

The Palmateer

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Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society

March 2014

December Meeting Report

By Maryann Krisovitch

Over 50 members of the Society once again enjoyed fabulous holiday tours and a feast at our December 7th meeting.

Our first stop was at the garden of Gina Valentino and Nicholas Georgiades. This private half acre of palms, bamboo, bromeliads, ar-oids, tropical and edible plants is carefully planted and maintained by the enthusiastic owners. It's a little slice of Hawaii right there in Sarasota!

Our final stop was at the Sarasota home

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*Come right into the Dent Smith Trail of FIT's Botanical Garden.
(Photo by John Kennedy)*



Borassus flabellifer anchoring the corner of the CFPACS space at FIT's Botanical Fest, March 1st.

March Meeting: FIT & Micco

Mark the day: Saturday, March 29th. The spring CFPACS meeting goes to two stops in Brevard

County. First, to an old favorite to which we have returned any number of times, the Botanical Garden at FIT in Melbourne. The palm collection there once was second only to Fairchild's. Over the years, many palms have been lost. But the Botanical Garden is in the process of restoration. The Board will meet at 9:30; all members are welcome to attend. The general

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March 29th meeting schedule

Board meeting: 9:15-10:00 Florida Tech Botanical Garden (Everyone welcome to attend.).

Tour of FIT Botanical Garden: 10:00-11:30.

**Tour of Jason Baker & Sue Reilly's property in Micco, South Brevard: 12:00-3:00
Lunch there c. 12:30, followed by plant auction and sale.**

Driving directions on opposite page.

The feast at Rob & Susie's in December, palmlovers dig into Cuban pig roast and sides.

(Photo by Mike Evans)



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The Palmateer

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The Palmateer

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I-95 to FIT, Melbourne

Get off I-95 at Exit 176, Palm Bay Road. Go east 2.3 miles on Palm Bay Road to Babcock Street. Turn left (north) on Babcock for 2 miles to University Blvd. FIT is located at the intersection of Babcock & University. Actual address is **150 W. University Blvd.** Continue north half a block beyond University Blvd. Parking on the left side of Babcock is closest to the Botanical Garden.

FIT to Jason Baker & Sue Reilly, Melbourne to Micco

From FIT drive east (about a mile) to U. S. #1. Turn right (south). Stay on U. S. #1 for 14 miles, to Micco Road. Turn right (west) on Micco Road for a mile to Fleming Grant Road. Turn left (south) on Fleming Grant Road, which winds around. Continue on Fleming Grant Road for 2.4 miles to Thompson Road. Turn right (southwest) on Thompson Road. The address is **5150 Thompson Road**, second house on the right. Signs will indicate parking, also at a next door neighbor's, 9250 Fleming Grant Road.

I-95 to Jason Baker & Sue Reilly, Micco

Coming from the south on I-95, get off at Exit 156, SR512 (Fellsmere-Sebastian) and go east on 512 to U. S. #1. Left (north) on U. S. #1 to Micco Road, about 5 miles. Left (west) on Micco Road—and as above.

Coming from the north on I-95, get off at Exit 176, Malabar Road. East to U. S. #1, turn right (south) on U. S. #1, about 8 miles to Micco Road. Right (west) on Micco Road—and as above.

March Meeting, FIT & Micco

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'meeting'—the CFPACS term for wandering around looking at palms and cycads—will begin at 10:30.

We will be given a tour of the Botanical Garden (the Dent Smith Trail has been considerably cleaned up since last seen. In addition, FIT's horticulturalist, Holly Chichester will be present to answer questions and to get acquainted with us.

At around noon, everyone will leave FIT and head south to Micco to the spread of Jason Baker and Sue Reilly. Here are 2.5 acres heavily planted with palms. Among the more notable sight is a grove of 18 *Bismarckia* as well as many species of *Copernicia* and *Sabal*. And, how about an 8+ ft *Mauritia flexuosa* that survived the two bad winters of 2009-10 and 2010-11?

Two large hybrid specimens of *Borassus aethiopum x flabellifer*, together with the rarely seen *Borassus madagascariensis*. Enough to keep the cameras snapping.

BRING A CHAIR if you hope to sit down.

Lunch will be served there in BakerReilly-Land, three forms of chili, including vegetarian. Members are welcome to bring suitable side dishes, such as salads and desserts. Soft drinks and water will be provided. Lunch is free to members and \$6 for non-members.

While the munching goes on, so too will the plant auction, followed, of course, by the plant sale. (Vendors must, of course, check in ahead of time with treasurer Maryann Krisovitch.)

[from The Palmateer, June 2003]

Origins of the Botanical Garden at F.I.T.

By Dr. Jerome Keuper

F.I.T. acquired the first forty acres of its present campus fronting on Country Club Road through a generous donation of the University of Melbourne in 1960. The land was originally owned by V.C. Brownlie who had donated the 40 acres to the Uni of Melbourne for educational purposes. After a few years of operation, and having built a small building on the site, the University decided that it was no longer viable as an educational institution. Of course, there was some competition from others who were interested in acquiring the property. Enter Mrs. Virginia Wood who, while Chairman of the Uni of Melbourne, was instrumental in donating the land to F.I.T. I believe the critical factor in our favor was my pledge to maintain the natural hammock that threaded through the property and to not disturb any of the trees unnecessarily. Conservation was of great concern to the U of Melbourne as it is to us. "Brownlie" and "Wood" Halls derive their names from these two key players in the process of the evolution of F.I.T. as we know it today.

