

# The Palmateer

Volume 20, Number 3

Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society

September, 2000

## Melbourne Meeting Sept. 9: Visit Two Gardens

By Charlene Palm

Mark your calendars for our 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter meeting and auction on the East Coast!

**Our first stop** will be Frank Brown's Valkaria Tropical Gardens, 4263 Corey Road, Valkaria. The garden was started about 10 years ago and includes a large collection of tropical plants and flowers, aglaonemas, bromeliads, and more. [*Valkaria is about 10 miles south of Melbourne.*]

**Our second stop** will be at Richard Lundstedt's 3-acre garden, 3370 Hield Road, West Melbourne. Parking will be on Lois Lane, which adjoins his property.

**The annual auction:** Montgomery Botanical Center will once again be donating plants for this event. Members are also encouraged to donate their extra cycads and palms. 100% of the proceeds benefit our chapter treasury. [List of plants may be seen at the CFPACS website: <http://cfpacs.freesevers.com>]

### **The itinerary**

9:00 a. m.—Board meeting at Valkaria Tropical Gardens

10:00-11:30—Tour Frank Brown's VTG.

11:30-2:00 p.m.—Lunch on your own.

1:00-2:00 p.m. Tour Richard Lundstedt's garden

2:00-til ?—Annual auction

### **Directions and Lunch**

To Dr. Brown's: Exit I-95 at Malabar Road. Go east 3 miles to Corey Road, then south 3 miles to 4263.

To Richard Lundstedt's: Go back to Malabar Road, then west to Babcock Street, turn right (north) on Minton to Hield, left to 3370

Lunch: Recommended places are Los Tapatios (Mexican food), 6265 Babcock. Please note that if you want to eat here, you will have to turn **left** at the intersection of Malabar & Babcock, instead of right.

New England Eatery has good seafood. Located on Palm Bay Road in the Stack Village Plaza.

Also at and near the intersection of Babcock & Palm Bay Road are Pizza Hut, Bost Market, Applebees, Chilis, and the usual fast food restaurants. Farther down on Palm Bay Road are Carrabas, Denny's, and Golden Corral.

See map on page 3.



*Only one property on Nassau Road in Cocoa Beach looks like this. All the other houses are visible, lots of lawn, etc. Could a CFPACS member live here? You bet. See story on Arenga pinnata and Bud Wideman on page 5.*

## OCTOBER MEETING IN GROVELAND

**On October 28**, Hersh and Jackie Womble will host the CFPACS at their place in Groveland, Lake County. Plan to arrive about 10:30 for a tour of their palm, cycad, and tropical plant collection.

**Lunch will** be provided for \$4.00 per person. It will consist of BBQ pork and beef, fried chicken, potato salad, baked beans, and drinks.



**As always** at CFPACS meetings, there will be a plant sale. Vendors are encouraged to bring palms and cycads, possibly other tropicals.

**The CFPACS** Board will meet at 9:00. All members are invited to attend.

**In Groveland**, the Wombles' address is 4641 Ag Road. The phone number is (352) 429-4271.

*(Continued on page 4)*

**Deadline for material to go into the  
December issue: November 13**


**CONTENTS**


|                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| Melbourne Meeting             | 1,3 |
| Groveland Meeting             | 1,4 |
| Cheap Pots                    | 2   |
| CFPACS Website                | 2   |
| Valkaria Gardens              | 3   |
| <i>Arenga pinnata</i>         | 5   |
| Bud Wideman's Palm Successes  | 5   |
| MBC Auction Plant List        | 6   |
| Germination                   | 6   |
| CFPACS Plant Sale Policy      | 7   |
| USF Fall Sale                 | 8   |
| Ask Tom                       | 9   |
| California Palms              | 10  |
| Seaweed Fertilizer            | 14  |
| <i>Desmoncus orthacanthos</i> | 15  |
| <i>Sabal palmetto</i>         | 16  |
| Palms Not Recommended         | 17  |
| Seedbank Report               | 17  |
| Our Dave PACSOF Prez          | 19  |
| First Palm Society Bulletins  | 20  |
| Grant to Montgomery           | 24  |
| December Election Notice      | 25  |
| CFPACS Membership Application | 27  |
| IPS Membership Application    | 27  |
| From the Editor's Desk        | 28  |
| CFPACS Officers List          | 29  |

### CFPACS HAS A WEBSITE

Finally ... Please check out the new website for our chapter. The temporary address is <http://cfpacs.freeservers.com/>

Currently there is loads of info as well as several articles from our newsletter concerning local plantings. You will also find some of the pictures from the past few newsletters (now in full color) as well as other pictures of interesting plants from some of our members' collections. Included are color pictures of the *Lodoicea* (Double Coconut) seed from Dr. Young's, some native palms in their respective habitats as well as many unusual (uncommon) palms from various local gardens. Some items from this edition of **The Palmateer** will be on the website shortly.

### R.I.P., *Mauritia flexuosa*!

The Sharp-eyed Critic (who shall be nameless) pointed out to the Editor that the photo below, of the *Mauritia flexuosa* growing on a dry site at Ruth Sallenbach's in Lake Worth, was an old (file) picture, that the individual shown had since gone to the great palm paradise in the sky. The species grows naturally, of course, in marshy conditions.



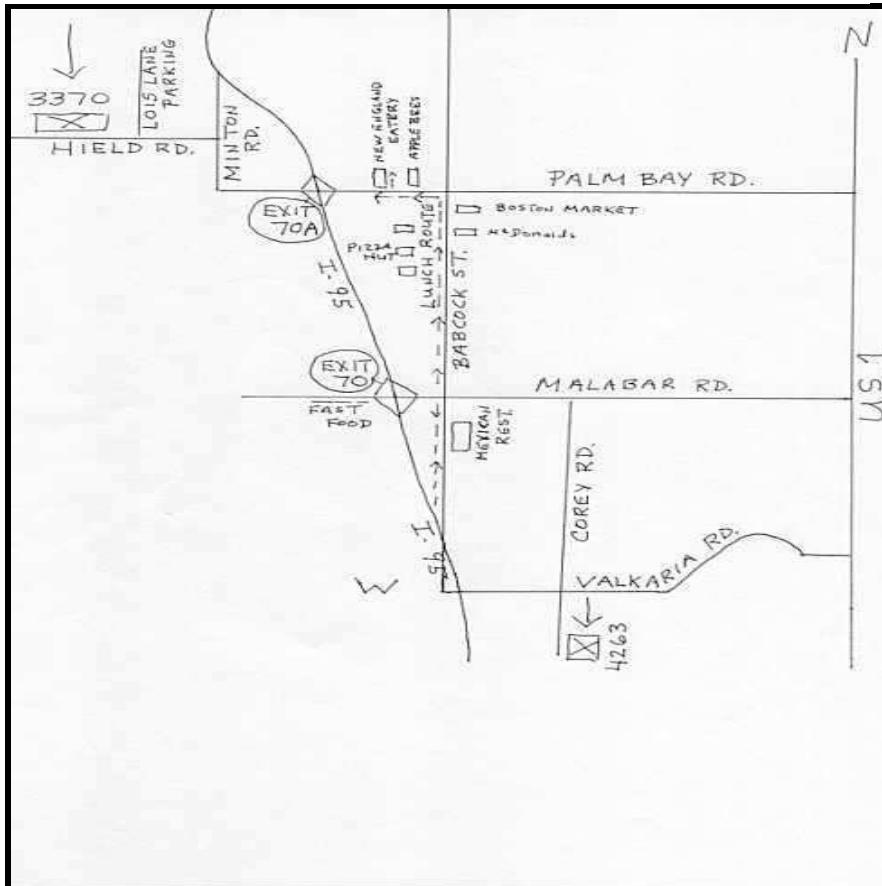
### Pots, Anyone?

Mark VanAntwerp has found a man who sells citrus pots. . .cheap. The sizes are 6 x 6 "at the top" and 14 inches and 16 inches deep. The cost is 15¢ each: the owner has 10,000 pots to dispose of. The catch is that they come mixed in size. His name is Philip Womble, and he lives in Highland City, just south of Lakeland. The pots are kept on his farm near Bradenton. Mr. Womble's phone number is (863) 701-9481; call after 6 p.m.

Details are available from Mark at [mvantw@parinc.com](mailto:mvantw@parinc.com) or (813) 968-3003. That's Land O'Lakes, north of Tampa.

—John Kennedy

## Valkaria, Melbourne, and Lunch: See Below



**A Reminder—**  
 We travel to Montgomery Botanical Center (MBC) in Miami on January 20th. If you've never been there, you must go. It's well worth the time and long drive. You'll think you died and went to palm and cycad heaven. Ask anyone who has been there: it's not delirious ravings. Details and directions will be provided in the December issue of *The Palmetteer*.  
 —JDK

### Our first stop on September 9 **Valkaria Tropical Garden: A Day in Paradise**

*(Reprinted from 50 Plus Lifestyles, August, 2000, by permission of the Vero Beach Press-Journal)*

**By Ann Taylor**

**Gold and silver** aren't the only treasures to be found along this part of Florida's eastern coast, as you'll soon discover when you spend a Saturday or Sunday touring Valkaria Tropical Garden.

**Recently named** one of the nation's premier gardens, this five-acre paradise, tucked midway between the Indian River and I-95 in Brevard County, is the only garden in the country where unique tropical plants from Southeast Asia are grown.

**Be prepared** to have your sense greeted by the vivid colors and subtle fragrances of plants native to places

such as Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the Philippines.

**Here you'll** see masses of bromeliads bordering curved pathways and peeking out from crevices on tree trunks. A row of plants with bright red flowers called The French Kiss will leave you with your mouth open in amazement, and varieties of bamboo you never even knew existed will greet you as you walk around a bend.

**All have** been acclimatized to central Florida, thanks to Dr. B. Frank Brown's vision and the expertise of Cleofar Millare, the chief horticulturist he brought back with him from the Philippines 14 years ago.

**"I go** to the Philippines a lot, collecting plants, and Cleo was in charge of the gardens at the hotel where I was staying. I told him I needed a gutsy gardener to help me with what I wanted to do, and he said he

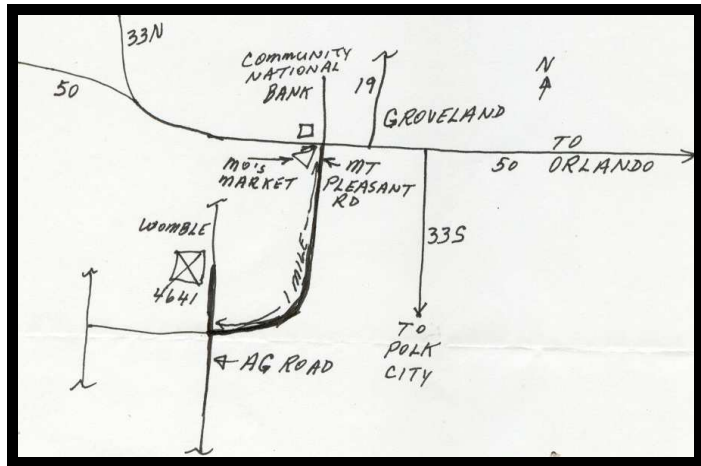
*(Continued on page 4)*

## October 28th in Groveland

(Continued from page 1)

**Directions:** The turn-off from SR 50 is between Groveland and Mascotte. Look for Community National Bank on the northwest corner and Mo's Market on the southwest corner of Mount Pleasant Road and SR 50. Go one mile south on Mount Pleasant Road to Ag Road. Turn right on Ag Road. House is on left, about 1000 feet; parking is across from the house. (See map right.)

