

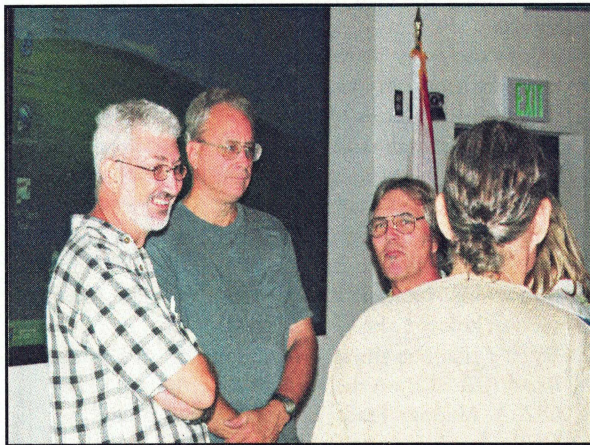
# The Palmateer

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Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society

September, 2006

## **DOWE ON PALMS, August 26-27: THREE TALKS AT IRCC**



*John Dowe (left) answers questions after his lecture on hurricane adaptation of palms at Indian River Community College in Fort Pierce on August 26th.. (Photo by Laura Kelley)*

### **By John Kennedy**

**"Palm immersion"** might be the best general description of John Dowe's talks at Indian River Community College in Fort Pierce on August 26-27. His first topic was "On the Genus *Livisona*." Please be assured that he missed none of the 36 species. Since this is his specialty and since his revision of the genus is now in press, how could he do otherwise? The PowerPoint presentation started off dauntingly enough for non-scientists. (Do you know about clades in *Livistona*?) Lay palmpersons learned that these are groups of related species.

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*Right, members touring the late Dr. Young's garden in Tampa on June 10th (Photo by Diana Grabowski)*

## **September 30: Joint Meeting At Bok with The Cycad Society**

**By Tom Broome**

I would like to announce that we will have our next meeting on Saturday, September 30th at Bok Sanctuary (also known as Bok Tower Gardens) in Lake Wales.

**This will** be a very special meeting. We are going to have somewhat of a joint meeting with Cycad Society members. CFPACS has become a chapter of the Cycad Society.

**The Cycad Society** board meeting this year is in central Florida, so I thought it would be nice to combine our meeting times and present a mini cycad symposium with some of the board members of the Cycad Society. TCS has paid the rental for the large meeting room that can hold close to 90 people.

**In case** there is rain that day, this will insure that we can have a great meeting no matter what the weather happens to be.

**Maurice Levin**, from California, will talk about growing cycads with conservation in mind, but in a limited space, which should be interesting for members who live on a residential lot. Jody Haynes from Miami will speak next, but at the time of this writing, he has not sent me the subject. Next, Craig Nazor from Austin,

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## Palm Beach Picnic/Auction Saturday, September 16th

CFPACS members are invited to attend Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society's annual picnic and auction on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>. As usual, this will take place at Ruth Sallenbach's "spread" on South Military Trail in Lake Worth.

**Sandwich meats**, cheeses and fixings, together with soft drinks, water, and dessert will be provided. Those attending may bring side dishes and salads.

**Plants for auction** are solicited, not only palms and cycads, but also trees, ground covers, and shrubs.

**While the event starts at 9:00 a.m.**, the auction typically begins in the early afternoon. It's a good idea to bring a chair to sit on.

**The mature palms** in Ruth's collection, though battered by hurricanes, remain well worth a visit.

**Directions:** I-95 exit for Lantana Road, west to Military Trail, then south. From Florida Turnpike, exit for Lake Worth Road, east to Military Trail, turn south. Lantana Road is the next major intersection below Lake Worth Road.

**Ruth's place** is about 100 yards south of Lantana Road (CR 812) on the west side of Military Trail: 6825 S. Military Trail. This is just past Blue Pine Circle. Look for sign.

**Info:** (561) 965-5430.

**CLOSING DATE  
FOR DECEMBER ISSUE  
NOVEMBER 13**

## Palm Beach Fall Palm Sale

Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society will hold its fall sale on Saturday October 14<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup>, in the usual location: Caloosa Park in Boynton Beach. Saturday, 9-5, Sunday, 9-4. Admission is free. For information, contact Dennis McKee at : [nugget1147@bellsouth.net](mailto:nugget1147@bellsouth.net)



## September 30th Meeting

(Continued from page 1)

Texas, will show us the Hartman Prehistoric Garden that is within the Zilker Botanical Garden in Austin. Finally, I will give a presentation on the manipulation of cycads.

**Each talk** will be 30 minutes or less, so we will get four varied presentations that will go at a fairly quick pace. After the presentations, there will be an auction of cycad materials to benefit the Cycad Society. After the auction, we will have the regular CFPACS vendors with their plants outside, and these sales will be the regular split that will benefit the CFPACS.

**We will** have the room for four hours, so the schedule is as follows. **The CFPACS board meeting will be at 9:30** and the mini symposium will start promptly at 10 am.. Members can get in at 9 am, so if you want to tour the garden on your own before the formal meeting starts, that is fine. The presentations should end just before 12 noon.

**We will** have a short break and have the auction until close to 1 pm. (we have the room until 1 pm) We will have the regular sale at that time. After the sale, you can tour the garden the rest of the day if you wish. We really didn't have enough time for people to leave for lunch and come back, so we will have some light snacks available during the symposium. We will keep this in mind during the symposium and try to have a short break, half way through the presentations.

**Even though** there will not be a formal tour of the garden, many of us will be taking our own tour and looking at the palms that CFPACS donated to Bok Sanctuary this last Spring.

**There is** normally a charge to get into Bok Sanctuary, but with the room rental, all people attending the event get in free. The people at the main gate need to know who is coming so you can get in free.

**Please contact me with your RSVP. You can e-mail me at [cfpacs1@aol.com](mailto:cfpacs1@aol.com) or call me at 863-984-2739.** I will need to know how many people are coming, and your names, so you can be added to their list. If anyone would like to donate something for the cycad auction, or if anyone has questions about the event, feel free to contact me. This should prove to be one of our best meetings. I look forward to seeing everyone together from both society groups.

*Right, well grown Howea forsteriana on a lawn in Micco.  
(Photo by Mike Dahme)*

## Driving Instructions

### From the East:

Be on route 60 in Lake Wales

Turn **RIGHT** (North) onto CR-17B [Buck Moore Rd] 1.4 miles

Turn **LEFT** (West) onto CR-17A [Burns Ave] 0.7 miles

Turn **RIGHT** (North) onto N Tower Blvd, there will be a sign saying Bok Sanctuary. Follow the road until you get to the visitor center.

From the South: go north on route 27 and turn right onto route 60 for 2.7 miles till you get to Buck Moore Rd. Turn left (North) and follow instructions above.

From the West: be on route 60 going into Lake Wales and follow instructions above.

From the North: go south on route 27 coming into Lake Wales Turn **LEFT** (East) onto E Mountain Lake Cutoff Rd 0.7 mi

Turn **RIGHT** (South) onto US-27 Alt 0.9 mi

Turn **LEFT** (East) onto CR-17A [Burns Ave] 1.4 mi

Turn **LEFT** (North) onto N Tower Blvd







*Under the palms Board meeting at Jardin Toph. From left, Secretary Chuck Grieneisen, East VP Mark Grabowski, Past President Ray Hernández, President Diana Grabowski listen to unseen speaker. Could it be the Editor outlining early details of the Dowe appearance?*

*(Photo by Karen Barrese)*



*Is that Tom Broome, right, identifying the cycad all three are looking at? Locale is the late Dr. Young's Tampa garden.*

*(Photo by Bob Johnson)*

## **So, You Wanna Be a Star?**

### **CFPACS Needs Good Men/Women**

**It's time** for some new faces on the CFPACS Board.

**Available slots:** President, Central and West Vice Presidents.

**Diana Grabowski's** two-year term as president expires at the end of December. What does the president do? This officer coordinates the activities of the chapter, presides over physical and e-mail meetings of the Board, and is the contact person for outside organizations.

**The president** signs all chapter checks (together with the treasurer). The unofficial chief requirement would seem to be knowledge of the organization that comes through involvement and membership for some years. Definitely, the president has to be a person who is well organized and responsible.

**Tom Broome** is looking to exit as Central VP, Tom Barrese to leave as West VP. The vice presidents represent their areas within the chapter and organize meetings that may be held in their regions. The central section of the state includes Gainesville, Orlando, and Lakeland. (Tom Broome lives in Polk City, outside of Lakeland.) The west section includes Tampa, Clearwater, St. Petersburg, and Sarasota. (Tom Barrese lives in Land O Lakes, a Tampa suburb.)