Attempts at landscaping the campus began almost immediately. We planted a row of royal palms on the new campus all along Country Club Road. People were pouring in from the north expecting to see palms everywhere. I didn't intend to disappoint them, they would see plenty of them at F.I.T. But then came January 1961 and most of my beautiful royals turned into skinny haystacks. One of them has survived to this day and was subsequently transplanted to the protected south side of the "Quad". The un-

usually cold winters it has endured are readily evident by the gross irregularities of its trunk profile.

It was evident that I had a lot to learn about palms but I soon heard of a man named Dent Smith who could help me. He had founded a palm society and was growing a great many species in Daytona Beach. It seemed obvious that whatever he could grow there we should be able to grow here. A visit to his place was easily arranged and set the stage for a lasting friendship and a mutual interest in developing a palm garden at F.I.T. In subsequent years Dent Smith contributed greatly and in many ways to accomplish this. To recognize him we dedicated the trail through the hammock garden as the Dent Smith Trail.

During the construction of the dormitory complex, I was informed by the Fla Power & Light Co. that it would be necessary to dig a trench through the hammock to lay a power cable to the dorms. I had no choice but to agree to the project but extracted a promise from FP&L to snake the trench and cable around the existing trees and palms. This they did and it worked out well. Students began to use the narrow filled-in trench as a short cut to the dorms. The winding path crossing the hammock seemed to have a natural beauty all of its own [later to become the Dent Smith Trail]. A curving concrete bridge was built over the stream and Dent Smith and I began to plant Chinese fan palms [*Livistona chinensis*] along the way to complement the natural stand of Sabal palmettos. A potential for developing the ham-

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Origins of the Botanical Garden

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mock into an accessible place of beauty while maintaining its natural setting was becoming apparent. A botanical garden was about to unfold on the campus of the Florida Institute of Technology.

The palm garden is a native hardwood hammock in the floodplain of Crane Creek. The canopy of live and laurel oaks, red maple and cabbage palms are adapted to having their feet wet when the creek floods. This dense canopy provides a greenhouse effect so that cold sensitive plants might better survive periods of cold weather. The soil is fertile and wet and supports an abundant jungle-like growth.

In 1972 the Board of Trustees formerly dedicated this “jungle” as the students call it, as a botanical garden. At one time there were approximately 400 species of palms; but the subsequent freezes in recent years have reduced this number to about 60. Many have silver identification tags.



[from The Palmateer, June 2002]

Dr. Jerome Keuper, 1921-2002

Nine days after our chapter’s plant sale on the F. I. T. campus in Melbourne, Jerry Keuper died on March 25th after a long illness. He was 81; his passing was in Melbourne. Many of us remember him from a meeting we held on the campus five years ago: a genial, welcoming presence, a handsome elderly gentleman clearly proud of the recently spruced-up Dent Smith Trail.

Jerry Keuper played a significant role in the early years of The Palm Society (which became the IPS in 1984). He joined the society in 1967 and, becoming immediately active, served as vice president from 1968 to 1970, then as president from 1970-1972. He hosted the Biennial on the Melbourne campus in 1970 and 1976.

For Central Florida palm-lovers, the Florida Institute of Technology campus has been over the years a magnet, a living laboratory of mature palms, showing what can be grown in Central Florida. The landscaping of the campus was Jerry Keuper’s inspiration. He created the Dent Smith Trail of palms along a twisting path in a hardwoods hammock on the campus to honor his good friend, the founder of The Palm Society. But the palms were not confined to this small area. Nixon Smiley described the Florida Tech campus as a major palm collection in a long, illustrated article in the April,

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Left, *Astrocaryum alatum*, a recent planting in the Botanical Garden, glimpsed at Botanical Fest on March 1st.

(Photo by John Kennedy)

Keuper obituary

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1975, issue of *Principes*. At the time, more 2,000 palms of over 100 species had been planted all over the campus within a seven-year period. In Florida, only Fairchild Tropical Garden and the Montgomery Foundation had more palms.

How did Jerry Keuper come to plant all these palms on campus? Simple, it was his university. As founder of F. I. T./Florida Tech he had the freedom and ability to shape the physical environment, to beautify an ordinary pine flatwoods with palms. He served as the university's president from 1958 to 1986. He lived in Melbourne Beach and, in retirement, devoted himself to a favorite study of 50 years that culminated in his publication of a dictionary of Mandarin Chinese in 1997.

The Renaissance Man, an ideal from Shakespeare's time and earlier, is defined as a man of all-round versatile talents: courtier, poet, soldier, scientist, scholar. We can't say—perhaps Mrs. Keuper can—whether Jerry Keuper was a poet, but the other gifts were definitely there. He was an Army intelligence officer in World War II, serving in China and Burma. On returning home, he earned degrees from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Stanford University before receiving a doctorate in nuclear physics from the University of Virginia. When he came to Brevard County as chief scientist for a defense contractor, there was no university in the area for training and upgrading the skills of engineers and scientists. Florida Tech filled a clear need.

His love of palms was obvious and deep. In the 1960s and 1970s, an interest in palms was just this side of strange. Little information was available then and far fewer spe-

December Meeting Report

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and garden of Rob Branch & Susie Dow. One of Florida's finest private gardens developed over the past 20 years includes palms, bamboo, dozens of different kinds of bromeliads, and rare tropical plants. Following a guided tour, we were treated to have a demonstration by CFPACS member Ken Johnson on creating rare tropical palm bonsai.

Harry Blenker did a great job on the Cuban pig roast and many of our members brought scrumptious sides. As always our plant sale and auction were a huge success. This type of meeting makes membership in the Central Florida Palm & Cycad Society well worth it!



At the entryway into the FIT Botanical Garden.
(Photo by John Kennedy)

cies were known. Learning about palms and obtaining them required time and patience. Despite many other competing demands, Melbourne's Renaissance Man found that time and accomplished so much.

