pollinators are honeybees and lovebugs which do interfere with an entomologist's wish to find more interesting insects. What he has found, however, is that saw palmetto attracts 109 species of flies, 91 species of bees and wasps, 43 kinds of beetles, 20 species of moths and butterflies, and 31 miscellaneous sorts of insects. The grand total is an amazing 294 species of visitors, not including entomologists. Saw palmetto performs an important function as an interim food plant for insects whose major flower source has not yet bloomed, and when other flowers are scarce. In Indian River County, and in much of Central Florida, *Serenoa repens* blooms in April and May.

Mark Deyrup's presentation included slides showing the unfamiliar beauty of the flowers that are too small to be seen easily with the naked eye. His witty comments were punctuated by close up views of the many insects that are part of the saw palmetto community. He is the author of a recently published softcover book, *Florida's Fabulous Insects* (Tampa: World Publications, 2000). Aimed at a general audience, the color photographs are little short of spectacular.

Archbold Botanical Station has, of course, a website with much information about the Florida scrub and a curriculum aimed at elementary and middle school students on this specialized ecology. Part of this curriculum deals with saw palmetto. The address: www.archbold-station.org

From the Editor's Desk

So, PalmFest was a great success. At least 120 registered ahead of time for the two-day event and a number of others registered at arrival.. Then, there were "day-trippers" who toured the gardens but did not attend the banquet. There was no financial loss. The weather cooperated in being hot, but not yet unspeakable, in the 80s, with a light breeze and moderate humidity. The palms at Ruth Sallenbach's were in perfect condition for the admiring crowd. Here the setting is park-like, with open spaces and stretches of lawn. The jungle at Norm and Ann Moody's was beautiful in a totally different way. Here, a visitor can see no farther than about 20 feet before there's a bend in the path. Only things missing are monkeys and macaws. . . oh, Norm, I didn't mean it, you don't have to get some! The Palm Beach chapter is to be congratulated on providing an event so well organized and substantial.

This issue of *The Palmateer* was delayed in order that it might contain an account and pictures of PalmFest. Since there is no meeting in June, there was no necessity to get the newsletter to members as early as possible.

We survived the winter, Deo gratias. Now, we have to survive the drought. For Vero Beach, the average rainfall for May is 4.36 inches; as of 31May, the recorded total is 0.36 inch. Lots and lots of watering, and the citrus groves are parched. It's La Niña, I have been told. But I thought La Niña was ending, though maybe not as quickly as we would like. The next obstacle to survive is hurricane season which is, unfortunately, predicted to be an active one. We all remember last year's Hurricane Floyd, especially those of us who wound up visiting Bayou LaBatre, Alabama, and also Hurricane Irene. I have noticed that the hurricane-bent crownshafts (Irene) have produced bent leaves on *Carpenteria* and on *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*, but the crownshafts appear to have straightened, so normal leaves are on the way.

Probably what will happen, as far as rainfall goes, is what has occurred before: we go from Dust Bowl to the ark, from no rain at all to 12 inches in two days (for starters). I think we should order up a tropical wave—most of the rain a hurricane might bring, without the wind or accompanying tornadoes. Some years back, it seems to me that we were saved in one dry summer by a tropical wave. It rained for three days straight, brought us up to average rainfall for the year, and Florida turned from brown to green in as many days.

Dave Witt, aka David E. Witt, aka David Edwin Witt, membership chair, borrowed my slides to illustrate a presentation on palms that he made several weeks ago to a homeowner's association meeting in Orlando. I haven't heard yet whether he talked anyone into joining CFPACS. If anyone else is out there proselytizing, let me know of your experiences.

A person knowledgeable about membership matters in another plant society tells me that a 1% return on flyers or membership forms is the norm; this to my complaint that while I know membership brochures have been picked up in my home county, no new members have joined CFPACS from Indian River County. Maybe it's necessary to be more pushy, like the Brevardians, and less discreet and tasteful than has been the case here.

