

# The Palmateer

Volume 25, Number 4

Central Florida Palm Society

December, 2005

## Winter Meeting: Palms & Food

### **Holiday Social, Cocoa Beach December 10th**

**Tour up** to four Brevard County palm gardens and end up at the Grabowskis' for lunch, plant auction and sale.

**Plan on** celebrating the holidays on the east coast "beach style" as you visit four gardens in the morning and finish off the day at Mark and Diana Grabowski's wind/salt tolerance proving grounds located in Cocoa Beach on the ocean.

**Who?** This palm social is open to all CFPACS and IPS members, and all our neighboring palm society friends.

**When?** Saturday, December 10th, 2005

**Time:** 9:00a. m.-3:00 p.m.

**Where:** There will be four gardens to tour in the morning hours (9:00 a.m.- noon ). You can visit any or all of the following gardens.

**Dave Reid's** property located at 100 Hilliard Lane or 6845 South Tropical Trail, Merritt Island. Dave has a variety of palms in their juvenile state as well as an abundance of tropicals. Two miles north of Pineda

*(Continued on page 3)*

## **September Meeting in Ruskin**

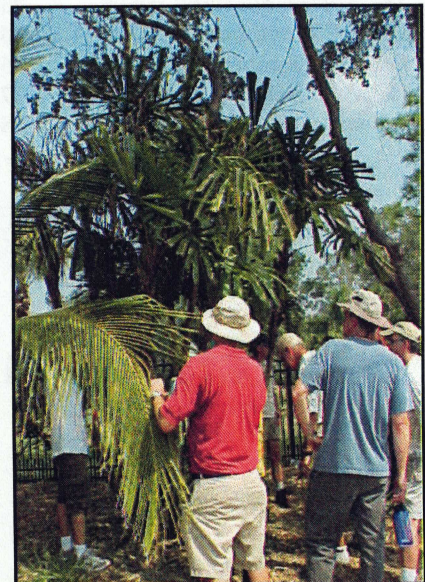
**By John Kennedy**

**Many of us** have dreamed of transforming a barren yard or unremarkable lawn overnight into an instant palm paradise. Rob Pittman has done exactly this on his two-acre property on the Little Manatee River in Ruskin. About 60 members enjoyed looking at all the mature palms there at the fall meeting on September 17th. Remarkably, everything had been planted no longer than two months previously. How could this be done? Why? Rob's interest in palms was whetted when he attended, with a friend, an auction at a Homestead nursery that was going out of business. Carried away, he wound up the purchaser of a very large number of palms. In fact, 57 flatbed truckloads of palms were brought almost 200 miles north to Ruskin.

**The most choice** palms were planted at the homeplace; the others were put in the ground at 5- and 10-acre fields a little distance away and were offered for sale at excellent prices. Among the most notable

*(Continued on page 4)*

*Right, Rob Pittman (pointing) guides the group around his Ruskin property. That's Caryota laeensis behind him. Far right, the tour stops at a sizeable Licuala spinosa. (Photos by Chuck Grieneisen)*





The Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society service area includes the following counties:

Alachua, Brevard, Citrus, DeSoto, Flagler, Hardee, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Indian River, Lake, Levy, Manatee, Marion, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola, Pasco, Pinellas, Polk, Putnam, Sarasota, Seminole, St. Lucie, Sumter, Suwannee, and Volusia.

Please notify the Membership Chair (see directory on p. 27) of any changes in street address, phone number, area code, or e-mail address. The newsletter is sent to the address of record.



## Contents

Holiday social meeting	1
September meeting report	1
CFPACS service area	2
Suggestion for garden tour	2
Final treasurer's report	5
Attack of the Killer Palms (Part II)	6
Microclimates in inland Central Florida	7
New palms needed at Michaels'	11
New Zealand palm ban	13
Biological control of Brazilian pepper	15
Growing <i>Zamia variegata</i>	16
Palm Points	18
Drive By Shootings	19
From the Editor's Desk	22
President's Message	22
Seed Bank report	24
Treasurer's quarterly report	25
CFPACS membership form	26
IPS membership info	26
CFPACS board member list	27
Louisiana Hurricane Report	28



## NEEDED!

## A Treasurer...

## Contact:

**Diana Grabowski**

## A Suggestion...

To tour all four gardens, as hardcore folks will do, I would recommend starting at the southernmost venue, Scott Ward's in Indianalantic, moving north up A1A to Neil Yorio's in Indian Harbour Beach.

This is about 3 miles north: go to Banana River Drive, which is the next major intersection above SR 518. Turn left (west), go about half a mile to Wimico Drive. Turn right (north). Neil & Karen are in the second block.

Back to A1A north about a mile to Charlene Palm's on Ocean Spray Ave. (left, west) in Satellite Beach.

Next, go back to A1A; turn left (north) to Pineda Causeway (toll) west to Merritt Island to northbound SR 3 (or South Tropical Trail). Dave Reid is at Hilliard Lane, 2 miles north.

To get to Cocoa Beach and Chalet Grabowski-sur-Mer, drive south on SR3 to Pineda Causeway (SR 404, toll) to A1A. Turn left (north) on A1A to 541 S. Atlantic Ave (which is A1A north in Cocoa Beach), a distance of maybe 4 miles. Or drive north to SR 520 Causeway, then south on A1A.. (See directions directly across on opposite page.)

For locals who know the area, there are more direct routes, but A1A is useful for those who are unfamiliar with the Brevard barrier island.

Lunch is at 12:30 on the patio.

—The Editor



## Brevard December Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

Causeway. **100 Hilliard Lane**, or 6845 South Tropical Trail, Merritt Island. The garden is located exactly two miles north of Pineda Causeway (SR 404).

**Charlene and Greg Palm's** property located at 220 Ocean Spray Avenue in Satellite Beach. Charlene and Greg have an established garden with a handful of unique mature specimens. Coming from the south, A1A to Satellite Beach, be looking on the left for "The Cove" restaurant. Ocean Spray Ave. is one street north of the Cove, Citgo Gas on one corner, ABC Liquor on the other. 1st block left off A1A. If coming from the North, A1A, be looking on the right for Bunky's Raw Bar, Ocean Spray Ave. is on the next street south, ABC Liquor on the corner.

**Neil Yorio's** property located at 211 Wimico Drive in Indian Harbour Beach. Neil has lots of cool stuff here. Probably even more since our last visit. From I-95 (exit 180), take the Eau Gallie Blvd. east about 7-8 miles. It will cross the Indian River Lagoon via the Eau Gallie Causeway. Go north (left) on SR-513 (South Patrick Drive). At the second red light (Banana River Drive), turn right (east). At the first stop sign, turn left on Wimico Drive (there will be a fire station on your right). The garden is at 211 Wimico Drive, right hand side, at the corner of Wimico and Crespino. Parking can be found by turning right on Crespino and entering the municipal sports complex or by parking along the street across from the garden. Please note that parking in the median or along the street in front of the house is not allowed (it's a bike and pedestrian lane).

**Scott Ward's** property located at 500 Orlando Boulevard in Indialantic. Here's an elegant collection in a well-laid out garden. From Route 95, travel east on Route 192 (Melbourne exit) and cross the causeway to the barrier island. Take a right (south) at the first traffic light onto Riverside. After 0.5 mile, turn left (east) onto Orlando Blvd. Scott's house is the second on the left. There is a large park (Orlando Park) adjacent to the house- please park automobiles next to the park and walk to the house.

**12:30 p.m. -3:00 p.m. Lunch, Plant Auction and Sale...Free sun and surf.. at Mark & Diana Grabowski's** property located at 541 South Atlantic Avenue located in Cocoa Beach. From the North I-95, take 528 Causeway (Bee Line, exit 205) east, which becomes A1A, heading south, make a left on 6th Street



*At the top (Start)'is Cocoa Beach, where the Grabowski's live. At the bottom, where it says End, is Indialantic—just across from Melbourne, site of Scott Ward's place. Indian Harbour Beach is Neil Yorio, Satellite Beach is Charlene Palm. The south end of Merritt Island (above 'Banana River' on the map) is the locale of Dave Reid's garden.*

South and then head back North on A1A for ½ block. From the South I-95, exit 191 at tollroad Pineda Causeway east (SR 404): head north on A1A, the garden is on the east in between 6th and 5th Street South. and From West: Take 528 (Bee Line) to become A1A south. Though the garden suffered during the 2004 hurricane season, the Grabowski garden is a nice location for a holiday social. If you are questioning what to grow on the beachside, this is definitely the test site.