We are indebted to Jerry Keuper. *Requiescat in pacem.*

--John Kennedy

An Apopka Garden

What's in Our Apopka Garden?

By Ron Hart

Since most of you can rarely make it to Apopka, I have decided to write an article each newsletter that will show photos of our palms and cycads along with about our experiences growing them. Our collection is young, begun in 2006-2007, but diverse. As many of you know, we have a \$10 – Two Times Rule. We generally don't pay over \$10 for a palm or cycad and we will try a palm twice. If it dies the second time, it doesn't get invited back!

This article will feature the section of the garden that contains our Treasurer Maryann's favorite palm. We commonly referred to that garden as the Licuala Island. The Licuala Island contains 2 species of palms and 3 species of cycads. Our *Licuala ramsayi* was planted in August 2007 (Figure 1). The *Licuala* has not shown any cold damage except from the freeze in January of 2009 in which there was approximately 10% leaf burn.

Behind the *Licuala* is hidden a small *Cycas petraea* (Figure 2). We planted the *Cycas* in June 2009 after our cold period that caused the damage to the *Licuala*. Still, all the subsequent winters have not resulted in any damage to this cycad. This is one of two *Petraeas* in the yard. Our third species in our Licuala Island is a *Zamia vazquezii* (Figure 3). Boy, I wish I could use that name in a game of Scrabble. But I digress. This small 6-year old cycad was planted in 2007 and has not shown any cold damage yet.

The fourth species is a *Zamia loddigesii* also planted in 2007 (Figure 4). This species also



Figure 1 (above): Treasurer Maryann with her favorite palm, a 7-year-old *Licuala ramsayi*.

Figure 2 (below): a 4-year-old *Cycas petraea*.



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Palm Phytotelmata: Water Pockets Full of Life

L. Philip Lounibos & Stephen P. Yanoviak

Introduction

The term phytotelmata (from Greek: phyton=plant + telm =pond) was coined to describe pools of water that accumulate, from rain or secreted fluids, in select parts of terrestrial or epiphytic plants and support therein small, discrete communities of aquatic fauna. Plants from many families, including Arecaceae, harbor phytotelmata in modified leaves, leaf axils, flowers, tree-holes, open fruits, or fallen leaves and spathes. Although most abundant in the tropics, phytotelmata appear wherever water-impounding terrestrial plants occur, i.e. on all continents except for Antarctica.

Aquatic insects account for the predominant biomass of phytotelm fauna and may possess specific adaptations for such microhabitats. Researchers have used some phytotelmata, because of their small size and replicability, for experimental tests of ecological hypotheses. In wet regions of the tropics, abundant phytotelmata may contribute to ecosystem health and productivity through nutrient cycling, although this has not, to our knowledge, been quantified. The aquatic fauna of phytotelmata often includes immature stages of mosquitoes and, occasionally, some species known to be capable of transmitting pathogens to humans.

Below we describe a few types of palm phytotelmata known personally to us and include one anecdote of a spurious water-holding habitat in coconut palm axils. We speculate that many more examples of palm phytotelmata await description.

Palm Axils

Mauritia flexuosa (Fig.1), known as *moriche* in Venezuela, *burití* in parts of Brazil, and *aguaje* in Peru, may be abundant in wet regions of northern South America. While one of us (SPY) was resident in Amazonian Peru, we noted that *aguaje* axils impounded water (Fig. 2), creating phytotelmata in which at least 20 different species of macroinvertebrates were found and provisionally identified. Among *aguaje* phytotelmata sampled near the canopy (Fig.3-4), the water contents in axils often measured in gallons and was relatively acidic (pH range = 3.9-5.8, n=20). The most abundant insects harbored were mosquito larvae and dragonfly nymphs, the latter presumably feeding on the former. In Peru, palm swamps, or *aguajales* composed of monotypic stands of *M. flexuosa*, may span hundreds of hectares and are associated with the natural succession (filling in) of old oxbows and river meander scars (Fig.5).

Transmission of malaria and yellow fever by mosquitoes was not revealed by research until the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Thereafter, colonial entomologists, especially British, began to conduct field studies on tropical mosquitoes. One of these reported finding large numbers of mosquito larvae of diverse species occurring in coconut palm axils sampled on the coasts of Kenya and Tanganyika (Haworth 1924). This study led to the recognition of two species from coconut palm axils new to science and related to the yellow fever mosquito (Edwards 1924). However, subsequent collection efforts by Lester (1927) detected no phytotelmata nor mos-

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Fig. 1 A young *Mauritia flexuosa* palm at the Allpahuayo/Mishana Reserve near Iquitos, Peru.



Fig. 2 *Phytotelmata* in the axils of a young aguaje palm near Iquitos, Peru



Fig. 3 Left, Steve Yanoviak ascending a mature *M. flexuosa* to sample *phytotelmata* in the canopy.

Fig. 4 Above, Steve measuring water parameters and sampling aquatic fauna from aguaje axils in the canopy.



Fig. 5 an aguajal in the Department of Madre de Dios, Peru.

Phytotelmata

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quito immatures in coconut palm axils, and it is believed that Haworth's African collectors, who climbed the palms to sample, may have filled their mouths with water and mosquito larvae before climbing in order to deceive him about the origins of the mosquitoes purported to come from coconut axils (personal communication from PF Mattingly, former curator at the British Museum of Natural History).

Fallen Palm Parts

Palm parts that fall to the ground and collect rain water or throughfall may provide phytotelmata if these aquatic habitats persist long enough for colonization and growth by inquiline fauna. Coconuts, either gnawed open by rats or as husks discarded after consumption by humans, are known to hold rainwater long enough to support the development of some mosquito larvae into adults.