You will have noticed that there are no pictures of me in this issue, grimacing next to some misfortunate palm. I won't say there were complaints, exactly, but my presence is only background and relatively invisible in several pictures. The shocking-pink shirt (not red, Mike, which isn't PC in Florida, anyway), which I often wear to meetings, would identify me in any color picture, even if my face can't be seen. But these are black-and-white pictures here, so I remain safely anonymous, part of the palm chorus behind the major figures in the foreground.

Now that *Wodyetia bifurcata* has been around for , what, almost 10 years, surely it can't be the hot item it once was. What is, or will be, the next "hot" palm? *Dypsis lastelliana*? But we haven't all been exactly successful with palms from Madagascar, though I have been told that my failures with several species have been due to my slipshod attentions, not out there every day with the water, the iron, the magnesium. People like me don't deserve to have a palm from Madagascar.

Is there anyone reading this—Paul Craft?—who can explain soils to me? When I read that a palm grows in "serpentine" soils, I know I am being given important information, if only I understood what the term means. I have come to realize that when I read such terms (another is "laterite"), that I had better not try to grow the palm mentioned. Actually, I'd like some-

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From the Editor's Desk

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one knowledgeable to write an explanation of these soil terms for the next issue of the newsletter. Any volunteers can contact me.

Andy Warhol said that everyone was entitled to 15 minutes of fame. I've had seven, I believe, before it faded out on me. Four people have mentioned to me my account of giving a slide show on palms, which appears in the current issue of *Principes* (no, *Palms*). One person in Henderson, Nevada, e-mailed me to request a copy of my handout which Natalie Uhl had asked me to make available to anyone who might wish it.

Speaking of fame, I was recognized by a fiftyish bag-womanperson at Publix after I appeared on local TV in early April. "Talk of the Coast," hosted by Marcia Littlejohn, is seen over a low-power local station and is visible from Lakewood Park (northern St. Lucie County) to Gifford (just north of Vero Beach), a distance of maybe 15 miles. For 15 minutes, I answered questions and gave very basic information, presenting the hostess with the gift of a small *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*. I also lugged in, to place by my chair, a large *Chamaedorea seifrizii* that I had always meant to plant, and never did. My son taped my performance which has not yet, as far as I know, been seen by the TV critics of CFPACS (and I hope to keep it that way). I am to be invited to return for another go-round in the summer ahead. The station couldn't , in April, use my slides, but will be able to do so, shortly. (Dave!)

Our next chapter meeting is September 9. The deadline for material to be submitted for the September issue (which must be mailed out at the end of August) is August 7. There's very little flexibility with this because of my work schedules and the time constraints, so **please** get anything to me for September by August 7.

—John Kennedy

It takes greater character to carry off good fortune than bad.

—LaRochefoucauld, Maxim #25

Misinformation Department:

A book by a well-known and popular gardening author illustrates his ignorance of palms (and cycads) or--at the very least--the ignorance or sloppiness of his editor. Unfortunately, innocent readers are on their own. The book, *Florida Exotics*, by Jack Kramer, is a slim hardcover volume published in 1998 by Taylor Publishing of Dallas. Its purpose seems to be to provide basic and superficial information on gingers, bromeliads, palms, and other tropical plants to newcomers to Florida. There are some pretty color pictures. One shows what is captioned as a multi-trunked *Phoenix canariensis* in a pot; though the picture is not as distinct as it should be, the plant looks very much like *Cycas revoluta*. In the text, the author remarks what a good pot plant this palm is and that he has had one. (Does he mean the cycad?) Another picture of a "coconut palm" is that of a royal. "*Arenga engleri*" appears under a picture of *Phoenix roebelenii,"* while "Cocos palms in the landscape" seem to be paurotis. "*Sabal minor*" is under another picture that is very clearly paurotis. A row of "*Washingtonia robusta*" is none other than a row of queen palms.