## The Way to the Wombles in October



*Left, Dr. Frank Brown, owner of Valkaria Tropical Gardens, the first stop on the September 9 Melbourne meeting. Entrance pathways lead to interesting plants.*

## Valkaria Tropical Garden

(Continued from page 3)

would," Brown chuckled, obviously pleased that Millare said yes.

**Together** the two have totally transformed the property Brown had earlier purchased. Thanks to his efforts and Millare's expertise, what had once been an overgrown pine forest is now a work of art where anyone can come to admire—and learn.

**"My mission** is to introduce new tropical plants that will grown well in Florida. We'd like to increase interest, help people get interest in gardening.

**"You could** say this was just a hobby that got out of hand," Brown grinned before adding, "yet I wouldn't have it any other way."

**That hobby** began when Brown, who has a Ph.D. in education, moved from Georgia to Melbourne to become principal of the high school; he later became superintendent of schools for Brevard County.

**"I left** the school board to become Director of Education for the Kettering Foundation. Did that for about 10-15 years before I finally retired so I could work full time with plants. Growing, experimenting—it just took over," Brown said, in his typical laid-back style.

**Those who** have experienced the beauty of Valkaria Garden are grateful it did. Brown and Millare receive numerous thank-you letters and telephone calls from appreciative visitors like Charlotte and Skip Barkett of Vero Beach.

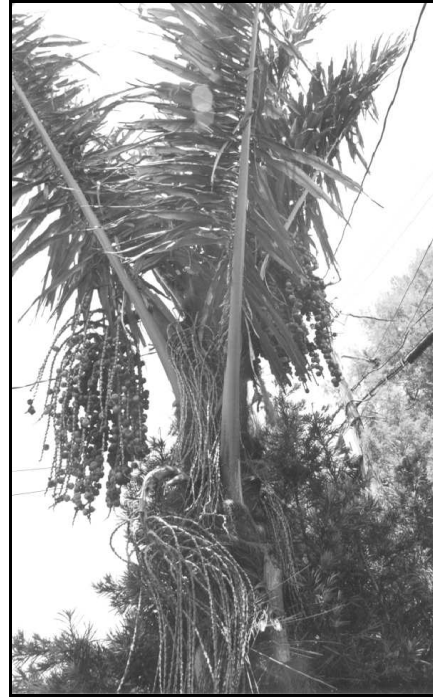
**"We thoroughly** enjoy going there," said Charlotte. "When we first started, they were only open twice a year. Now it's the first weekend every month. There's such a wide

(Continued on page 24)

## **Arenga pinnata, Fountain of Seed**

**By Mike Dahme**

**Readers** of the central Florida chapter's bulletin with exceptional memories will recall that in issue 16:3 (Oct. '96) a report was made of the flowering of Bud Wideman's *Arenga pinnata* palm at his Cocoa Beach home. Although no seed resulted from the earliest inflorescences of this hapaxanthic (dies after flowering) species (flowers of several were all staminate and even those that Bud hand-pollinated failed to set seed), two subsequent inflorescences were more than adequately pollinated by natural means and, for several months, have been showering his backyard with the distinctive, odorous, almost golf ball-sized fruits (each containing one to three seeds). To date almost a thousand seeds from this plant (see photo) have been distributed, but at April's end it's estimated that several thousands more remain on the palm with no homes to be sent to. Don't let Bud's plant die in vain, send in your request for seed of this cold-hardy central Florida survivor to me at 321-724-8417 or by email to [palmyra@palmnet.net](mailto:palmyra@palmnet.net) Reduced donation request is 20 cents each, \$15/100 or \$100/1000.



[Hapaxanthic means that the palm starts flowering at the top of the trunk. Subsequent inflorescences appear progressively lower; after the lowest inflorescence has set fruit, the trunk dies. *Arenga pinnata* is a single-trunk species, so the individual dies. With multiple-trunked species, such as *Arenga engleri*, when one trunk dies, others survive. Monocarpic palms bloom only once, set seed and die. The *Coryphas* exemplify this type of flowering. The two terms, hapaxanthic and monocarpic, are often confused and, in earlier days, monocarpic was used to describe both.—Editor]

*Bud Wideman's Arenga pinnata isn't very tall, maybe 15 feet. It's tucked into the north-east corner of a small backyard, very close to a telephone pole. Its demise would seem to be three—maybe four—flower/fruitstalks away.*

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* In the business of living our faults are often more \*  
\* attractive than our virtues. \*  
\* --LaRochefoucauld, Maxim #90 \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

## **Bud Wideman's Palm Successes: An Envious Report**

**By John Kennedy**

**OK**, so the guy has a fruiting *Arenga pinnata*. Big deal, not that any of us would offer a spare body part to have, right? But I have the goods on him: his real name is *Leo*, not *Bud*. This information atones for the fact that *Leo/Bud* also owns the New Guinea palm *Actinorhynchus calapparia*—in Brevard County, for crying out loud! What's so great about that? I have one, 65 miles south: it's about two feet tall and is now as thick

as a pencil. And that's as big as anyone else's, except Bud's, which is 20 feet tall, 14 inches at the base. Moreover, it is now producing its first inflorescence and, presumably, its first seed.

**Then there's** that *Veitchia* in the front yard (no lawn). I have a *Veitchia arecina*, very healthy, 15 feet high, with a 6-inch trunk. I was satisfied and happy until I saw Bud's—unknown species—which is at least twice the size of mine. I took it to be a well-grown *Archontophoenix*. And, get this, he's planning to take it out! Too close to the house for hurricane season within a

*(Continued on page 26)*

## Palms, Cycads from MBC

The number of plants donated in each species is not clear. In the past, plants from Montgomery have not been seedlings but well-grown individuals in 1-gallon pots. Often, these have been larger. All originate from seed collected in habitat.

### PALMS

*Allagoptera arenaria*  
*Arenga macrocarpa*  
*Astrocaryum gynacanthum*  
*Attalea brasiliensis*  
*A. burretiana*  
*A. humilis*  
*A. pindobassu*  
*Bactris longiseta*  
*Bactris sp.*  
*Calamus caryotoides*  
*C. microcarpus*  
*C. ornatus*  
*Coccothrinax miraguama*  
*C. miraguama ssp. havanensis*  
*Daemonorops melanochaetes*  
*D. rubra*  
*Dypsis sp.*  
*Orbignya brejinhoensis*  
*Phoenix canariensis*  
*Syagrus cearensis*  
*S. cocoides*  
*Thrinax morrisii*  
 CYCADS  
*Dioon mejiae*  
*Encephalartos ferox*  
*E. gratus*  
*E. hildebrandtii*

The total number of plants donated is 79.



CFPACS member, Sam Sweet, of Goleta, California, gives approval—as well as scale—to *Livistona lanuginosa* (formerly known as *Livistona* ‘Cape River’). The palm is shown in habitat: Lulu Creek, SSE of Ravenswood, Queensland, Australia.. Is this another palm for Central Florida? All growers of this species in our area are encouraged to recount, to the Editor, real-life experiences with *L. lanuginosa*.

## Germination: Another Approach

By Mark Thoe

In my early years of gardening, I wanted to grow some *Washingtonia robusta*. I found a concrete gutter at the edge of the street loaded with germinated seeds. Ten or fifteen feet in from the curb, under the tree, germination was sparse. As I pulled up a hefty handful, I found that the seeds were growing in a coarse, well-washed sand. Rain would wash any silt or organics away and leave only the heavy sand behind.

I made off with my new *Washingtonia* farm, and they all did well. Months later, I found some *Roystonea* seed and decided to use the same technique for germination. I got a hold of some coarse white sand. I put it into a 10-inch deep pan, put holes 3 inches up from the bottom, to keep them continually moist.

Out of 110 seeds, 107 germinated. I have used this method ever since. I believe warm organic matter breeds too much fungi for the young seedlings, causing rot and loss. I

Mark's seedlings in foreground are in heavy-sand; those in pots are less well grown in the usual medium.



put 20 *Bismarckia nobilis* seeds into a peat and perlite mix, as many CFPACS members have done well with this method. Eight seeds sprouted. I put 20 seeds into a pile of coarse moist sand and had 100% success in sprouting.

If you're having trouble with low germination, try the sand. Keep it moist and warm. Good luck!

## CFPACS Meeting Plant Sales Policy

By Neil Yorio, President, Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society

This article provides information to CFPACS members about the organization and operation of the plant sales that occur during chapter meetings. It is especially important to acquaint new members with these procedures. A good sale means a good meeting, since the ability to obtain hard to find species at the meeting is a certain draw for members. A good sale also means increased participation from vendors and thus better future sales. The following is a set of guidelines that the CFPACS will incorporate for the meeting plant sales.

**Background:** *There will be a sale at every CFPACS meeting (unless noted otherwise) with the exception of the fall meeting in which we have our auction. Vendors are encouraged to supply plants for these sales. Anyone who has a palm or cycad to sell can be a vendor. The CFPACS collects the money from the sale of the plants and the vendor receives 80% of the proceeds. The CFPACS discourages vendors from selling plants at meetings without offering them at the sale (that is, out of their cars). This makes the selling of plants unfair to those who participate in the sale. Plants offered for sale will be placed in a centralized, shaded area and meeting participants may view the plants offered at their convenience. Plants must not be removed from the sale area until an announcement is made that the sale has begun. A sign will be posted in the sale area to answer questions and help insure that the sale procedure is going well.*

**Instructions to Vendors:** *Vendors must supply a plant label for every plant they wish to sell. The plant label must have the name of the plant, the price, and a vendor ID. The scientific name of the plant is sufficient, but may be augmented by the common name as well. The price must be in whole dollar amounts. Vendor identification can be either a number or initials. In either case, the treasure knows what vendors correspond to what number or initials, and vendors will be reimbursed for their plant sales as soon as possible (usually a few days after the sale). The plant label must also contain a detachable or severable tab with duplicate information including price and vendor ID. This duplicate information is to be removed from the label by the sale coordinator at the time of purchase so that the treasury can accurately track who sold what. If a new vendor wishes to participate in the sale, he/she must speak with the treasurer to insure they are accounted for and reimbursed.*

**Instructions to Buyers:** *Only CFPACS members are eligible to buy plants from a meeting sale. The ability to purchase plants at a meeting is a membership benefit. One can immediately become a member at any meeting. Plants must not be removed from the sale area before the sale starts. When the sale begins, members can choose at their leisure any plants from the sale. When finished, the purchaser brings the plants to the sale coordinator (the person with the cash box) and the purchaser can pay with cash or check. The sale will also end at a designated time, so potential plant purchasers should heed their watches.*

If there are any questions regarding the meeting plant sale, please contact Neil Yorio (President) or Mike Merritt (Treasurer).

## Auction Plants

The list of palms & cycads from a generous donation via Montgomery Botanical Center is now available on the CFPACS website, <http://cfpacs.freesevers.com>. Click on the preceding link to see.

In most cases there are 2 plants per species, several w/ more, and a few (including all cycads) are limited to one plant. A reminder to all - feel free to bring along any extra palms or cycads you have as well. All proceeds to benefit our chapter's treasury.

Dave Witt  
Orlando, FL  
CFPACS Membership

See also opposite page for species list.

Everyone complains of his memory and no one complains of his judgment.

--

LaRochefoucauld,  
Maxim #89

### USF's Fall Plant Festival 2000

**It's time** again for the fall sale in Tampa. The University of South Florida, in Tampa is hosting the fall plant festival on Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup>. The hours will be 10 AM to 4 PM on Saturday, and 10 AM to 3 PM on Sunday. Members of the USF Botanical Garden get in early at 9:30 AM.