**Vice presidents** serve for a year, though usually they continue longer, until obligations elsewhere require their attention. The Board meets at each of the quarterly society meetings around the CFPACS service area. Its members normally attend, though sometimes miss because of job or family responsibilities. E-mail messages between Board members arrive perhaps once a week, more often just before meetings and major decisions, e.g., should the chapter buy a new [expensive] printer to produce the newsletter?

**Elected positions** currently filled include Secretary, Treasurer, and East VP.

**Appointed Board** positions are Membership Chair, Editor, Seed Bank Coordinator, and Webmaster, who serve at the pleasure of the elective Board members and have no fixed terms.

**Anyone interested** in serving our group should contact Diana Grabowski ([ScinceLady@aol.com](mailto:ScinceLady@aol.com)). Potential Board members **must** have an e-mail address, since this is the usual method of communication and discussion.

**--John Kennedy**



## June 10th: Tampa/St. Petersburg Meeting

By John Kennedy

**A Florida-perfect day**—for palms, if not for people. Sunny, blinding light, low 90s, with matching humidity. First stop, Ballast Point, down the Tampa peninsula, off Bayshore Drive. Narrow, tree-shaded streets with newish, biggish houses, here and there a more basic older house.

**At 9:15** in the morning 15 minutes before the board meeting, the Editor is outside Joe Toph's house. No one else has appeared, but the humidity isn't bad (yet). This has to be the right place: the carport has a table that looks like food and drink on it. Ah, yes, a guy appears to stick a sign in the ground by the driveway, "Palm society meeting." Yes, it's Joe. And a modern house, concrete and glass, behind a discreet façade, shaded by live oaks. Not the kind of house—usually "traditional" Georgian/Bahamian/West Indian—found in Vero Beach. Attractive on its wide but narrow-depth lot. How many palms can flourish in a relatively small space? Many more than most folks could imagine. The sheet handed out seems to list 68 species of palm, seven of cycads. Many of them aren't small. What's that on the edge of the forecourt, disappearing into the oak. Why, a good sized *Caryota no.* Then there's an *Archontophoenix* heading into the wires on the other side of the driveway. Gotta come out, says Joe. Maybe Kopsick could come get it for a new home, suggests one of the arriving members.

**Board meeting**, just a tad late, but hey! we're human, man. Many momentous issues discussed around a table on the full-width back patio lined all around with palms. The meeting is scheduled for 10 and, maybe 60 people come in. Respectable size *Kentiopsis oliviformis* and that *Chambeyronia macrocarpa* just might almost be half full size.

**Second stop**, Dr. Young's garden, only a few minutes' drive away. Dr. Young is gone; all the beautiful mature palms planted in the 1950's are still there, along with huge cycads. Brad Young, Dr. Young's son, is the host here, kindly indicating the, umm, facility and also the ice chest containing water and soda. The humidity is now fully at the level that most palms like; the sweating tourists peer at the plants, can or bottle in hand.

**The third stop** is a half hour away, across the bay in St. Petersburg, at Rick Nale's house. Time, then, for lunch at The Casual Clam, a St. Pete restaurant recommended by past-president Ray Hernández. Atmosphere, none, seafood wonderful, inexpensive prices. (We will remember this place.)

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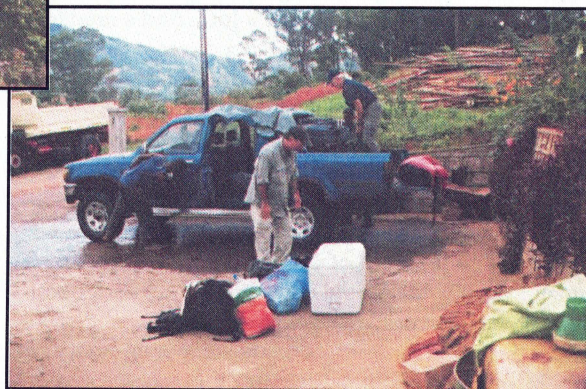
Above, Joe Toph's frontyard plantings, with June 30th visitors. That has to be Geri Prall with hands on hips. Below, behind the Toph house: treasurer Bob Johnson (center) makes a point to president Diana Grabowski. Tom Broome lurks behind. (Photos by Karen Barrese)





Mada Madcaps Strike Again**Palm Travels in Madagascar**

Left, *Dypsis decipiens* in Ambohitantly Reserve. Below, the travelers packing up for the strenuous jaunt. Note logs beyond truck.



By Bill Beattie

In April this year we returned to the Masoala Peninsula, visited two of the most important plateau forest remnants Anjozorobe and Ambohitantly, explored the *Dypsis ambositrae* site south of the plateau town Ambositra, climbed Mt Vatoavavy in the south east and visited other highland and coastal reserves. We, included Peter Balasky and Jeff Searle from Florida and Guy Rafamantanantsoa and Pierrot Rahajanarina from Antananarivo.

The northern and eastern parts of Madagascar had received well above average rainfall peaking around Maroantsetra and the Masoala Peninsula with falls in excess of an almost unbelievable 300 inches by April 10<sup>th</sup>. Indeed, on our visit, soaking rain was our constant companion for the first two days. This restricted photography and general comfort but did not reduce cheerfulness and we saw some wonderful palms! Highlights being the search for a giant palm in the 'Vonitra' group, sighting a certain *Orania longisquama* that turned out to be an unusual species of *Ravenea*, more of an undescribed tall, thin palm with quite large seed and red leafed seedlings, *Dypsis pachyramea*, *D. mocquersiana*, *D. forficifolia* in all its forms and three different types of "*D. ?tsaravoasira*", In all, about 23 species were indentified including *D. beentjei*\* and *Satranala decussilvae*. It would seem that flowering in the former is rare. We have made three visits and examined hundreds of these palms with no result. Our most experienced guide has never seen flowers or seeds either. Of the rarer palms, we obtained a few seeds from the large fibrous species that resembles but does not appear to

key out to any in the "Vonitra" species group. Squat, single stemmed to 6m tall with a very long, faintly purple inflorescence. Seeds are quite large at 27 x 22mm. This palm is probably closest to *D. utilis*. The *Ravenea* sp. that looks from a distance like *Orania longisquama*, is a bit of a mystery and fooled us all till we checked the inflorescences and some fallen seeds. Clear photos were impossible to obtain because of heavy rain but Dr. John Dransfield is aware of its existence and in the future, more will be heard of this oddity. The tall, thin, single stemmed palm remains unidentified and almost certainly undescribed. Very difficult to pick out in the general mass of tropical forest plant material, this 8-14m palm with a max. trunk diam. of < 10cm, carries a tuft of pinnate leaflets (10-30 pairs) and bears large fibrous, ruminant seed. Inflorescences appear branched to 2 orders. Seedlings have a reddish new leaf and grow quite rapidly. Short of cutting one of these palms down there is little more information to be gained.

Our base site on the Peninsula was once again at

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Left, man-powered barge makes the crossing, Ambila-Lemaitso. Truck at bottom left. Below, *Dypsis eriostachys* on Mt. Vatjavy.

## Palm Travels in Madagascar

*Continued from page 6*

Tampolo Lodge which consists of a small collection of thatched huts close to the beach and Tampolo River. We had wonderful food prepared by a young, beautiful and highly trained Malagasy lady cook. This added flavour to the nocturnal tropical ambience of our rain-forest retreat! Indeed, two grizzled veterans in our party were reduced to unusual silence in her presence. Ah! Memories!

**North-west** of the capital city Antananarivo lie two interesting small plateau forest reserves (~1400m asl) ...Anjozorobe and Ambohitantely. Both are well protected and in excellent condition. The former has *Ravenea madagascariensis* and quite a few small *Dypsis* including *D. concinna*, *D. heterophylla*, *D. jumelliana*, *D. nodifera* and a beautiful form of *D. linearis*. O'night accommodation is available and the campsite looks well organized and very clean.

**Ambohitantely** is well known to biologists and ornithologists but less so for palm enthusiasts. So far, surprisingly few palms have been recorded here and in the short time available to us with less than an hour in the forest, we saw only *Ravenea madagascariensis* and later... on the southern extremity, a vast population of > 250 *Dypsis decipiens*. The latter are well worth the trip alone. A spectacular sight! One would imagine that smaller *Dypsis* sp. such as *D. jumelliana* must be here somewhere? 30 km north of the turnoff for Ambohitantely Reserve, tiny forest remnants can be seen in the valley bottoms. Some of these contain a few surviving individuals of *Dypsis oropedionis*. Peter and Guy went off on a long walk through a valley and reported that some of the palms were just coming into flower. These forest remnants are being rapidly reduced for fuelwood and



the future of this highland palm hangs in the balance. This is a cold, empty and somewhat desolate, rolling grassland region and a sobering thought is that just 8 years ago, small numbers of a lemur species were being studied here. (Rahajanarina pers com).