The text mentions *Sabal palmetti*, that's right, with an I-ending, but there are other misstatements and choices of species that make clear that the author knows very little about palms despite his oracular tone. *Sabal minor* , he says, gets quite large The zone choices for species recommended in the text indicate that these were taken from a book; some, common with us (e.g. *Bismarckia*), are said to grow only in Zones 10 and 11. But, then, Kramer recommends *Cocos nucifera* for Zones 9, 10, and 11; he also mentions the suitability of *Jubaea chilensis* as a street tree. A paragraph on cycads lists several genera but provides little beyond the names. It's difficult to know whether we are to laugh or cry, so woeful are the errors

Can readers depend on the accuracy of the information on gingers, aroids, and bromeliads? I'll leave that decision to those more knowledgeable than myself.

--John Kennedy

Ceratozamia kuesteriana: A Cycad for Central Florida

By Tom Broome

John Kennedy had asked a question for the " Ask Tom" column, about cycads that would be easiest to grow for a beginner. These plants should be fairly cold hardy, and should be easier to maintain. These plants should also be fairly easy to find as well. Anything other than king sagos and cardboard plants might be a little hard to find at your local store, but these plants are usually sold at the society sales. Instead of just listing a few plants, I thought I would go into more detail on each species and have a different species in each issue.

Ceratozamia kuesteriana is one of the cycads that is perfect for growing in central Florida. This plant comes from the state of Tamaulipas, in Mexico. The ground there is poor, so it can tolerate growing in our sandy soil here in Florida. I have found that this species is very cold and frost hardy. I had some plants out in the open during a freeze that had a low of 20F, and a blanketing frost, but none of the plants showed even a hint of frost damage. *Ceratozamia kuesteriana* has a subterranean stem, so the plant can survive temperatures in the lower teens. I have seen leaves and exposed stems get damaged at 17F.

Ceratozamia kuesteriana makes a great landscape plant because it is one of the only cycads that don't have any spines on the leaflets, or the petioles. Because they are "unarmed", they can be planted near traffic areas. They attain a five to six foot spread, so they don't get too large for most landscape applications. They can be planted in the shade or full sun, but they look their best in light shade to give them the best color. I have found that they also produce seeds better when grown in the shade. These cycads are unique because they have brown emergent leaves. This means that when the new leaves come out, they are brown, and turn to green as they harden up. During this period of growth, some leaves and leaflets will turn green at different times so that the plant will have a variety of colors for a few weeks. As a landscaper, I have found that these cycads look very nice when they are surrounded with Aztec grass, a variegated border grass. The white grass and the brown leaves have a really nice contrast that looks good in the landscape. Both these plants perform well in the shade, so they can be used as understory plants, amongst plantings of oak trees or large palms. I have found that these plants perform moderately to fertilizer applications, and will usually produce leaves two to three times a year. As long as the soil drains well, the plants can tolerate a great deal of water, but on the other hand can be also grown in a xeriscape situation.

Above, Tom's suggested cycad for beginners in Central Florida, Ceratozamia kuesteriana, *is indeed lovely and lush.*

All cycads are on the endangered species list. The most endangered species are on appendix 1, where the least endangered plants are on appendix 3. All cycads are on either appendix 1 or 2. All Ceratozamias, including *C. kuesteriana* are on appendix 1. In habitat, there are an estimated 1200 mature plants. The locality has been made into a national park and little poaching is happening, so these plants are fairly safe for now. They produce seeds very easily in Florida, and it is not uncommon for a female to produce a cone that will hold more than 200 seeds. Older plants can form a cluster, so it is possible for a large plant to produce up to 1000 seeds in one season. There are at least a dozen individuals in Florida who have small colonies for seed production, so these plants should easily be found for sale by cycad collectors.

Ceratozamia kuesteriana would be a great plant for any novice cycad collector to grow. It can be grown almost anywhere in Florida, but until people start getting familiar with this species, it will only be seen in private collections and botanical gardens.