**What to bring:** Bring quarters for the parking meters. There's an empty lot ½ block north and across from the property where you can park. **DO NOT PARK ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE ROAD YOU WILL GET A TICKET!!!**

**Please bring** a covered dish of your choice, chair, and beach equipment if you choose.

Diana will be cooking up the main spread consisting of: Salmon, Vegetables, Potatoes, Chowder depending on weather, and her scrumptious key lime pie, so she's been told. Beverages will be provided.

\*\* Please note that the plant auction and sale will take place after lunch. There will be no plant sales at the final destination until after lunch at the designated time.

-DWG



## September Meeting in Ruskin

(Continued from page 1)

palms near the house were sizeable mature specimens of *Howea forsteriana*, a Spindle hybrid with an emerald-color crownshaft, and landscape size *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis*, among many others. A notable cycad was a large undescribed emergent *Ceratozamia* from Vera Cruz state in Mexico that gets 12 feet tall. A specimen of the very rare and endangered *Zamia inermis* was planted, along with *Z. vasquezii*, *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*, and several forms of *Dioon edule*.

A Cuban luncheon was enjoyed by all present. CFPACS's most recent former president, named Hernández, testified to the authenticity of the *platanos* as well as the *ropa vieja* and the yellow *arroz*. Dessert, of course, was *flan*.

An auction conducted by those usually shy boys, Tom Broome and John Bishock, brought in a tidy amount for benefit of the chapter. This was followed by a plant sale. Per usual, the departing visitors all seemed to have waving fronds visible in vans, SUVs, and just plain cars.

Tom and Karen Barrese are to be congratulated on setting up so successful a meeting in so attractive a setting. And we should also congratulate Rob and Tracey Pittman: during the meeting Tracey was 9+ months pregnant, welcoming but clearly very tired. Not long afterwards, she gave birth to a baby girl, a sister for the cute little 3-year-old boy who was goggled eyed at all the visitors.

The Editor was surprised by the board; you can see this in the picture below.



Chowing down in Ruskin, from left, former CFPACS presidents Ray Hernández and Tom Broome. Karen Barrese presides over the table. Despite Ray's and Tom's best efforts, there was food left over.

(Photo by Diana Grabowski)



Surprise, surprise in Ruskin. The Editor, in infamous red shirt (he thinks it's pink), is presented by the CFPACS board with the gift of two palm books: *Palms of New Caledonia* and *Palms and Cycads of Thailand*. The occasion? His seventh year as Editor, possibly a record tenure for an IPS chapter publication. In shirt and cap, left, is Tom Broome, Central VP; in blue shirt, right, is Chuck Grieneisen, Secretary. Sunglasses on Diana Grabowski, President. A horde of onlookers are out of camera range.

(Photo by Mark Grabowski)



## *Ave atque vale:* Final Report from a Treasurer

By Mike Merritt

I have just completed a third quarter treasurer's report for our esteemed editor to put in the next *Palmateer*. Our bank account is still headed south to a slight degree, but our seed sale income has strengthened, thanks to our energetic new seed-bank coordinator. We are also experiencing our seasonal low in membership income and we didn't have any net income from our June meeting. But we have a healthy account balance, and we could go on this way for years without reaching bottom.

However, this report is the last one you will be having from me as CFPACS treasurer. Sometime in the next month, I will turn over the chapter checkbook either to a new treasurer or to President Diana to keep for the new treasurer when chosen. It's time for members to think hard about finding a new person for this position. The chapter cannot function without someone handling the finances. Checks have to be written to support the *Palmateer* and the activities of the seedbank coordinator and membership coordinator. Checks received by the seedbank and membership chairs must be deposited. Accounts from meetings (sales, auctions, food, room rentals, speaker expenses) have to be resolved and paid. Monies have to be dispensed to vendors at sales. The state must have a sales tax report every quarter, and we have to renew our corporate status every spring.

**Needed** is a details-oriented individual who can keep track of things. A bean counter. Higher math ability is not a requirement, but the ability to keep track of a budget without too much difficulty is the primary qualification. Email access is necessary because most of our communications are over the net. Anyone in the membership with a candidate in mind or who would like to volunteer should contact Diana.

**My mind** now turns to the past, way before my time with the chapter. The old notes I inherited with the treasury files include rosters of The Palm Society from 1956 (members include Mrs. David Fairchild, Mrs. Robert Montgomery, and the founder, Dent Smith. There are announcements from Dent Smith and Billings McArthur in the

1970's of meetings of the Central Florida Group of the Palm Society. Apparently, things slid in the late 70's, and a flurry of correspondence from the fall of 1981 describes the efforts of Dave Besst to revive the Central Florida Group. Dave was assisted by wife Marian, Ed and Nancy Hall, Hersh and Jackie Womble, and Pat and Gordon Smith. Eager member Dr. Jerry Keuper helped with the arrangements for an organizational meeting at FIT, and younger members John and Ann Kennedy were also active. Part of the program was a Founders Day Program in honor of Dent Smith. An ailing Dent Smith attended and received a plaque. Then they had the important part – the plant sale.

**In the** ensuing years, the chapter was kept going largely through the efforts of Ed Hall, serving as treasurer, and Nancy Hall, serving as Secretary, as Presidents and other officers came and went. In late 1996, when Mike Dahme was serving as the president (an "ossifer" on the "bored", imagine that!), some members, including Dave Besst, decided that it was time for another "revival". New bylaws were written, and the chapter officially incorporated and became the Central Florida Palm and Cycad Society, Inc. Ed and Nancy Hall continued for another year in their positions, but decided to step down at the end of the year. The new era (1998-?) began with a new treasurer, Dave Besst. Edgar Hall became the Secretary for a year, followed by our present Secretary, Chuck Grieneisen.

**In April** 1999, Dave Besst resigned. I had attended most meetings for a year or so as a new member moving up from south Florida, and I had previously been approached by "nominations chair" Mike Dahme about serving as an "ossifer" of the revived group. When Dave resigned, I was asked to step into that position. This is how I became the third treasurer of the central Florida group since 1981, following two of the primary driving forces in the group during that period. My first reaction was "hey, I'm not an expert, how could I be an officer?"

**My involvement** in palms began soon after I moved to the Miami area at the beginning of

(Continued on page 9)



## The Attack of the Killer Palms (Part II)

FLIPPC is on the job, Floridians. Fear not!

The latest, 2005, list of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council lists no less than 6 (**SIX**) dangerous palms that threaten the native plants of our fine state. Not a word, of course, about citrus or sugar cane or the bulldozer for mushrooming subdivisions. These are not, you must understand, threats to native ecology. Is it possible, perhaps, that funding might come only for discovering—every year—additional dangerous exotics? With about 1200 exotic plant species in Florida, obviously opportunity continues to knock.

**A comfort**, however, lies in the fact that these menacing palms are listed only in Category II:

“Invasive exotics that have increased in abundance or frequency but have not yet altered Florida Plant communities to the extent shown by Category I species. [An admirable long sentence.] *These species may become ranked as Category I, if ecological damage is demonstrated.* [Italics in the original.] So, we can breathe a sigh of relief. Doom has not yet been pronounced.

**Which palms?** *Chamaedorea seifrizii*, which the Institute for Systemic Botany indicated was naturalized in Miami-Dade County, has hit the big time with establishment in a hammock somewhere. Matheson Hammock? Then there’s *Livistona chinensis* which, I mistakenly thought, had been removed from the list. Probably, one of dauntless investigators has seen how it has naturalized in McKee Botanical Garden in Vero Beach, which closed in 1972 as McKee Jungle Gardens so that the Chinese Fan Palm could achieve its fell purpose.

**Phoenix reclinata** remains on the list, to no one’s surprise. The only surprise is that it hasn’t yet made it to Category I, where the really dangerous plants are named. *Ptychosperma elegans*, Solitaire Palm, is also an old listing, possibly having escaped as a street planting in West Palm Beach, the medians and concrete providing compelling habitat.

**Congratulations are** in order to FLIPPC, I hate to admit, for listing my very non-favorite palms that are the most common in all of Florida: *Syagrus romanzoffiana*, the Queen Palm, and *Washingtonia robusta*, often four stories high until lightning or hurricanes take care of the matter. Has FLIPPC noticed all the *Wodyetia bifurcata*? Foxtails seem to be replacing Queens all around and they are fruiting! Here is a possible candidate for inclusion on the 2006 or, maybe, 2007 list.

The definition of Category I plants make evident why the palms haven’t yet made it aboard: “Invasive exotics that are altering native plant communities by displacing native species, changing community structures or ecological functions, or hybridizing with natives. *This definition does not rely on the economic severity or geographic range of the problem, but on the documented ecological damage caused.*” [Italics in original.] I wonder what, exactly, the italicized sentence means; while supposedly providing a more clear definition, it accomplishes the opposite.