**A few** days later saw us down along the plateau south of Antananarivo and once again pursuing *Dypsis ambositrae*. It is now well known that various seed/seedlings served up over recent recent years as the genuine species are in reality quite different. We had good fortune and were shown advanced juveniles and three mature palms growing on a distant farm. All are protected by fady (taboo). At the end of our experience we had viable seeds and many photographs. This was a particularly positive time for everyone and appears to bring to

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## Palm Travels in Madagascar

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a close a five year periodical investigation into one of the rarest and most beautiful palms in the world. Words cannot adequately describe the intense warm feeling that accompanies such isolated occasions! Our thanks go to the enthusiastic local farmers who have proved once again that they know every plant in this normally bleak region. **In summary**, the juvenile of the species has a very distinct red petiole and rachis, the advanced juvenile has already developed the 90 degree angle of leaflets to the leaf rachis and has a whitish crownshaft, and isolated adults are almost always single stemmed, a clean grey/green crownshaft and 8-14m tall. The seeds average about 11x 8mm, lightly fibrous and sparsely ruminant. We have seen advanced juveniles with two stems, one much shorter than the other but have never uncovered why the shorter stem is frequently cut or lost by periodical ? fires. At the time we were there this marginal region had had very good rain, subsequent greening and reminded me of rocky parts of N/E Scotland.

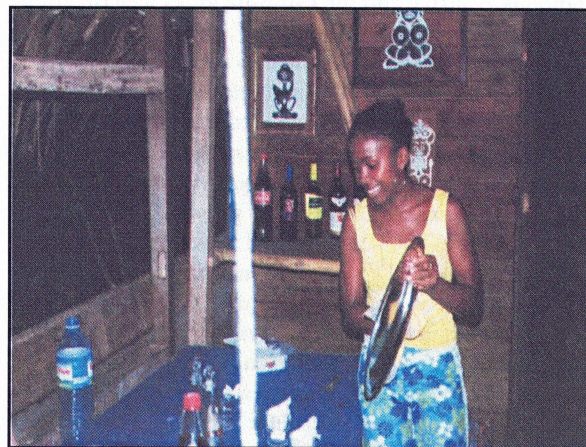
**Far south** and east lies Mt. Vatoavavy. An isolated peak rising 1500' above the coastal plain and an important site for palm enthusiasts. Perhaps two or three unusual and rare palms have been recorded here and nowhere else. This mountain is not easy to find and few know of its exact locality. Peter, Guy, Pierrot and I had been before but even then it took an hour or so to locate the precise village that provides permits and guides. There are obligatory blessings to protect against accidents and blood loss while on the mountain. The tomb of an ancient and much revered King of the region faces the peak and rum is poured onto soil and respect given prior to the ascent into the realm of the Ancestors. I like this place. Everything about it seems natural. On a previous occasion the memory of a weighty backpack equalising gravity force on a muddy 80 degree slope left me just hanging there contemplating a grisly end. This time my aging bones passed backpack to a younger 'person' and the route was easier but still punishing!

**Many interesting** palms to see and a slow ascent recommended. Regardless, our senior guide, a wizened old man already a lively figure braced by some of the ancestors' rum, raced off at a brisk trot. This led us to the lower slopes and he kept going! He laughed when told we were searching for palms. Peter had already found a massive *Dypsis prestoniana* near here and this is a new record for this site. One hour later we were some way up and found the first of many giant *Ravenea*

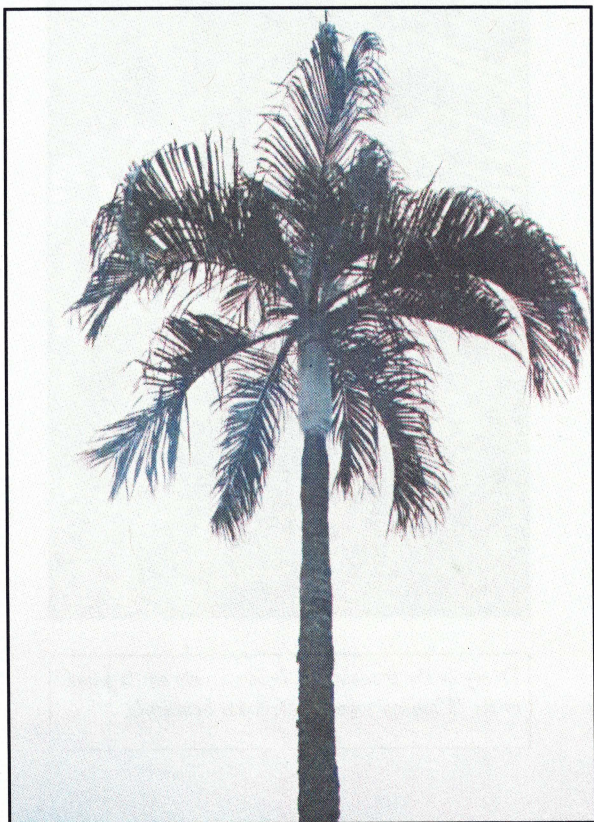
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Above, *Dypsis babilonga* on Mt. Vatoavavy, April, 2006. Below, pretty waitress at Tampolo Lodge on the Masoala peninsula. It appears to be a...water bottle on the table, other possibilities behind the young lady.







None other than *Dypsis ambositrae*. Bill Beattie's comment: "Note the clean crown-shaft."

## Heathcote Garden Festival, Ft. Pierce, Nov. 18-19

Heathcote Botanical Gardens will hold its 19th Annual Garden Festival on Saturday, Nov. 18, and Sunday, Nov. 19. More than 50 vendors are expected. Admission: \$6.00 for adults, \$5.00 for seniors, \$2.00 for kids under 12 but out of diapers.

Heathcote is just east of U.S.#1 at 210 Savannah Rd. For further details, call (772) 464-4672 or e-mail [info@heathcotebotanicalgardens.org](mailto:info@heathcotebotanicalgardens.org) (Note: 'gardens' not 'garden'.)

## Palm Travels in Madagascar

(Continued from page 8)

that may be related to *R. krociana*. Some large seed (26x22mm) was garnered and later germination proved to be remote ligular. Nearby were *Dypsis mananjarensis*, *D. sahanofensis* (one plant...an extremely rare palm superficially resembling a broad-leaved *Chamaedorea seifrizii*), *D. nodifera*, *D. fibrosa* and an occasional *D. basilonga*. Much higher and just below the summit we found *D. trapezoidae*, *D. angusta*, and new (to us), a very tall *Dypsis* with orbicular seeds (~11mm) and pale purplish seedlings. Very odd indeed.

**Nearby**, a tremendous surprise ... a mature *Masoala kona* and many juveniles! Another first, we think! One of the most beautiful small and very rare palms also found close to the top is the single-stemmed *D. erio-stachys*. Entire leaves and carrying a silky inflorescence. For me even superior to *D. pachyramea* in attraction. More than thirty *D. basilonga* were counted and one very odd looking *D. ?linearis*. Rain had accompanied us everywhere and down it came again. I left our group early and began the descent knowing full well that the remainder would catch up pretty quickly. It had been a very successful day and no hurry. Women and children's voices sounded quite close in the high forest and I walked towards them. The fact that no-one else could possibly be there ...the nearest village miles away, seemed perfectly ok with me. And so it proved. The old guide passed and I mentioned 'the voices'. He stared a while then gripped my hand and said 'so did I' and trotted away.

**Down on the flat** we found that our 4wd had a faulty battery! Few of us have tried to start a 4wd with power steering by pushing along a wet and twisty muddy track. We did and thanks to brilliant arm-deadening steering by Pierrot and desperate hauling and shoving by the remainder we set off back to base just on dusk. Perhaps one extra beer was drunk that night! For the ancestors.

**Three days later** we were down near the east coast and checking out the new *Ravena* sp. in Manambato district. ('Palms' Spring 2004). (Jeff had returned to Florida. The drama surrounding his 'ticketing arrangements' at Tana Airport a humorous one). The stately, white-trunked *Ravena* were all alive and we even saw another in a nearby swamp. This is the unique palm that Guy and I first saw way back in 1999 and they await official description. We spent a morning in the Forest of the Tombs just outside the town of Brickaville. Guides must be obtained from an adjacent village as this area is 'fady' to foreigners. Based on

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## Palm Travels in Madagascar

(Continued from page 9)

white-sand soils, the forest canopy is about 15m and poking out are some *Dypsis lastelliana*, *D. sambiranensis*, *D. fibrosa* and a *Pandanus* species. Inside are *D. pinnatifrons* and several smaller palms lacking inflorescences for identification. At the top of a small hill lie the tombs of local people that go back more than a hundred years and our oldest guide spoke in a somber and respectful tone as we moved quietly among the trees and wooden coffins. Some flowers are placed on or around the more recent.