We are never so happy or so unhappy as we think.
--LaRochefoucauld, Maxim #49

Where to See Palms

GIZELLA KOPSICK PALMETUM, ST. PETERSBURG
A Central Florida Palm Paradise

By Ray Hernandez

Here's something that can be disputed but in my humble opinion, the St. Petersburg bay front is the warmest location in west central Florida on cold winter nights. Even when the entire area falls below freezing any given January or February, the bay front seems to stay just a notch above. Even the dreaded 1989 freeze only dropped temps into the upper twenties, which would have been welcomed by the rest of us. Maybe Mrs. Elva Rouse, a local resident and park volunteer, knew this back in the mid 1970's when she proposed that a palm arboretum might be a good idea. Shortly thereafter, the St. Pete city council decided to adopt the proposal. It was then that long time palm admirer Gizella Kopsick donated some stock to get the ball rolling and out of the proposal stage. In 1976, the vision became a reality and the Gizella Kopsick Arboretum was born.

Miss Kopsick was confined to a wheelchair so all facilities within the park were carefully designed to make life easier for the handicapped and the elderly. When the park was dedicated on May 16, 1977, a winding brick path with benches and a gazebo were among the structures to be found amidst the arboretums 60 palms. The initial planting covered only 10 genera, which was pretty good considering the limited number of palms readily available at the time. Subsequent donations have occurred throughout the years with the park now consisting of well over 300 palms in 70 genera.

Some of the original specimens have attained great size in the parks 24 year history and many have perished. Most noticeable, are the giant Cuban Royals visible from the distance towering above the park. The park contains common clumpers such as *Caryota mitis, Phoenix reclinata, Arenga engleri, Rhapis excelsa*, and *Acoelorraphe wrightii*. There are several palms here that seriously question the area zone 9B classification.

These consist of Spindle and Bottle palms, *Pseudophoenix vinifera*, *Thrinax radiata*, Foxtails, King Alexanders, and more noticeably, Jamaican Tall coconuts. The latter have all just about been wiped out by lethal yellowing in south Florida. *Phoenix rupicola*, *sylvestris*, *canariensis*, *theophrasti*, and *dactylifera* are present with some containing huge, noisy Quaker parakeet nests further adding a tropical feeling. The giant *Arenga pinnata*s that were part of the original planting are the most noticeable absentees in the current Kopsick collection. These monocarpic palms produced seed about two years ago and have since been replaced by juveniles in the exact same spot where their predecessors stood. Also nearby is their new addition, *Corypha utan*, never before planted inside the park. These will someday produce good shade on the parks north side. *Sabal*s are well represented with the giant trunked *causiarum* being the tallest of the group. The *Bismarckia*s put in less than 5 or 6 years ago have become the giants of the park's west end and seem to double in size every year. *Latania* is also present, as are young *Coccothrinax argentata*s and *crinita*s. An interesting sight is the park centering *Dypsis decaryi* missing a huge portion of its trunk. It's seems obvious the freezes that infrequently visit the arboretum have taken their toll on this palm. I assume this is what Roy Works described as low cold trunk hardiness at Dr. Young's residence recently. In short, the arboretum is a treasure for palm lovers and all those who might enjoy a taste of the tropics right here in our own backyard. It also provides all of us with a slither of hope that a Bottle palm may just survive for a quite a few years in our own front yards.

The park is located on North Shore Drive at the foot of 10th Ave N.E., just north of the historic Vinoy Resort on St. Petersburg's sunbathed bay front.

CFPACS will host PalmFest 2001 in a location probably on the East Coast, in and around Melbourne. No details are available at this point. Much has to be discussed and arranged, including the date. Tune in for further details, right here in *The Palmateer*. (Marilyn, 100 miles closer to Gainesville!)

