The Palmateer

Volume 21, Number 4

Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society

December, 2004

<u>Winter Meeting</u> December 11th, Sarasota By Rob Branch

I would like to welcome all CFPS members and guests to my garden on for the board meeting at 9 a.m. Dec. 11.

I've been collecting tropical and exotic plants for more than 20 years. I have one of Central Florida's largest collection of aroids, succulents, gingers, ferns and bromeliads. About five years ago I got hooked on palms, and I now have 175 varieties planted and another 50 scheduled to go into the ground next spring. **My garden** is on one acre of land, completely land-

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Touring Gaylord Palms Resort, Kissimmee, on September 18th: CFPACS members were impressed by this true tourist attraction. (Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)



A palm jungle at Rob Branch's in Sarasota. (Photo by Paul Roat)

Fall Meeting September 18th, Orlando By John Kennedy

In the interval between the departure of Hurricane Frances and the advent of Hurricane Jeanne (still at that point, far-off in the Atlantic), CFPACS held its fall meeting in the Orlando area. The venue, on that typically hot and humid September Saturday afternoon, was unusual in that it was indoors and in the air conditioning. The Gaylord Palms Resort, actually in Kissimmee, is an 8-story hotel angled into an atrium

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MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE: SEE PAGE 8 FOR DETAILS VOTE FOR PRESIDENT SEE PAGE 22



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Welcome to New Members Joining Since August:

Rupert Lee 3200 Chatsworth Lane Orlando, FL 32812 Orange County (321)861-8975 rlee6@earthlink.net

Allan MacCavish 1801 West Grand St. #1 Orlando, FL 32805 Orange County (407) 423-2324 ytwinboi@aol.com



A preview of what's to be seen at Rob Branch's in Sarasota on December 11. (Photo by Paul Roat)

<u>KIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKIKI</u> CLOSING DATE FOR MARCH ISSUE: FEBRUARY 11, 2005

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December 11th Meeting, Sarasota

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scaped with pathways leading from one enchanting area to another. I host many garden tours throughout the year for local garden clubs and other plant societies, and it is my pleasure to host the Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society meeting.

Lunch will be catered, but attendees are asked to bring a side dish to share. Please RSVP by Dec. 6þ7 for me to order food. Items that would be appreciated to bring for the event include chairs and sale plants.

> My address is: Rob Branch 1315 38th St. Sarasota FL 34234. Telephone: 941-358-4953. I look forward to seeing you on Dec. 11!

[Sarasota was spared the hurricanes that devastated the East Coast and the Panhandle. So, an undamaged collection would be a welcome sight to many of us. —Editor]

If you plan to attend on Dec. 11, you must call Rob by Dec. 6 so that there is enough food and soft drinks on hand. Cost for the lunch is \$5, payable there. (Bring a covered dish and a chair.) Rob's phone: 941-358-4953.

LATE NEWS-

Frankie Ramos, who lives in Cocoa and is a web designer at the Cape, has agreed to become Webmaster, succeeding Steve Wasula of Longwood. More details in March issue.

Directions to Rob Branch's

From North: Take I-75 south to University Parkway. This is the first Sarasota exit. Head west—take a right—for approximately 5 miles to U. S. 301, a major intersection. Make a left (south) on 301. Go 1 mile to Myrtle, where you will turn right. There is a large sign before Myrtle for "Jungle Garden." Cross over railroad tracks. The second street after the railroad tracks is Coconut Ave. Turn right and go one block. Rob's place is the second garden on the right (1315 38th St., corner of Coconut Ave. and 38th St.) Signs will be posted along the way to help drivers.

From South: Take I-75 north to University Parkway, then follow the directions above.

Meeting Schedule

9:00 a.m. Board meeting at Rob's.
All members welcome.
10:00 a.m. Garden visit/general meeting begins.
Noon (or a bit after) Lunch onsite.
1:30 p.m. Auction, followed by sale.
CFPACS t-shirts will be available.



September Meeting in Orlando

(Continued from page 1)

higher than the building itself.

The atrium is big, with 4.5 acres at ground level. Central to the space is an artful series of terraces and levels, accessed by what seem to be numberless broad staircases. Going up the steps, visitors found ponds, restaurants, bars (one seated customers on the desk of semi-sailboat). All very interesting, obviously, but to persons of our ilk more compelling were the 25 species of palms, many of them mature, and a couple of cycad species. Snowbirds were more likely to be dazzled by all the orchids, the bougainvillea, the hibiscus, the gingers, the caladiums, etc., etc., but unlikely to spot that good-sized *Cyrtostachys renda* in an obscure corner. Nor would they realize that the coconut palms and royals so evident in the atrium are not exactly visible on the streets of Orlando.

A small army of workers is necessary to replace all those flowering annuals on a routine basis and to keep everything looking fresh. Palm-lovers, while susceptible to the spectacle of it all, might wonder about how happy sun-loving palms are in perpetual air conditioning set at 75°, in something less than full light. A member who had stayed the previous night in the hotel (with small balcony overlooking the atrium) reported that she was unable to move the thermostat in the room above 75).

The board met in a ground-floor room at 9:00 a.m. to a larger audience than is usually present: about 50 members and guests, some of whom had either driven considerable distance to attend or had spent the night before either at Gaylord or a less pricey lodging nearby. While admission to the atrium was free, parking was not (\$7). Some enterprising members drove past the kid at the gate or told him that they were attending an event inside (nothing so powerful as the truth).

Willie Tang was the star of the meeting that began at 10:00. He showed slides and explained the cycad conservation project in China that he has helped create and which CFPACS has continued to assist in underwriting. Most of those present had read Willie's three articles in *The Palmateer* on *Cycas debaoensis*. But here was even more information and the opportunity to ask questions. (Note: an update and a palm article by Willie elsewhere in this issue.)