Barrera and Villalba (1994) investigated the succession of mosquito species that colo-

nized fallen spathes of *Euterpe* sp. that provided phytotelm habitats in a Venezuelan cloud forest (Fig.6).

Abundances of the first mosquito species to colonize, a facultative predator, were negatively correlated with numbers of a successor species in bracts, suggesting that interactions between the two were occurring during the course of the biological succession.

Elsewhere in South America, on a biological reserve north of Manaus, Brazil, water-holding fallen spathes of four palm species were sampled for the presence of an obligate predatory mosquito larva, *Toxorhynchites haemorrhoidalis* (Sa 1994). Larvae of this genus have been used for the biological control of mosquito pest and vector species, and their colorful adults do not consume blood (Fig.7).

Treeholes in Palms

In deciduous trees, holes that collect and retain rainwater (or stemflow) often form in crooks where branches bifurcate or, alternatively, in natural cavities left in rotting wood after a branch has fallen. Trunk damage leading to natural treehole formation ap-

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Phytotelmata

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pears to be rare in palms. Our experience suggests that trunk treeholes in palms are generally created by humans.

Kitching (1987) described the macroinvertebrates of water-holding treeholes in cut stumps of *Livistona rotundifolia* in Sulawesi. He found a relatively diverse fauna of aquatic insect species, including larvae of a species of *Toxorhynchites*, as well as a 'top predator' dragonfly nymph. **One of us** (LPL) had the good fortune to reside decades earlier on the coast of Kenya, where coconut palm 'tappers' of the local *mijikenda* tribes frequently hewed steps into trunks to facilitate regular climbing, especially to harvest palm 'wine'. During the rainy season, many steps collected and held rainwater and supported a rich aquatic fauna, especially mosquitoes (Figs. 8,9)

Conclusions

Palms represent a diverse group, and their myriad growth forms likely promote the formation of phytotelmata in many species that have not yet been examined. Studies of the ecology and natural history of palm phytotelmata are few and remain wide open for exploration.

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Fig.6 Top, fallen spathe of *Euterpe* sp. palm provides phytotelm habitat on the floor of a cloud forest in northern Venezuela.

Fig.7 Above, adult male *Tohaemorrhoidalisxorhynchites* whose predatory larvae are known to develop in palm spathe phytotelmata

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Phytotelmata

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Butia odorata (?) in the Panhandle town of Chattahoochee. (Photo by Wiley Whiddon)



Above, all eyes focused on Rick Nale during the plant auction at the December meeting.
 Right, Gina Valentino in Rob Branch's garden.



Palm Education:

Showing/Telling the Basics

By John Kennedy

On January 21st I gave my standard palm presentation to the Indian River County Master Gardeners. This was my first gig for 2014. My hosts duplicated my basic 10-page handout, "Suggested Palms for the Treasure Coast," with lists of species and cultural information. They also duplicated a 4-page item, "Landscaping with Palms," created last year for a presentation that raised the fundamental questions—and answers—about palm placement and care. My thumb drive contained more than 60 PowerPoint slides.

Since these were Master Gardeners trained by the local Extension office to answer questions members of the public might bring in, I shifted the focus of my talk more to cultural matters rather than gee-whiz pictures of gorgeous unusual palms. And—as is often the case—I brought freebie palm seedlings in plastic cups.

This time *Chamaedorea seifrizii* (turned out that the two palms planted next to each other were a male and a female). The session went on for an hour and a half, that extra half hour because of frequent questions as I went on. The 35 people present were very interested and knew as little about palms as most other groups I have spoken to. My whole approach is informal, humorous and low-key, that I've learned much from my mistakes in growing palms in Vero Beach since 1980. I don't lecture, I chat.

I began, as usual, waving a pinnate leaf and a palmate leaf at the audience. I told the group that palms were not woody plants, did not have bark, etc. This was news to

most of those present. A little palm botany is a must.

Next presentation is scheduled for April 18th to the Treasure Coast Beekeepers Association.

I've been doing these palm presentations for over 20 years now, for the most part within the 3-county area of the Treasure Coast—Indian River, St. Lucie, Martin. My single Martin County presentation years back was to the Jupiter Island Garden Club, an interesting experience. Rich ladies also like freebie palm seedlings. But I've also done this in Oviedo and for the entertainment of the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society, where I accused a prominent nurseryman-member of flogging *Washingtonias* to an ignorant public (snark). Mostly I've talked to garden clubs but also at the local botanical gardens (Heathcote, McKee, and Port St. Lucie).

My first presentation was in January, 1993 at Heathcote Botanical Gardens in Fort Pierce. The-then director, Lib Tobey, had installed a Palm Walk with a few nice palms. She set this (and me) up. I was terrified, not of talking to 30 or more people since I'd been a college teacher since 1964, but because I didn't think I knew enough. And what to include, what to omit? What would they wish to know? Much soul-searching went into my prep.