**The spring** sale was one of the best sales we have had for a long time. We had new vendors, as well as some of our veterans there. We had extra people to help with palm and cycad questions, and many of our members showed up just to see their friends in the society, and meet new people.

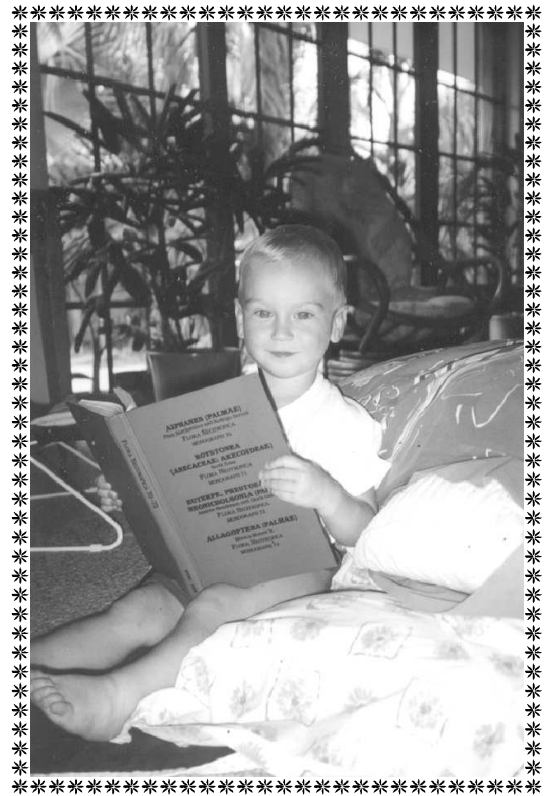
**If there** is anyone who would like to be a vendor, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. We need to get nametags for you, so we need to know who is coming out as early as possible, and not at the last minute.

**If there** is someone new who does not know how to get to the garden, it is near the southwest corner of the USF campus, in Tampa. You can get to the campus on the Fowler exits from either I-275 from the west, or I-75 from the east. From the east, you will drive a few miles before you see the campus. Turn right into the main entrance, and go to the first light. Turn left, the road will end at the entrance to the garden. From the west, get onto Fowler and drive about a mile, and then turn left into the main entrance, and follow the other instructions. There will be people to show you where to park.

**The fall** sales are usually better because people's plants have had time to grow out during the season. I would like to invite everyone to come out, especially the people who have not been to this sale. Most of the other societies are there as well, so if you enjoy growing plants such as bromeliads, orchids, ferns, or anything else unusual, you can find it at this sale.

**If you** need more information on the sale, or would like to be one of our vendors, please contact me, Tom Broome at 863-984-2739. I hope to see everyone there.

—Tom Broome



*Owen Yorio, Assistant to the President, looks up a tricky point for Dad in Flora Neotropica, 70-73. We didn't think to ask which monograph the 26-month-old was interested in: Aiphanes (Borchsenius and Bernal)? Roystonea (Zona)? Euterpe, Prestoea, and Neonicholsonia (Henderson and Galeano)? Or, perhaps, Allagoptera (Moraes)?*

The surest way to be outwitted is to suppose yourself sharper than others.

--

**LaRochevoucauld, Maxim #127**





**By Tom Broome**

*Two sagos in which I recently repotted had all of their leaves turn yellow.*

*They were collapsed as if they had been sat on! Any advice?*

This is not good. When I transplant cycads, I cut all the leaves off, but it sounds as if you only re-potted from one container to another. Leaves can collapse for two reasons.

If the roots are damaged from a transplant, then the amount of moisture pumped to the plant will drop off, and the leaves can fall. I would cut the leaves off now, and wait for new leaves when the time is right.

The second, and most probable choice is that the plant rots somewhere, and the leaves falling is a sign that the plant is almost dead. I would cut the leaves off, pull the plant out of the pot, and look for rot in the roots or stem.

If you find the plant is rotten, you must remove all the rotted material, apply a fungicide (I use Daconil), and then paint the wounds with black tree paint. This can save whatever portion of the plant that is still good. For more information, I have a website, with an article on this subject. The address is <<http://cycadjungle.8m.com/>>

*Lifting the pot of my Macrozamia communis, that I had left on the lawn for some years, I have accidentally broken a thick taproot that in the meantime has grown out of the drainage hole. I have re-cut the wound with a sharp knife, to make it smooth and I have dust with Benlate (fungicide). I'm afraid the plant could rot from this wound, should I paint it with tree sealer, as you suggest in your article? Could I use the piece of root in the ground to start a new plant? Angelo*

Breaking off the bottom part of the root like this, usually doesn't cause any problems. If you put the pot on a table where the cut end would be open to the air, it would normally harden up on its own. You did the right thing to be sure, and it would also help to paint the wound with the paint. Sometimes, I have seen new plants being produced on a section of root, but it will be unlikely for this species, but if you have the time, it is still worth the effort. If it were me, I'd do it.

## ***Dioon Edule*: Recommended**

By Tom Broome

Of all the cycad species I will be talking about in this column, *Dioon edule* is probably the hardiest and easiest cycad to grow. I have never seen this species with insect problems, and it is very tolerant of a variety of soil conditions. *Dioon edule* is also one of the longer living cycads, where a single stem can live to be 1500 years old, and will attain a stem height of 10 feet.

*Dioon edule* is an average sized plant that will normally have a six foot spread. In many ways, it is very similar to the king sago, or *Cycas revoluta*. The leaves are a little lighter green, and are more rigid than the king sago. I have found it to be one of the most frost hardy species in my collection. During the freeze of 1989, I had 17F at my nursery. All my king sagos were either defoliated or showed leaf damage. None of my *Dioon edule* plants had even the first sign of tip burn. From what I have been told, this species will get leaf burn at 14F, and trunk damage when experiencing temperatures in the single digits. This species comes from Mexico with a habitat ranging from just south of Texas to Vera Cruz in central Mexico. Because of this, there are several variations as far as leaf types, and cold hardiness. The tolerance of low temperatures will vary depending on which variation you have, but all should be considered very cold hardy. As far as leaf types is concerned, they can have leaflets that are spread apart, close together, or even slightly over lapping. *Dioon edule* can have green, red, silver, and even purple emergent leaves. This means that the leaves will emerge a certain color, and once the leaves harden up, they will change to green. This is common in many cycad species, and the most colorful plants are highly sought after by collectors.

*Dioon edule* prefers to be grown in full sun, but can tolerate some shade. It is not very fast growing. Even when it is fertilized regularly, you should not expect more than two flushes of leaves per year on the average. Cones become receptive to pollination in our area in either October or November, and seeds are usually ready the next November. Once the cone falls apart, the seeds can usually be planted immediately or with an over ripening period of only one month.

*Dioon edule* is a good choice for the first time cycad enthusiast and is readily available at all our sales. A plant like this will be something that you can enjoy growing for the rest of your life, as well as handed down to many generations to come.



*A beautiful example of Dioon edule. The color—could you see it—is a bright light green, the texture almost fern-like.*

*Metroxylon sp. at USDA, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. Note the flowerstalk in the center top of the picture. Curtains for this monocarpic palm. That's Bud Wideman walking past.*



## California Palms. . . from a Florida Observer

By Ed Brown

I spent a week in Oakland and I had the opportunity to see some unusual palms in San Francisco. SF has an unusual climate. It is in zone 10 which should mean you can grow lots of palms. This is true that it doesn't have killer frosts however, it doesn't have the heat to make so many palms prosper. The flip side is that this climate permits many species of palms to prosper that enjoy the cool windy summers reminiscent of the upland tropics. (1) This has interest for me for a while as I live in North Florida, we are tropical in the summer but we have a cool period from Nov-Mar. where some plants can grow. I was looking for some insights into this plus to learn how cold it actually gets where these plants grow. As you know San Francisco is in zone 10 but around the metropolitan area the climate grades from Zone 10 to zone 8 (1). I thought by touring these areas I would see the various plants and obtain some further insights into the plant of this climate. I also wanted to determine just how much cold such species as *Parajubaea*, *Rhopalostylis*, *Linospadix*, etc can tolerate.

**The place** is damp, wet, and melancholically beautiful like a winter day in North Florida. The very high fog rolling in from the Pacific reminded me of the weather around Vallegrande in the habitat of the *Parajubaea torrallyi*. The touch of this climate brought back some fond memories.

I visited Darold Petty one of the forces behind the palm society in that area. He's located in the Sunset District of San Francisco. He has embarked upon some promethean planning and planting to make the most of a 40 X 60 lot. He is a man after my heart as he has that particular disease which impels us to spend thousands of dollars hop upon an airplane to go to the Andes to collect seeds of the peculiar. He has 2 species of *Ceroxylon parvifrons*, *Rhopalostylis sapida*, *Rhopalostylis baueri*, *Howea forsteriana*, *Caryota no*, and *Parajubaea coccooides*. The *C. parvifrons* he collected the seeds 3 years ago and it has meter high leaves which is a testimony to the climate (for example my *C. alpinum* is approximately 6 years old and one half the size) I suspect the cool climate of the Sunset district allows year round growth whereas mine only grows during the fall/winter and abruptly stops in the summer). I was there in July and .. oh... how it reminded of a cool overcast winter day in Florida. The fog from the coast would roll in and insulate this area from the solar intensity of the summer sun. It would

actually become cooler during the afternoon heat rather than hotter as one expects in Florida.

**The largest** observation that I can make is that *Ceroxylon* prospers in Northern California. But it is still slow and takes a life time to get one to significant size. I saw 2 large *C. quindiuense*(2) (discussed by Phil Stanger previously in an earlier issue of CFPS) in Golden Gate Park. Per my research they were planted by Foster in 1976. They had had leaves perhaps 20 feet tall but the trunk was just beginning to emerge. They had all the wonderment, splendor, and hyperbole of a *Attalea cohune* erupting from a mountain side in Puerto Vallarta (Mexico). These palms punctuate the gardenscape like a 6 inch exclamation point after a Faulkneresque sentence.

**On this species**, Riverside Garden in Oakland had 3 species of *Ceroxylons*: *C. quindiuense*, *C. hexandrum* and *C. vogelianum*. The *C. quindiuense* is the eldest and is approximately 15 years old. The *C. vogelianum* is approximately 5 years old and has leaves a meter long.. Darold Petty is the force behind this garden also.

I have long been interested in *Ceroxylon* having read the stories about *C. utile* being the tallest of the species. I had tried several times even importing seeds from the Bernal expedition in '86 with no success. Currently, I have about 6 individuals I purchase from Paul Craft some time ago that are prospering. After about 8 years they have several characteristic leaves. I am uncertain of the true identity but suspect they are *Ceroxylon* "Very Silvery Trunk" from Tondapi, Ecuador, 91-SS-062, (Ian Edwards personal correspondence.) They are hardy down to at least 25 F but then cold is not the problem. By all accounts, *Ceroxylon* is no good for Florida and this is largely true but perhaps not totally true. I am banking that we have enough cool weather in our winters for some of the lower elevation *Ceroxylons* to prosper in the north of the state. It is only a matter to determine the extent of their frost tolerance. Time will test my hypothesis.