Now Willie Tang and Gaylord Palms Resort were well enough in their way, of course, but the real business of the meeting came next, after lunch: Dave Witt's place, site of the plant auction and sale. Chateau Witt is 10 minutes' drive from Gaylord, several members were



Above, Royals inside the atrium at Gaylord Palms Resort, Kissimmee, show the scale of the plantings.. There's another Gaylord Resort, without palms, but with oaks as a feature near Washington, D.C. and a third under construction in Dallas. (Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)

told, laughingly, later in the afternoon. These unfortunates, following directions in the newsletter, found themselves in remote, unexplored areas of Orlando, only an hour away from their destination. (Yes, where it said **not** to turn was where they should have done so.)

Ruffled feelings were soothed with the acquisition of new palms and cycads to take home. As ever, departing vehicles seemed filled with waving fronds.

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Tropical Species

Delayed Germination

By Mike Dahme

Six years ago in the first of a series of articles on cultivating tropical palms that appeared in the Palm & Cycad Times, organ of our brethren to the south, the proposition was made that seemed immune to verification, namely that, due to growing at higher elevation, the spiny Seychellean Roscheria melanochaetes might be hardier to cold than its even spinier neighbor, Verschaffeltii splendida. Later entries covered two other spiny palms from the same island group, Phoenicophorium borsigianum and Deckenia nobilis, all four of these unique palms being monotypic, or sole members of their genera. The author of this series [who must have passed on or, worse, into bromeliads, for it petered out several years ago following the 14th installment], though living in a warmer climate than ours of central Florida, was unable to ascertain such distinctions because none of the species is able to withstand the usual winter low temperatures of even Palm Beach. However, thanks to the efforts of northern Thailand-based Ruud Meeldijk, a partial answer has come. Though his location in Chiang Mai is well within the tropics [19 deg N latitude] occasional winter cold of the Asian continental climate has tested several tropical species that he was growing in pots. During the winter of 2000/01 he experienced an overnight low of 5 deg C [approx 40 deg F], this after a day during which the high temperature had been 35 deg C [approx 95 deg F], and it is to this extreme range, more than the absolute low, that he attributes the losses of many of his tropical [and one non-tropical] species. While both his Verschaffeltia and Roscheria were spared, albeit with foliar damage, the other two did not fare well as all of his approximately 100 Deckenia and all but six of approximately 1500 Phoenicophorium were lost. A surprising survivor to this level of cold was [Doug K take note] Cyrtostachys renda, which he remarks was completely unaffected, but perhaps the biggest surprise of all was the loss of all of 100 or so Washingtonia robusta, a species which in Florida easily withstands freezing temperatures. These, he observes, were the first to die. At the time Ruud was growing more than 130 species and most of those which survived [including the Verschaffeltia and Roscheria] this unusual cold event showed leaf burn, whether due to frost and/or, as he believes, inability in winter to absorb minor elements, particularly magnesium and to a lesser extent, manganese, resulting from low soil temperature. The main reason for the actual fatalities



A tree may grow in Brooklyn, but a Bismarckia grows in Orlando—at Dave Witt's—visited durint the September meeting. (Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)

in his opinion, however, was the extreme range between the prior day's high and the overnight low, a range of 55 degrees Fahrenheit, the range that last occurred in Florida during the Xmas '89 freeze: mid 70's in the afternoon to 20 well before daybreak.

More recently Ruud was the first person that I'm aware of to report on delayed, or post, germination of Pigafetta. In April 2003 he received a large quantity of P filaris seed from a supplier in Indonesia. After several months with no germination he set the Styrofoam container that they were in [with moist sphagnum] aside [intending to throw them out] and forgot about them until December of that year, when he noticed that significant germination, which he attributes to the gradual drying out of the medium, had begun. [He emphasizes that the germination coincided with the onset of winter, that the temperature inside the box was quite low, and that the germinations were earliest and most numerous in the portion of the sphagnum that was the driest.] Sporadic germination continued for several more months [ultimately reaching, he estimates, 50%], until May of this year, more than a year after receipt of the seeds. From the accounts I have seen in the literature about this genus the consensus of opinion was that the tiny, Washingtonia-sized, seeds of this extremely tropical species would germinate very quickly or not at all. Ruud's experience was somewhat replicated recently by a grower in Puerto Rico, who experi-

(Continued on page 6)

September 19: Orlando. That's Dave Witt under his Corypha utan. Is this the northernmost individual of this species growing outdoors? (Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)



Delayed Germination

(Continued from page 5)

enced delayed germination of the other species of the genus, *P elata*. These seeds were received last December [03], in his case there was no germination at all until May, whereas three others of us planting seeds of the same accession had more or less immediate germination. So I guess the moral is to add *Pigafetta* to the list of palm species that can germinate long after sowing, useful advice for central Floridians.



Hurricanes' Casualty Lingers On



A Vero Beach victim of the hurricanes: Latania lontaroides (Photo by Matthew Kennedy)

My formerly beautiful male *Latania lontaroides*, with 7 feet of trunk, more than 30 leaves, survived the Christmas freeze of 1989 when less than half its present size. The palm got through Hurricane Frances by dropping its leaves, but was devastated by Hurricane Jeanne (120 mph). The spear pulled out, then more than a foot of what looked like mulch (frass) containing grubs: the palmetto weevil. Two generous doses of poisons dropped into the cavity don't seem to have had any effect, but the grieving owner won't give up until next summer. The palm itself remained in the ground, trunk unbent.

Ken Macht's *Latania lontaroides*, very old (more than 68 years old), with 20 feet of trunk, that grows six blocks north, seems to have weathered the hurricanes successfully.

Indian River County (Vero Beach, Sebastian, Fellsmere), with 115, 000 residents, sustained about \$2 billion in damage from the two hurricanes.