**What** documentation? Does this mean that my *Livistona saribus*, with all those seedlings at its base, qualifies for listing? There might even be a few in the neighbor’s yard that have escaped the lawnmower.

**Mum’s the word:** I won’t mention the species of a grove of feral palms that I know are somewhere in the south end of Brevard County. Unless, of course, FLIPPC has subpoena powers, then woe is me.

**About five** years ago, I contacted members of the FLIPPC board (still all the same people, a closed shop?) to ask what the criteria were for inclusion on either category list. I never received an explanation, which led me to the not unreasonable suspicion that these people spotted a few individual palms growing where they had not been planted. I did receive a few insults apparently for raising the question but, then, the sender was likely sensitive about not being able to respond suitably.

**Make no** mistake, there **are** hideous and rampant exotics. Whether the palms listed should be there may be debatable. However, don’t get alarmed.

Remember, FNGA (Florida Nurserymen & Growers Association) evidently watches FLEPPC; a disclaimer seen elsewhere, if not on the brochure, announces that the semi-public organization cannot forbid the sale or planting of any species. If it’s a semi-public group, maybe there should be a wider representation on the board. Any CFPACS volunteers ready to apply?

**A side** note, gleaned from the FLIPPC brochure, is that wedelia has received the attention of the taxonomists (inevitable, really) and is now not *Wedelia trilobata* but *Spagneticola trilobata*. I think I prefer the old name; the species is Category II. And, as a member of the Florida Native Plant Society (FNPS), I also spot the tall growing blueporterweed, *Stachytarpheta urticifolia* arrived in Category II. But we all thought it was native when we planted it! It does spread, sometimes beating out the bahiagrass.



By Walter Darnall

Having now experienced eight winters living in inland south central Florida, I can attest to the value of living in proximity of a lake and/or at higher elevation above sea level, with respect to higher nighttime low temperatures. Both areas run warmer at night, mainly during radiational cooling nights (i.e., nearly windless conditions with clear sky), than non-lake front areas and low elevation areas.

My wife, Cathy, and I moved to Lake Placid, Florida



## Microclimates in Inland Central Florida

(Highlands County), in early December of 1997. Coming from Baltimore, Maryland, our main intention was to escape the long, icy cold winters of the north and to live in an area less populated and urbanized. At that time we gave nary a thought to growing palms, tropical plants, shrubs, trees, etc., that abound on our property today. Hence, we didn't consider as to what inland areas might be the warmest (at night), and, thus, more conducive to growing the aforementioned plants. After moving here it didn't take long to not that some areas appeared to have a higher USDA zone rating than others. What were the factors for these differences, I thought?

### Nighttime Temperature Influencing Factors

Running down the spine of Highlands County is the southern end of the Lake Wales Ridge (approximately 150 miles long by 10 miles wide, starting in Lake County, running south through Polk County, and ending at the southern end of Highlands County). In Highlands County, on and along the ridge, there are about 80 lakes, ranging in area from 10 acres to almost 28,000 acres.

It is within these lake areas, and some of the higher elevation areas on the ridge, that I observed species of palms, tees, shrubs, etc., growing that are more commonly found in the warmer coastal areas of central Florida and also in inland areas much farther south.

Specifically, within the above areas, I observed fruiting coconut palms, royal palms, Carpentaria palms, and *Ptychospermas*. I also found very large banyan trees, African tulip trees, mangos, lychee, and royal poinciana. Shrubs like croton, ixora, hibiscus were all of larger size, compared to those found in non-lake areas, indicating they got frozen back far less often than the same plants growing in non-lake areas and in areas of lower elevation.



Growing at Lake Jackson, Sebring: top, a banyan tree and (just above) an African Oil Palm, *Elaeis guineensis*.

### January 6, 2001—My Worst Radiational Freeze

It was on this morning I recorded my all-time lowest temperature during the eight winters I've resided here. That morning my low temperature in the open yard bottomed out at 22 degrees, accompanied with heavy frost. Under tree canopy it was less severe, averaging 28-29 degrees, as a result of rising ground heat being reflected back down by the tree canopy.

Needless to say, most of my tender palms and tropical plants and shrubs were severely damaged, many turning to a sickly, brown mush. For an instant I thought I was living back in Maryland! I could hardly believe what I was seeing. As the morning sun rose higher in the sky and temperatures began to climb, some plants I first thought had escaped damage started to wilt and collapse.

By the end of the day my garden looked like the

(Continued on page 8)



## Microclimates Inland

(Continued from page 7)

aftermath of a nuclear holocaust! I was devastated. It was then I decided to drive up the hill (on the ridge) into town and see what the freeze damage was like there.

**On the** way out of my subdivision, I had to pass by the south end of Lake Clay (367 acres in area). As I approached the lake front properties I noticed little or no damage to the same palms and plants that, at my place, were turned to mush.

**Driving up** the hill towards town, the freeze damage became less and less pronounced; once in town, I saw **no** freeze damage—not even to banana and papaya leaves. A large traveler's palm in town showed no signs of leaf damage, yet my white bird-of-paradise (a half-zone hardier plant) was fried! Driving around other lake front neighborhoods revealed the same thing: if you lived next to water and/or were on higher ground, you fared much better in a radiational freeze.

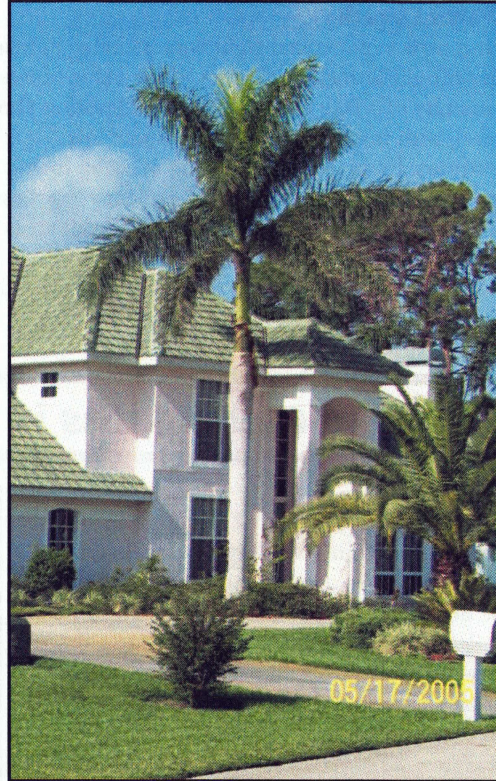
**Later in** the week, there was a local newspaper article that said it was typical for temperatures (during a radiational freeze event) to run 10-11 degrees warmer on the ridge and around lakes than in non-lake areas and low outlying areas down off the ridge. This was due to air stratification and inversion up on the ridge areas. The lake areas are warmer due to the thermal effects of water, which average about 68 degrees in the winter.

**Approximately 90%** of my worst freezes are of the radiational cooling type. Hence, living in a low area, I tend to get colder freezes due to heavier cold air draining down to my property off the ridge, while warmer air flows up. Almost conversely, I usually fare better during advective freezes (i.e., windy freezes) as being in a lower area surrounded by trees, I don't receive the brunt of the drying winds, which tend to burn and desiccate exposed palms and plants on the ridge and open lake areas.

### Lake Front Living

**At present** time, lake front property here in Highlands County is going for a premium similar, but less expensive than coastal water front property. Because of this, many folks from coastal south Florida are selling their property for big bucks and are moving here in droves, many buying and building their new homes on lake front property. This boom has been going on for about three years now and, in that time, I've noticed that many of the new lake front property owners are having cold-tender palms, like coconuts, royals, and foxtails, installed in their landscapes.

**While living** in proximity of a lake and/or on high ground affords one higher nighttime temperatures



*A very vigorous royal palm growing outside a house on Lake Huntley. Is the owner 'pushing the envelope'?*

during the winter, it's not long term foolproof. One day a severe advective freeze will come, and even the lake areas and other warm microclimate areas won't escape the wrath.

**Some long-time** residents here told me the Christmas freeze of 1989 was the last severe one, killing all coconut palms and many of the royals here. Some of the old royal palms show trunk damage to this day.

**I will** conclude this article by saying that all other things being equal, if one wants a long-term chance of growing Zone 10 and above palms and plants in inland central Florida, their best chances are to do it at lake front locations or on high ground. I learned this the hard way!