The news that most of those signing up were nurserymen made me feel faint. "Don't worry," said Lib Tobey, "They don't know anything." And that, to my amazement, turned out to be true. I had planned on an hour's talk. They peppered me with nearly non-stop questions for more than two hours. Fortunately, I was able to answer all the questions, never got into much

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Cutting a Royal: Regret and Heart of Palm Salad

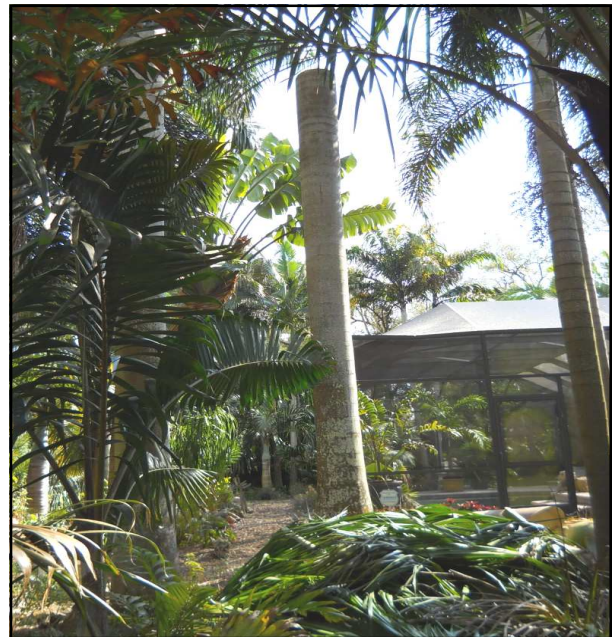
By Mike Evans

I started a number of royal palms 17 years ago from seed. When we bought our new property in 1999 we planted a lot of them from 15 gal containers. We built the house and pool in 2000. One of the 55'+ royals turned out to be too close to the pool enclosure and was dropping the leaves through the screen.

This year I decided to cut the top out of this royal. I left 3/4 of the trunk to slowly dry out and rot. It also seems to make a good woodpecker home when it starts to dry out. I found this out from another royal I had to slowly kill. After topping the top 15' of the palm, I chain sawed the heart (crown shaft) in half and harvested the royal size "heart of palm". There were only certain portions that were very soft

for eating, but it was a lot and it is good. Just like the heart of palm in the can, only back yard fresh. I really hated to have to cut the palm, but it was just too large to move. This harvest made a royal size mess to clean up. I am still deciding what to do with the cut up trunk. It is extremely heavy.

I have the heart marinating in water, vinegar, salt and sugar liquid, with the vast majority being water. This was an expensive salad. I do not condone killing palms for the heart, but when you have too, at least there is a small reward.



*Left, the big royal before operations began.
Above, near the beginning of the cutdown.
(Photos by Marjorie Evans)*



Above, extracting the palm heart, more than a snack. Below, left, a large piece in the kitchen sink. A glass of wine as reward for all the effort. Below, right, palm heart marinating.



The Editor Catches On—Finally

I like to think that I'm pretty quick on the uptake. You know, fast reply, that kind of thing. However, it doesn't always happen, as I have recently been made to realize.

I gradually became aware that I was seeing small *Phoenix* palms on lawns all around Vero. Pretty, maybe 4 feet of trunk, silvery stiffish leaves. But the trunks were almost blond, certainly very light colored. I was seeing so many that it was evident that these palms were inexpensive and at the Big Box stores.

I wondered what they could be. I was also dimly aware that there were landscape size palms of the same kind around newish office buildings and recent projects. Kew lists 16 *Phoenix* species and, as we know, species in the genus hybridize very easily. Have to ask someone, but who? OK, time to consult the Grand Pooh-bah, Paul Craft. And Paul explained it to me very clearly.

Turns out that all of these are *Phoenix sylvestris*, Indian Date Palm or Wild Date Palm. And the common name from vendors is "Sylvestra Palm" or "Sylvestris Palm." Maybe "Indian Date Palm" sounded a little too, well, *foreign*. Big old Canary Island Date Palms are seldom planted anymore, as such Mediterranean climate palms didn't do well in Florida and were subject to a number of diseases, even before we get to the newest ones. *Phoenix sylvestris* is from a climate similar to Florida's and is less susceptible to disease.

But the blond trunks? I have a big specimen, 30 years old, maybe 30 feet high, that has a dark trunk and is not nearly as pretty as the little lawn specimens. Well, the vendors treat the trunks to lighten them for a short time: light trunks sell more pretty



Now this Pindo Palm in Panama City has to be a tourist attraction.

(Photo by Wiley Whiddon)

palms than dark trunks. Eventually, dark will prevail.

Why so cheap and everywhere available?

The good idea of growing and selling a more suitable species of *Phoenix* certainly took hold and, these palms would not be massive and more suitable for small house lots. So everyone and his brother got in on growing the 'new' species, would make their fortunes selling these to eager homeowners. (How many times have we heard that someone expects to make his fortune by selling palms?)

Just as the vendors were ready to unleash these great palms, the cataclysm occurred: the collapse of the housing bubble in Florida, c. 2008. Many, many "Sylvestra Palms" but few, if any, takers.

Thanks, Paul, for enlightening me.

See, your Editor does catch on though maybe a few years after everybody else?

—John Kennedy

Palm Basics

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of my prepared talk, just as well, since I hadn't focused clearly (didn't know what I was supposed to include). I staggered home and went to bed.

Any teacher knows that the first time a course is taught is often wrong, emphasizing the trivial and passing over the important. The second time around, it comes straight. And, so this happened with me. The hand-out came a bit later since I know, as a teacher, to send people home with something in their hand that helps retain what they have heard. And, with Tom Broome's help, I added a few pages at the back of the handout for basic information on cycads.

About every two years, I tweak the hand-out, usually removing or adding palm species to one of the lists. For instance, most recently removing *Chamaerops humilis* from the main list after being forced to notice how poorly it does in this area and how seldom it looks good here. And there's room somewhere to add the latest 'hot' palm that everyone must have but of which my audience is completely unaware.

A few years later, more experienced, I wrote about giving palm talks for PALMS. I wondered then—and now—if anyone else is doing this? A very useful way of spreading the good word about palms. I used to say I was a palm evangelist until I caught some people looking at me as if I shouldn't be using the word "evangelist." And I resist being called an 'expert,' saying that the experts are botanists. I've been growing palms since about 1980 and have learned quite a bit through my failures—where I didn't know enough to understand what was required. And, in earlier days, much less in-

formation about cultural requirements of individual species—often recently introduced—was almost totally lacking.