**Moving back** to the main road in silence, we headed off to the rarely visited coastal region of Ambila-Lemaitso to find *Dypsis ambilabensis*. This is another palm that has frequently appeared in palm collections but is clearly not the species described. Crossing over a river by man-powered barge we found the required species almost immediately! This suckering palm (2-3m) has two forms; one with entire leaves and the other broadly pinnate and very much resembles a taller *D. forficifolia*. Very attractive and many were in full flower and a few with seed.

**Further along** the white-sand forest track we sighted *D. psammophila*, *D. lutescens*, *D. ?arenarum* and a strange form of *D. ?pinnatifrons*. This latter I would like to look at more closely some other time. There is something about this palm that instinctively tells me 'perhaps this is not all it seems'. Then back to Brickaville for a very late and disastrous lunch! A particularly black period for Peter and I! Suffice to say that later that night Peter began moaning and rushed to the toilet. A 'grenade like' explosion occurred that rattled our wooden quarters and apparently lifted the fearful occupant clear off the toilet seat! Then it was my turn and we alternated miserable hours in a condition of fever and gradual weakness. Time measured by toilet rolls used. The inexperienced are advised that if you suffer stabbing bowel pains in a tropical country then you have a maximum of 30 seconds to obtain relief. Two days later and surviving on Coca Cola, Staminade and chocolate we were back in Tana. What happened during the long journey back is momentarily fascinating but not for print. Caught short in a busy street? We survived. Food in Madagascar is generally very good and this is supported by the fact that both Guy and Pierrot remained unscathed in the 'vazahah' (foreigner) poisoning episode. We all ate the same thing. I doff my cap to their superior digestive systems!

**Several other** sites were visited during our stay and these will feature in another article. For us all, it was a wonderful and productive trip. Coming from one of the most controlled societies in the world it was a relief



*Dimly in the shadows, an inflorescence on "a giant in the Vonitra" crowd," Masoala Peninsula.*

for me to get back to a more natural humanity...forest animals, birds, plants and insects. Shades of my childhood. There are very few vehicular speed limits in Madagascar and drivers are the most courteous and tolerant in the world. Malagasy respect and support their neighbours, fellow citizens and all faiths and creeds are treated with courtesy. Long may this continue.

Malagasy proverb : *A man cannot take home everything he sees.*

++++++

(1) Thanks again to the Earthwatch Institute for vehicular support and to Guy Rafamantanantsoa and Pierrot Rahajanarina for their ongoing friendship, guidance and sense of humour.

\* Latest good news from Dr. John Dransfield is our '*Dypsis beentjie*' is not that species at all and could be undescribed! Investigations at Kew Botanic Gardens are continuing.



## June 10th: Tampa/St. Pete

(Continued from page 5)

On the way to Rick's the Editor makes a short detour to a famous, even hallowed spot, the most wonderful used bookstore in Florida, Haslam's, and even finds one of the two titles he's looking for.

**Rick's** is another city garden, very different from Joe Toph's, a small conventional house more tightly enclosed by other houses, privacy at a premium. Fenced almost all around, the neighbors disappear. Inside, the layout is ingenious, a curving boardwalk everywhere with pockets open for palm and cycad plantings. Tables and chairs are scattered about in cozy proximity to ice chests containing 'beverages'. The effect is intimate; the Editor is reminded of some other place, many years ago. Yes, he has it, an outdoor German beergarden (*Biergarten*), only thing missing is strings of colored lights. Surely, Rick can supply these for a party?

**Fourth and final stop** is Don and Marjorie Evans' place in the north end of St. Pete. The Evans' garden is expansive and well laid out. The garden must have more than 100 species, with just as many available for sale through a home nursery. Don has been involved with palms for 10-15 years. Genera at the Evans' include *Kerriodoxa*, *Astrocaryum*, *Dictyosperma*, *Cryosophila*, *Gastrococcus* (now *Acrocomia*), *Livistona*, *Archontophoenix*, *Chambeyronia*, *Bismarckia*, *Coccothrinax*, *Roystonea*, *Phycosperma*, *Adonidia*, *Cocos*, *Cyrtostachys*, *Copernicia*, *Wodyetia*, *Ravenea*, and *Chamaerops*.

**Tom and Karen Barrese** made all the arrangements for the day and we appreciate all their time and work in producing such a highly successful meeting.



Dr. Young's garden in Tampa. The CFPACS visitors are just around the corner, out of sight.  
(Photo by Bob Johnson)



The dry garden: xeriscape at the Evanses' in St. Pete.

(Photo by Karen Barrese)

**N. B.: Ray Hernández** contributed the information about the Evanses' garden. The Editor had to leave for home in Vero Beach earlier in the afternoon, just in time to encounter a 4-lane, 5-mile long traffic jam for the Howard Frankland Bridge back to Tampa. However, with many others, he exited I-275 down an on-ramp and was able to make it to the Gandy Bridge farther south. Good old American initiative.

**SIDEBAR** The Editor was given a quick personally-guided tour of Ray Hernández's collection at his small Tampa bachelor house and can confirm that Ray—beneath that seemingly reasonable exterior—is truly a palmfreak. Maybe 200 species, most in pots (to be taken to the next [wedded] homesite) in a space not much bigger than a good-sized bedroom. A small greenhouse, too.



CFPACS Webmaster Frankie Ramos took the picture at right, with this explanation: "While vacationing/working in Washington State this past July I came across this restaurant in Centralia, Washington (about halfway between Portland and Seattle) that not only had a tropical motif, but it actually had some *Trachycarpus fortunei* of substantial size planted in front of the place. In Portland I saw several houses with even bigger *T. fortunei*, always planted very close to the buildings. Maybe the heat from the building provides enough of a micro-climate to keep them healthy. Centralia has average temperatures of 34.0 35.0 36.6 39.7 for January thru April respectively with 3.1 1.3 0.6 0 average snowfall for the same months, so it's not frigid, but it does get cold."



Mike Dahme's picture was sent with the caption, "How to Clean a Phoenix." Not everyone, when confronted with an un-favorite palm goes the scorched-earth policy or turns arsonist. However, each to his own method (without malice, of course).



[Back by 'popular demand' more of the innumerable palm spots taped by your Editor for broadcast on WQCS, 88.9 FM, the public radio station of Indian River Community College.]

## Palm Points #51 Palm Websites (revised)

**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.org](http://www.cfpacs.org). 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 [www.palms.org](http://www.palms.org).





### Palm Moving

A 6-year-old *Thrinax morrisii* had to be relocated at the St. Lucie Village home of Phil and Julie Lounibos to make way for an addition to their house. That's the Indian River in the background (left). Phil watches below.

(Photos by Julie Lounibos)





## GROWING CYCADS IN CENTRAL FLORIDA

### Growing *Dioon mejiae*



*A large female Dioon mejiae—in beautiful flush—still growing in a container.*

By Tom Broome

*Dioon mejiae* is an excellent cycad to grow in most parts of central Florida. *Dioon mejiae* grows to be a large cycad within a ten-year period, even though it produces only one flush of leaves each year. It is the only dioon that comes from Honduras, whereas all the other dioons come from Mexico. Older specimens in Honduras have the stem size and leaf spread that can be compared to the size of a Canary Island Date Palm. Very old specimens can become 30 feet tall.

These cycads look their best when grown in partial shade. In habitat, the small plants may be in the understory, but as the same plants get older, they grow up to become part of the canopy and tolerate the full sun. The leaves of *Dioon mejiae* are not very frost tolerant so this is another reason why growing them in some shade will be beneficial. I have seen the leaves burn at 26F when plants are grown in full sun where plants growing under the cover of oak trees did not have leaf burn until the temperatures got down to around 21F.

I have not tested to find out what temperature would kill a *Dioon mejiae*, but I would assume that something in the mid teens would do it.

*Dioon mejiae* does not seem to react to fertilizer applications, but does appear to react to high temperatures to force out a flush of leaves. When we have had highs going into the 90s as early as April, I have seen these plants producing new leaves as early as May, where normally they are producing new leaves in August.

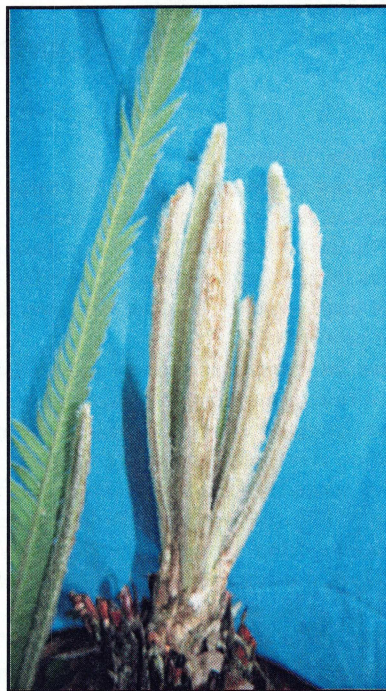
*Dioon mejiae* looks a lot like *Dioon spinulosum* but can be easily distinguished if you know what to look for. *Dioon mejiae* have median leaflets that are entire, where most of the *Dioon spinulosum* plants have spines on each side of the leaflet. Seedlings can be easily identified as compared to *Dioon spinulosum* seedlings because *Dioon spinulosum* plants have a bare petiole, where *Dioon mejiae* seedlings have prickles that go all the way down the leaf. The seeds of *Dioon mejiae* are very unique. The

(Continued on page 15)





Above, receptive female cone of the *Dioon mejiae* pictured on the opposite page. Right, emergent leaves of this species are furry.