-John Kennedy

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The Palmateer

Page 7 Growing Cycads n Central Florida

By Chuck Grieneisen

Larger Macrozamia moorei is a cold hardy, carefree cycad for central Florida. Small seedlings are another matter. I'll first address my experiences with small seedlings. (under 1 inch caudex). The seedling starts out as very touchy about rotting. I still have not found a mix that does real well with small seedlings. One I may still try is, using a 3-gallon container, use 3 parts Perlite, 1 part peat and add to that 1 gallon of sand. Possibly reducing the peat would help. I think the main problem may be the watering. They seem to need just the right amount of water at that stage. I think Tom Broome will recommend just using sand for the seedlings. I tried that, but it seems that if you add too much water just one time they rot quickly. They can't be kept outside in that mix because if we get a few days straight of rain, they would almost cer-

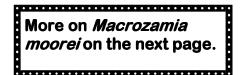
tainly rot. Once an experienced nursery grower just gave me a bunch of 1-gallon seedlings because they were having trouble with them. That is when I started experimenting with different mixes. I still have not found what I consider is a good mix for them. On the rest of the ones that I was given ,I got a load of builder's sand in the yard about 1 foot high and planted them out in that. I lost about 2/3 of them. I was considering giving up on Macrozamia moorei, but I kept seeing big ones growing and thriving in different gardens and private collections. Every time I asked what the secret to growing them everyone said that they didn't do anything with them. What gives?! About 10 months ago I acquired some larger ones. The smallest of the new ones had about a 3-inch caudex to about 12-inch caudex. One was growing in what looked like potting soil! I planted them in my above mix and they are thriving. (They were even doing well in the potting mix). It seems that at some point they stop being finicky and become tough carefree plants. They seem to prefer full sun. Just planting them in our sandy Florida soil is what they like. They don't seem to get the manganese deficiencies or any trouble of any kind as large plants. I have never heard of freeze damage from plants in Florida. It should easily take the mid



A medium-sized Macrozamia moorei growing at Montgomery Botanical Center, Miami.

to lower 20's.

I would estimate that the biggest problem with the small seedlings is the lack of precision watering and the organic part (peat) of the mix. I have watched Tom Broome watering his plants in a greenhouse and it is very precise (and in a greenhouse). My greenhouse gets too hot in the summer and my watering was always less than precise, either being too much, or after seeing them rot, then not enough water. That goes for the small ones in containers and the ones in my builder's sand. So if you can find them, go for the big ones.



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December, 2004



Macrozamia moorei in Central Florida (2nd take) By Tom Broome

I think *Macrozamia moorei* makes a great landscape plant for central Florida. Just about all Macrozamias will tolerate 18F, but some will go even lower than that. I have heard of a large *M. moorei* going down to

that. I have heard of a large *M. moorei* going down to 16F. They will grow in full sun but I think growing them in a little shade makes them look nicer. You can expect them to attain a 16 foot spread in time, but they will grow very slowly here in Florida. It might take 20 years for a seedling to get this large. There is a green form but also a blue form. The blue form is very beautiful, but if it is grown outside in the rain, the leaves will still appear green because the rain slowly washes off the wax coating on the leaves.

Chuck has covered the water issue pretty well. Seedlings are going to be a little touchy when it comes to extra water. I use builder's sand for the medium in all my small Macrozamias. Even though they are very cold hardy, I keep my seedlings in the greenhouse to regulate exactly how much water they get. I lightly water the top of the soil a couple of times a week, which is just enough for some of the moisture to work down into the pot, but not enough to make the pot wet. I think that is the key to growing small Macrozamias, as well as other hard to start seedlings. I have mentioned this in the past in other articles, but cycads prefer to have a medium that is uniformly moist. They don't like it wet, but just moist enough to lightly absorb some moisture by a root system that looks much like a fat carrot. Anything more than that is more than they like. Macrozamias seem to be less tolerant to the extra moisture compared to many other cycads. As Chuck has mentioned, Macrozamia moorei seems to tolerate wetter conditions once it is larger.

Macrozamia moorei is readily available here in central Florida, at least from our vendors at the society sales. Seeds are made available by several people each year on the internet, and sometimes by a society seed bank. If you can afford a larger one, it is well worth buying one that has a stem at least 3 inches in diameter



A very, very old Macrozamia moorei at Fairchild Tropical Garden in Miami.

Membership Dues Increase

Membership dues will go up to \$15 a year, beginning in January, 2005. The Board agreed to the increase at the June 12th meeting in Tampa.. At present, dues are \$10 annually or \$25 for three years. These rates have been in effect since 1998. In the mean time, expenses (primarily for *The Palmateer*'s printing and postage) have skyrocketed.

The new 2005 dues still come with a discount: \$15 for one year, \$40 for three years.

A sweetener, a bargain, will be in effect until the end of December. *Renew membership <u>before</u> December 31st and be grandfathered in under the current rate, \$10 for one year, \$25 for three.*

Overseas membership will be raised, effective the same date, to \$20 annually. If renewed by December 31st, the current rate of \$15 will apply.

It might be noted that membership in the Palm Society of Southern California costs \$40 a year.

-John Kennedy

or larger.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

June 13, 2004 to September 18, 2004

INCOME:

Seed sales	682.41		
Membership Dues	560.00		
Donations to CFPACS	0.00		
Public Sales (USF Spring Sale)	0.00		
Private Sales (June 12 meeting in Land O Lakes)	263.45		
Back Issue Sales	0.00		
Total	1,438.61		
EXPENSES:			
Publications (v. 24, no. 3)	1,633.31		
Grants	0.00		
Miscellaneous	0.00		
Total	1,633.31		
INCOME - EXPENSES	194.70		
Bank balance 06/12/04 23,500.58 Bank balance 09/18/04 22,867.21			
Net increase633.37 (decrease)			
(Note: Club-budget and bank reporting periods do not exactly coincide.)			
ASSETS:			
Endowment (mutual funds) 10,000.00 (purchase price) 			
	.39 Washington, 2,958.81		
	ked from sale of Putnam		
	res)		
Office equipment and tent 1,595.00	/		
Computers and software 2,544.41 minus depreciation			
Printer			
—Michael Merritt, Treasurer			

Third Quarter Meeting Minutes, Sept 18/04

The third quarter meeting was called to order at Gaylord Palms Hotel. The impending rate increase for membership was discussed. The yearly rates are going from \$10 up to \$15. It was decided that Jan. 1 was the cut off date for the rate going up. Printing up new membership flyers was discussed. Presidential candidates for C.F.P.A.C.S were also discussed. It was hoped that the candidates would be posted on our website before the December election. It was agreed that we should investigate the possibility of investing the rest of our endowment fund in a mutual fund. A motion was made and passed to reimburse Willie Tang \$100 for his travel expenses to be our guest speaker.