Seedbank Report

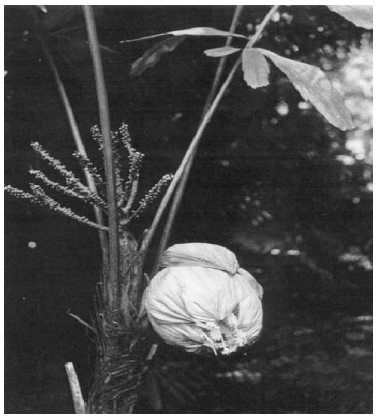
By Mike Dahme

Seed donations from two sources each resulted in contributions to the chapter treasury in excess of $500. One was another generous gift from Lou Thomas' Belize home of three *Chamaedorea* species and *Cryosophila stauracantha*. These proved to be very poular and netted $530: Lou for president!. The other was an interesting "find" by Janice Broda of Vero Beach. One day she noticed at the University of Florida's mosquito study site (FMEL) on Vero's Oslo Road an unusual palm growing amidst the mangroves at the edge of the Indian River Lagoon. Word of this soon reached John Kennedy (see separate stories). The palm proved to be *Livistona benthamii*, a denizen of the true tropics (in the far north of Australia's Northern Territory and Queensland, as well as New Guinea), and it was heavily laden with ripe fruit, donations for which slightly exceeded $500.

Other noteworthy contributions during the quarter ending April were made by Neil Yorio, Charlene Pal, Bud Wideman (see related article) and, again, by the Montgomery Botanical Center of Miami. Neil's consisted of three species gleaned from the campus of FIT, the Venezuelan Sabal, *S. mauritiiformis*, *Arenga caudate*, and the African Oil Palm; Charlene's was once again *Copernicia alba* (a small donation of seed of this species from Argentinian habitat was also made by Leonel Mera): Bud's was once again *Arenga pinnata;* and that from the M. B. C. consisted of three *Encephalartos* species. These gifts each resulted in contributions exceeding $100, the total being in excess of $700.

Other donors to be thanked include Joe Michael (*Bo* plants and *Attalea speciosa*), Martin Sloos (*Rhopalostylis* and *Beccariophoenix*), Jules Horwitz (yet again *Wodyetia*, the Foxtail Palm, his gift this time returning $80), Mac Rogers (for *Adonidia*), and Shri Dhar (for *Phoenix reclinata*). Total receipts for seed distributions for the quarter will be $1990.

Right, Wallichia densiflora *(the male flower), photo from Shri Dhar.*



Wallichia densiflora and Nathaniel Wallich

By Shri Dhar

Nathaniel Wallich was a Danish Jew and a Doctor of Medicine. He was made a prisoner of war by the Britishers during the earlier part of nineteenth century. Considering Wallich's profound knowledge in Botany, he was offered the post of Superintendent of the East India Company's Botanic Garden near Calcutta (now Indian Botanic Gardens, Howrah). The post was lying vacant after retirement of Dr. William Roxburgh. Dr. Wallich served as Superintendent from the year 1817 to 1846. He travelled extensively in North Assam, Burma, etc., and collected and inventoried his huge collection in different well known publications. Considering his great contribution on the Botany of the Indian sub-continent, a number of plants have been named after him. *Wallichia densiflora* is one of them.

It is a suckering, bushy, monoecious palm with congested or elongate internodes usually obscured by persistent fibrous leaf bases and sheaths. Leaves spirally arranged, induplicate, marcescent, sheath covered in a great variety of tomentum and scales; hairs often extended beyond the petiole into a mass of black fibres; petioles are well developed, slender to robust covered in a variety of scales and tomentum. Leaflets, single-fold regularly arranged or grouped and fanned within the groups are oblong; irregularly rhomboid or deeply lobed, whitish below, mid-nerve on lower side light orange in colour, radiating from the base. Female inflorescences terminal; male inflorescences axillary interfoliar, solitary, bursting through leaf sheaths, male flowers paired or solitary, sometimes accompanied by the rudiments of a central pistillate flower. Male flowers yellow when fresh, calyx tubular truncate, usually with 3 lobes; stamens 6. Female flowers spirally disposed; calyx irregularly lobed; corolla shortly 3 lobed. Fruit oblong, two seeds basally attached, plano-convex; endosperm homogeneous; embryo lateral.