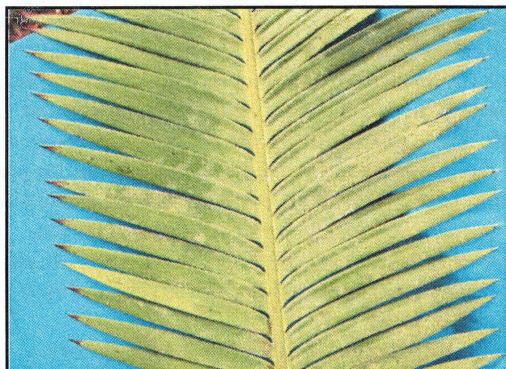
## Growing *Dioon mejiae*

(Continued from page 14)

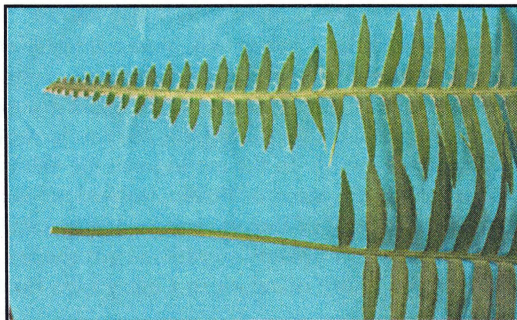
attachment end of the seed (opposite from the sprouting end) sticks out where every other *dioon* seed will have a flat end or a small hole at the spot it was attached to the cone. The real treat from growing this species comes once a year when they are producing new leaves. The new leaves are the most furry I have seen on any species of cycad. Some people say that *Dioon redowskii* have very furry leaves, but on the plants that I have in my collection, there is no comparison between the two species. Of all the cycad species in the world, this is my wife's favorite cycad. When a new flush of leaves first starts to emerge, they look like a giant rabbit's foot coming out. There is nothing like it, and it makes you want to go up to the plant and feel the leaves.

For many reasons, *Dioon mejiae* is a great cycad to grow in most of the central Florida area. There are plenty of plants available here in Florida, from small seedlings to large specimen plants, so as long as you have the room for it, this is a must for us here in central Florida.

[Picture of seeds on Page 17.]



Above, median leaf of *Dioon mejiae*. Below, top is seedling leaf of *D. mejiae*, bottom is *D. spinulosum*. Seed comparison picture on Page 17.





## A mystery solved?

### The Question of *Livistona robinsoniana*

By Mike Dahme

*Livistona robinsoniana* is one of three Philippine species in the genus that share a resemblance - a fourth, the widespread *L. saribus*, is distinctive. The others being *L. rotundifolia* and *L. merrillii*, I've specimens of all three growing, but lack accession data to confirm their provenance.

In recent years it has become accepted that *L. robinsoniana* differs from them, indeed, from all others in the genus, by virtue of being thornless: no armature on the petioles, very un-*Livistona*-like. Starting with the David Jones 1984 *Palms in Australia* "coffee table" book [CTB], subsequent CTBs have repeated this.

This allegation was not in McCurrach's 1960 *Palms of the World*, the first modern palm book, which referred to *L. rob* as having "spikes", and that the fronds "are like the leaves of *L. chinensis*", and wasn't cited in Blombery & Rodd's 1982 book, *Palms*. So how did an evolutionary change that would normally take millennia occur in two decades?

Below is a transcript of a page from an undated script letter ca. early '90's from Australian palmpal Dave Hopkins, resident of Cairns. I re-read what had been gathering dust on the shelf as a result of his recent death. The explanation for the mistake appears credible, that Jones photographed the wrong palm for publication in the book, and, as we in central Florida also know, *L. chinensis* often appears as unarmed when shade-grown [or in adage]. Following authors doubtless copied what appeared in prior CTBs, and so it became 'palm legend'.

The monographer of the genus [in print], John Dowe, verified that the species is armed, adding that presence or absence of spines on the petioles is not a good diagnostic feature for *Livistona*.

Then there is the matter of differentiating this species from the other Philippine tropicals. All of the CTBs refer to distribution of *L. robinsoniana* as the Philippines, giving it a great range. [*L. rotundifolia* is also known from Indonesia.] But *L. rob* is only from a single island of the more than 7000 that comprise the nation, and one geographically apart from the three island groups of the Philippines, Luzon [north], the Visayas [central] and Mindanao [south]. In the monograph the habitat of this species is the island of Polillo, isolated off the east, windward, coast of Luzon. Any garden specimen so labeled, or seeds or plants on offer as this species, must be tagged to this island, or to a tree grown from

seed collected on this island: buyer beware.

Finally, there is the central Florida concern with hardness to cold. I've no experience since the '80's, but my take is these three Philippine species are equally at risk, that none are likely to make it through the next cold event without help.

#### Page from Dave Hopkins letter early 1990's

My notes in brackets { }

Re the 'arming' of *L. robinsoniana*. The palm is definitely armed and well armed at that. The photograph that Jones' book displays was actually taken at Flecker {1} and that specimen is nicely armed. The possibility in my mind is that whoever was accompanying him had him photograph what I assume to be *L. chinensis*. My observations have been that when *L. chinensis* is grown in deep shade its petioles do not develop pronounced spurs even at their bases. The petioles arch and reach for the sun remaining relatively trunkless for a long time. I would have to refer back to B.P.'s {2} very interesting article on the changed gross morphology of *L. chinensis* when grown in different conditions. I cannot recall whether he made mention of the armature or not but generally I believe his observations triggered my unraveling of different forms of this taxon that had puzzled me growing under different conditions. I myself made the same mistake following the directions that "*L. robinsoniana* was by the stairs". It was indeed by the stairs but to the left not to the right and Jones' picture is the specimen to the right, not the left - which is named with a plaque after my enquiries confused the troops at Flecker and they uncovered the plaque. The *L. robinsoniana* is v. large and I have a photo coming.

#### Notes

1 'Flecker' is Flecker Botanical Garden in Cairns, FNQ, Australia

2 'BP' is Bernie Peterson and the article referenced is doubtless "The Chinese Fan Palms of the FIT Botanical Garden" that appeared in the chapter issue 12:2, July '92.





*Livistona robinsoniana*, Polillo Island, the Philip-  
pines.

(Photo by John Dowe)



The supposed *Livistona robinsoniana* at Flecker  
Botanic Gardens. In reality, *L. chinensis*?

(Photo by Dave Hopkins)

## Palm Points #52 Silver Saw Palmetto

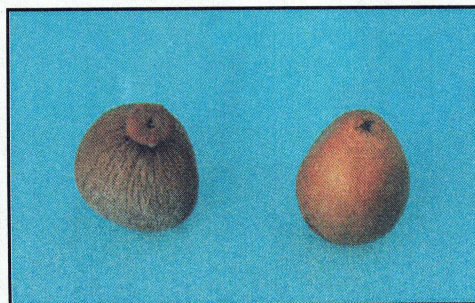
The native Saw Palmetto, low and shrubby, that grows in pastures and in pinewoods, is available in a silver form.

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 form.

***Dioon mejiae*:** Left below is *Dioon mejiae* seed, showing outward growth. Comparison is with *Dioon spinulosum* seed at right.





Near right, a 15-year-old *Wallichia disticha* flowers for the first time in Micco, Brevard County. Far right, a close-up of the inflorescence. The palm is female, no male blooming in the vicinity, so no fertile seed will result. The species is pleonanthic, blooms down the stem, then dies (like single trunk *Arenga* or *Caryota*). That's Sue Reilly and Jason Baker's house.

(Photos by Sue Reilly)



That's member John Martin holding onto *Hydriastele wendlandiana* growing at Ruth Smythe's house in Micco. In the June issue of *The Palmateer*, the only known specimen in Brevard County was believed to be that belonging to BJ Sutphin and, after his death, was given to Charlene Palm. She reports that the seeds pictured on her palm proved, alas, to be empty.

(Photo by Mike Dahme)



## From the Editor's Desk

Hey, **nobody** even missed me! There was no "From the Editor's Desk" in the June issue because there wasn't any space lest I run over the self-imposed limit of 32 pages. I know, some of you will tell me to keep up the good work and delete my light-hearted comments from all future issues of this publication. However, I will **not** roll over for such malicious, if not malevolent, suggestions.