—Chuck Grieneisen, Secretary

Treasurer's comment: We are still spending more than we are collecting, but the difference has great decreased, thanks to renewed seed sales. We are especially indebted to the Montgomery Botanical Center for regular donation of seeds to the CFPACS treasury.

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Cycad Conservation Project in China Revisited

By William Tang

This past May I traveled once more to southern China to carry out work on the Cycas debaoensis project in Guangxi Province [see vols 22 (no.1) and 23 (nos.3&4) of The Palmateer for previous reports]. Cycas debaoensis is a unique and exceptionally ornamental cycad discovered only in 1998. In 2002 CFPACS provided funds for the construction of a village school here as part of a conservation project that I and other members of an international team are working on. The school, to be named after the cycad, is part of an effort to promote conservation among the villagers. After more than 4 years of repeated visits by Prof. Liu Nian, of the South China Botanical, Anders Lindstrom, of Nong Nooch Tropical Garden, and myself, we are seeing a transformation in the attitudes of the villagers. As a result of this unique plant they have received considerable attention from foreign organizations, like CFPACS, and their village has been on national television in China. The money that CFPACS and others have provided has brought welcomed income to this poor village and the construction of the school has been a focus of much attention, especially for the children. The health of their wild cycad population has stabilized. When we first started the project, the wild plants were being dug out at an alarming rate, but now poaching has virtually ceased. The farming of young plants, grown from wild seeds col-

lected on their mountain is progressing well, and in the foreseeable future, they will be able to produce seeds from their farmed plants for sale. **The first** floor of the school has been built and it is a beautiful sight to behold. The frame and floors are steel-reinforced concrete and the walls

floors are steel-reinforced concrete and the walls are built of cinderblock - all for only a few thousand dollars in materials, with labor coming from the villagers themselves. With a \$1000 grant from CFPACS for 2004, the villagers plan to finish the second floor. (The buying power of U.S. currency is multiplied approximately 8 times in China.) I can safely say that this conservation project has now passed the experimental stage, now that it has caught the attention of the central government. Support from the Forestry Department in the form of funding is now a possibility, however, much work is yet to be done. The adults of the village now seem firmly committed to the preservation of this plant, a plant that has brought them such good fortune. During the obligatory celebration and dinner that accompanies our visits one villager remarked that he has formed a very positive image of Americans, based on



Above, male cones of Cycas debaoensis. Below, new leaves emerging from the cycad.



my visits. I was very unlike George Bush, who seemed too bossy for his tastes, and I reminded him more of Lady Diana! He was, however, a bit drunk at the time.

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No, not a scene in Beautiful Vero Beach after being hit by Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, but the Debao Cycad School in China. The first floor was completed in May, 2004; second floor comes next. (Photo by William Tang)

> At right, Noted Cycad Person, aka Willie Tang, at lectern during his slide show presentation at the Gaylord Palms Resort meeting on Sept. 18. (Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)





Left, the insect pollinator (a Languriid) of Cycas debaoensis appears to belong in the same genus as the pollinator of the Florida coontie! This suggests that the pollination system of both plants are relicts from the time when these cycads lived together on the ancient supercontinent of Pangea.

-William Tang



<u>Guangxi Province, China</u> Palms Associated with Cycas debaoensis

By William Tang

Guangxi Province, China lies within the subtropical zone of Asia. It is bordered on its south by the South China Sea, which brings in moisture and tropical air masses. Guangxi's topography is dominated by mountains, with only 15% of its area categorized as flat. Its western half is particularly mountainous, being covered by steep metamorphic limestone hills and mountains. This area was once part of a shallow seaway, but the drift and collision of the Southeast Asian plate with the South China plate caused this ancient seabed to lift and fold, and erosion carved it into miles upon miles of rugged karst topography. This terrain covers tens of thousands of square kilometers and has a characteristic flora. Besides many endemic species of cycads, such as Cycas debaoensis, there is a distinctive palm flora here. A unique palm genus characteristic of this region is the cliff-dwelling Guihaia. Currently two species of Guihaia have been described, G. argyrata and G. grossefibrosa. Guihaia argyrata can be distinguished from its sister species in having leaves with a silvery underside, which G. grossefibrosa lacks. Also G. grossefibrosa forms a short aerial trunk with age while G. argyrata will not. In the field it is difficult to distinguish these two species, since individual specimens are often on inaccessible spots and hard to view and examine. Until the 1980's, this palm was virtually unknown to collectors and researchers outside of China, until seeds were mistakenly exported as Raphis excelsa. Guihaia is widespread in these hills, occurring scattered, usually on steep exposed areas, though rarely in dense colonies. Although many of the hills in the region have been cleared for agriculture and grazing, these palms persist on ledges, beyond the reach of hungry cattle. If one was to conservatively estimate an average of 100 of these plants per hill, the total population would number in the millions.