*[Share your own experiences in growing palms in Central Florida by writing about these for The Palmateer. Your friendly local Editor will be glad to help.]*



## Final Report from a Treasurer

(Continued from page 5)

1980. A professional colleague told me of his interest in palms, and I began to pay particular attention to them when I attended the Rambles at Fairchild Gardens. My interest in plants generally began when I was a preteen, and I recall my non-plant family staring at me as I planted rows of various kinds of flowers in the backyard (fortunately, they were tolerant and reserved about this strange activity that fell outside the scope of their understanding). At Fairchild, I began to ply a brown-bearded man (Curator of Palms Chuck Hubbuch) with really ignorant palm questions ("What does this look like when it gets larger?"). Vendors at the palm sales during my time in Miami (1980-95) might remember me as an assiduous buyer of plants, which I hauled out in a wheelbarrow.

In my first year as treasurer, Mike Dahme (seedbank chair) began to send me excess seeds (*Copernicia macroglossa* was one of the early ones). I exclaimed, "I don't think I could do that!" (actually raising a palm from a seed). But I was left with no choice but to try. Now, my two shadehouses/greenhouses and holding areas are crammed with thousands of palms and cycads that I have raised from seed. I have probably not bought more than 5 or 10 palms in the last five years. From planting the wrong palms in the wrong places, I have learned many lessons about cold hardiness. I have gained knowledge of many palm genera. Perhaps I have become an "expert" after all. But there are many far more expert than I.

I am leaving Florida for the Big Island of Hawaii, where there is still "affordable" land in the southeast. I have purchased 8.33 acres of land at 700 ft elevation off the Volcano Highway leading from Hilo to the main tourist attraction (Kilauea). The land is on the slopes of Mauna Loa, but no one should be concerned because I am in what real estate agents identify as "Lava Zone 3", which is quite unlikely to get lava flows the next time Mauna Loa gets going (pressures in the volcano are building – the last eruption was in 1984). The lot is former sugar cane land with deep soils and few rocky areas. (Many properties in the southeast of the Big Island are unsuitable for growing because the land surface is hard, congealed lava rock. Pauline Sullivan and others have dealt with this problem by hauling in tons of cinders and planting palms in the cinders. This works, but requires constant watering, which causes problems when it stops raining for a while.).

The property is overgrown with relict sugar cane and weeds. There is a distinct slope to the lot, as evidenced



Above, Photo 1 showing the slope of Mike Merritt's property on the Big Island of Hawaii. Below, Photo 2, looks into the overgrown 8.33 acres from the road. Looks empty: lots of room for palms. Pritchardias, of course.



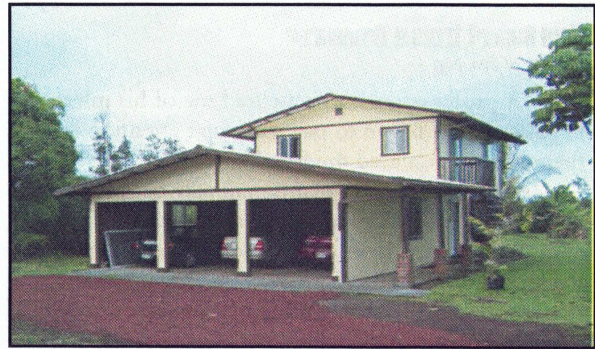
by photo 1, showing the road by the property. It is hard to see into the property because it is overgrown, but photo 2 is an attempt. Sugar cane can be seen in the near part of the lot. In the right background can be seen some large trees with long branches extending outward. The locals call these "albezias". (I would provide the scientific name, but, unfortunately, I have already packed my *Tropica*). "Albezia" is an exotic invader and residents describe in horror how it can grow 10 ft in a year. Besides clearing (I will leave the big albezias for shade), I have to deal with the problem

(Continued on page 10)





*Photo 4: Beginning all over again with palms—makeshift cover for seed pots to protect from mynah birds.*



*Photo 3: Mike Merritt's rented house on the Big Island.*

### **Final Report from a Treasurer**

*(Continued from page 9)*

of wild pigs.

**I have** rented a house on a point of land near the ocean. The attraction for me is the 3-car garage (photo 3). I have already started the future production of palms by setting out some seed pots in the backyard, where they should benefit from the near-constant rains. While there, I noticed that flocks of mynah birds seemed always to be in the yard, picking at the ground. Fearing that these exotic pests would attack the seed pots, I developed the arrangement shown in photo 4, where a shade cloth cover is anchored by blocks.

**In the past**, I recall that some of the "experts" I talked to were arrogant, dismissive, and uncommunicative. As a result, I failed to progress in any significant way in my knowledge of palm horticulture, even though I purchased many plants. In central Florida, I have met people who talked to me as an equal, people who willingly shared their knowledge, people who encouraged me, even challenged me, to do and learn more. The result was that I became far more involved in a rewarding, truly enjoyable activity and learned far more than I would have otherwise. In my involvement with the central Florida chapter, I have made many friends that I will always cherish and never forget. Our editor, meanwhile, wants me to become sort of a roving Pacific correspondent. This is not a bad idea. So, like a bad penny, articles from this former treasurer might continue to turn up. Mahalo and aloha.

Peace



## New Palms Needed at Michaels' in Wabasso

By Mike Dahme

Long time Palm Society members Joe and Anne Michael of Wabasso Beach recently decided to make a serious effort to supplement their old collection [which dates to the late 1950's] of palms at their as-tropical-as-it-gets location on the Indian River lagoon. To that end several Brevard area members met to inventory and make suggestions as to what species should be recommended for adding. The existing palms are as appended at bottom, what is listed here are recommendations of two members whose beachside locations have been testing grounds for many other species:

*Actinokentia divaricata*  
*Allagoptera arenaria* [and other spp]  
*Borassus flabellifer*  
*Carpentaria acuminata*  
*Chambeyronia macrocarpa*  
*Coccothrinax barbadensis* [and other spp]  
*Copernicia baileyana* [others]  
*Cyphophoenix* spp  
*Dypsis ambositrae* [other spp]  
*Hyophorbe verschaffeltii*  
*Kentiopsis oliviformis* [others]  
*Nypa fruticans*  
*Pritchardia* spp  
*Pseudophoenix* spp  
*Syagrus botryophora* [other spp]

Many other species not currently present should also be considered, I suggest some of the 35 or so species of *Livistona* - only three are there now. Also *Actinorhytis*, *Alphanes*, *Beccariophoenix*, *Borassodendron*, *Carpoxylon*, *Cryosophila*, *Euterpe*, *Gastrococcus*, *Gaussia*, *Kerriodoxa*, *Licuala spinosa*, *Raphia*, *Satakentia* and *Schippia*.

Joe, who is experiencing some health problems, has asked that chapter members help in his wish to do some more palm\* planting by making donations - if possible, he'd like to have 3 or more of a species so as to plant in groupings - as well as help in the actual planting. Anyone who'd like to assist him could bring palms to a future meeting [to give to an E coast member if the meeting is elsewhere], or could call Anne and Joe at 772-589-5830 to arrange for a drop off. This would be a way of saying thank you for the more than 1000 seeds of *Borassus aethiopum*, several other unusual species, that they have contributed to members of our and other Florida chapters in the last decade, as well as for opening their home for numerous meetings over the years.

\*Cycads would also be desired but for the problem of flooding [salt water intrusion] that has occurred several times in recent years as result of wind-driven [can you say 'hurricane'?] events. If anyone knows of cycad species that can tolerate occasional inundation [dolphins - the mammal - were once observed swimming across the property], they would be worth trying.

Below is a list of what we noted as existing palms planted at the Michaels.