\*\*\*\*

With this issue, I begin my seventh year as Editor! Sometimes it seems longer. Editors for IPS chapters generally seem to flame out after two, maybe three, years. To what do I ascribe my amazing longevity? *Mens sano in corpore sano*. I've also been pampered by the Board, assisted by contributors, encouraged by compliments. (I do get brickbats, too.)

\*\*\*\*

**Palmophiles**—is there really such a word?—have **TWO** meetings to attend in September, coming after the John Dowe extravaganza in late August in Fort Pierce. The first meeting that many CFPACers try not to miss is the annual picnic and auction of the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society on Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, in Lake Worth. If you haven't been to this, make the long drive for a really good day. Ruth Sallenbach's place is big (5 acres?) and filled with beautiful palms. There's food enough for a small army, lots of palm-talk, and our neighbors to the south are friendly people. The auction itself is an experience. Just about any kind of plant, not only palms and cycads, may very well appear; some are commonplace, others incredibly rare. Don't forget to bring something to sit on. Directions are on Page 2..

\*\*\*\*

**Second meeting** is our very own fall quarterly meeting, this time at Bok Sanctuary in Lake Wales on Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. It's a joint meeting with The Cycad Society (TCS). Remember, Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society recently became a chapter of TCS. For many of our members, the chief attraction is the vendors, a chance to pick up that palm or cycad species that you've been looking for. To get into Bok for free, you must contact Tom Broome to be added to his list: [cfpacs1@aol.com](mailto:cfpacs1@aol.com) or call him at (863) 984-2739.

My Sharp-eyed Critic has discovered my sins once again: the *Borassus* featured on the back page of the June issue is **not** *Borassus flabellifer*—as I said it was—but *Borassus aethiopicum*. Mea culpa.

\*\*\*\*

Last issue, I lamented that I couldn't read the full article in *Science* magazine (subscription only, etc) about the evolution, the speciation of *Howea forsteriana* and *H. belmoreana*. John Prince, the New Zealand Palm & Cycad Society editor, found a way to the entire piece. It's on the webpage of the Southern Illinois University Biology Dept.: [http://www.science.siu.edu/plantBiology/EvolDiscGroup/EDG\\_PDFs/SavolainenPalms-Nature06.pdf](http://www.science.siu.edu/plantBiology/EvolDiscGroup/EDG_PDFs/SavolainenPalms-Nature06.pdf).

\*\*\*\*

**Would you** like to get more involved with CFPACS? Ordinarily, not much time is involved. Two vice president slots will be open at the end of the year as well as the President position. The Central Vice President lives in the interior of the state and represents members from that area in decisions and discussions of the Board. Time is required when the chapter meets in the interior; Central VP scouts locations for the meeting, gardens we can visit, etc., and covers the logistics. The second vacancy is for West Vice President, who lives on the West Coast and represents members there. Similar responsibilities occur when a meeting takes place in this area. It should be pointed out that while the area vp is the person on the spot, there are frequent consultations for advice and suggestions with the rest of the Board. The President, well, presides. She/he sets the agenda, is in charge of Board meetings, co-signs all checks, and is the person outside organizations contact. Needless to say, the candidate for President needs to be committed and organized.

\*\*\*\*

**Everyone has** probably received the flyer advertising the new edition of *Betrock's Guide to Landscape Palms*, also by Dr. Alan Meerow, re-titled as *Betrock's Landscape Palms*. It has information on and pictures of 126 palms, 44 more than in the first edition, which may be the most widely used palm reference in Central Florida. One criticism of the earlier book was that the author seemed unaware of palms growing north of the Martin County line; quite a few familiar species in our area were listed as only for Zones 10A and 10B.

*John Kennedy*



## Independent Plant Breeder's Conference (IPBC) November 17 - 19, 2006, Orlando

<http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/IPBC/>

**Announcing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Plant Breeder's Conference!** Hosted by the University of Florida, IFAS, Environmental Horticulture Department, this event brings independent plant breeders together with some of the best plant breeding companies worldwide. **The IPBC** is a specialized networking and educational program that focuses on promoting communication between independent breeders of ornamental plants and plant breeding companies.

**This meeting** provides a proven arena for independent plant breeders to:

Learn the expectations of business partner

Understand the decisions necessary for patenting new introductions

Develop quality partnerships with industry representatives.

Network with other independent plant breeders

**During the 2<sup>nd</sup> IPBC**, independent plant breeders will have opportunities to:

Learn about the benefits of using current technology

Glean information through the successful practices of breeding professionals

Gain knowledge and understanding about the trends in ornamental plant production, consumption, and trade

Display photos of their hybrids during the Breeder Showcase & Reception

Turn a plant breeding hobby into a commercial reality

**Visit the** conference web site to learn more about this year's great program, speakers, sponsors, and how to participate. <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/IPBC/>

**If you** have any questions or require additional information about the conference, please contact us.

### —Mandy Stage, Conference Coordinator

On Behalf of Dave Clark, Conference Organizer

Ms. Mandy P. Stage, Conference Coordinator

University of Florida, IFAS

Office of Conferences & Institutes

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Web site: <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/>



*Not quite an elephant mask hanging in the garden but a piece of palm art, otherwise the dried boot of a Queen Palm. Holes drilled by Wayne Walworth, Claudia's spouse, whose eye catches what most of us miss.*

*(Photo by Claudia W)*

## 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.



## The USF Fall Plant Festival 2006

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

**We can** really use your support in order for us to be able to continue making palms and cycads available at these sales.

**Set up** times for vendors are 8:00am.-6:00pm. Friday. On Saturday morning it's from 7:00 till 9:00. You must be a member of the Central Florida Palm and Cycad society to be a vendor. You must also have a vendor number to be a vendor. You must get a vendor number from the CFPACS Treasurer. His contact info is on the next to last page of *The Palmateer*.

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

**Most** of the other societies are there as well, so if you enjoy growing plants such as bromeliads, orchids, ferns, or anything else unusual, you can find it at this sale.

**If you** need more information on the sale, or would like to be one of our vendors, please contact me, Chuck Grieneisen at [Chuckfg@bellsouth.net](mailto:Chuckfg@bellsouth.net) or 407-359-6276. I hope to see everyone there.

**Fairchild's fall sale is Nov. 4-5.**



**Robert Lee Riffle** (left, above) died suddenly on August 11th. He lived in White City, just south of Fort Pierce. Author of the award-winning *The Tropical Look* and co-author of *An Encyclopedia of Cultivated Palms*, he had just finished a new book, *A Pocket Guide to Palms*. Paul Craft is overseeing its path to publication.

**Bob** was passionate about palms and, for those who knew him, a great and funny character. He would be touched and pleased, I think, to know how much he meant to many palmpeople. He was looking forward to John Dowe's presentations and always wanted to know how the preparations were going.

**The picture** above shows Bob with Faith and John Bishock at the June, 2003 meeting in Lake Placid at Walt and Cathy Darnall's. Photo by Mike Dahme.

—John Kennedy

## 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.



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### *Summer, Rising Seas, Upcoming Meetings, and CFPACS Board Vacancies.....*

The dog days of summer will be quickly coming to an end, and probably not soon enough, for the many of us spending time with the constant upkeep of our gardens. Whether it be "potting-up", pulling up the dead palm that you were told "that will never grow in your zone", and the most dreaded pruning of the spent leaves and fruit stalks of various species, in particular the abundant *Sabal* species. We have fifteen of them in our garden, and it's the yearly dreaded summer chore. Summer is a great time to enjoy your garden in the early mornings or the balmy evenings. There definitely is a change in the "pace of life" during the summer, unlike other seasons it seems that everyone slows down just a bit to truly relax.

**And speaking** of balmy temperatures, palms have made it in the news again....Researchers from the University of Florida have been monitoring a large coastal area in North Florida since 1992. The researchers have reported widespread deaths among palms and other trees in the area being monitored. The latest survey of the waterfront area along the Gulf of Mexico has shown new and disturbing numbers: "Of 88 large, mature palms that died at the rural Levy County site between 1992 and 2005, 66 percent, or 58, have died since 2000 (<http://news.ufl.edu/2006/08/07>). The initial project was led by University of Florida botany professor Jack Putz. In 1992 his team tagged and counted all trees and seedlings on 13 nearby, 400-square-meter plots on forested islands on the coast at Waccasassa Bay State Preserve. They returned periodically to make observations of changes to the tree populations. The changes were correlated with measurements of local tidal flooding and salinity.

The researchers reported not only dying palms, southern red cedars and other species, but also the lack of tree seedlings on the lowest plots. The researchers



attributed some of the problems to the 1993 Storm of the Century and droughts but said rising sea level is the primary cause of the coastal forest decline. The palms and other trees being observed are being flooded more frequently, thus they are experiencing more salt water intrusion and subsequently greater salinity stress. Putz speculates that it's likely that palm deaths are accelerating up and down the coast. "In most of the U.S., it's really hard to see the impacts of global warming," he said. "Along the West coast of Florida it's not hard to see at all."