Guihaia has a particular interest for me, since its morphology is similar to the needle palm, *Rhapidophyllum hystrix*, which is found in Florida. Dr. Charlie O'Brien, an entomologist with Florida A&M University, has found that the needle palm is pollinated by a weevil of the genus *Notolomus*. He speculates that since *Guihaia* may be a sister species of the needle palm, its pollinator may be closely related to that of the needle palm's – a relict pattern of a ancient distribution when the

floras of Asia and North America were more closely adjoined. After several trips to find and study the pollinator of *Guihaia*, I have yet to find it. *Guihaia* was originally described as a species of *Trachycarpus*, and is also closely related to this genus.

Another widespread, though less abundant palm of Guangxi is a fishtail palm, *Caryota* sp. At the site where my *Cycas debaoensis* project is located, most of the original forest was cleared, apparently in the 1970's, except for one steep hill slope above a cave entrance. It is here that I found the *Caryota*. Further up this same slope, in fairly dense shade, I was surprise to find clump of *Rhapis* of an unknown species. In horror, I watched as my guide sliced through the clump with his machete-like blade.

Besides the native species, some introduced species of palms are widely planted as ornamentals along streets. The most common one is *Archontophoenix alexandrae*, from Australia. In Debao county, where I have done most of my explorations, the elevation is about 1000 ft. and the climate is cool in the evening and warm during the day. Temperatures in the winter can drop to near freezing. Under these conditions *Archontophoenix* appears to be very well suited. Similarly, the native palms should thrive in such conditions and should be well-suited for cultivation in northern Florida, southern California, as well as much of the southern U.S.



A flowering Guihaia argyrata growing in a limestone crack in Guangxi Province, China.





Above, the author examining a flowering Guihaia argyrata near a cliff edge. Left, Archontophoenix alexandrae as a street tree in the city of Debao. Opposite page, bottom, Caryota sp. occurs in intact forest. From the Editor's Desk

How did I make out in the hurricanes? The house came through; some of my co-workers weren't so lucky. And, like everyone else on the Treasure Coast and the Space Coast, I've gotten used to the desolate landscape: the downed trees, all the houses with blue tarps on their roofs (courtesy of the Army Corps of Engineers). We're past the curfew and the patrolling National Guard in Vero, but it was quite an experience. Few supermarkets open, little food in them. And, of course, a couple of weeks without power in 90-degree temperatures. The remaining trees have leafed out, hiding some of the ugliness.

My biggest, and some would say most interesting, palm came down. A 40-foot Livistona drudei, it was different from others of the species, being much larger (more than 2 feet at the base), and male. The species is moving into dioecy, as are mine and two of Stacey Peacock's-bought more than 20 years ago at a Fairchild sale. When the Liv went down, in the back of the lot, it took out my neighbor's electric and phone lines. It's still there on the ground, putting out leaves, not wholly uprooted. If I could figure a way to get it up past all the obstacles (the lines again, a tree, a guy wire for the utility pole), I'd like to save it but fear that the neighbor's patience may run out and she will resort to the chainsaw. It's too big for a come-along. Were the palm on my property and I couldn't raise it, I would just leave where it is.

My biggest personal loss (not quite lost yet, but probably) is the big Latania lontaroides in my backyard. A woeful picture and description appears on page 6of this issue. Most of the tall palms (at least 20 feet) are tilted at an angle and must be propped up. The small palms were mostly knocked flat in Hurricane Frances and, thus, escaped harm in Hurricane Jeanne. Most of the small palms have been pulled upright and staked by my strong son. Much work remains to be done, all of which has not been advanced by the requirements of my employer nor by my recent left carotid endarectomy (no heavy pushing, pulling, or lifting either before or after for a month). Matthew has agreed to do what is necessary, taking time from his studies to do so. My rarest (?) palm, a 20-year-old, 2-foot Oraniopsis appendiculata remained upright, not even fraved leaves; it escaped being hit by large pine limbs.

* * * * *

If you're wondering why *The Palmateer* is so short this time, it's because I received fewer contributions than usual. I am hoping that it is the result of hurricane trauma. Usually, our newsletter runs to 32 pages and

often to 36, occasionally to 40. If you'd like a longer March issue, **I need to get more material from folks by February 11**. I must say that it's far easier to assemble a small issue, cheaper to print and to mail, and less time-consuming:

* * * * *

Dues go up on January 1, 2005. It will be \$15 a year, three years for \$40 (up from \$10 annually, triennially \$25) If you get your check for renewal to us before the end of this month (December), you are grandfathered in at the old rates. Check should be made out to CFPACS and sent to Karen Barrese, 5940 Ehren Cut-off, Land O Lakes, FL 34639.

Do come to Rob Branch's in Sarasota on December 11th. Aside from the fact that we as a group have never seen his large collection, remember that Sarasota escaped any real damage from all the hurricanes. This means that, unlike my palms and those of others on the east coast (and elsewhere), his palms are still standing up, still looking good.

* * * * *

A cheerful note on recovery. I have been amazed and thrilled at how quickly most of my palms have started to recover. Bare trunks with all leaves blown off were not very encouraging, absolutely horrifying. But most of the still-askew palms are coming back. I thought for sure that my 20-foot Archontophoenix myolensis was a goner. Its crownshaft had been snapped in half by a large piece of falling tree. The top hung on, above my reach for cutting off, getting more brown and dead looking. I thought it another prospect for the palmetto weevil. But early in November, a piece of green began to push through the remains of the dead crownshaft. It's misshapen, ugly, but alive! And as it emerges, there's clearly a leaf, partial and broken, but green. Also on the hopeful side, it was reassuring to see that my largish foxtail and my smaller foxtail nearby weren't even bent by the winds, though they were unprotected on the east side of my half acre, losing only a few leaves on the windward side. However, my shady backyard now is very open and ready for sun palms, the Chamaedoreas looking a little wan in all that direct sunlight. After Hurricane Frances, I thought nothing more could fall out of the remaining trees; Hurricane Jeanne proved me wrong.