**The palm** that surprised me the most was the *Dypsis decipiens*. I had heard so much about them but never have seen one. It has the elegant curb appeal of a Royal, yet it is cold-hardy---- beyond belief. I had heard from several sources including Pauline Sullivan (4) (*Palm Journal*). The one at the Lakeside Garden (in Oakland) had survived for 10 years at this spot and survived the daunting cold of a fortnight of hard-

(Continued on page 12)

## California Palms

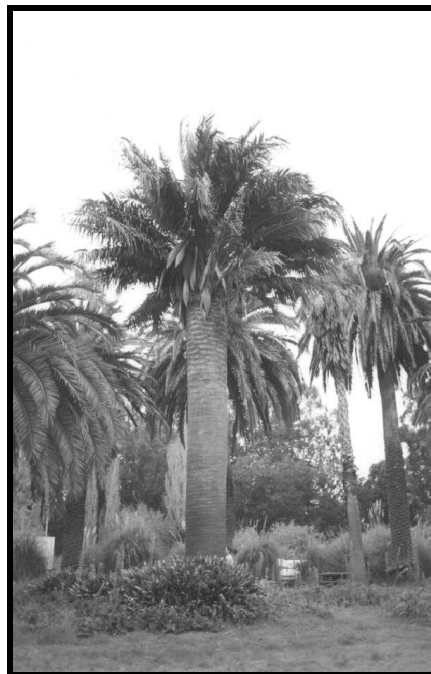
(Continued from page 11)

freezes. I wondered how this could be but as I got closer and looked at the very thick “v” shaped-sectioned rachis, the reason was apparent. It looks so much like a *Phoenix dactylifera*. It was waxy and gray. It was obvious that a freeze would not bother this palm. The heavy wax cuticle would insulate late it and prevent the damage of mechanical transpiration losses and mechanical expansion that turn most crown shaft palms to mush. (I would invite any observations from Californians in this regard).

I had wanted to see *Rhopalostylis sapida*. I had never seen a large one---only photographs and the 5 foot specimens in my back yard and yes... the background vegetation on *Xena the Warrior Princess*.

I agree I am getting old when I look at the background vegetation of Nikaus and Mamukas rather than the bristling bodices during the sword fighting scenes in the *Xena* series. But I digress...

I expected to see *Rhopalostylis* as a street tree. This is not the case but my host was kind enough to show



Left, a souvenir of Ed Brown's California visit: *Jubaea chilensis* in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco.

*Nikau Palm Characteristics* (5)↓

me several representatives of *Rhopalostylis*. I saw all three species and got the advice of true expert to differentiate the three. This is summarized

| Species               | Petiole                 | Flowers | Fruit                                     | Leaves                            |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|---------|---|-----------------------------------|
| <i>R. sapida</i>      | No exposed petiole      | Lilac   | Ellipsoid<br>Bright Red                   | Narrow<br>Feather duster<br>Crown |
| <i>R. cheesmannii</i> | Exposed petiole at base | Cream   | Ovoid-ellipsoid<br>Dull brown<br>12-15 mm | Broad<br>Open Crown               |
| <i>R. baueri</i>      | Exposed petiole at base | Cream   | Globose<br>glossy red<br>12-15 mm         | Broad<br>Open Crown               |

in this table.

As I said this palm is a favorite of mine.. Darold had several large specimens in his garden. Its cold hardiness is variable. I have read of trees surviving in Great Britain in the Channel Islands reported surviving temperatures in the teens. (6)

By my experience, I had lost some nikau palms in the low 20's. (yet some had survived). My friend in Pretoria West (South Africa) had had plants survive in the low 20's and Darold Petty had mentioned his had survived this as well. Additionally, Yann Corbel in France grows the nikau in protected locations in Zone 9 (7) A Correspondent Dick Johnson of ESP(8) had said he had seen a street tree survive in his suburb of LA reported tolerating 16 F to within an inch of its

life. Dick Douglas (9) in Walnut Creek had lost his at 14 F but it was a week of deep freezes.

Of further interest to me was the *Archontophoenix cunninghamii* "Ilwarra". Fantastic claims have been made about the cold hardiness of this tree most recently. Bernie Peterson reports these speculations as dating back almost 100 years (10) (Peterson CFPS-96). Its cold hardiness is purported to be down into the teens. I admit I was skeptical about this palm thinking it was a sales ploy. A local palm enthusiast in Jacksonville, Mat Encinosa has a large tree that has flourished since '89, being almost 30 feet tall. It sur-

(Continued on page 13)

Right, more of Ed Brown in California-land:  
"Jubaeopsis caffra with Child."



## California Palms

(Continued from page 12)

vived 22 F two years ago though its brother did not. Evidently in California, it is much more resilient to their frosts. For I saw the large specimen in Riverside Gardens (Oakland) that had survived the low 20's for a fortnight.

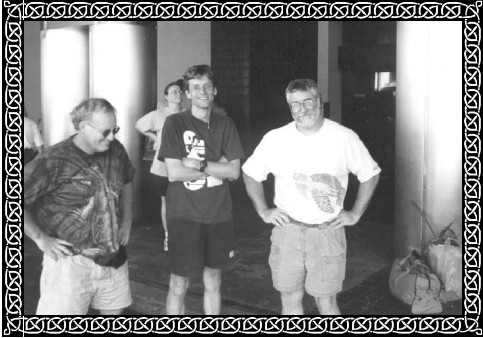
**Like the *Rhopalostylis***, the *Jubaea* I had wanted to see. They are uncommon though I visited 4 fantastic specimens. Nothing rivals a 35-foot Chilean Wine Palm. The feather duster crown and kingly girth and polished concrete trunk exceeds a *Roystonea elata* of twice the height in majesty. Darold Petty notes that there are two cultivars. The grey feather-duster crowned tree and a the more typical green variant with the longer graceful leaves, There are others around but they are no means common. The are reported as slow growing and ancient but Darold reports with authority that a 50 foot specimen can be cultivated within the life time of a man. Most of us have squandered our youth before we got interested in palms or had the resources for a garden. Their cold tolerance is their salient characteristic. They are as cold hardy as a *Butia* with individuals in Anniston, Alabama, Texas, and in Jacksonville. They are purported to survive freezes into single digits (11).

### References

1. Palm Micro-Climates in San Francisco Warren Dolby Principes 28(2)
2. 1984The Palms of San Francisco Phil Stanger CFPS 9/97
3. Personal Communication Ian Edwards
4. Pauleen Sullivan Dypsis Issue Palm Journal
5. *Palm and Cycads beyond the Tropics* Keith Boyer Publication Fund PACSOA 1992
6. Principes Palms of the Channel Islands
- 7 Personal Communication Yann Corbell
8. Personal Communication Dick Johnson
9. Personal Communication Richard Douglas
10. Peterson CFPS-96.
11. Personal Communication Hays Jackson



*Brahea armata*, here a street tree in the San Francisco Bay area, though difficult—if not impossible—to grow in Central Florida.



A scene last summer at the airport in Miami: left, the "unsinkable" Ed Brown; center, Mark Wuschke, from Victoria, Australia; right, Geoff Stein, cartoonist, veterinarian, present editor of the Southern California chapter's The Palm Journal. After this visit, Geoff wrote about the differences between palm-growing in Central Florida and in Southern California for The Palm Journal in November, 1999; his article was reprinted in the March, 2000, issue of The Palmateer.



The results of Chuck Grieneisen's experiment with seaweed fertilizer: *Encephalartos gratus*, bigger and more lush.

## Seaweed for Sagos (and Palms)

By Chuck Grieneisen

I like to try new concoctions and potions on my plants. I have found one in particular that got great results. Specifically, it is the "maxicrop liquified seaweed". The effect it has on palms and cycads especially, is that it grows the caudex (trunks) like crazy. I don't know why it works so well. I originally tried it because of the growth producing qualities I had heard about. The nutritional content is as follows. Nitrogen .1 Phosphorus 0.0 and Potassium 1.0.

**On cycad** seedlings, after the big caudex growth, they produce leaves that are sometimes twice as large as the previous ones. On my best responding cycad, *Encephalartos gratus*, (the one pictured) the caudex seemed to about double in size in about 2 months; growing from maybe 1 to a 2 inch caudex. It was noticeably larger after one application. The caudex didn't grow any more in the next 2 months, but that's when the big leaves came out.

**Some cycads** didn't respond as well. I'll give you my preliminary results with cycads and their response to the seaweed. I have used it for 6 months on the following:

*Dioon edule*; very good. *Dioon rzedowskii* almost no response. *Cycas circinalis*; good. *Cycas rumphii*; great. *Encephalartos gratus*; stunning (the best). *Encephalartos white-lockii*; very good. *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*; stunning (second best).

**It also** works with palms. I have a small *Phoenix roebelenii* that I had for about 2 years. It had a "trunk" about six inches tall. I admit I didn't fertilize it well for the 2 years and it stayed almost the same in girth and height. After about 4 months of seaweed the girth of the trunk went from about 8 to 12 inches. I admit this wasn't a scientific experiment. I didn't have a control group. In the words of Regis Philbin, it was "out of control"! But I'll let the photos speak for themselves. I only have a single *E. gratus*, but the *Lepidozamia* came up like that 10 for 10.

**Tom Broome** is now doing a controlled experiment to see if it will increase cone productions in cycads. I also tried it on bananas. I had 2 banana plants that were large enough to produce bananas but didn't do so all summer. After the seaweed they both started producing bananas in about 2-3 weeks. This makes me think the seaweed could produce more seeds in palms, or cones in cycads. I don't have any large enough to try. How about you? I'd love to put some on a bottle palm to see how "fat" I could get it.

**The application** rate is 1 oz. per gal., once a week. I

(Continued on page 18)

## Desmoncus: Spiny Climber

By Mike Dahme

[This article appeared in the May, 2000, issue of The Palm Journal, publication of the Southern California Palm Society. It is reprinted here by permission of Geoff Stein, editor of the Journal, but in its original, unexpurgated form.]

**Desmoncus orthacanthos** is the commonest member of the genus that is the only New World equivalent of the Old World rattans, and the only one that I am aware of with horticultural potential for the climate of central Florida. Due to the variability of the species, Henderson, et al, in *The Palms of the Americas*, suggest that it may be better considered as a species complex, however.

**Surely the** oldest example of this clustering species in the area is that at the home of Joe Michael (Wabasso), most of the plantings there dating from the '50's to mid '60's. On the occasion of the Xmas 1989 freeze, arguably the worst of the century, Joe made record of the effects on his palm collection, and his *Desmoncus* was listed in the column headed "slight to medium burn." This after approximately 33 hours of sub-

freezing temperatures, northwesterly winds to 30 mph, and an absolute low, the lowest of his lifetime at this location, of 19 degrees F.

**Another indication** that the species can be considered a perennial for our climate zone was provided more recently. Sometime shortly before the occasion of the Central Florida Palm Chapter's March '99 meeting at the Michaels', all of the stems of this palm (which is unfortunately situated directly below the crown of the property's lone *Bismarckia* pistillate) were cut at ground level, the palm in effect disappeared from the landscape. However, seven months later I was astonished to see it appearing as though nothing had happened, the stems (2-12 meters long, per the book) having returned to their full glory.

**I have** had a specimen planted out since '93, which I purchased as a seedling in '91. While I didn't get much out of the book, *The Palms of Eldorado* (Kahn), I had to smile at the veracity of the following description: "Although common these palms are always rather shy; their leaves being hidden among the foliage of the small to medium sized trees on which they climb." In my own case it is a Loquat tree in/on which the *Desmoncus* "hides": what is most noticeable about it are the cirrus, or "whips," with their back-

(Continued on page 16)

*Below, another positive result with the seaweed fertilizer, this time with Lepidozamia peroffskyana. See Chuck Grieneisen's account of his experiment on the opposite page.*



*Where's Waldo? Can you spot the Desmoncus orthacanthos? It looks, sort of, like a bamboo but, oh those spines!*

## Desmoncus: Spiny Climber

*Continued from page 15)*

ward pointing barbs that terminate each rachis. These are occasionally in view above the vegetation, searching for support, but I still delight in asking visitors if they can spot the palm—for usually they can't.