**Additionally,** an article in *Newsweek* (August 21/ August 28, 2006, Volume CXLVIII, No.8/9) lists numerous native trees as being threatened in the United States by a host of problems from climate change to invasive pests; they include: Aspen, Hemlock, Sugar Maple, Fir, Spruce, Pine, Chestnut, and Oak. It may not be long before palms that inhabit coastal areas appear on the list.

**On a "lighter note"** CFPACS will be having a joint meeting with the Cycad Society at Bok Tower on Saturday, September 30th. There will be four different presentations with emphasis on cycads throughout the day. Members can also tour the garden on their own. I hope to see many of you at Bok Tower, we visited there several years ago and it was splendid. If you are yearning to see a little bit of elevation, beautiful views and gardens you will surely be in for a treat during this meeting.

**Lastly,** as with many nonprofit organizations CFPACS has a Board of Directors, the positions are filled by volunteers who serve for two years at a time. In January 2007, three positions will become available: **The President, Central Vice President, and West Coast Vice President.** I am encouraging those of you that I see during each meet and have an interest in palms and cycads to consider submitting your name to myself or any of the board members.

We have been "recycling" many of our board members to fill openings throughout the years and, we need to give them a break!!! Don't be worried that you won't have the time to fulfill your commitment. 99% of our communication is done via e-mail; we have board meetings four times a year during our quarterly Saturday meetings. Secondly, don't be worried if you are not the palm or cycad expert: we have a great on-the-job

(Continued on page 23)



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

(Continued from page 22)

training program. I know, I'm a graduate of it!  
**In closing**, I urge each of you that has a desire to get involved at the "board level" to please seriously consider the opportunity. It's a wonderful organization, and one I might add that is "going strong" and well-respected World-Wide.  
**Happy Planting!**

*Diana Wehrell-Grabowski*

## 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*.



*The jungle inside the fences: visitors at Rick Nale's in St. Pete during the June 10th meeting. Note the wood decking, common throughout, that wove around inserts of planted palms and other tropicals. Looking very closely, that's Tom Barrese, West VP, at the table with wife, Karen Barrese, the Membership Chair*

*(Photo by Tom Broome)*



## Dowe in Fort Pierce

(Continued from page 1)

**Mercifully quickly**, however, Dowe moved on to slides of the individual species and comments on them all. Not surprisingly, his most detailed observations were on the 18 species endemic to Australia and New Guinea. About 60 people listened attentively, asking questions as he moved along, afterwards crowding around him prior to the lunch break.

**The session** opened with short speeches (62 seconds each) by Diana Grabowski, our CFPACS president, and by Cris Adams, the Heathcote Botanical Gardens president. Content: how pleased each organization was to sponsor Dr. Dowe's appearance in Fort Pierce. Prior to going into the auditorium, attendees munched on nicely large pastries and drank coffee, provided by the Indian River Community College Foundation. Many visitors were much impressed by the Kight Center for Emerging Technologies, both for its visual impact and for its state-of-the-art technical equipment.

**For lunch**, the Editor attempted to take Dowe and his companion, Jenny Martin, to the Cuban delicacies of Mervis' Café, not realizing that that establishment was closed on Saturdays. However, the small group wound up at the Tiki on the Fort Pierce waterfront. This is an open-air restaurant/bar with a roofing of dried *Sabal* palm fronds. Diners can watch boats, pelicans, water skiers, etc., pass by on the Indian River. Seafood is the basic staple. It can be reported that John Dowe ordered a strawberry daiquiri (his first), a special of the day on a sign. He said he liked it but that it was non-alcoholic. The Editor was initially inclined to take this up with the bartender, but wiser, mature thought prevailed, suggesting a return to IRCC for the second half of the program.

**"Hurricane/cyclone** Adaptation of Palms," the second topic, saw about 60 people (maybe half not having been there for the first session) attending as Dowe demonstrated the resilience of palms. Mechanical factors and habitat have a great deal to do with survival; palms native to regions subject to regular visits by cyclones and hurricanes are adapted to these, palms from elsewhere are not so fortunate (ah, an explanation for all those snapped Washingtonias and Queen Palms). Palms are not woody and hard, thus don't break in strong winds, but are flexible—perhaps "pliable" would a better description. Fan palms seem more adapted to weathering a cyclone, particularly because the leaves are both broad—spreading the force across a wide surface—and flexible. Furthermore, deep splits between the leaflets and drooping ends aid further flexibility, allowing wind to pass through. Although

the lamina may be very thin, inside it are tough fibers that hold the top and bottom together.

**Feather palms** often don't do as well in hurricane conditions. Crownshaft palms are especially vulnerable to having the crownshaft snapped. However, *Archontophoenix* species in Australia regularly recover quickly from such seeming disasters. Dowe's reference point for all hurricane observations was Australian experience, particularly *Livistona* species, though he mentioned other genera. He is responsible for describing all 60 native palms for an ongoing *Flora of Australia*, now being published. Laura Kelley, director of Lifelong Learning Institute at IRCC (co-sponsor of this presentation) spoke briefly before Dowe's talk.

**John Dowe** is a visiting fellow at Montgomery Botanical Center in Miami where he is studying the hurricane adaptation of *Sabal palmetto*. He has found in the Florida State Tree the same structural survivability as in *Livistona*. He is Senior Botanist at the Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research (James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland) and, as such, is a riparian ecologist dealing with more than palms in an environment of lake- and riverside areas subject to flooding.

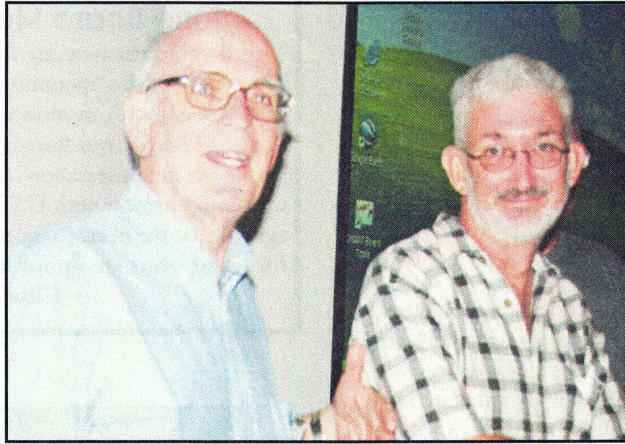
**After all** the hurricane information, attendees adjourned to a reception in Dowe's honor at Heathcote Botanical Gardens in Fort Pierce, where a Macarthur Palm had been planted to mark his appearance, and seeds of this species were offered for the taking. A 4-foot *Archontophoenix tuckeri* (named by Dowe) was donated to Heathcote by CFPACS member David Martin and stood on the patio before Heathcote House.

**Paul Craft**, president of the International Palm Society attended the reception and the two Saturday lectures.

**On Sunday** morning, August 27<sup>th</sup>, a small band of devotees assembled in the Interior Design studio of the Kight Center, to hear and watch Dowe's presentation on *Ptychosperma macarthurii*, the Macarthur Palm. Dowe has recently written a monograph on this species which, he says, is a "feral palm" in places such as Fiji. Interesting descriptive term, hopefully not discovered by Florida's own watchdog group, FLIPPC (Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council). *Archontophoenix alexandrae*, Dowe remarked, is "feral" in Hawaii. Macarthur Palm would seem to be a particular enthusiasm of the lecturer, who described in lively detail its habitat, germination (quick), growth (fast). All appeared to be characteristics of a successful weed. A contingent from Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society—led by Ruth Sallenbach and Dennis McKee—had many questions for Dowe, as did two IRCC students (there for extra credit).

(Continued on page 25)





John Dowe (right) waits patiently as John Kennedy winds up his introduction just before the lecture on hurricane adaptation of palms.

(Photo by Laura Kelley)

## Dowe in Fort Pierce

(Continued from page 24)

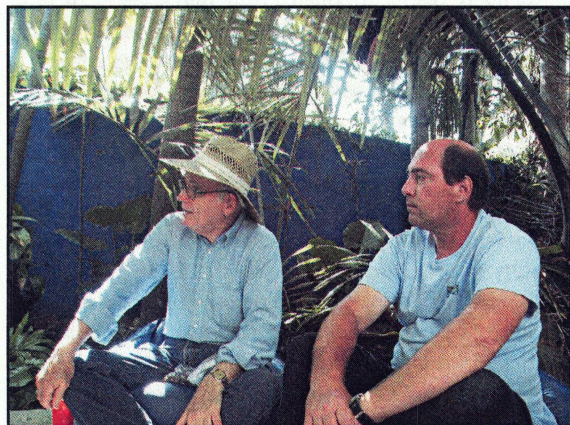
**After enlightening** everyone on the proclivities of the Macarthur Palm, Dowe was taken to the Michael estate on Earring Point on the barrier island in Wabasso, north of Vero Beach, which was arranged by Mike Dahme. Here is a palm collection dating from the 1950s, much battered by hurricanes two years ago but also the source of *Borassus aethiopum* seeds donated for sale by our seed bank. There are also mature *Attalea speciosa* and *Corypha umbraculifera*, as well as many coconut palms and representatives of Caribbean genera.