The Palmateer

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By Ray Hernández

Another year is coming to a close with the Holiday season now in sight. With the Thanksgiving holiday upon us, I suppose the main thing to be thankful for is the end of Hurricane season. Whether we were most impacted by Charley, Frances, Ivan or Jeanne, no one has escaped the season completely unscathed. Yes, many of our gardens were devastated and in some cases decimated, but we are alive to replant. My heartfelt prayer goes out to those folks who lost all or part of their garden wonderlands i.e. Ed Carlson' in Vero Beach and Dave and Geri Prall's in Cape Coral. For the first time in my life, I am actually looking forward to winter in bidding hurricane season adieu.

The disasters aside, the 2004 Hurricane season was quite remarkable. Never in the 120+ years of weather records in Florida, has the peninsula taken so many direct hits. More amazing is the brief amount of time between storms. In a seven-week span, the east and west coasts were each hammered twice. The new term "Hurricane fatigue", was coined during this time frame. Just when one storm was done wreaking havoc, another was following its coattails preparing to strike. Not even in the middle of January, have I spent so much time watching the Weather Channel and listening to my portable weather radio. Between the middle of August and the end of September, Florida became a sort of hell on earth. The night prior to Hurricane Charley's Punta Gorda landfall, my father and I were up until 5AM cutting plywood and boarding up windows. At that point in time, Charley was still forecast to come right up Tampa Bay and into my backvard! Never in my life had I been in the bull's eve of a hurricane's forecast track one day prior to landfall. Prior to this, Hurricane Elena's Labor Day 1985 indecision was the worst I had seen. That storm churned in the Gulf for days and did loops before heading into the panhandle. Not being a homeowner or palm fanatic in 1985, I brushed it off as an inconvenience. With Charley, I had a feeling of impending doom that everything I owned, would be gone in a matter of

hours. The next day with one sudden turn to the northeast, I was spared. Not so for my neighbors to the south who did, in many cases, lose everything but the shirts on their backs.

On a much better note, the December 11 Holiday Extravaganza is scheduled for Rob Branch's Sarasota garden. It is a feast for the eyes if you like palms, gingers, ferns, bromeliads, succulents and just about anything tropical. It is a one-acre paradise well worth the drive from the other coast. As usual, we will have plenty of food on hand. There will be a \$5 per person charge to cover the catered lunch we are providing. A sale and auction, now a holiday tradition, will follow the holiday feast. The board meeting will commence at 9AM with the garden tour starting shortly after 10AM.

This is my last message to you as President. I have enjoyed "running the show" for two years and hope the society is better for it. My replacement is our current east coast VP and "assistant editor", Diana Grabowski. Most of you met Diana as she so graciously allowed us to meet at her beachside bungalow for two of the last three holiday gatherings. I hope you will join me in welcoming her as our new CFPACS president. See you all in December



The Palmateer

Central Florida IPS Rep Reports on Board Meeting

By Faith Bishock

Greetings from your intrepid IPS Board representative. As is customary, the Board meets the day before the beginning of the Biennial, which started on May 9th in Hawaii.

Our agenda was quite extensive, and we found it necessary to have an additional session in Hilo on the last day with a Chapter Relations Committee meeting following that. (This is a new committee formed by Paul Craft, our new president). You'll be able to read a more detailed report in *Palms* concerning the usual issues and grant recipients, etc. The June *Palms* Supplement has the info on the new Board members and new committees. I'll start my report to you with new business.

The most important issue we discussed was the 'reinvention' of the IPS website. Toby Spanner gave us an extremely 'in depth' analysis based on his experience with his Rare Palm Seeds website and the European Palm Society chapter. He made many concrete suggestions with regards to set up, log on, aesthetics, content, links, and many others. His committee has been granted funding to continue to implement improvements in concept, content and design. Some upgrades have already been implemented. You real computer savvy people will have already noticed the "Classified" and the "Gripe Board". Allowing members to have their own IPS web page and email has been discussed. Improved links are in the works; new and improved navigation tools are on the way. I believe you'll be able to download and print your own Palms at some point in time.

Scott Zona is in the process of scanning all back issues of *Principes* and *Palms*. This will allow us to free ourselves of the 'back issue storage problem' at Allen Press and allow all members access. An index is also in the works. If any of you have more interest or expertise in this area, let me know. Internet issues are not my best thing, but I can hook you up with those in the know. Your suggestions and input are definitely important.

Several new committees have been formed. The Risk Management Committee was formed as an offshoot of the Biennial Committee. This group will review existing insurance coverage and make sure members are covered for Biennial activities.

The Affiliate Relations Committee is an offshoot of the MembershipCommittee, and I am on this one. The title is pretty self-explanatory. Please contact me with any suggestions you may have.



We really have a unique opportunity as IPS members to be in contact with the foremost plant researchers and journalists in the world and to have 2 of them as editors of *Palms* for free! They would like to see more horticulture articles and would like to include a section in each issue or a separate annual issue. If you have an idea, pass it along.

The hour is getting late and I need to wrap this up. We have a new chapter in El Salvador. The next Biennial will be in the Dominican Republic, and Lionel Mera is working his tail off making the arrangements. We are still hoping for a post trip to Cuba, but if that's not politically possible, Belize has been talked about. Our next interim Board meeting will be in Miami at the end of April, 2005. The 2008 Biennial will be in Costa Rica and the 2010 Biennial will be in Tenerife, Canary Islands with a possible post to North Africa (Morocco)

I have also been appointed head of the Nominations Committee, so if you are interested in being on the board or know someone who is, I will need a nomination in writing as well as a second. Then the interested party will have to present me with a biographical article to be printed in the *Palms* Supplement. The announcement of new board members will be in the June, 2005 issue of *Palms*.

Hope to see you all at our next meeting at Rob Branch's on December 11. Thanks for supporting IPS!