The most outstanding feature of this palm is its bushy habit with its cluster of long arching or erect fronds with large long oblong shaped leaflets with waxy gagged margins, not unlike those of fishtail palm but bright green above and silver white beneath. These fronds wave lazily in the breeze, contrast between the upper and lower surfaces is quite apparent. Male flowers are yellow. The female flowers are purplish borne on terminal inflorescence, dull purple.

(Continued on page 24)

Wallichia densiflora

(Continued from page 23)

Fruit oblong about 1.2 cm long are carried in narrow clusters. This species is native to Himalayas and Northern India where it grows in shady, moist gullies. In cultivation, it likes shady aspect in well drained organically rich soil.

* * * * *

Nathaniel Wallich was born on 28th January 1786 in Copenhagen, Denmark. He was a Dane who came to India in 1807 as a Medical officer to the Danish settlement of Serampore and entered the service of the East India Company when Serampore was taken over by the British in 1808. He was also a Plant taxonomist, Horticulturist and Plant collector.

His original name was Nathan Wolff but later he named himself Nathaniel Wallich. He became the successor of Buchanan-Hamilton and worked at the Calcutta Botanic Garden during the period 1815-41 and became Director of the Garden in 1816. One of Wallich's tasks at the Botanic Garden was to help in the editing of the posthumous *Flora Indica* (1820-24) of his predecessor William Roxburgh to whose manuscripts he made large additions. It was in this book that he name a Shrub *Leycesteria formosa* after William Leycester and conducted his duties with unbounded energy and enthusiasm.

Dr. Wallich undertook an extensive survey of a large part of the Indian Empire, particularly in the little known region of Kumaon, Nepal, Syhlet, Tenasserim, Penang and Singapore. His enormous collection were catalogued and named in Europe by himself and with the help of other botanists. One of the complete sets of Wallich's collections is now housed in Kew Herbarium in the original wooden cabinets marked as the East India Company's collection. A rather incomplete set of this valuable collection is in the Calcutta Herbarium together with Wallich's voluminous catalogue and his correspondence from 1794 to 1829 which was transferred to the Calcutta Herbarium from the India House, London.

As early as 1819, he was sending plants to England on an unprecedented scale, two chests of living plants, one of bulbs and tubers and a box of seeds on each of 11 East India Company ships for Kew Gardens besides packages for other English friends and correspondents.

Dr. Wallich published, along with others his *Plantae Asiaticae Rarioris*, three superb volumes of illustrated coloured figures. Dr. Wallich was not only Superintendent of East India Company's Gardens but also Professor of Botany at the Medical College, Calcutta, and Superintendent General of Government Teak Plantation in Bengal. Dr. Wallich retired after 30 years of service in 1846.

He seems to have adapted his new nationality very whole heartedly for he never returned to Denmark but spent his leaves and his declining years in London. He died on the 28th April 1854 at the age of 69 in London, England.

BAD NEWS NETWORK?

Is everybody familiar with FAWN? If not, perhaps, you should be. It is the Florida Automated Weather Network, sponsored by the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS). The address is http://fawn.ifas.ufl.edu While clearly aimed at agricultural interests, palm and cycad lovers can make use of the system, which collects and disseminates current temperature, precipitation, and wind information from 18 sites around Florida: "Weather data is received every 15 minutes and added to the database except for Gainesville." It's possible, too, to search for past weather information; this feature I haven't tried to track to see just how far back the system goes. I stumbled across mention of FAWN in a nurseryman's magazine that I picked up in the Indian River County Main Library. The importance of the site for bad news, or for reassurance, in winter is evident.