**Then, off** back to Miami for John Dowe and Jenny Martin. They had arrived at IRCC on Friday afternoon, were shown the River Room (auditorium) in the Kight Center in which the Saturday programs would be presented. Then, they were taken to their temporary nest for two nights. A recommendation for anyone planning to visit Fort Pierce: an attractive and handsomely furnished bed & breakfast on North Hutchinson Island (Fort Pierce North Beach), the Mellon Patch Inn. The visitors stayed in a mainland 'cottage' of the inn, a full second floor suite of a regular house: living room, full kitchen, big bedroom, bath with Jacuzzi, sun porches with view of the Indian River.

**Friday night**, the couple dined at an Italian restaurant in Vero Beach with John and Ann Kennedy and their two grown children, Matthew and Elizabeth. Jenny Martin had "dolphin" for the first time ("No, not the mammal!") and found it delicious.

**Expenses** for Dowe's appearance (rental car, gas, meals, lodging) will be paid by Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society.

The Board meeting at Joe Toph's, Tampa, June 10th. Tom Broome, right, unidentified geezer, left. (Photo by Karen Barrese)





## CFPACS Seed Bank Report 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2006

**Members, if you are interested in receiving the Seed Bank's Seed Offerings, please keep me updated when you change internet service providers. Lately I've been sending a dozen postcards each month to members whose email was returned to me "undeliverable". Don't miss out on rare seeds and great prices!**

During April the Seed Bank received *Syagrus amara*, *Ptychosperma macarthurii*, *Ptychosperma elegans*, and *Adonidia merrillii* from member **Rick Leitner**. (*Syagrus amara* is always popular with the membership, so anyone having a surplus of this species, please send them to the Seed Bank.) Member **Mike Merritt**, our former Treasurer, now living in Hawaii, shared *Clinostigma samoense* and *Rhopaloblaste augusta* seeds with us.

May's contributions included *Encephalartos ferox* and *Encephalartos gratus*, much to the glee of our cycad fans, plus *Hyophorbe lagenicaulis*, *Hyophorbe vershaffeltii*, and *Wodyetia bifurcata* - all from **Montgomery Botanical Center**. **Mike Merritt** donated *Dictyosperma album*, and additional quantities of *Clinostigma samoense* and *Rhopaloblaste augusta*. *Coccothrinax miraguama* and *Wodyetia bifurcata* were contributed by member **Eddie Williamson**. And, **Ortanique.com** donated some very rare, and other intriguing seeds: *Metroxylon warburgii*, *Marojejya darianii*, *Dypsis decaryi*, *Parajubaea cocoides*, *Washingtonia filibusta*, *Ceroxylon ventricosum* and *Geonoma undata* — thanks to **Joseph Prabakhar** for this generous contribution!

In June, our members had an opportunity, thanks to lifetime members **Mr. and Mrs. Joe Michael**, to order *Borassus aethiopum* seeds. I have since learned that the Michaels' palms are one of only two sources of this species' seeds in the entire country, so this was a grand opportunity for CFPACS members to acquire a rare species. Many thanks to the Michaels for sharing these seeds with our chapter. Several members assisted with this effort: **Jason Baker** and **Sue Reilly** collected and cleaned the *Borassus* seeds, and **Neil Yorio** delivered them from Florida's east coast to the west coast for the June meeting and plant sale. Members also had an opportunity to order these seeds directly from the Seed Bank's email offerings. **Neil Yorio** stepped up to the plate again, collecting *Hyphaene dichotoma* seeds from member **Mike Dahme**'s palms, and also donated *Hyphaene coriacea*, *Archontophoenix tuckeri*, *Archontophoenix alexandrae*, and *Hyophorbe vershaffeltii* seeds.

All in all, our members had a very fine collection of seeds from which to choose during the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter! As

### June Board Meeting Minutes

The Bok Tower meeting for Sept 30 was finalized. The plans for the upcoming John Dowe palm talk were discussed. A motion was made and passed to get our Seed Bank Coordinator Claudia Walworth a gift certificate in appreciation for all her hard work. An upcoming project with U.C.F. was discussed. It was agreed that we need to recruit new board members, for when terms are up for the current members.

—Chuck Grieneisen, Secretary



Yes, it's another *Allagoptera arenaria* with maybe 5 feet of trunk, at Dr. Young's in Tampa, seen during the June 10th meeting.

(Photo by Chuck Grieneisen)

one of our members wrote to tell me "... what a great organization this is! " And another member wrote "...Holy Cow! What a stupendous selection of seeds to choose from ..."

—Claudia Walworth, Seed Bank Coordinator  
[ClaudiaWalworth@bellsouth.net](mailto:ClaudiaWalworth@bellsouth.net)



## Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society TREASURER'S REPORT

May 1, 2006 to July 31, 2006

### INCOME:

Membership Dues..... 285.00  
Private Sales (June 10 meeting)..... 148.60  
Seed Sales..... 1,467.85  
Total \_\_\_\_\_ 1,901.45

### EXPENSES

Office Supplies..... 26.10  
Publications (Palmateer)..... 2,014.67  
Taxes (FL sales tax)..... 222.01  
Total \_\_\_\_\_ 2,262.78

### INCOME-EXPENSES

Bank Balance 04/30/06..... 22,841.80  
Bank Balance 07/28/06..... 21,871.95  
Net Decrease..... (969.85)  
(Note: Society 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)  
..... 10,127.27 (current value, close of market on 07/31/06:  
7,168.46 Washington Mutual, 2,958.81 banked  
from sale of Putnam shares)  
Office equipment and tent..... 1,590.00  
Computers and software..... 2,544.41 minus depreciation  
Printer..... 4,250.00

— Bob Johnson, Treasurer



\* \* \* \* \*  
 \* Orchids are, well, lovely. And bromeliads are,  
 \* um, interesting. Everyone should have some or-  
 \* chids and bromeliads but—just possibly—  
 \* something more substantial? Bamboo? Cro-  
 \* tons? Maybe. Palms and cycads?. YFS,  
 \* but what kinds are there? Seem to be at least five  
 \* or six different palms, though only one cycad at  
 \* the Big Box stores. To find out about more  
 \* kinds of palms and cycads join Central Florida  
 \* Palm & Cycad Society. Lots of friendly people  
 \* who love to show their collections and tell you  
 \* what you've been longing to know. No experience  
 \* necessary, just send your check to the Member-  
 \* ship Chair (her address is elsewhere on this  
 \* page). N.B.: All checks received after October  
 \* 1st receive the December issue of *The Palmateer*  
 \* and four issues in 2007.  
 \* \* \* \* \*

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 opposite page) of any changes in street address, phone number, area code, or e-mail address. The newsletter is sent to the address of record.

**CLOSING DATE**  
**FOR DECEMBER ISSUE**  
**NOVEMBER 13**

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)

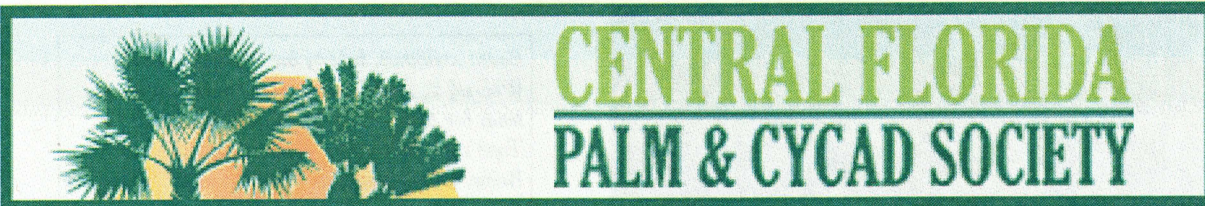
#### The International Palm Society (IPS)

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)





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Board candidate, held by her Daddy? Caroline Wehrell, 2, Prez Diana's niece/goddaughter, attends her first CFFPACS board meeting at Joe Toph's on June 10th. Dad is Mike Wehrell. Below, Diana stands next to a beautiful Sealing Wax Palm at the Evanses'. Not an inexpensive item, one would think. . . .

(Photos by Mark Grabowski)



On Sunday, August 27th, after his exposé of the Macarthur Palm, Dr. John Dowe (left) visited the Earring Point property of Joe and Anne Michael, one of the oldest and most beautiful palm collections in Central Florida. Dowe's companion, Jenny Martin, is in center. At right is John Kennedy. Blue shirt is worn by Dave Martin.

(Photo by Michael K. Dahme)