I've demonstrated many times that I'm not an 'expert' when somebody sticks a juvenile pinnate leaf under my nose and demands that I identify it. I gently respond that the leaf could be any one of maybe 10 different species, that I need to see more of the plant. Do you have a picture of the palm? (No.)

One of the pitfalls in making these presentations: don't go into more detail than the audience is capable of handling, stick to the basics. But don't talk down to those listening. If a complicated question is asked, best to talk with that person privately later. Many of those really knowledgeable about palms are often completely unaware of the depth/sophistication of their information. The audience tends to have little, if any, sophistication.

A slightly different appearance will come on April 28th. The Garden Club of Fort Pierce sponsors "Plants in the Park" at Glidden Park Garden Center in Fort Pierce. About a dozen plant societies are invited to participate. I'll sit at a table with a sign **CENTRAL FLORIDA PALM & CYCAD SOCIETY** and answer questions about palms, occasionally about cycads, maybe offer freebie seedlings (probably of *Livistona saribus*). This will make my third appearance at the annual event, my initial invitation coming after giving my presentation to the ladies of the Garden Club of Fort Pierce.

If anyone might be interested in trying to put together a similar palm presentation for a home area/region, do contact me for suggestions.

An Apopka Garden

(Continued from page 7)

has not shown any damage in the past 6 winters.

Our last species in the Island is a *Cryosophila warscewiczii* (Figure 5). This palm was planted in March of 2008 and has not experienced any damage from any cold temperatures or the freeze in 2009.

Well, that is all from this section of the yard. In the coming newsletters, I will try to cover some of the other 130 species we have growing in our yard. By the way, the thick oak canopy helps to keep the frost away and we do cover the ones we love the most with sheets and blankets, and occasionally Maryann lets me use a blanket too.



Figure 3: 4-year –old *Zamia vasquezii*.

Look for this just inside the Botanical Garden. Don't know what FIT calls it, but I think a good name would be "The Bridal Bower." Yes, it's for weddings. Nice bricked patio for folding chairs, all very palmy. Maybe in a future visit to FIT, the headline event might be a pair of CFPACS members getting married here? Maybe a bandshell? Nah, brick flooring not for dancing. . .

(Photo by John Kennedy)

TREASURER'S REPORT 2-28-14

Checking Balance 10/31/13 \$12,264.00
 Nov - Feb deposits \$4,175.22
 Nov - Feb Checks \$2,232.44

Ending Checking Balance (2/28/14)
 \$14,206.78

Gain/(Loss) \$1,942.78

Income Year to Date
 Membership \$1,060.44
 Merchandise -
 Private Sales -
 Public Sales -
 Seed Bank \$129.74
Total Income Year to Date \$1,190.18

Expenses Year to Date
 Meeting Expense \$0.00
 Office Supplies -
 Public Relations -
 Seed Bank \$ 76.99
 Taxes \$162.12
 Vendor Fees \$200.00
 Vendor Proceeds -
 Website -
Total Expenses Year to Date \$439.11

Assets
 Endowment Fund Balance \$10,275.71
 CD #1 1-31-14 maturity \$3,265.41
 CD #2 9-25-13 maturity \$3,151.28
 Sales Cash Box \$307.00

Total Assets \$16,999.40

Liabilities
 U.A. Young Collection Relocation Commitment \$5,000.00

Total Liabilities \$5,000.00
Net Worth as of 2/28/14 \$26,206.18

Opening Checking Balance 1/1/13 \$10,431.74

Income 2013 \$11,015.90
 Expenses 2013 \$7,417.82

Ending Checking Balance 12/31/13 \$14,029.82

Assets
 Endowment (Mutual Fund) \$10,275.71
 Certificate of Deposit \$6,413.54

Total Assets \$16,689.25

Liabilities
 U.A. Young Collection Relocation Commitment \$5,000.00

Total Liabilities \$5,000.00
Net Worth as of 12/31/13 \$25,719.07

—Maryann Krisovitch, Treasurer



Elaeis guineensis, a 40-footer, seen at Botanical Fest, also smaller ones. Fewer volunteers? (Photo by John Kennedy)

From the Editor's Desk

Mike Evans has really impressed me, taking down a 55-foot royal by himself, the Paul Bunyan of Pinellas County. And he did it without any of it falling on himself or on the pool enclosure. Just look at the pictures on page 15. Of course, it's easier to do this kind of thing if you're about 30 years old, right, Mike?

None of us (of course) has planted a palm in the wrong place, the mistake becoming bigger as we watch. Mine is an *Arenga pinnata* stuck in the ground as a tiny palm many years ago when there were few other palms, then treated with the Kennedy specialty, benign neglect. This probably accounts for its slow growth: now it has about 15 feet of trunk, with many 20-foot leaves almost completely obscuring the full size Foxtail beyond. No blooming, as yet, maybe an eventual problem for my heirs. Nothing like a big dead palm to take out of a tricky place.

* * * *

Phil Lounibos lives in St. Lucie Village north of Fort Pierce, right on the Indian River. It's a small place and old, for Florida. I'd say 'quaint' if the word didn't bring Mount Dora to mind. Phil is a longtime CFPACS member who is on the staff at the University of Florida's Medical Entomology Lab in Vero Beach. (Yes, bugs, chiefly mosquitoes.) With colleague Steve Yanoviak, he's come up with an interesting insight into the abundant life going on in palm water pockets. But their explorations are in Latin America. How similar for palms here? I do like the idea of a predator mosquito that eats other

mosquito larvae.