—John Kennedy

Two Board members in one shot: Ray Hernandez, left, and Charlene Palm, right. Don Schulstad has his back to the camera at Frank Tintera's during the March meeting.

In the Early Days of The Palm Society. . .

(The Editor asked Teddie Buhler to reminisce about her stint as Secretary of The Palm Society, performing many of the functions now in the hands of the Allen Press of Lawrence, Kansas. Mrs. Buhler lives in Miami, conveniently close to Montgomery Botanical Center and to Fairchild Tropical Garden.)

By Teddie Buhler

Some early recollections of the PALM SOCIETY (before it was IPS). . .

It came as a big surprise to me when Lucita Wait, who had been a co-founder of The Palm Society with Dent Smith in 1956, asked me to take on the job of Executive Secretary. She had been doing the two jobs--the Seed Bank and the Executive Secretary—and it was too much for her to handle. Besides, the Seed Bank was the more interesting, I guess. She did a terrific job of that for many years, keeping voluminous records (in two fat notebooks of at least 4 inches each) with the names of those who had ordered seed and the names of the various palms and how many they had ordered. Then there was the payment to keep straight--I can see why she did not wish to do the other job as well.

I felt entirely inadequate to do the job she asked me to do, but she assured me that she would help me at any time, and she did. So, I became Executive Secretary. This meant keeping the records of the members, and notations as to their payment of dues. It meant keeping the records of the institutions (libraries, botanical gardens, or others who got *Principes* but nothing else). It meant ordering a sufficient supply of *Principes* to send to the members, and extras so that those who joined later could get any back issues they wished.

It meant answering every inquiry, and there were quite a few. It meant putting ads into various publications to try to get new members, and then there was the financial aspect—depositing checks which had to be credited to the right account, and when bills had to be paid, getting checks signed by two of the three Board members who had the duty of signing checks..

When I started the job in 1972, we had some 600 members—when I had to stop in 1980, we had 1500. I had stacks of back issues of *Principes*, often had to make up an entire back set of issues for institutions that wanted them for their records. Toward the end it kept me too busy, I occasionally had to hire help. I had to see that the minutes of the Board meetings were sent to all Board members, though there was a corporate secretary who kept those minutes. In other words, it was the administration of The Palm Society.

Teddie Buhler (right) and Phyllis Sneed (left) find a quiet, shady place to rest at the Moodys' during PalmFest.

Pauleen Sullivan had the Book Store and always did a fantastic job, as did Lucita Wait with the Seed Bank. In fact, I think the Seed Bank is responsible for the amazingly large variety of palms now available around the world. Had there not been a Seed Bank we would have had very few palms available to anyone. Those who got extra palms from the seeds they had paid for were the first vendors at our small sales, and there were no palm nurseries, as such, with a very few exceptions, like Dave Barry in California who had early collected and gotten palms, mostly *Chamaedorea*s, and Otto Martens, who had had long contact with someone on Lord Howe Island and had a considerable number of *Howea belmoreana* and *H. forsteriana* for sale to hotels as they were very popular for that purpose, especially in Europe

When an enthusiastic young man might say—I love palms, I think I will start a palm nursery—Lucita would say, no, don't do that, you cannot make a living growing palms. So, many were discouraged. But look now: a great many growers are bringing hundreds (even thousands) of palms and more people are enjoying the tropical look that has really come about because of our Seed Bank and our palm shows and sales. So, it is nice to see how this all gradually came about.

From the President

Free Palms and Cycads?

Yes, that's right. By the time you finish reading this *Letter From the President*, you'll know where to find free palms and cycads.