I've also purchased two other *Desmoncus* species (Henderson, et al, list seven provisionally, from over 60 named species), which vegetatively appear indistinguishable from *D. orthacanthos*. However, neither of these has done poop, growth-wise, barely hanging on thru winters, recovering (via new stems) somewhat in summers. (Surely proof that they are indeed another species.) Although Joe's specimen has flowered (before the '89 freeze), I'm unaware of a domestic source of *Desmoncus* seed. It can be obtained in bulk from Lou Thomas in Belize, however, and in smaller quantities via Gibbons & Spanner in Europe. It might be worth a try in California, just don't plant it under your female *Bismarckia*.

## Sabal palmetto: Speedy or Not?

Florida's state tree is found almost everywhere in the Sunshine State. Well, any southbound driver on I-75 can spot *S. palmetto* beginning to appear naturally on the south side of Gainesville. From that point on, the interior of Florida is filled with them. On the east coast, this palm continues north past Jacksonville, along the Georgia and South Carolina coasts, then into the southernmost Atlantic corner of North Carolina.

On the west coast I'm not sure how far along the Gulf the species extends. To Panama City, at least? As a pioneer extending its range, *S. palmetto* may be working its way toward Pensacola. Of course, horticulturally, it's found farther north, trucked into interior South Georgia and Alabama and westward along the Gulf to Mississippi and, I believe, to New Orleans and beyond.

Not every palm-lover is appreciative. There are more graceful, more tropical-looking palms but these—with the possible exception of *Butia capitata*—tend not to be hardy in northerly (palm) parts and are inclined to perish, if not next winter, certainly in the second winter. *S. palmetto* is commonly dug from the wild; "landscapers" have been known to cruise the neighborhoods of Vero Beach (and elsewhere) offering to homeowners, for a reasonable price that includes planting, the unfortunate individuals in the back of their pickups. A veteran area



*In the foreground, at USDA in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico, is the stump of a towering *Corypha umbraculifera* that flowered in 1994. The arrow points to an offspring of the dead palm that was spared by the lawnmower because it's growing next to a pole.*

nurseryman told a native plant society meeting that these dug-up palms survive such treatment if trunkless or with a trunk of at least 6 feet. Otherwise, he said, they always die.

The catch with our state tree is its reputed slow rate of growth; few nurserymen commonly carry *S. palmetto* in stock. I have had an opportunity to observe, casually and impressionistically, its growth rate. About 15 years ago, a single strap leaf appeared next to my mailbox out at what would, in another town, be a curb. I noticed it and mowed it down regularly, but sometimes I missed, through laziness or mercy. I had no other *S. palmetto* on my property, but there were two in the back lawn of the house immediately behind mine, perhaps 150 feet away. Ten years ago, mature leaves began to appear on the "mailbox palm," but there was no trunk. Five years ago, it formed a trunk. Now, the trunk is 4 feet high (overall, the palm reaches about 7 feet), 15 inches at the base, with a full crown of 15 large leaves, one of which always seems necessary to cut so the mailman/woman can get access to the box.

Growth has been fairly fast after the trunk developed. While the palm has received no fertilizer or special attention (other than being allowed to live), it is growing on the edge of a swale which, in the rainy season, is very often filled with water. For comparison, I do have a *S. domingensis*, now fruiting for the first time, and I can say its growth has been much faster than its Florida cousin.

—John Kennedy



## A Brief Synopsis of Readily Available Palms not Necessarily Recommended for Central Florida

By Ray Hernandez

Central Florida is a palm paradise to the casual observer and the infrequent visitor. To this person, a Royal Palm, Spindle Palm, Christmas Palm, and other tropical palms live and flourish in a climate that seems to suggest that the sky is the limit. Unfortunately, the natives and long time transplants know that this is rarely, if ever the case. In fact, with the exception of the last 10 years, the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was quite cold and disheartening for the average palm buff. Most of us have had to deal with the heartache that accompanies the loss or severe damage to our favorite palm. Let's face it, at some point we have fallen in love with a tropical palm that has become an integral part of our landscape. We know going in that it should never have been planted to begin with. Still we persist hoping that the past doesn't repeat itself in the remainder of our lifetimes. Here are some statistics that might make us cringe but are factual nonetheless. The temperatures may vary a few degrees depending on colder or warmer microclimates. All temperatures were recorded at Tampa International Airport and are the lowest during that particular freeze event. In addition, a total number of consecutive nights below freezing are listed.

| Dates             | Lowest Temp. | Freezing nights |
|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Feb. 4,5, 1958    | 24           | 2               |
| Dec. 12-14, 1962  | 18           | 3               |
| Jan. 30,31, 1966  | 24           | 2               |
| Jan. 8-11, 1970   | 24           | 4               |
| Jan. 20,21, 1971  | 23           | 2               |
| Jan. 18-22, 1977  | 26           | 5               |
| Jan. 12-14, 1981  | 22           | 3               |
| Jan. 11,12, 1982  | 24           | 2               |
| Dec. 25-27, 1983  | 19           | 3               |
| Jan. 21-23, 1985  | 21           | 3               |
| Dec. 26, 27, 1985 | 27           | 2               |
| Dec. 23-25, 1989  | 24           | 3               |
| Feb. 4,5, 1996    | 25           | 2               |

Of course, these are only the most severe freezes of the last 40 years. Other less severe but still damaging freezes occurred on dates not listed here. The current trend at Home Depot and Wal-Mart is to sell tropical palms not intended for our climate to the unknowing public. I'm not talking about the marginal palms that have a good chance of surviving for 5 or more years. More so, let's focus on the ones that are sure to be fatalities the first time the thermometer touches 28F. Here is a list of what seems to be popping up in people's yards and probably shouldn't be:

1. **Adonidia merrillii (Christmas or Manila Palm)** – A very beautiful palm that thrives in the southern third of the state. The palm is damaged at temps right around freezing and is completely intolerant of frost. Cold damage to the fronds begins around 34 degrees and the damage to fronds in the bud persists well into summer even after freeze-less winters. The palm is recommended for container planting, as its trunk and canopy remain relatively small.

(Continued on page 18)

## Seedbank Report

By Mike Dahme

May through July was an active quarter for seed distributions, 22 species in all. As is usually the case, many (five) of these were courtesy of the Montgomery Botanical Center in Miami: two of these were cycads that were greatly desired, *Microcycas calocoma* and *Encephalartos whitelockii*. The MBC seeds earned the chapter \$325 in donations.

Among the other usual cast of suspects to whom thanks are due are Jules Horwitz, whose donations of *Wodyetia* seeds came to \$200 for the quarter, Lou Thomas for seeds of the rare *Chamaedorea stolonifera*, Joe Michael (three species), and John Kennedy (residual distribution of *Livistona benthamii*). Two others are Richard Lundstedt for a large quantity (almost 500 seeds counting those being distributed in August) of the hand-pollinated Pindo/Queen cross, and Bud Wideman for continuing donations of seeds from his *Arenga pinnata* plant. In this quarter alone Bud's seeds resulted in donations of \$732 (year to date of almost \$1000), and the requests keep coming. Unfortunately,

(Continued on page 18)

## Palms Not Recommended for Central Florida

(Continued from page 17)

2. **Hyophorbe lagenicualis (Bottle Palm)** – Only recently available at Home Depot, this gorgeous gem is slightly more tropical than *Adonidia*. The palm's small stature and relative slow rate of growth lend it to container planting. Again as above, consistently cool temps above freezing damage foliage and make the palm look ratty well into summer. The plant dies at or very near 32F especially if no trunk has formed. Add a degree or two of cold hardiness when full grown.
3. **Ptychosperma elegans (Seaforthia or Solitaire Palm)** – Extremely common at retail stores and nurseries throughout our area (often labeled *Adonidia*). This palm reaches a height of 30' and is unmanageable with regards to cold protection. Like *Adonidia*, Solitaire palms are intolerant of frost and perish between 28-30F. This palm also suffers from nutritional deficiencies at cold temperatures above freezing.
4. **Cocos nucifera (Coconut palm)** – This palm has been a mainstay at Home depot with large 10 gallon plants often available. These palms survive in many areas for years at a time developing into a nice landscaping piece to be proud of. Its rapid rate of growth further makes it desirable in attaining "the tropical look." Unfortunately, the loss of specimens with 10 feet of trunk or more is not uncommon in a severe freeze. The old Clearwater Beach Hotel lost several large 30 footers in the 1958 freeze. Those particular specimens had been growing there for 10 years or more.
5. **Roystonea regia (Cuban Royal Palm)** – I really would like to keep this one off the list; however, facts are facts. Bayshore Boulevard in Tampa was once lined with them in the early 50's. Before 1983, about 10 remained. Today, one remains in a location nudged between a three-story mansion and an ancient live oak. Again, as with the Coconut, this palms has a pretty good rate of growth and can become a wonderful landscape addition in a short amount of time. A hard freeze of 27F or lower however will kill younger specimens and severely damage, defoliate, and possibly kill adult trees. There are large specimens that have survived throughout Central Florida. This one has the best chance of survival on the list.
6. **Veitchia sp.** – In my humble opinion, these are some of the most beautiful palms in the world. They are very fast growers that reach heights in excess of 30' quickly, responding to water and fertilization with vigorous growth. Unfortunately, they absolutely hate frost, wind chills, and will perish somewhere in the neighborhood of 30-32F. This may be the most tempting of all when you are staring at a cute, little one-gallon specimen.

**This being** said, there are hardier individual specimens that are exceptions to the rule. It is also important to note extreme coastal areas and other warmer microclimates often provide safe haven in our coldest winters. For the rest of us who live in the cooler parts of the central third and choose to try one of the palms listed above, four factors will impact your success or failure. These factors consist of:

(Continued on page 19)

## Seedbank

(Continued from page 17)

many of these are in the form of bulk orders from out-of-the-area nursery operations and not by central Florida hobbyists. This species has proven itself cold-hardy for our conditions and should be much more commonly planted. **Finally, three** new donors are welcomed: Scott Ward for his seeds of the Solitaire Palm (who would have believed 10 years ago that *Ptychosperma* species could come to fruition in central Florida?) and *Coccothrinax miraguama*, Nick Cock of the U. K. for *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*, and Greg Hodge for the Florida Royal. Donations for the quarter exceeded \$2200.

## Seaweed Fertilizer

(Continued from page 14)

followed that . It cost about \$20 a gallon. Here are some sources for it.

Homegrown Hydroponics, Longwood FL (888) 833-4769, website [www.growcrazy.com](http://www.growcrazy.com)

BWI in Apopka FL (407) 884-0242 or (800) 876-9113

(On the Internet) [www.greenfire.net/hot/ALLF.html](http://www.greenfire.net/hot/ALLF.html) click on maxicrop seaweed

### Our Dave Witt Now PACSOF Prez

Paul Craft has resigned as president of the Palm & Cycad Societies of Florida (PACSOF). Dave Witt was elected at PACSOF's board meeting during PalmFest last May to fill the year remaining in Paul's two-year term. Dave didn't have enough to do as membership chair and, recently, as webmaster of the new CFPACS website, so the new office is guaranteed to keep him out of trouble and off the street for some time to come. CFPACS members now learn, via the Internet, from Dave of palm and cycad seed as it becomes available for sale from our seedbank

**PalmFest** next year will take place under the sponsorship of CFPACS. At this point, virtually no detail has been decided, neither location nor date. Dave will be much involved in planning this event and, doubtless, will find things for many of us to do.

**The December** issue of *The Palmateer* should contain some details about PalmFest 2001, at least as much as will be known by early November.