*Acoelorrhaphe*  
*Arenga* sp [possibly *A tremula*, not *A engleri*]  
*A pinnata*  
*Attalea cohune* [per Joe's original remembrance]  
*A speciosa* [per Andrew Henderson's take]  
*Bactris* sp [clumper]  
*Bismarckia* [10 counted]  
*Borassus aethiopum* [5 counted]  
*Caryota mitis*  
*Chamaedorea seifrizii*  
*Coccothrinax argentata*  
*C sp* [argentea? many individuals in two "clumps"]  
*C crinita*  
*Cocos nucifera*  
*Copernicia* sp [clustering palm, *C glabrescens*?]  
*C hospita*  
*C macroglossa*  
*Corypha umbraculifera*  
*Desmoncus orthacanthos*  
*Dypsis decaryi*  
*D leptocheilos*  
*D lutescens*  
*Elaeis guineensis*  
*Hyophorbe lagenicaulis*  
*Hyphaene* [presumed] *coriacea*  
*Latania lontaroides*  
*Livistona* [presumed] *australis*  
*L chinensis*  
*L saribus*  
*Phoenix reclinata*  
*P roebelenii*  
*Ptychosperma elegans*  
*P macarthurii*  
*Rhaphidophyllum hystrix*  
*Rhapis excelsa*  
*Roystonea regia*  
*Sabal* [Caribbean form] *causiarum/ domingensis*  
*S mauritiiiformis*  
*S mexicana*  
*S palmetto*  
*S* [presumed] *yapa*  
*Serenoa repens* *Thrinax morrisii*





*John and Peggy Martin missed being in the photo above, which shows Jason & Sue Baker, Mike Merritt, Richard Lundstedt, and Bob Derleth. The golf cart is driven by Anne Michael, with husband Joe next to her. At right, a newly-planted Chambeyronia macrocarpa with its emerging wine-red leaf.*

*(Photos by Mike Dahme)*

## Palm-planting at the Michaels' in Wabasso



*Chuck Grieneisen, c. 1990s, investigates a most unusual cabbage palm at Silver Springs. Please, someone, the scientific explanation ? (Sent by himself, should be in Drive By*





## New Zealand Regional Government to Forbid Palm Species?

[This article was published in the (Spring), September, 2005 issue of NZ Palms & Cycads, the quarterly magazine of the Palm & Cycad Society of New Zealand, and is reprinted here by permission of the author-editor. Some unfamiliar terms —Pakeha is a Maori term for Europeans; a Holden is an Australian-made Ford.]

### The ARC's death sentence for some palms?

By John Prince

The Auckland Regional Council, covering an area with about a third of the country's population, an area in which palm plantings have spread widely in the last two decades, is moving to ban some palm species. Since I took over this magazine there have been both positive and negative aspects to doing the job. That admitted, nothing with a negative side to it has approached how I feel about the next section of this magazine.

These are not just any species. There are three of them. They include the two most common species which we have inherited from those Victorian and Edwardian gardeners who perceived the exotic allure of palms. The park in the very centre of Auckland is Albert Park, between the central business district and the University of Auckland. The fountain area at the heart of the park was laid out in the later Nineteenth Century with multiple *Trachycarpus fortunei* to decorate it. It's not the most attractive palm imaginable these days, but it gave to the Victorians an exotic connection to other parts of their Empire, and it gave a sense of order and form to their colony's largest city and its green breathing space, at the other end of the world from England.

A very large number of older house and farm gardens throughout much of New Zealand also had Chinese Fan Palms dotted into them, demonstrating an awareness that we Pakeha were 'overseas', not back 'home' in virtually palmless islands located offshore from northern Europe.

The other heritage palm species is *Phoenix canariensis*. Magnificent old avenues of these palms can be found in private and public spaces big enough to display them well. From lined farm driveways in Northland, to the protected plants on the wonderful concourse entering Ellerslie Race Course, to the majestic examples along each side of the main road into Waihi, to the plantings in Timaru, and to many other spaces, these palms have reached upwards for a century or more. They've often been inappropri-

ately sited in the front yards of suburban houses where the optimistic owners wanted the form and shape of a palm but may have not realised how this species can dominate such a small space. Modern landscapers with the right skills and equipment have used these plants, by moving them around the cities and towns, to create expensive palmscapes for those enamoured of modern subtropical gardening styles.

The third species under attack does have some older examples, but might be better seen as the main beneficiary of the modern interest in gardening with palms in northern New Zealand. The Bangalow Palm, *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*, has been the most common commercial species of the past two decades. The deluge of coloured real estate supplements that we see today are awash with gardens, in northern New Zealand anyway, with relatively new palm plantings. Indeed, I often wonder if real estate agents don't carry a palm frond or two in the back of their Holdens or Fords, so they can hover just out of camera on a ladder, draping the ends of fronds where the camera lens will pick them up for a sense of the 'tropical landscaping' around whichever 'modern masterpiece' they are touting.

All three species are living plants. They flower. They set seeds. Seeds are programmed to grow into new plants. Unsurprisingly, like all the other 25,000 to 40,000 introduced species in this country, these palms try to reproduce themselves.

Some botanists have begun to worry about the reproductive successes of these palms. Other people, who have the duty under existing laws to control weedy plants, are convinced that these palms present problems, and they intend to see that they are banned. They are sincere, and they have answered my questions so far with clarity and directness. When focusing on their words and arguments I will try to present their views without editorial comment.

In the next issue of this magazine I'll give reactions from within the palm-loving community to these proposals. Anger and emotion at their proposals are natural. But the only things that will really matter in the arguments to come are factually-based counterarguments, not attacks on the personalities of individuals who want to ban palms.

My own position is this. If these bans go into place, then we will be the only palm-growing community which has tried to manage any problems associated with these species by banning them. Actions on this

(Continued on page 14)



## New Zealand to Forbid Species?

(Continued from page 13)

scale, and with this intent, don't occur anywhere in analogous situations. Not in Florida, not in California, not in the Mediterranean, and not in Australia. People live with, appreciate and protect, and manage any problems, without destroying the palms themselves. **The logic** of the ARC's biosecurity decisions will be to end gardening and landscaping with palms as this has developed in well over a century in New Zealand. Any palm species which is successful in reproducing itself is only fit to be banned under this logic. *Livistonas* and Queen Palms are also under suspicion currently. *Washingtonias* will follow. It will become impossible to garden freely with palms in New Zealand. **The only** acceptable palms (apart from *Nikaus*) will ultimately become ones that are either sterile (such as *Butia/Syagrus* crosses), or which are so marginal here

that they cannot successfully mature seeds, or that cannot have seedlings get through their first winters outdoors in New Zealand. Once we go down the ARC's path, then there is no cessation of banning. We will become the only palm growing people who have banned successful palm growing and the warm climate look that it gives to human habitats.

**These plans**, I believe, even though that is not the conscious intention in the minds of those embarking on this course, amount to the first shots in the functional equivalent of a declaration of war on growing exotic palms successfully in New Zealand.

[See page 6: "The Attack of the Killer Palms (Part II)" for the activities of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council.]



"Part of my 'Palm Bank' Top left is *Phoenix sylvestris*; top centre is *Trachycarpus fortunei*; right hand side mid level is *Phoenix reclinata*; dead centre, more or less, is *Pritchardia affinis* just showing up over aroid leaves; bottom left hand side is *Dypsis decipiens*; centre bottom is something grown from seeds sent to me as *Sabal blackburniana*. (All these things are years old...growth is much slower here); bottom right hand side is *Sabal minor*." —**John Prince**, on his palms in Helensville, New Zealand, near Auckland.



## Biological Control for Brazilian Pepper

By John Kennedy

**Dr. Bill Overholt**, an expert on biological control of exotic plants at the University of Florida Indian River Research & Education Center in Fort Pierce, spoke on his subject at the Florida Medical Entomology Lab (FMEL), Vero Beach, on November 8<sup>th</sup>. The small, attentive audience was made up of volunteers for ORCA (Oslo Road Conservation Area) in Vero who have been pulling up pest plants energetically since the 2004 hurricanes. They were come in hopes of hearing about a bug that could destroy air potato (*Dioscorea bulbifera*), that fast growing vine. Alas, there's nothing immediately in sight to contain it.

**Air Potato** had never flowered or produced seed in Florida but had spread by tuber-like 'potatoes'. However, the vine has recently flowered for the first time in many locales and fertile seed may result in the near future.

**However, some** interesting statistics emerged in the talk. Only 11% of the approximately 1200 exotic species in Florida cause trouble. That's 125 species on the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council list in Category I (definite, destructive present impact on the native ecology) or Category II (naturalized, not yet having major impact).

**Invasive plants** come mostly (67%) from ornamental horticulture. Often, their invasive qualities are only realized many years after introduction. Air potato was brought into Florida from Africa in 1600-1700s but was first recognized as a problem in the 1970s. Henry Nehrling, pioneer in Florida horticulture, was sent bulbils—the 'potatoes'—in 1905. The heart-shaped leaves are handsome. How could anyone suspect that it would grow into such a pest? DNA analysis confirmed that the air potato is African in origin and not a closely related species growing in South Asia. Since it is a last-resort famine food, the species may have been eaten on slave ships.

**Brazilian Pepper** (*Schinus terebinthifolius*) may be on the point of control. The detective work that went into finding that control illustrates the time and effort required. It was determined, by DNA analysis, that there were two forms of the species in Florida: an east coast variety and a west coast variety. Apparently,

there had been two separate introductions. To make matters more difficult, 77% of the Brazilian Pepper plants in the state are hybrids of the two. This meant that biological controls on the species in Brazil might not be able to deal with the Florida hybrid.

**Long, patient** investigation eventually came up with a non-stinging wasp that eats only the Florida hybrid Brazilian Pepper. Before the wasp can be released, Federal approval is necessary. This is expected to happen within the next several months.