[The intrepid representrix in the original form of this missive which arrived a little too late for inclusion in the September issue of The Palmateer-- had announced that she and John B were leaving for a week of lobster-eating in Maine, that they would think of us often. Clearly an expedition somewhat earlier in the season, the traffic now being <u>south from</u> Maine rather than <u>to</u> that picturesque state. -Editor]

From the Candidate for President

During our September Board meeting the usual biennial discussion arose on who would replace the current CFPACS President, Ray Hernández, whose term ends this January. Unfortunately, our society like many nonprofit societies does not have an over abundance of folks willing to take on such endeavors which may ultimately result in additional headaches.

During the discussion it was suggested that I become the new CFPACS President. I will be honest with everyone, I was hesitant because after being the East Coast VP for the past two years, I've learned a thing or two about group dynamics and politics that you don't learn in the classroom or anywhere else until you are neck deep into it.

I will not make any grand promises at this time on what I would like to undertake as the new President of CFPACS, instead I will assure you that I will try to do my very best in this leadership role in staying attuned with our society as a whole and keeping abreast of the "palm world" in general. I've been actively involved with the CFPACS society for about seven years and I've observed as many of you have the interest in palms with the general public increase ten-fold. It's almost like palms have become the "in-thing", heck you can deck out your entire home or office with palm decor if you choice. Even the corporate building supply companies (i.e., Home Depot and Lowes) have jumped on the "palm band wagon", and decided to take the plunge and lure in the die-hard palm enthusiast by selling more exotic palms such as Bimarcks and Licualas.

Through the years the CFPACS organization has grown tremendously and has helped to educate the general public and its members on palm-related issues. I can see that our organization has the potential to continue this growth and have an important impact on educating all those who may be taking the plunge into the palm world and those that are already addicted. **In closing**, I will welcome any input from all of you as to your suggestions you may have to help maintain

and strengthen our organization. Looking forward to seeing all of you during our quarterly meetings. **Wishing all** of you and your families a blessed holi-

day season and 2005, and especially a speedy recovery for all your palms that are still "hanging in there" from the 2004 Hurricane Season.

--Diana Wehrell-Grabowski



A special guest at the CFPAC meeting in September: Kathryn Ostadal, President of the Louisiana Palm & Cycad Society, here arm in arm with her brother, Eddie Stumpf (SW Florida chapter), flew in for the occasion. Right foreground is CFPACS secretary—and unofficial chapter photographer—Chuck Grieneisen. At right, back to camera (as usual), Faith Bishock, Central Florida's rep on the IPS board.

(Photo by Geri Prall)



The plant auction/sale, Dave Witt's, at the September 18th meeting. Plants and people shelter from the blazing sun beneath the chapter-owned canopy. That's John Bishock waving his arms on the sidewalk.

(Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)

The Palm Tree Gardens Hurricane Charley Experience

By Geri Prall

Consider yourself lucky if you attended Palmfest 2003 and had the opportunity to see SW Florida's tropical lush landscape before it was devastated by Hurricane Charley . This area will look at lot different now. The Holiday Inn Riverwalk, the host hotel, is being demolished for a high-rise condo. The "S" was blown off the Shell Factory sign, thus describing what if felt like after Charley. Photos show tree farms on Pine Island with all the palms leaning over on their sides.

The City of Cape Coral's damage estimate from Hurricane Charley continues to rise as inspectors find more extensive interior and exterior damage to homes and businesses than initially observed. The amount of damage estimated now is more than \$500 million. The highest elevation in the City is the mountain of horticultural debris.

Friday the 13th [August], Charley was a low-level hurricane, spinning its way across Cuba and was expected to stay well off shore as it moved north along Florida's west coast. We only did minor storm preparations. It had been over 43 years since Hurricane Donna hit this area. A few specimen container plants were put in the garage to spare them from wind blown debris. About an hour before landfall, the local forecasters told us that Charley had spun into a monster Category 4 storm setting its course for Lee and Charlotte Counties. There was very less than an hour left to protect a few valuables and prepare for what was to come. Then the power went out and stayed out for exactly a week.

When we finally emerged from the house, it was shocking to see all the trees that went over. Surprising enough, we never heard any of them crash. Matures specimens of Sabal causiarum and mauritiiformis, planted back in the 1980's) went over. So did two single trunk Fishtails, but the Caryota (grown from seed from the San Diego zoo in 1976) is still standing. Acrocomia just barely missed landing on the neighbor's roof when it fell. The huge Royal next to it stripped of fronds along the SW side. But the 22' of trunk of Roystonea lenis lay across the pathway along with Livistona australis. Most of the Royals around town, including those on McGregor Blvd near Edison Home, were able to withstand the winds as they threw their fronds, leaving a tall pole. Many palms, with huge fantype fronds acting as wind sails, toppled over. Our Washingtonia is standing high above the power poles when many of the Washingtonias in the area fell or broke in half. Our

15' *Coccothrinax crinita* still stands proudly, still supporting all its seed, although *Coccothrinax littoralis*, and (20' tall) *Copernicia alba* lay leaning on the roof. **Some palms** remain completed unscathed. Is it because they were protected by the house or other trees, or is it due to their lower height or are they more wind tolerant? Did some trees go over because the ground was too saturated and made it hard for the roots to hold on? Maybe a small tornado whipped through taking those palms in the upper canopy – we'll never know. As people saw in media photos, coconut palms are still standing on the beaches, many still have coconuts on them, as with our two Maypans still holding a clump of coconuts.