--John Kennedy



*Above, Bud Wideman at his home in Cocoa Beach: that's Trithrinax acanthacoma in the right foreground. Bud is standing next to a beautiful blue-flowered native plant, the lignum vitae (Guaiacum sanctum) from the Florida Keys, not commonly grown—or surviving—in Brevard County. Below, Bud's Trithrinax campestris, which is about 4 feet tall.*

### Palms Not Recommended for Central Florida

(Continued from page 18)

1. **Care given the palm** – Correct fertilization and water in dry periods keep the palms healthy.
2. **Individuals' Cold Tolerance** – Certain individual palms within one genus may be slightly more cold tolerant than another. Getting a hardy tropical is like winning the lottery!!
3. **Microclimate** – This one cannot be stressed enough. Away from coastal areas, the south wall, shade tree canopies, mulch, and artificial means of protection provide the best chances for survival.
4. **Age of the Palm** – The older the specimen you plant, the greater its chance of surviving freezes. It's well worth buying the 20ft Royal or Coconut if you must have them.

Unfortunately, only three of the above four items are within our control. Many people will claim to have the most cold hardy Bottle Palm or *Adonidia*. Chances are, they have inadvertently met item 2 listed above. I wish all the available tropical palms originated from seed of these hardy individuals. Reality is, the majority of these palms are not meant for our climate.



## From Mimeographed Bulletins to *Principes*: Publications of the New Palm Society (1956)

By John Kennedy

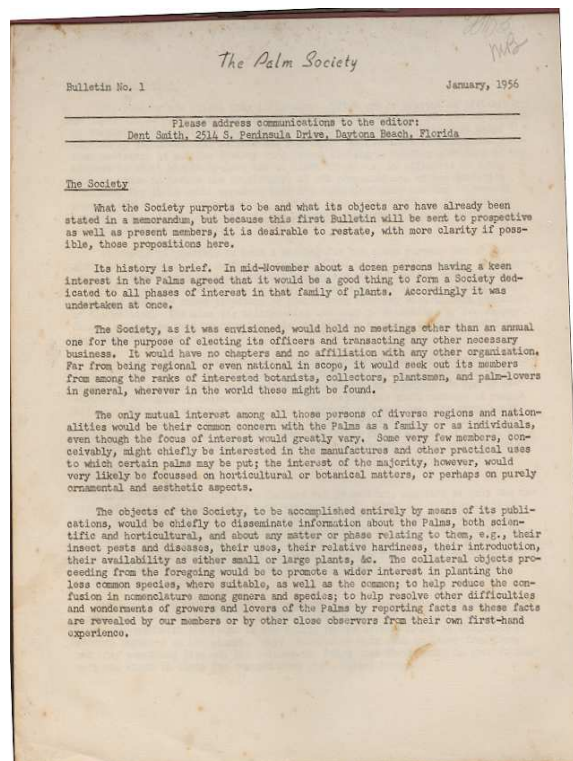
*Dent Smith was not only the founder of The Palm Society, precursor to the current IPS, but also the new organization's first editor. He published, from Daytona Beach, six monthly issues of an 8½ x 11 mimeographed bulletin, starting with January, 1956, and ending with July of the same year. There was no issue for June. The first page of the first issue is shown (right).*

According to Dent Smith, in Volume 1, No. 1, the society was formed in mid-November of 1955 in a meeting of about a dozen people. Membership, as of December 31, 1955, is 35 (counting husband and wife as one member); four are botanists. There are no dues. Smith outlines a projected structure for the new society to be discussed at a future meeting. The 12-page issue contains excerpts from published articles by Liberty Hyde Bailey on palms as a family and by Miriam Bomhard on *Ceroxylon*. There are pieces on *Ganoderma*, on William Bartram's discovery of royals along the St. Johns River, of changes in taxonomy (noted ruefully), of the confiscation of imported palm seeds.

\* \* \* \* \*

The second issue in February notes, happily as the first news, that there are now (January 31, 1956) 73 members, 13 of whom are scientists. The second item is less happy: an account of a January cold snap, the worst since January, 1940, with ten mornings less than 40° in Daytona, but with only one day below freezing (two hours to 30°). Inland, even south of Miami, suffered more. Dent Smith notes a low at Chapman Field of 33°, and is happy to point out how tough palms are, that many tropical species emerged with little or no damage at his house. After all, he points out that potted palms have had to survive cigar butts in hotel lobbies! For certainly the first and, probably, last time in palm annals, the poet Keats is quoted in a line about winter's cold. The next article recounts his travels around Florida's West Coast looking in vain for palm collections and palm collectors from Naples to Tampa: he seems to be looking for recruits. Along the way, Smith encounters "old-time nurseryman," Carl Cowgill (of the Cowgill Nursery in Tampa), who shows him several immense *Arenga pinnata* which, he believes to be the largest in the state, together with a stand of a hundred *Phoenix rupicola*. There are other encounters with nurserymen: Norman Reasoner in Bradenton and Eric Golby in Oneco.

Continuing his cross-state tour, Dent Smith visits Dr.



Bruce Ledin at the University of Florida's Sub-Tropical Experiment Station near Homestead, where there had been eight hours below freezing, the temperature falling to 29°. Avocado groves and coconut palms in the vicinity look as if burnt. Ledin explains the function of the station and that it has some palms, offering free to members the seeds of 36 species; the problem with tropical palm seeds from outside the country, he comments, is their short viability.

A correspondent, Bert Wheeler, details the fate of *Phoenix* palms in Houston, mentioning the fact that the freeze of 1950 there took the temperature below zero for the first time in recorded history. While many palms had died, a surprising number of the genus had survived. He noted no damage to *Chamaerops*, *Butia*, or *Trachycarpus*. Hardiness concerns continue with Dent Smith describing *Tritbrinax brasiliensis* and *Nannorrhops ritchieana*. The editor pays tribute to the accomplishments of Brother León who has just died; the first volume of his *Flora de Cuba* contains a complete treatment of the palms of Cuba.

Mr. James E. Smith, "plantsman of Oakland, Florida," gives a first-hand account of tracking down *Sabal rosei* in the Mexican state of Nayarit. He managed to collect 300 lbs. of seed, adding "Just a tip to anyone

(Continued on page 21)

## First Bulletins of The Palm Society

(Continued from page 20)

planning seed-collecting in Mexico: beware of ticks, scorpions and rattlesnakes.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**The third** issue (March) announces, as first business, an organizational meeting for April 17, 1956, at Fairchild Tropical Garden to adopt by-laws and elect officers of the new society. The slate of directors is listed: Paul Allen, Honduras; David Barry, Jr., California; I. D. Clement, Cuba; William Hertrich, California; Mrs. A. C. Langlois, Bahamas; Bruce Ledin, Florida; Harold Loomis, Florida; Dent Smith, Florida. The presidency and treasurer's office are open; vice president is Dr. R. Bruce Ledin, the secretary, Mrs. W. Walter Hargert. More than four pages are given over to an explanation of the use and logic of binomials in the names of palms.

**Mrs. Lucita Wait** describes a novel, unknown palm from Madagascar, a relatively recent introduction to Fairchild Tropical Garden: *Neodypsis decaryi*, the triangle palm. A two-page article on gingerbread or dhoom palms quotes from Blatter's *Palms of British India and Ceylon*. Paul H. Allen of the Escuela Agrícola Panamericana, Tegucigalpa, Honduras, disputes earlier suspicions that *Raphia* was introduced into Central America from the Old World. He sends pictures—which are the first in the bulletins. Mrs. Eleanor Montgomery explains the Founder's Medal she has established in memory of her late husband, Robert H. Montgomery who helped to start and develop Fairchild Tropical Garden, now 18 years old, in honor of his friend, David Fairchild. The inscription reads “For Distinguished Achievement in the World of Palms and Cycads.” The Montgomery Palmetum occupies 25 acres of FTG's 85 acres, she writes.

\*\*\*\*\*

**In April**, the fourth issue gives details of the forthcoming meeting, suggestions as to motels (most expensive, \$13 a night, double occupancy), an optional lunch at Fairchild. Membership, as of March 29, is 124; eight states and eight foreign countries or colonies are represented. More than 20% of the members live in California. The mail brings many questions, comments, and suggestions to Dent Smith, including the possibility raised by Nat DeLeon that members might exchange surplus seeds. A. C. Langlois, in a short article, suggests some new palms, mostly from the Southern Hemisphere, that might prove cold

hardy. Then there is the account of a palm expedition to Cuba by the editor, Stanley Kiem, and Ray Vernon that runs to five pages, with pictures and a glowing description of Harvard University's Atkins Garden near Cienfuegos. A two-page list of palms growing there concludes the issue.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Page 4** to page 10 of the fifth issue (May) contains part (?) of Beccari's monograph on the genus *Pritchardia*. The big news, on the front page, is that a full slate of officers has been elected and a constitution and by-laws adopted; 116 members out of a total of 140 attended the meeting at Fairchild. Dent Smith is president, Bruce Ledin vice-president, Claire Hargert secretary, and Margueriete Martin treasurer. The new president says he will wear both hats—president and editor—for one year, then one office must go. He points out that being editor is virtually a full-time job. No dues are levied, though voluntary contributions are solicited. Tacitly understood is the fact that Dent Smith himself is paying all expenses, which now run about \$150 a month.

**As of May 2, 1956**, there are 155 members, the numbers expected to increase to 365 by the end of the year. Dr. Richard Howard, Director of the Arnold Arboretum suggests publication of a membership roster to facilitate correspondence. The editor is agreeable but asks that members contact him to be included on the list.

**Dr. Harold E. Moore** writes to agree on the identity of a strange palm encountered by James Smith in Mexico, described in the February issue. Smith thought it might be *Scheelea liebmanni*; Moore mentions traveling in Mexico where this palm is to be found and says there are problems with classification of *Scheelea* and *Orbignya*. [These copies of the first palm bulletins have the correct accent marks for Spanish names entered in pen, the typewriter unlikely to have contained these symbols. Bill Bidlingmayer, to whom the issues belonged, or Dent Smith?]

**Palm beetle** infestation is currently heavy in Florida. Dr. Bruce Ledin and others report the measures they've taken to combat the larvae of *Rhyncophorus cruentatus*, which chiefly appears to be massive drenching/spraying with lindane or DDT.

**Nat DeLeon** explains his success in germinating various palm seeds through the use of bottom heat. Dr. Ledin supplies a bibliography of all extant books and articles dealing with palms: nine books on gardening in Florida or the sub-tropical garden else-

(Continued on page 22)

## First Bulletins

(Continued from page 21)

where, 12 articles from the *Proceedings of the Florida State Horticultural Society*, and a few others. *Gentes Herbarum* is mentioned, along with various publications of Fairchild Tropical Garden.

The final note in this issue states that the next issue will be July in order to give the editor time to plant 50 palms and to get more money into the treasury to pay for the next and successive issues. Appended is the adopted constitution of The Palm Society

\*\*\*\*\*

**The sixth** and last bulletin (July, 1956) announces that 73 members have generously and voluntarily contributed a little over \$1,000, while 90 have contributed nothing. The rate of increase in membership has slowed possibly, it is thought, due to summer weather or vacations. The editor provides a financial statement of expenses and what remains in the bank (\$713.66). It would be less expensive in the long run to publish a printed quarterly journal, with better pictures, than to continue incurring the costs of mailing a monthly mimeographed. Dent Smith says, "...our original print order should be for 500 copies; the content will never be out of date, and a future demand is bound to occur." He continues, "It would seem that we have ready at hand the perfect name, PRINCIPES, Quarterly Journal of The Palm Society."