**Research on** biological controls must establish that the new insect, fungus, or virus only attacks the target species. Special labs in Gainesville and Fort Pierce expose the prospective biological control agent to other plants. The entire process is slow, taking 10 years, so that yet another pest is not inadvertently introduced.

Overholt pointed out that only 60% of released biological agents become established and that only a third of these actually have any control. Even when most successful, no biological agent completely destroys a pest plant species. At best, there is only containment similar to that in its native habitat.

**Tropical Soda Apple** (*Solanum viarum*) is a major pest, infesting thousands of acres of pasture in Florida. It's a weed that quickly covers a field, identifiable by long prickles on leaves and stems. Cattle and wild animals eat the fruit and spread seeds through their feces. The difficulties of finding a biological control can be seen in the name of the genus. Anything brought in could not attack tomatoes, potatoes, and eggplant—all of which are *Solanum*. Tropical Soda Apple was first noted as a pest in 1987. Presently it is a problem in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, Louisiana, and Pennsylvania. It is distributed throughout Florida; an imported beetle has had some effect on the species.

**Overholt believes** that more controls should be established over importation of potentially invasive plants.

To see the work of his department, go to <http://bcrd.ifas.ufl.edu> To look at online documents of the University of Florida Extension Service, go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>



## GROWING CYCADS IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

### Two views: *Zamia variegata*

#### Growing *Zamia variegata* in Central Florida By Chuck Grieneisen

The *Zamia variegata* (*picta*) is one of the more unusual cycads in that it has white speckles (variegation) in its leaves. It used to go by the name *picta* but I think the proper name for it now is the *variegata*. It is a much different plant than I first thought. I always knew about the speckled leaves, but I used to think it was a smallish zamia.

However, the leaves can get to 8 feet long and with the specks, a very impressive plant. The largest ones I have seen are in the greenhouse at Fairchild Tropical Garden in Miami. The leaves were every bit of 8 feet. I have some with a caudex of only about 3 or 4 inches and they have 6-foot leaves. The plant typically only has 3 or 4 leaves, and they are held very upright. It requires typical zamia care. Well draining soil and part sun. I have only had my fairly large plants for a few years, so no good cold hardiness data. I have not grown them from seed, so I don't know how tough they are as seedlings, which some cycads tend to be.

The large ones I got are very carefree. They cone in the spring. I got 3 of them and only 1 has coned so far. It was about a 3-4 inch caudex when it coned and it was male. Usually females have to be a little bit bigger to cone than the males. As you can see from the photos the leaf width has a lot of variation. There is also variation in the speckles. Some having few and some having a LOT of speckles. I'm not sure if there is a way to grow them to make them have more speckles or not. From what I have heard, some variegated plants can be made to grow more white on them based on soil PH.

I don't know which PH made it more white, though. It would be interesting to try.

#### Growing *Zamia variegata* in Central Florida

By Tom Broome

*Zamia variegata*, which is also sometimes called *Zamia picta* is the only naturally variegated cycad in the world. The plant has been described by both these names but the name 'variegata' was given to this plant first in 1845, which had precedence over 'picta' so variegata is the proper name for this zamia. *Zamia variegata* is an upright growing plant that comes from Guatemala and Belize.

The plants from Guatemala vary a little from the plants from Belize, depending on their location. Many of the plants in Belize are growing very close to another zamia that looks very much like *Zamia loddigesii* that does not have spots on it, so many of the Belize plants are all green instead of having the spots. All these plants can vary significantly with the amount of spots on the leaflets from just a few spots; to having a splotchier look to them.

To me, the more variegation the leaflets have, the more attractive the plant is. The forms from Guatemala seem to have more variegation, but even a particular plant can have leaves that are extremely variegated, and then have another leaf that is just barely variegated. When grading out plants for good form, I would not discount a poorly variegated plant because it is very possible that the next leaf will be very beautiful.

My plants grown from seeds collected in Guatemala had average variegation at first, but half of them have now grown out to be more splotched, and are very impressive. I have about 700 plants that I grew from seeds collected from Belize and they range from being all green to almost splotchy with variegation at only 3 feet tall.

*Zamia variegata* is an excellent plant to grow in central Florida, but should be protected in our coldest areas during a hard freeze. If the plant is grown out in the open, the leaves can burn at temperatures around 28F, where I have had plants growing under trees that

(Continued on page 17)





*Above, close-up shot of a *Zamia variegata* leaf.  
Below, the upright habit of this cycad. Notice the small size of the pot in relation to leaf length.*



## ***Zamia variegata* (Broome)**

*(Continued from page 16)*

did not burn at 21F. Like many zamias, these cycads have subterranean stems, so they can survive short term freeze events down to the upper teens without dying. This species seems to prefer being grown in the shade, so you would normally place them under tree cover, which will also decrease your chances of leaf burn. They have an upright growth habit, so they don't use a lot of space in the garden, or in the greenhouse.

**My largest** plants are 8 feet tall, but I have seen pictures of plants in habitat that were every bit of 14 feet tall. I would think this is the maximum height for these cycads to attain. *Zamia variegata* doesn't seem to have much of a pest problem, but the leaflets can get a spotty fungus that is common on many of the Central American zamias. This is not a big thing to worry about unless you introduce the spores of this fungus into your growing area from another zamia that already shows signs of this fungus.

**If you** do get this fungus, it is easily taken care of by using a fungicide like Daconil, or Cleary's. It is possible for these plants to get scale, or mealy bugs, but these pests are not typically known to be a common problem for this species. Any direct contact spray can be used on mealy bugs and I would suggest a systemic for scales such as Orthene, or Cygon.

*Zamia variegata* produces a tan cone that looks very much like many of the Central American zamia cones. It becomes receptive in spring, and this timing coincides with the timing of *Zamia furfuracea* receptivity. When *Zamia furfuracea* was brought into the Florida, the weevils native to Mexico came with them. This means that it is possible for natural cross-pollination in the garden between these two species.

**Several years** ago, *Zamia variegata* was thought to be a very rare species, but in the last 5 years, more seeds have been brought into cultivation. This species can now be found in many collections, and are usually available at our CFPACS sales. If you are the type of person who loves variegated plants, this is the cycad for you. If you are able to find a quantity of these plants, I would suggest buying a few of them, so that you can grade them out over a several year period to insure you get some really nice looking plants for your collection.



*More of the unending spots taped by your Editor for broadcast over Indian River Community College public radio station, WQCS, 88.9 FM. Only 40 seconds in which to say something penetrating and insightful. Informative and also useful for Palmateer issues when material submitted is less than usual.*

## Palm Points #51 Palm Websites

**Cruise the Internet** for palm sites and you'll turn up many possibilities. Quite a few are businesses selling palms. Some palm-lovers have set up their own home pages.

**Three websites** are of particular interest.

The first is the website of the Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society, with news of the organization and its forthcoming meetings. The address is

[www.cfpacs.com](http://www.cfpacs.com) There are links to other palm and cycad websites.

A **second** address of note is that of the Palm and Cycad Societies of Florida: [www.plantapalm.com](http://www.plantapalm.com) "Plantapalm" is one word. Here, the viewer will find the Virtual Palm Encyclopedia and, again, other links.

**The third, and** largest, website belongs to the International Palm Society. Its address is

## Palm Points #52 Silver Saw Palmetto

**The native** Saw Palmetto, low and shrubby, that grows in pastures and in pinewoods, is available in a silver form. This striking version, sometimes almost white, can be a specimen plant in home landscapes. **It may** be obtained—expensively—from native plant nurseries. The silver Saw Palmetto grows in nature only along the southeast Florida coast.

**Keep your eye out** and you'll see it growing in undeveloped areas, frequently in among the usual green



## Palm Points #53 Rattans

**Do you** have rattan furniture in your home? If so, the frames of your chairs and couches are made of palm stems.

**"Rattans"** is the name given to a group of more than 100 species of climbing, vining palms that grow mostly in India, southeast Asia, Indonesia, and Australia.

**Their stems** are flexible and very strong.

**Rattans climb** high into neighboring trees by means of vicious hooks.

**At least** one species of rattan will grow on the Treasure Coast, though perhaps not as luxuriantly as in the true tropics.

## Palm Points #54 Sabal Palmetto

**Often overlooked** or taken for granted is our State Tree, the Cabbage Palm. Its Latin name is *Sabal palmetto*. Cabbage Palm is too commonplace and not exotic enough to attract much attention.

**However, it** is tough and durable, pretty much takes care of itself and gets through freezes with no damage.

**Cabbage Palm** is often trucked in from the wild and planted in landscapes.

**Homeowners should** not pull the boots off the trunk. These are the remains of dead leaf stems, pulling them off can damage the trunk.