Wow! What a great meeting we had in Tampa. Visit to the historical garden of Dr. U.A. Young to view his magnificent collection of cycads and palms. Nothing could top off that garden tour or the whole palm society meeting except news afterward that some intolerable behaviors had taken place. "That can't be," I thought as I recall all the friendly people and good times I have had in so many of our generous member's gardens. True it is, incidents of theft and damage remain in the wake of the visit to Dr. Young's garden. A rare cycad, the "true" *Ceratozamia mexicana* (thin leaflets) was discovered missing from the garden the day prior to the meeting, and after our visit, a very special *Chamaedorea radicalis* was found gravely damaged to the point of certain death. Additionally, reports of individuals attempting to grab *Hyphaene* seed (unripe and uncertain to even sprout) in a damaging manner from a tree in the garden is truly senseless. These events, although unable to prove who is responsible, reflect very badly on the society.

Members and guests need to remind themselves that they are invited visitors to someone's private garden. The backbone of our society is the ability to visit wonderful collections of palms and cycads. If we are not respectful of this, we may lose the ability to tour such places. It is true kindness and generosity that allows our hosts to be put out by a group of 50-70 people wandering about their property. They should not have to be insulted with disparaging actions of the visitors. We should all be more mindful of other's plants and the hard work they put in their gardens. One day, it just might be your place people are visiting.

--Neil Yorio

Send your check for $10 (3 years for $25), made out to CFPACS, mail to:

CFPACS Membership chair
7026 Burnway Drive
Orlando, FL 32819

Membership year begins Jan. 1; new members receive back issues of *The Palmateer* for that year.

Name_____
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Willing to be listed in CFPACS Directory?
_____

Join CFPACS today! Follow the simple directions to the left. You will receive this stimulating newsletter, will learn of meetings of like-minded persons who won't think you're odd for being so very interested in palms and cycads. The price is most reasonable and, if you do join, you'll even find out the details of our planned, treasured visit to that marvelous place, Montgomery Botanical Center, which is not open to the general public—which we are not.

Left, Dioon edule, *var.* edule *at Ed Carlson's in Vero Beach.*

CENTRAL FLORIDA PALM & CYCAD SOCIETY

President
Neil C. Yorio
211 Wimico Drive
Indian Harbour Beach, FL
32937
(407) 779-4347
neil.yorio-1@ksc.nasa.gov

Secretary
Chuck Grieneisen
2450 Simmons Road
Oviedo, FL 32765
(407) 359-6276
chuckg@mpinet.net

Treasurer
Michael Merritt
1250 Bee Lane
Geneva, FL 32732-9172
(407) 349-1293
(407) 349-2924 FAX
mmerritt@iag.net

Immediate Past President
Tom Broome
9128 Golden Gate Blvd.
Polk City, FL 33868
(941)984-2739
cycadjungl@aol.com

East Vice President
Charlene Palm
220 Ocean Spray Avenue
Satellite Beach, FL 32937
(407) 777-2046
cgpalm@worldnet.att.net

Central Vice President
Marilyn Bachmann
9016 N.W. 64th Terrace
Gainesville, FL 32653
(352)378-6847
mdbach@aol.com

West Vice President
Ray Hernandez
4315 W. San Juan Street
Tampa, FL33629-7703
(813) 832-3561
SubTropicOfCancer@hotmail.com

Membership Chair
David E. Witt
7026 Burnway Drive
Orlando, FL 32819
(407) 352-4115
(407) 297-8662 FAX
bizmark@mindspring.com

Editor, *The Palmateer*
John D. Kennedy
3225 13th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960-3825
(561) 567-9587
jkennedy@ircc.cc.fl.us

****

CFPACS Seedbank
Mike Dahme
Box 89
Grant, FL 32949
(407) 724-8417
(407) 724-8417 FAX
palmyra@palmnet.net

DEADLINE for submission of materials for the September isssue:
AUGUST 7

These giant silvery palm leaves are Sclerosperma *sp., snapped by Peter Mayotte in Ghana.*

The Palmateer
Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society
3225 13th Street
Vero Beach, FL 32960-3825