**Not all** members are happy. One, unnamed correspondent complains to Dent Smith: "I by no means intend to be critical. I believe, however, that one of the reasons for starting the Society was to promote an interest in the planting of palms and to dispense information to this end. I know it is difficult for those with experience and knowledge to bother with the basic and well-established facts pertaining to it. On the other hand the beginner is often lost due to lack of 'ground work.' Many of us are not young, and the trial-and-error method seems at times a gamble. Wherefore the more of the plain facts we know, the more assurance we have in attempting to develop the palms beyond the everyday run-of-mine type."

**The reply** to this runs more than two single-spaced pages. Dent Smith points out that very little is actually known about palm culture and that many palms have not been brought into cultivation. His tone is apologetic, aware as he is, of how much yet is to be learned. He runs down some basic information on cleaning and germinating seeds, planting, fertilizing, and watering. Much, he seems to say, must be on a trial-and-error basis because much about palms isn't

yet known.

**Palms grown** by a monk at St. Leo Abbey, northwest of Tampa is the subject of a short article. "Comments on Palm Growing in the Bahamas" by M. A. Langlois runs to four pages of text, two pages of pictures. The successes and failures at The Retreat are explained; there is a list of genera planted there. Thus, in the final article in the final mimeographed bulletin, Mrs. Langlois provides the exact kind of hobbyist-grower information sought by the disgruntled member.

*The tone of the bulletins is consistent throughout: energetic, upbeat, literate. "We are all friends together, bound by our common love of palms" is the implied message. Scientific articles and detail await the coming of Principes. The third bulletin, containing Mrs. Montgomery's (Mrs. Jennings') message about the Founder's Medal, makes very clear that the connection between the study of palms and the study of cycads goes back to the establishment of The Palm Society and, probably, even further.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**PRINCIPES: Journal of The Palm Society** first appears in October, 1956 (see cover, opposite page). The printed journal has 28 pages; there are now 155 members. The first article is a reprint of John K. Small's "The Needle Palm—*Rhaphidophyllum hystrix*" from the *Journal of the New York Botanical Garden* (1923). The Division of Tropical Research, United Fruit Company, La Lima, Honduras, contributes the second article: "United Fruit Company Plantations of African Oil Palm in Central America." "The Palms of Chapman Field," after a brief introduction lists all the palms growing as of August 15, 1956, at the U. S. Plant Introduction Garden in Coconut Grove, Miami. A few short notices cover a variety of topics: palm fertilizers, *Arenga engleri*, palms in Kenya, the coconut rhinoceros beetle, an earlier palm society around Orlando in the 1880s, identifying *Coccothrinax*. A somewhat longer piece deals with the perplexing problem of how to obtain palm seeds, then provides the names and addresses of seven individuals, and a botanical garden source in Chicago of *Copernicia* seedlings of several species. The concluding article is entitled "Palmyra Palms." After a brief introduction mentioning the two species of *Borassus*, Dent Smith reprints five double-column pages (plus three pages of pictures) by Berthold Seemann from *The Natural History of Palms* (London, 1856).

\*\*\*\*\*

**The second** issue of *Principes* (January, 1957) continues with reprints from other publications: on palms generally (W. H. Hodge), and on the *Nipa* palm (H.F. Loomis). M. A. Langlois writes of "A Trip to British

(Continued on page 23)

## Principes

(Continued from page 22)

Honduras” to locate and photograph palms—*Reinhardtia*, *Schippia*, and others—in what is now Belize. Alex Hawkes writes on “The Genus *Acanthophoenix*.” Perhaps the most interesting to a reader 43 years after the fact are the pictures and article by a Japanese collector, “Some Palms at Yashiroda Junkaen,” by Kan Yashiroda. Many of the palms are clearly mature; the family has been collecting since at least the 1920s. Dent Smith, as editor, recounts the growth of the society, problems of print run, and an acknowledgement that the pictures aren’t always very good. At the back of the issue is a classified section.

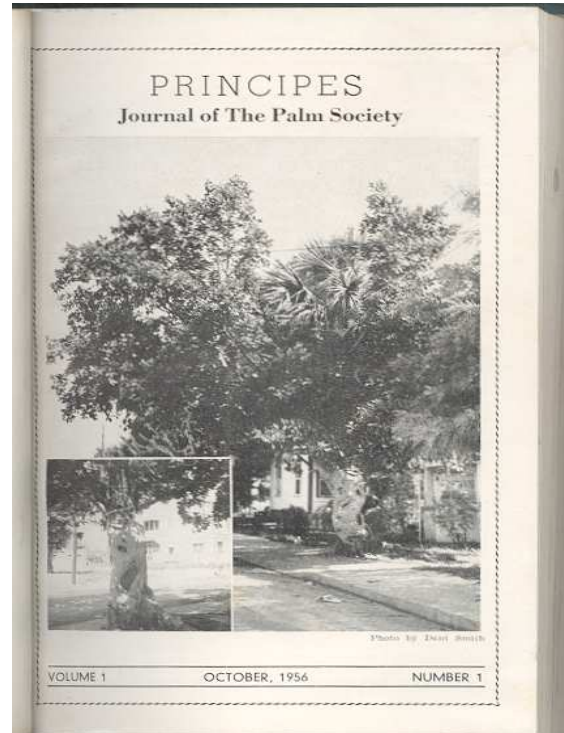
\*\*\*\*\*

The third issue of *Principes* (April, 1957) is Dent Smith’s last as editor. New officers for The Palm Society are announced: Walter Hodge as president, Lucita Wait as executive secretary, Nat DeLeon as treasurer; Bruce Ledin continues as vice president. Harold E. Moore, Jr., becomes editor. Cold tolerance is a general theme of this issue: in Italy (Harold E. Moore, Jr.), in Northern California (Warren Dolby), on the Oregon coast (Robert Bishop), and in Daytona Beach (Dent Smith, with a long list of palms growing at his house). Lawrence Simonson writes of palms in his Polk County garden. Roy Pence, of UCLA, explains “The Fan Palm Caterpillar as a Household Pest.” David Barry, Jr. has “Comments on Chamaedorea Palms.” Bruce Ledin contributes an index to palm genera in *Gentes Herbarum*. For those looking for cultural information, there is an article by Adolph Jordahn who oversaw the establishment of palms in Fairchild Tropical Garden. A number of unrelated pictures show the grove of *Arenga pinnata* at the Carl Cowgill Nurseries in Tampa, and an unidentified species of *Raphia* at McKee Jungle Gardens in Vero Beach. This palm is seen adjacent to a line of royal palms, possibly some of those in McKee’s famous allée of *Roystonea regia*, now occupied by Vista Gardens condominium.

*The early mimeographed issues and the three Principes issues edited by Dent Smith are all pitched at the intelligent, interested layman: the hobbyist-collector. There are no purely scientific articles.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Hal Moore’s article on “The Genus *Reinhardtia*” in July, 1957 (Volume 1, Number 4) becomes the first scientific article (19 pages)—complete with drawings of flower parts, leaf margins, seeds—in *Principes*, and the first issue under his editorship. Moore also contributes a more general description of *Chamaedorea radicalis*. On



page 2 is a tribute to “Dent Smith, ‘Palmateer’” by the new president, Walter H. Hodge. There is a treasurer’s report and short pieces on growing *Sabal minor* in suburban Philadelphia (Mary Henry) and on *Zombia antillarum* (Nat DeLeon), together with a speculation on how long palms have been in existence (Arthur Eames).

\*\*\*\*\*

The fourth issue of *Principes* (October, 1957) continues the pattern. Along with information about the society (now incorporated in the state of Florida), P. B. Tomlinson contributes 11 pages on “Current Work on the Systematic Anatomy of Palms,” clearly his book in progress. Hal Moore has a general article on *Pelagodoxa henryana*. W. H. Hodge writes of *Rhyticocos amara* [now *Syagrus amara*] and David Barry writes about *Jubaeopsis caffra*. There is an introduction to a reprinted article on the genus *Pritchardia*. New members of the society are listed; these include Marjory Stoneman Douglas, Dr. B. E. Dahlgren (Chicago Museum of Natural History), Roberto Burle Marx, Dr. Max Burret and Dr. Eva Potzta, and Joseph Sullivan of Ventura, California.

The Seed Bank is in operation and the 84 species available are noted. *A reader in 2000 notices that the species whose names are proper names, that is, of people, are always capitalized (contrary to practice today): Archontophoenix*

(Continued on page 24)

## Principes

(Continued from page 23)

*Cunninghamiana, Arenga Engleri.*] The editor publishes a letter from Mrs. Sulema Etchison of Brownsville, Texas, on "Palms in Texas." The issue concludes with an index to the first volume. A noteworthy ad in the classifieds is from James C. McCurrach of Palm Beach, who is looking for photographs of 32 genera for a palm book he is compiling.

**Thus endeth** the first year of *Principes*.

\*\*\*\*\*

*The mimeographed bulletins and bound copies of the earliest issues of Principes belonged to Bill Bidlingmayer, who handed these over to the Editor before retiring from Vero Beach north to Monticello. A short-lived hobbyist newsletter, Palms, was also published. An account of this will appear in the next issue of The Palmateer.*

## Valkaria Tropical Garden

(Continued from page 4)

variety. Their bromeliads are outstanding."

**That's music** to Brown's ear as bromeliads are among his favorites.

**"We have** more than 1,000 varieties of bromeliads here. Did you know that on his second visit Columbus took the first bromeliad to Spain to present to Queen Isabella?"

**He paused** before adding, "It was a pineapple."

**Brown and** Millare continue to travel in search of new plants and varieties to introduce to their already abundant garden. Among the latest additions are blue and black bamboo trees that joined the yellow.

**"For a** long time, bamboo had a bad name. Now there's increasing interest in it. The government won't let you bring in any bamboo; they quarantine it, but we're on their list to receive it," Brown said.

**For their** horticultural achievements, Valkaria Garden has received numerous awards and certificates, all proudly hanging on a wall in Brown's home.

*(Valkaria Tropical Garden is a wholesale nursery.—Editor)*

## CFPACS Provides Grant to Montgomery Botanical Center's Imaging Program

**By Neil Yorio**

**The CFPACS** board of directors has unanimously approved a motion to grant the Montgomery Botanical Center (MBC) funding for their new Image Program. With the collaboration of the South Florida Palm Society, we are happy to report that the project will be fully funded by early 2001. The project proposed by Dr. Walters of MBC is to document the complete life history for each accession, that is, from seed germination, to the juvenile stage, to planting stage, to flowering, and finally to fruit and seed set.

**Additionally,** the project will document bi-yearly growth rates of one plant per accession as well as document distinctive taxonomic characteristics and features throughout the cycad's and palm's life history. Clearly, this approach will yield extremely valuable information, never before attempted, to be available to the scientific and enthusiast communities.

**The proposal** requested funding for a digital camera, a slide scanner, and a high-resolution flatbed scanner to fulfill the needs of the project. The total funding request is \$4,787.84 to be used solely to purchase the

equipment. The South Florida Palm Society has generously donated \$1,500 to this project, and the CFPACS will contribute the remainder in two installments. We have already forwarded \$1,600 to MBC, and plan to submit the rest (\$1687.84) during the first quarter of 2001.

**As many** of you know, part of the CFPACS charter is to be involved with developing scientific research related to palms and cycads. Participation with the MBC proposal serves this purpose. Dr. Walters and MBC have always been strong supporters of the CFPACS in terms of plant and seed donations which are made available to our members. Additionally, they have always been accommodating to our biennial requests to visit their unique, world-class scientific research facility devoted to the study of palms and cycads.