**Boots eventually** fall off on their own.

## Palm Points #55 Needle Palm

A **Central** and North Florida native that few state residents have seen is the Needle Palm. This is an extremely slow-growing shrubby, clumping palm with palmate leaves, that sports 6-inch spines around the short trunk bases.

**What the** needles are there to defend against isn't clear, maybe dinosaurs?

**Needle Palm** is on the Endangered Plant list, for much of its former range is prime development property. It may be the most cold-hardy palm of all, surviving temperatures down to zero.

**Needle Palm** may be seen in shady sites in Highlands Hammock State Park near Sebring and in the Devil's Millhopper sinkhole, a state preserve in Gainesville.

The Latin name is *Rhapidophyllum hystrix*.





## DRIVE-BY SHOOTINGS

*How many trunks on this  
Sabal palmetto?  
Location: somewhere within  
reach of Lake Placid.  
(Photo by Walt Darnall)*



*Look closely at the top of this ordinary (?)  
Queen Palm in St. Pete. There's a  
candelabra effect.*

*(Photo by Rick Nale)*



*An upright Serenoa repens convenient to the shuffleboard court  
in Kenneth City, April of 1985. Is the palm still there?  
Tom Pavlucik sent this photo. That's his wife, Esperanza.*





*"The biggest Chamaerops I've ever seen," says Mike Dahme, who took this picture in October. It's one of two clumps of European Fan Palm planted at the Santa Barbara Zoo in California.*

*Another California picture, taken in 1978 during the IPS Biennial, two beautiful Howea forsteriana at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse. Should have asked Mike to check if they are still there. "Kentias" don't get this big in Florida. OK, prove me wrong, somebody, and I'll run the picture in the March issue. (Photo by Tom Pavlucik)*







*Not California, not Florida, but Nevada—the Las Vegas Strip. Left, the median clearly has Phoenix, probably dactylifera. What the small gray palms may be is unclear. Braheas? Below, more Phoenix, against a building. Hotel? Casino?*

*(Photos by Geri Prall)*



*Not Florida in a time of global warming. Maybe Las Vegas at Christmas, Olde Tyme style?*

Few people know how to be old.

—LaRochefaucauld, Maxim #423



## From the Editor's Desk

**Mike Merritt is leaving us! How dare he?** Going off to Hawaii, the Big Island, to grow. . . what, pineapples? No, probably palms from Fiji that aren't allowed in Hawaii. So, he's going there when he could stay fixed in Geneva, Seminole County, and be convenient to Orlando and to freezes? Disloyal, too, when he's taken care of our money for 7-8 years and also done all the paperwork needed to satisfy the State of Florida.

**So, he** throws this all off, just to go live in Hawaii and have **fun!** He could stay right there and go to Disney World every day. Look, there are people in America who would sell their eldest born for the chance to live so close to the Mouse.

**Guess he's** retiring. . . again.

\*\*\*\*\*

**We will** miss Mike, sure will. Not only did we know that the finances were in capable hands, but he also gave careful considerations to all our questions about what we could or should not do. And he was also a vendor, lots of good stuff at just about every meeting. **And he** wrote beautifully and often for *The Palmateer*—indeed, maybe the most literate of contributors. However, the Editor has every intention of pursuing him wherever he may be (there's no hiding place this side of the grave) to continue to observe and write for our newsletter.

\*\*\*\*\*

**We need** a Treasurer. Diana and the CFPACS board will sift through the applications and select the finalists. Ha. We should be so lucky that volunteers struggled to compete for the unpaid job.

**Seriously, anyone** interested should contact Diana Grabowski (see the board on page 27).

A bean counter—as Mike puts it—is needed.

Someone who's good at detail and at remembering deadlines. Maybe a retiree who has grown tired of playing shuffleboard all day and going to cocktail parties in the evening?

\*\*\*\*\*

**Another long-serving**/long-suffering person in the chapter is none other than your Editor. The CFPACS board recognized the accomplishment of seven years of faithful, if sometimes cranky, service with the surprise gift of palm books at the Ruskin meeting in September. The picture (elsewhere) shows his mouth open in a perfect O of amazement. Impossible to look

**We have** received, for the first time in exchange, the magazine *Le Palmier* from the French IPS chapter, Fous de Palmiers (Crazy about Palms). There's a picture on the cover that any palm publication editor would drool over. It's sunset and the classical columns of a stately balcony frame a silhouette of palms. The site is the vast public park of the seaside Villa Ormond in the Italian Riviera town of San Remo.

**There are** other beautiful pictures. How could it be otherwise when the chapter's address is a French town called Hyères-les-Palmiers?

**Of course,** the magazine is in French, but the Editor had to pass a French reading test as one of his doctoral obstacles, so that's all right, right? Actually, he is just barely able to figure out the point of the articles. His language in school was German, which doesn't help, and then there was that disastrous semester of Russian.

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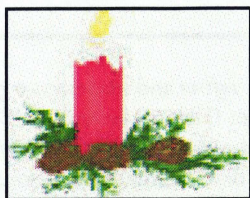
**An unexpected** sight on my daily drive from Vero down to Fort Pierce: a 5-acre field of young *Roystonea elata*. Could it be that *Washingtonia* has lost its charm? After all, Hurricane Wilma snapped only 12 *Washingtonias* around the two-story courthouse parking garage in Vero Beach. The palms were uniformly about three stories high. Will these be replaced with smaller *Washingtonias*? Probably, although several *Livistonas*, especially my favorite, *L. saribus*, might be a better choice.

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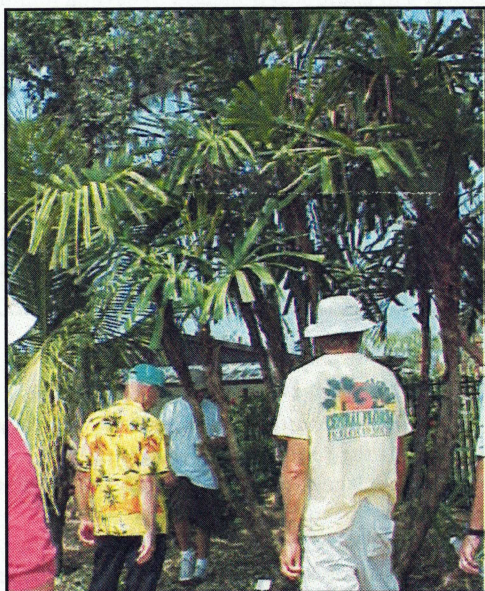
**Fort Pierce** member/grower Ron Schaff has taken me to task after hearing me badmouth *Washingtonias* on my taped radio Palm Points spot. He did admit, back against the wall, that what I said about *Washingtonia robusta* was all too true. But, he insisted, *Washingtonia filifera* was very different. I pointed out, never loath to argue, that *W. filifera* was neither widely grown or widely available (he has them). I didn't add—the thought occurring much later—that only time would tell if *filifera* would hold up in a hurricane.

*John Kennedy*





CFPACS t-shirts are still available, though not in all sizes. That's Mark Grabowski below wearing one. You can contact him at [windburn@hotmail.com](mailto:windburn@hotmail.com) to buy (mail order) OR buy yours in Cocoa Beach on December 10th.



*Rob Pittman—center— and his big Licuala spinosa, during the Ruskin September meeting. Yellow shirt (left) is clearly Ray Gompf, paler chapter t-shirt (right) is Mark Grabowski. Can that be the Editor's red shirt at left? (He thinks it's pink.)*

*(Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**2005** is quickly coming to an end. It's been a year of recovery for central Florida gardens. Unlike other areas in Florida, central Florida was spared from a repeat of the intense hurricane season of 2004.

However, many of our neighboring states were not so lucky. My prayers go out to all those in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama who suffered losses.

**On a light note...** some historical points related to the use of palm trees by various cultures and religious groups over the centuries follows:

**The Date Palm** is considered the Tree of Life, people of ancient times relied on the Date Palm for shelter and food, and up until this day many cultures thrive due to the Date Palm.

**There are** countless versus in the Bible that make reference to palm trees, specifically the Date Palm.

**In the Jewish religion** the Menorah has seven branches, they are spread out in a similar format as the seven branches of the Date Palm tree.

**The Quaran** has numerous references to the Date Palm, specifically for shelter and food.

**Before Christmas** was celebrated, Egyptians brought green palm branches into their homes on the shortest day of the year in December as a symbol of growing things and life's triumph over death.

**It's comforting** to know that all of us involved with palms to some extent, from the weekend palm gardener to the individual whose life has become inseparable from caring for and growing palms, that we are following a long line of individuals who have shown interest and an appreciation for palm trees.