Satakentia, Kentiopsis, Pritchardia, Wodyetia, Phoenix roebelenii and reclinata, Hyophorbes, Dypsis, Dictyosperma, Trithrinax don't even look like a storm hit here. The Caribbean palms (Copernicias, Coccothrinax, Pseudophoenix) as well as Archontophoenix, Veitchias, Ptychosperma may have battered fronds but are stable. Palms in the Borasseae tribe (which includes Bismarckia, Latania, Hyphaene, etc.) that usually have roots that grow downward before sending up an aerial shoot, withstood the winds better than those palms with small rootballs that allowed the hurricane force winds to rip plants them from the soil. Some trunks on Zombia and Zombia x Coccothrinax lost their buds and it seems best to remove the damaged trunk. I'm wondering if now when we classify palms (i.e. cold tolerant, salt tolerant), we should add a category "wind/hurricane tolerant"? The monumental task of cleaning up all the debris, trying to protect all the understory plants from sunburn is underway. I'm sure all the Florida's hurricane victims can identify with this. I've heard people say that palms don't provide shade. Not so. The absence of one mature palm is causing many of the plants in the area below to burn. < A special thanks goes out to the crew of Florida Painters and also to Bill Blain who came with chain saws to help clear out the fallen palms>.

Although it was very heartbreaking to see the garden we spent years in developing trashed by the storm, we feel fortunate that we still have a garden, and a home. There are so many to the north of us that have it so much worse. We are grateful that and Ivan didn't hit us as hard as predicted. Now it is time for garden restoration to take place.

To keep spirits up, we also try to look for something good in all this. New planting spaces have opened up. (*Continued on page 19*)



Dave Prall sits with daughter Brittany and their Siberian Husky, 'Frangi," wondering how he will ever get 22' of Roystonea lenis and Livistona australis out of Palm Tree Gardens, which was trashed when Category 4 Hurricane Charley whipped through Cape Coral. Many members visited this garden during Palm Fest 2003.

The crew of Florida Painters, along with Bill Blain from the SW Florida chapter, came to the rescue with chainsaws. The palm trunks made it to the trash heap. Brittany plays bongo drums on a cut-up Royal trunk.



Hurricane Charley Experience

(Continued from page 18)

We can redesign some areas of our property – with more wind tolerant palms, of course. There are a lot less sickly Queen palms in Cape Coral. The sad part is that some people will not replant their landscapes and there will be a lot more lawns and less trees in SW Florida. Page 19



Hurricane Disaster Areas



Left, Ciao, Actinorhytis calapparia —scene at Mike Dahme's in Grant. Below, Ray Barclay sits astride a downed Livistona decipiens in the same demesne.



A Hurricane Itinerary

Hurricane Charley: strong Category 4 (145+ mph)

August 13th, landfall late afternoon near Fort Myers, then to Orlando, out into the Atlantic at Daytona near midnight.. Strongest gusts at Punta Gorda (180 mph).

Hurricane Frances: Category 2 (105 mph) September 4th, edge reaches the coast; comes ashore at Sewall's Point, near Stuart, September 5th. Eye 80 miles across, speed 5-10 mph, takes two days to clear the state, exiting into the Gulf of Mexico as a tropical storm, north of Tampa; came ashore again as tropical depression at St. Marks, south of Tallahassee.

Hurricane Ivan: Category 3(130 mph) September 16th, landfall at Gulf Shores, Alabama, with widespread damage to the Florida Panhandle. September 20th, return remnant-band gives two days of rain to water-logged state before reviving as a tropical depression in the Gulf to hit Louisiana and Texas.

Hurricane Jeanne: Category 3 (120 mph) September 25th, landfall at Hutchinson Island—5 miles north of Frances' landfall—near midnight. Follows path of Frances but stays inland all the way into Georgia.

-John Kennedy



Above, Syagrus botryophora at Mike Dahme's in Grant, after Hurricane Frances. Below, Jaycee Beach in Vero Beach, as caught by Ed Carlson. That's a boardwalk out there that used to have sand under it. Also missing on the landward side is a broad sidewalk and a two-lane street.



Page 22 The Pal.	mateer December, 2004
BALLOT	Please print Name
For President	Street City
Diana Grabowski	State, Zip
O Write In	Email Phone (area)
Mail ballot (original or copy) to Charlene Palm, 220 Ocean Spray Ave., Satellite Beach, FL 32937 no later than January 15,	Wish to be added to Seed Bank E- mail list? (Circle one) YES NO
2005.	Willing to be listed publicly in roster? (Circle one) YES NO
On January 1, 2005 membership dues go UP to \$15 annually or three years for \$40. Foreign membership goes up to \$20. Any new or renewed member- ship checks received by De- cember 31 go in under the old rates.	Mail check made out to CFPACS (domestic: \$10 one year; \$25 three years; foreign: US\$15 one year) to: Karen Barrese Membership Chair 5942 Ehren Cutoff Land O Lakes, FL 34639 <u>cfpacsmbrship@aol.com</u> Membership also available at website: <u>www.cfpacs.org</u> The dues of anyone joining after October 1 are applied to the following calendar year.
The International Palm Society (IPS) Anyone interested in joining the IPS and receiv- ing the quarterly, illustrated journal, <i>Palms</i> , should send a check for \$35 (regular membership) or \$45 (family membership) to: International Palm Society	Deadline for March issue: FEB. 11
P. O. Box 368 Lawrence, KS 66044 Dues may also be paid online at the IPS website, www.palms.org	Note: The president's term ends on December 31, and he moves to the slot of past president. The current webmaster will leave his post at the end of this month. With the east vice president moving into the office of president (not an automatic succession), that
	office becomes vacant. Musical chairs, musical of-

fices.

-JDK

The Palmateer

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December, 2004





Below, member Joe Alazraki knows how to moor a palm for storms behind his house in Melbourne Beach. (Photo by Mike Dahme)

Left, hybrid Borassus at Borassic Park, Grant, <u>before</u> Hurricane Frances. Right, same palm, same place, <u>after</u> Hurricane Jeanne. See any difference? Maybe a little more blown in the right hand picture. Hurray for our side!

(Photos by the proprietor)





Above, adult Coccothrinax boschiana on a hill overlooking the sea in the Dominican Republic. Right, an attractive juvenile of the same species. (Photos by Robert Wilson)