**The CFPACS** is very proud of our commitment to MBC, and this first step will be one of many in future collaborations



## Ahead: December Election

By Neil Yorio

It's that time of the year again where the CFPACS lists the officers an vacant position to be filled for next year. This gives the membership time to review the current candidates and request that if there are any others interested in serving either the elected or appointed posts to notify the president of their intentions. During the fourth quarter, short bios of candidates will be printed and voting will take place to seat any new officers to their posts, effective January 1. Here's the current list of directors:

### Elected Positions

**President**—Neil Yorio, term completed, 2000

**Immediate Past President**—Tom Broome, term dependent on president's status

**East Vice President**—Charlene Palm, term completed, 2001

**Central Vice President**—Marilyn Bachmann, term completed, 2001

**West Vice President**—Ray Hernandez

**Secretary**—Chuck Grieneisen, term unlimited

**Treasurer**—Mike Merritt, term unlimited

### Appointed Positions

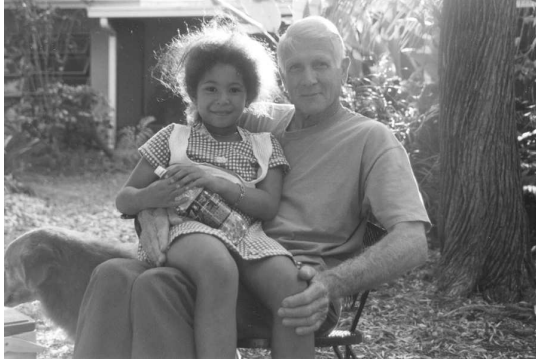
**Publications Chairperson (Editor)**—John Kennedy

**Membership Chairperson**—Dave Witt



*Below, Bud Wideman (left) tells the Editor how everything grows so well for him, or is he struck dumb by that kelly-green t-shirt with the legend, "Mullins Irish Pub, N. Wildwood, N. J."? Between the two is reputedly the largest living Livistona inermis in Brevard County. Above, a close-up shot of this uncommon palm. How many CFPAC.Sers have neighbors with utterly blank lawns, containing nothing but grass? What a waste of space!*





*That's Bud Wideman sitting there calmly with Jasmine Nash, just as if he doesn't have the most beautiful and unlikely palms in Brevard County. We try not to hold this against him, to think of him as a good guy, anyway.*

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

**LaRoche foucauld,  
Maxim #25**

## An Envious Report

(Continued from page 5)

mile or so of the Atlantic. After my shock subsided, I begged the proprietor to allow it to bloom (and seed once) before he destroys so beautiful a palm. Isn't there a tree spade somewhere to lug this large specimen to a new and loving home? (No takers in chilly mainland Brevard, let alone anywhere else.) Of course, there isn't exactly any space for a tree spade to go in and dig . . .

Once an *Aiphanes acuminata* (*caryotifolia*) grew nearby, fruiting and seeding for years in Brevard, not Puerto Rico. It came to an accidental and fatal end. (Don't ask.) Of course, there's also that gorgeous blue-flowering native small tree from the Florida Keys, *lignum vitae* (*Guaiaacum sanctum*) that grew, for Bud, from 1-gallon to 8 feet since 1992. I have one of the seedlings—now a foot high—from his plant: in four years it's put on at least half an inch.

Who else has a *Trithrinax campestris*? Yes, small, maybe 3 feet high, overall, but healthy and happy. Not to mention the bigger *Trithrinax brasiliensis* (*acanthocoma*) growing nearby. Nobody else I know also has a *Livistona inermis*, so healthy and in the ground. I did have one that slowly lingered and declined in the pot, refusing all aid, until it finally gave up the ghost.

Palms aren't the only plants in Bud's packed front and back yards. He's also into exotic gingers. Some are low-growing and have flowers similar to tulips. Sorry, I don't remember the names; I was noticing (again) how healthy they were. Now that I think of it, there wasn't anything that looked bad, even the *Pachypodiums*. These are odd cactus-looking plants from Madagascar. That's it! Bud doesn't have any Mada palms. A shortcoming (at last).

But how does he do it? Do I want to know or just feel bad: ignorance is bliss? Maybe he has access to a riding stable, like Norm Moody? No, there are no

"When next in Miami," writes Mrs. Theodore C. Buhler, "take advantage of even a spare hour or two to visit one of the area's smaller, older and a present little-known horticultural collections: the Miami City Cemetery, located between North Miami Avenue and N. E. 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue at 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The plantings at this cemetery once attracted many out-of-town horticulturists and are still of much interest. Many unusual palms, trees, and shrubs were planted there by the sexton, Alek Korakoff, in the twenties and early thirties. They are now mature and Alek is always willing to talk about his plants, will help collect seeds if and when available, and has exact records of the plants. One may speak to Alek beforehand by calling, between 8 and 3:30, the City of Miami switchboard, then asking for the City Cemetery."

--from *Principes*, Volume 1, Number 3 (April, 1957), p.103

[We haven't asked Teddie Buhler whether it's still there, not the cemetery, but the collection. Maybe she, or a Miami member—Paul Drummond?—can let us know.]

piles of *excrement* rotting gently and aromatically in the sun on that small house lot. Further inquiry about fertilization and cultural practices are in order, I guess.

*Join*

Most people judge others simply  
by how prosperous or popular  
they are.

**--LaRochefoucauld,  
Maxim #212**

## From the Editor's Desk

**Sometimes I** wonder whether palm-lovers ever get to stop being nervous. Maybe *worried* is a better way of putting it. In the winter, we hope that this time we will miss the Alberta Clipper that has stopped in Central Florida in years past.

**If we** get past the winter successfully, then when will the rainy season start? Early or late? Late means endless watering. For me, this time it was late. For May, as you may recall my moaning here, only .36 of an inch. June finally delivered slightly above the average for the month, but in spotty showers many days apart. July was much the same. Halfway through August, and nothing much so far: three-tenths of an inch. The average for August here should be well over 6 inches. My personal measure is that, so far this summer, my backyard (below the lawn) hasn't been flooded even once. Usually, after several big rains, there's an inch or two of water for a day or so.

**Of course**, it's supposed to be a very active hurricane season. Lots of rain, lots of wind. We can't wait, can we? Last year, September and October were memorable for hurricanes. Will we be similarly "fortunate" this year? I can recommend the Comfort Inn in Bayou LaBatre, Alabama, should anyone need to know.

**Congratulations to** Karen and Neil Yorio (our prez) on the birth of their daughter, Marina Rae Yorio, on 9 June. A sister for Owen.

**My Clear-Eyed Critic** has had me do penance for the *Mauritia flexuosa* I pictured in the last issue. The mystery *Caryota* at Ruth Sallenbach's, the two big, multi-trunked individuals that look like timber trees, has been identified. The expert, Bill Hahn, from New York Botanical Garden, after examining the inflorescence and leaf sent to him reports that it's just plain old *Caryota mitis*. He regards this species, with a very wide range in Asia, as extremely variable.

**The same person**—who keeps me honest, right—says that my account of "The Saltwater *Livistona*" in the June issue was confusing. Suffice it to say that the *Livistona benthamii* discovered at the Florida Medical Entomology Lab (FMEL) in Vero Beach is growing in full sun with its roots tapping the brackish, if not exactly salt, water of the Indian River lagoon. Many *Livistonas* (most?) prefer to grow in shade and relative dampness when young, before reaching into the canopy and sun as adults. My own small *L. benthamii* was

planted in shade, its roots not in contact with water—brackish or otherwise. As a result of this conventional treatment, it is less than a third the size of its sibling at FMEL.

**Dave Witt** is now president PACSOF, exemplifying the promotion that comes to those who do a job well. This means that someone finds **more** for you to do. What Dave gets to do is plan PalmFest 2001 somewhere hereabouts, sponsored by our chapter. Undoubtedly, he will be looking for volunteers. Remember, folks, as membership chair he knows who you are and where you live and e-mail!

**Our donation** to Montgomery Botanical Center (MBC) helps an institutional mission to analyze and propagate palms and cycads grown from habitat-collected seed. Moreover, it makes more solid our connection as a chapter with that wonderful place.

**The Indian River** County extension agent writes a column for the Sunday paper in Vero Beach about twice a month. His contribution for 13 August is an account of plants on the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council list ([www.feppc.org](http://www.feppc.org)). Category I has such well-known local species as Brazilian pepper, Australian pines, and melaleuca; all of these have disrupted the native ecology. Category II is a list of plants that have the potential for doing the same; its most familiar plant is wedelia. I am intrigued, however, by the addition (according to the county agent) of Chinese fan palm to Category II. It's difficult to believe that something so slow-growing and that takes so long to bloom would be seen as potentially dangerous. Those of you who have seen *Livistona chinensis* at McKee Botanical Garden (formerly McKee Jungle Gardens) in Vero Beach know how beautifully it has naturalized there. Can the people who keep track of vegetative pests possibly have seen the palm at McKee? The microclimate and a long period of neglect there brought this about; the same conditions are unlikely elsewhere. I will investigate and let you know how and where this condemnation originated. As far as I am aware, this is the first time that a non-native palm has been regarded as a widespread potential ecological threat. Of course, queen palms and washingtonias often produce seedlings in their vicinity, but this is very local and small-scale. A look at the website given above shows *Phoenix reclinata* and *Ptychosperma elegans* also on the Category II list, but with no details, no explanations.

The deadline for submitting material for the December issue is 13 November.

--John Kennedy

**CENTRAL FLORIDA PALM & CYCAD SOCIETY  
THE BOARD**

**President**

Neil C. Yorio  
211 Wimico Drive  
Indian Harbour Beach, FL  
32937  
(321) 779-4347  
[neil.yorio-1@ksc.nasa.gov](mailto:neil.yorio-1@ksc.nasa.gov)

**West Vice President**

Ray Hernandez  
4315 W. San Juan Street  
Tampa, FL 33629-7703  
(813) 832-3561  
[SubTropicOfCancer@hotmail.com](mailto:SubTropicOfCancer@hotmail.com)

**Secretary**

Chuck Grieneisen  
2450 Simmons Road  
Oviedo, FL 32765  
(407) 359-6276  
[chuckfg@mpinet.net](mailto:chuckfg@mpinet.net)

**Treasurer**

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

**Membership Chair**

David E. Witt  
7026 Burnway Drive  
Orlando, FL 32819  
(407) 352-4115  
[bizmark@mindspring.com](mailto:bizmark@mindspring.com)

**Immediate Past President**

Tom Broome  
9128 Golden Gate Blvd.  
Polk City, FL 33868  
(941) 984-2739  
[cycadjungl@aol.com](mailto:cycadjungl@aol.com)

**Editor, *The Palmateer***

John D. Kennedy  
3225 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960-3825  
(561) 567-9587  
[jkennedy@ircc.cc.fl.us](mailto:jkennedy@ircc.cc.fl.us)

**East Vice President**

Charlene Palm  
220 Ocean Spray Avenue  
Satellite Beach, FL 32937  
(321) 777-2046  
[cgpalm@worldnet.att.net](mailto:cgpalm@worldnet.att.net)

**CFPACS Seedbank**

Mike Dahme  
Box 89  
Grant, FL 32949  
(321) 724-8417  
(321) 724-8417 FAX  
[palmyra@palmnet.net](mailto:palmyra@palmnet.net)

**Central Vice President**

Marilyn Bachmann  
9016 N.W. 64<sup>th</sup> Terrace  
Gainesville, FL 32653  
(352) 378-6847  
[mdbach@aol.com](mailto:mdbach@aol.com)

\*\*\*\*\*

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



*This picture of Phoenix canariensis in habitat was taken by Amy Kredlo, Ed Carlson's daughter, near the town of Masca on the west side of the island of Tenerife in the Canary Islands. The local people call them "Canarian palms." The shape of the fronds reminded Amy of fireworks.*