**In closing**, please mark your calendar for the annual CFPACS Winter Holiday Palm Social to be held on Saturday, December 10th in Brevard County.

**Wishing all** of you a wonderful holiday season and Happy New Year.

*--Diana Wehrell-Grabowski*



## SEED BANK REPORT 3rd Quarter 2005

### Hi Members!

Important: I have numerous e-mail addresses that are no longer valid; if you wish to receive the Seed Bank's seed offerings, please send us any email changes. Send your current e-mail address to me and to the membership chair (our email addresses are listed on the next-to-last page of this newsletter).

We have had a good quarter, thanks to your contributions and purchases, despite three hurricanes, which have caused serious problems for many of us.

**During July**, we received some rarer seeds from Brazil, which included *Astrocaryum gynacanthum* and *Geonoma baculifera*, compliments of Gileno Machado; *Livistona rotundifolia* from member Mr. Shri Dhar in India; *Allagoptera arenaria* from esteemed editor of *The Palmateer* John Kennedy; *Syagrus botryophora* seeds from member Mike Dahme (which created "email havoc" for me, leaving unfilled orders for hundreds of seeds); rare seeds of *Lemurophoenix halleuxii* from Madagascar (snapped up), *Chamaedorea microspadix*, *Dypsis* sp. 'Mahajanga', *Phoenix canariensis*, and *Caryota mitis*, all donated by Ortanique, LLC; *Pseudophoenix ekmanii* seeds donated by Vincenzo Rubino in Italy; and *Coccothrinax barbadensis* from John Irvine.

**In August** seed donations included hard-to-find

*Bactris major* var. *infesta* and *Astrocaryum gynacanthum* seeds, again from Gileno Machado in Brazil; *Coccothrinax miraguama*, and *Wodyetia bifurcata* (those flew out the door!!!) from Eddie Williamson; *Chamaedorea radicalis* from member Dean VanderBleek; and *Syagrus romanzoffiana*.

**During September**, despite Hurricane Katrina's destruction, we received *Pritchardia affinis* seeds, hand-delivered from Hawaii by CFPACS treasurer Mike Merritt; *Phoenix reclinata* seeds and *Syagrus romanzoffiana* seedlings from member Dorothy Kellogg; *Bismarckia nobilis*, *Syagrus schizophylla*, *Attalea speciosa*, *Lantania lontaroides*, and *Syagrus coronata* (collected in Puerto Rico by Mike Dahme) from Joe Michael/Mike Dahme; and *Dypsis decaryi* and *Syagrus schizophylla* from Rene Coativy in France. An additional donation of several hundred *Wodyetia* seeds from Eddie Williamson (destined to fill backorders from August) was accidentally sold at the quarterly meeting in Ruskin, but thanks to Eddie for thinking of CFPACS again!

**And thanks** to each and every one of our seed donors (and purchasers) for supporting this chapter. Blessings to all of you!

--Claudia Walworth  
Seed Bank Coordinator



*Foxtails in the ground in one of Rob Pittman's two nursery stock fields away from the house in Ruskin.*

(Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)

### Third Quarter Meeting Minutes

The third quarter board meeting was called to order on Sept 17<sup>th</sup> at the residence of Rob Pittman.

The need to replace the soon leaving treasurer Mike Merritt was discussed.

**Joining with PACSOF** to do a once a year journal of palm and cycad articles was brought up. It was agreed that it needed further discussion.

**The next** meeting place and date were discussed. It is to be an east coast meeting the second weekend in Dec.(10<sup>th</sup>). A suggestion was made to E-mail east-coast members to see who would like to host the next meeting.

**A motion** was made and passed to give Bok Sanctuary a \$1000 gift certificate redeemable at our society's plant sales so they can buy palms and cycads to replace plants lost in the hurricanes. (And to get more palms and cycads in botanical gardens.)

--Chuck Grieneisen, Secretary



## TREASURER'S REPORT

June 11, 2005 to September 17, 2005

### INCOME:

Seed sales.....	772.75
Membership Dues.....	420.00
Donations to CFPACS.....	0.00
Public Sales .....	0.00
Private Sales (Bok Tower Gardens).....	-146.60
Total .....	1,046.15

### EXPENSES:

Publications (v. 25, no. 3).....	1,352.45
Grants.....	0.00
Miscellaneous .....	0.00
Total .....	1,352.45

INCOME - EXPENSES ..... -306.30

Bank balance 06/11/05..... 19,893.51

Bank balance 09/17/05 ..... 19,302.56

Net decrease..... 590.95

(Note: Club-budget and bank reporting periods do not exactly coincide.)

### ASSETS:

Endowment (mutual funds).....	10,000.00 (purchase price)
.....	9,456.26 (value at time of purchase)
.....	9,445.14 (current value, close of market 06/07/2005)
	(6,486.93 Washington, 2,958.81 banked from sale of Putnam shares)
Office equipment and tent.....	1,595.00
Computers and software.....	2,544.41 minus depreciation
Printer.....	4,250.00

**Treasurer's note:** Our budget this quarter was a simple and classic balance between seedbank and dues income and expenses for the bulletin, and unfortunately the result was slightly negative. However, it is noted that third quarter membership dues are at a low point in the annual cycle, and most meetings tend to produce small but positive incomes. There were many expenses associated with the meeting this quarter.



*You've just moved to Florida. Hurray! No more snow shovels, no more frozen pipes, all is bliss (hurricane season being over). But what are all these palms, the big tall ones? There seem to be small ones, too. At least four or five kinds. Then, what about those even smaller plants with the fleshy leaves. Cycads? Never heard of them. Your gardening lore, honed for Cincinnati, just can't cope. To make yourself at home in Florida, and not be a stranger in a strange land, be able to identify all this exotic vegetation. How? From the friendly folks in the Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society (CFPACS). The only requirement for membership is a desire to know. Before you can turn around, you might have 10 or 15 kinds of palms/cycads right there in your own yard.*

*Just fill out the membership application on this page and mail, with your check, to Karen Barrese (molta simpatica), the Membership Chair, at the address listed. Let's see you in Cocoa Beach at the December 10th Christmas Social Meeting. Good food, good company, wonderful setting, palms and cycads.*



*A typical scene at a CFPACS quarterly meeting: inspecting the palms. Host Rob Pittman takes the group on the Guided Tour of his collection, in Ruskin on September 17th.*

*(Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)*

**The International Palm Society (IPS)**  
Anyone interested in joining the IPS and receiving the quarterly, illustrated journal, *Palms*, should send a check for \$35 (regular membership) or \$45 (family membership) to:

International Palm Society  
P. O. Box 368

Lawrence, KS 66044

Dues may also be paid online at the IPS website, [www.palms.org](http://www.palms.org)

## Membership Application

Please print

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (area) \_\_\_\_\_

Wish to be added to Seed Bank  
E-mail list? (Circle one) YES NO

Willing to be listed publicly in  
roster? (Circle one) YES NO

Mail check made out to CFPACS  
(domestic: \$15 one year; \$40 three years;  
foreign: US\$20 one year) to:

Karen Barrese  
CFPACS Membership Chair  
5942 Ehren Cutoff  
Land O Lakes, FL 34639  
[cfpacsmembership@msn.com](mailto:cfpacsmembership@msn.com)

Membership also available at website:  
[www.cfpacs.org](http://www.cfpacs.org)

The dues of anyone joining after  
October 1 are applied to the following  
calendar year and include the December  
issue.

Those joining before October 1 receive all  
four issues of *The Palmateer* for the current  
year (March, June, September,  
December).





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## Louisiana Hurricane Report

*Below and right, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina at the home of Joe and Cindy Baucum, south of New Orleans. If you didn't guess, the snapped palms are Washingtonias.*



*Joe Baucum has been president and editor of the Louisiana Palm & Cycad Society. His unincorporated community, Barataria, is famous as the long-ago lair of Jean Lafitte. Of course, he lives on Privateer Blvd.*

*Above and left, the aftermath of Hurricane Rita. Beyond the line of palms (top) should be the Baucums' concrete bulkhead, which is under 2.5 feet of water. Left in the line are Windmill Palms and *Zamia furfuracea* in a 'raised bed'. That's Bayou Barataria, which usually is 3 feet lower and rather narrower. The mailbox is, as you would suspect, at the end of the driveway, that is submerged just to the right of the Washingtonias. Joe took the picture from a canoe. Behind the oak tree, visible to his eye, is a blown down *Bismarckia* that has since been propped up. No damage is reported to palms after three days of standing salty-to-brackish water. The house came through both hurricanes.*