But how long before someone asks suspiciously whether there might also be (gasp) cockroaches? I was told years back that a new species of roach was making its way through the Caribbean toward Florida and that this was a flying roach. Guess the species never made it to Florida, no reported calls about cardiac arrest on the 15th floor of a beach condo: snowbird lady from Cincinnati meets flying roach.

* * * *

Florida Tech in Melbourne is where we will meet on Saturday, March 29th. The Botanical Garden looks good—a quick inspection when the Editor visited Botanical Fest on March 1st. Then, after some good ambles down the Dent Smith Trail, the group will drive south to Micco and the homeplace of Jason Baker and Sue Reilly. Lunch is there, provided to members. We've been to 'Bakerland' before but not since 2005.

A palm ID at FIT is requested. There's a large pinnate palm, with no crownshaft, growing next to the big royal at the right of the entrance, just beyond the grass. A certain ubiquitous member (you know who you are, Terrence) insists that it's a Teddy Bear Palm. If so, it lacks the attractive features that we associate with that species. Go take a look. Will it be necessary to concede that he's right?

The chili for March 29th lunch is chili con carne, white bean chicken chili, and vegetarian chili.

John Kennedy



*This is the Phoenix that the Editor couldn't identify, so went looking for help. See page 16. Below, Burretiokentia hapala—competitor for most beautiful palm?—its February inflorescences were covered with honeybees in the famed. Palmz 'n' Weedz garden in Vero Beach.
(Photos by the proprietor)*



2013 Fourth Quarter Meeting Minutes

The fourth quarter meeting of the CFPACS was called to order Dec 7, 2013 at the residence of Gina Valentino and Nick Georgiades. Attending were Ron Hart , Maryann Krisovitch, Dottie Kellog, Mike Evans, Lucinda McCartney, and Chuck Grieneisen. We found our membership is now up to 175+ people.

A motion was made and passed unanimously to increase dues to \$20 and a 3 year membership to \$55.

It was decided that the society will try and participate in the U.S.F. and F.I.T. plant sales in the upcoming year.

We got an update on Dr. Young's plants that the Kopsick arboretum is trying to acquire. Everything is moving smoothly and it looks closer than ever to Kopsick being able to acquire the collection. Just a city council meeting in January to approve the funds and it will be a go.

There will be 3 membership renewal notices sent out , with the president acknowledging the notices.

We will try and get a nominating committee for new board members.

We will try and get the year's worth of meeting dates in the next Palmateer.

We will try and get our meeting articles online , like on Palmtalk, as well as our upcoming meetings.

Upcoming meeting sites for future meetings were also discussed.

—Chuck Grieneisen, Secretary

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I think most of us will agree that CFPACS has a “pretty face” meaning it provides an opportunity for members to visit lovely palm/cycad gardens throughout Central Florida and enjoy a day of camaraderie with others who share our enthusiasm. The board of directors spends hours arranging four meetings a year and our generous hosts also labor lovingly to get their gardens ready for “company.”

These meetings are an important benefit to members and great efforts are expended to ensure that each one is worth what is often a long road trip just to get there.

However, we also have a higher mission, that of creating or enhancing opportunities for others to enjoy palms and cycads now and for years to come.

You will find the CFPACS name linked to many causes, most recently the campaign to move the U.A. Young garden in Tampa to St Petersburg's Gizella Kopsick Palm Arboretum and Sunken Gardens. Dr. and Mrs. Young spent their lifetime collecting rare palms and cycads from around the world and amassed one of the finest private collections anywhere. Now, instead of going under a developer's bulldozer, the valuable plants will be placed in public gardens where they can be cared for properly, studied and appreciated by future generations. This project is ongoing and you will be hearing more about it as the months go by.

There will be other opportunities to “do good.” Your board is looking now at the Florida Institute of Technology Botanical Garden in Melbourne. This lovely 15 acre spread was originally designed by Dent

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.

Smith, founder of the International Palm Society many years ago, but neglect, lack of knowledge and other factors took their toll and the original 600 or so palms dwindled down to a relative handful. We think the FIT garden might be an appropriate place for our society to focus some attention – and perhaps a few plants. Keep tuned as discussions with FIT officials continue.

As a palm fancier, you might also look around your home community for public gardens that could benefit from CFPACS' collective expertise and possible donations. Our region reaches from north of Gainesville to Sarasota and from Daytona Beach to Port St. Lucie—27 counties--so there should be many opportunities to spread our palm magic. Please let me know if you have a place in mind. Palm.president7@gmail.com
Meanwhile, be assured that CFPACS will continue to offer exciting, interesting and noteworthy gardens to visit. And we hope you'll join us at every single one.

—Lucinda McCartney

PayPal Tutorial

Here is how to make a payment to CFPACS using PayPal

- 1) Log on to <http://www.paypal.com>
- 2) If you have a PayPal account, log into your account. If you do not have a PayPal account, click on the 'Personal' tab. Once on the 'Personal' page go to 'Send Money' and then 'Send Money Online.'
- 3) Once on the 'Send Money' page, type 'payments@cfpacs.org' in the 'To' field. Type in your email address in the 'From' field and the amount you wish to pay in the 'Amount' field.
- 4) From there you will be taken to a secure page where you can enter your name, address and credit card information.
- 5) When you are ready to finish up the payment process, please indicate whether your payment is for membership or seeds or t-shirts in the message field.

The Cycad Society

11701 Barchetta Drive
 Austin, TX 78758
 Regular membership, \$35, quarterly newsletter
<http://cycad.org>

The International Palm Society (IPS)

9300 Sandstone Street
 Austin, TX 78737-1135
 Regular membership, \$45, quarterly journal
<http://palms.org>

Join CFPACS 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: \$20 one year; \$55 three years;
foreign: US\$20 one year) to:

Maryann Krisovitch
 CFPACS Treasurer
 1008 Little Fawn Court
 Apopka, FL 32712
treasurer@cfpacs.org

Membership also available at website:
www.cfpacs.org

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

Give a friend the
 gift of a CFPACS
 membership!

John Kennedy talks to the Indian River County Master Gardeners about palms on January 16th. See page 13.

(Photo by Tanya Goldsmith)

U. A. Young Collection

By Phil Stager

The St. Pete City Council unanimously approved the expenditure of \$300K in Weeki Wachee funds to purchase and relocate the U. A. Young cycad collection to St. Pete from Tampa. We will also be taking some palms and landscape boulders and rocks. The really rare stuff goes to Sunken Gardens: *Encephalartos latifrons*, *E. cupidus*, *E. horridus*, and *Cycas scratchleyana*, along with *Lodoicea maldivica* and some others. About 10 larger palms will go to Gizella Kopsick Palm Arboretum (GKPA), along with some smaller ones.

The City of St. Petersburg will take title to the collection on April 3rd when the Council approves the sole source purchase of the collection for \$125K as a consent agenda item.

Our contractor, Morelli Landscaping, will start digging the following Monday, April 7th. Tom Broome will be our consultant for the project. We estimate 2-4 weeks to move everything. **The City** has started preliminary work at GKPA—defining the outlines of the new planting beds, killing and stripping of old turf grass, removing old plant materials to make way for the new. Concrete curbing around the new beds will go in after the cycads and palms have been installed.

Most, but not all the cycads will go directly



from the Young estate to GKPA or to Sunken Gardens. The rest will go into temporary storage at the contractor's facility. I will bring some plot plans with me to the March 29th meeting that will show what's new and what goes where. **On behalf** of all of us here in St. Pete who are involved in this project, I wish to re-iterate our appreciation for the \$5K that CFPACS committed to the project. This certainly helped close the deal with City Council here.

Seed Bank

The winter months have been slow even though we had some very good seeds to offer. Total sales since the last report were \$140.25. We have had some people who have not paid the invoice sent them, so in the future people who have unpaid invoices will not receive seeds. Postage isn't cheap anymore, and we can't sustain this loss.

—Dottie Kellogg

Winter Observation. . .Lake Placid Highlands County (2013-2014):

This winter was slightly colder than last (2012-2013). The official low recorded at the Sebring FAWN site was 33.67 degrees on January 19. I recorded 30 that morning with widespread frost in open areas (no frost in tree canopied areas). The low was 41 degrees at my parent's home on Lake June, across town from me (a testament to the inland lake effect to hold up nighttime low temperatures). All in all, if all my winters were no colder than this one I would be a happy camper.

Damages/casualties were few, as only my most exposed tender palms incurred some frost burn. My *Cocos nucifera* has about 50% frost burn on fronds, but the trunk and meristem was protected with heating cable and insulative wraps; it's already opened an inflorescence. My *Roystonea regia* has about 10% frost burn on the oldest, lowermost fronds near the tip ends. My oldest *Dypsis leptocheilos* has 75% frost burn, but my *D. leptocheilos* back in the woods is unscathed, as are all other zone 10+ palms (e.g., *A. alexandrae* and *cunninghamiana*, *R. rivularis*, *W. bifurcata*, *S. botryophora*, etc.) growing there and elsewhere on my property. My large *Adonidia* and *S. schizophylla* fronds were tied up and wrapped and escaped frost damage.

—Walt Darnall, Lake Placid



Winter Observation. . .Orlando

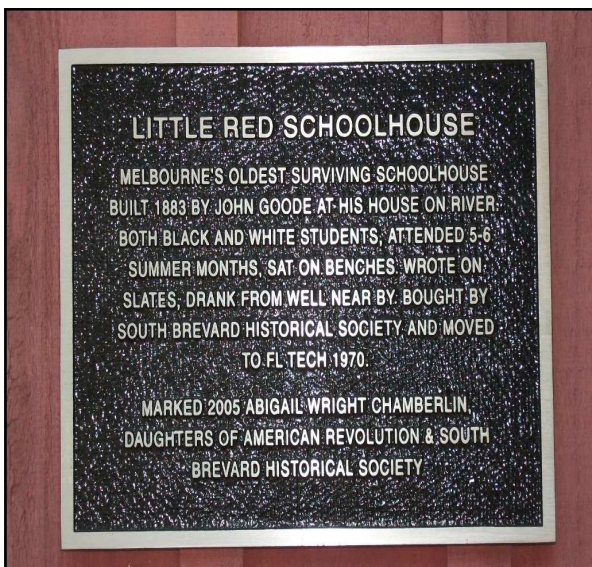
This year has been very easy on the palm collection. We flirted with freezing temperatures on several nights, but no frost. In general, frost seems to do the most immediate damage while freeze damage doesn't always show up right away. A small, recently planted *T. radiata* suffered some leaf burn and a *S. oleracea* had some singed leaf tips. I wrapped most of the trunkless *Attalea liebmanii* with a frost blanket. It completely defoliated two years ago with 36° + frost, but the exposed parts were unaffected this year. The same is true for the fishtails. All of my more sensitive palms died off a few years ago when we had 28° + frost, 28° and 24° on successive nights: all *Thrinax* and *Coccothrinax*, all *Dypsis* except *decaryi*, *Saribus merrillii*, African Oil and a few others. The Triangle and an *Archontophoenix* have significant stem damage from that same year.

—Vance Browning, east Orlando



Above, a landmark just outside FIT's Botanical Garden. Below, the explanatory marker for this piece of local history.

(Photos by Elizabeth Kennedy)



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