



NEWSLETTER

JULY 1986

**TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, Inc.**

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH
THERESA HEATH
ARNOLD STARK
LILLIAN STARK

NEWSLETTER MAIL ADDRESS: ARNOLD & LILLIAN STARK
6305 Eureka Springs Rd.
Tampa FL 33610

PRESIDENT: ARNOLD STARK CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 260363, Tampa FL 33685

MEETINGS ARE HELD THE SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 2:00 P.M.

NEXT MEETING. JULY 13, 1986

MEETING PLACE COMMUNITY ROOM UNDER WEST RAMP, TAMPA BAY
CENTER SHOPPING MALL, BUFFALO & HIMES
AVENUES NEXT TO TAMPA STADIUM. (TAKE
DALE MABRY TO BUFFALO AVE., AT STADIUM.)

PROGRAM EARL MARTIN, Apple Grower Extraordinaire,
will present a program on the culture and
civilization of apple trees in our area.
Also, he will be bringing to the meeting
a number of varieties for sale to members.

NEW MEMBER:

Mary Jo Cross
P O Box 15964
Tampa FL 33684 (935-8676)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Day W. Boddorff
2835 Temple Ct.
E. Palo Alto, CA 94303

Rhea Hurwitz
84 Chesapeake Ave.
Tampa FL 33606

Bill Ryland
2446 Granada Circle East South
St. Petersburg FL 33712

JAMAICA TOUR

Tom Economou is providing a tropical fruit tour of Jamaica, leaving Miami Sunday, August 10, and returning the following Sunday, Aug. 17. The tour is organized by that talented organizer, Tom Economou, and Gene Joyner will act as tour leader. This will be an excellent opportunity to tour Jamaica, and visit several botanical gardens, tropical fruit nurseries, some private fruit gardens of the local Horticultural Society of Jamaica, as well as some of the more well known tour spots. The cost of the tour is \$799.00 for the 8 days which includes air fare, hotel and buses. So all you need to bring is money for food and miscellaneous spending. Openings for this tour will be available, probably, through about the first of July, at which time they will have to be closed. Anyone interested should contact Tom Economou at 1-904-285-7173. Those of our membership who have gone on previous tours know they are a lot of fun and provide an opportunity to bring back many seeds and see lots of interesting horticultural sights.

COMMON AND RARE FRUIT TREES SUITABLE FOR GROWTH IN CENTRAL FLORIDA, by Gene Joyner.

Gene Joyner is a horticulturist at West Palm Beach County Extension Service, very knowledgeable of fruiting trees for Florida. Mr. Joyner's presentation concerned plants and fruit trees which will take the cold of central Florida with a minimum of damage during normal years.

Blackberry. The blackberry is not rare nor tropical as it grows wild in the local woods. However, excellent varieties have been developed for central Florida, notably the Brazos which was developed jointly by Texas A & M University and the University of Florida. It is a large blackberry that flowers usually from mid to late March, and fruits into late June and early July. Fruit size varies from 3/4" to an inch and a half in length and as we could see from the slide, it produces an abundance of fruit on each plant. Brazos is a semi erect berry vine bush which means that a trellis will not be necessary to support the canes, although one may be used. The bushes may be pruned to 3 or 4 feet for easy picking of the fruit. Blackberries are very subject to root suckering and frequently sprouts will spring up eight to 10 feet from the parent plant. This may be prevented by installing a barrier of sheet metal approximately 30" in depth in the ground on each side of the blackberry row to contain the roots within this area. The vines should be heavily fertilized in mid February when the new canes are just shooting up, and again two or three times during the growing season. 6-6-6 fertilizer is satisfactory. The fruit is excellent for eating fresh, making jelly and desserts and may be used to make an excellent wine. They also lend themselves to freezing quite well.

Figs. The fig will grow well in central Florida and is rarely damaged by the cold weather. The varieties commonly found in this area are Brown Turkey, Celeste and the light colored types such as Green Ischa. Black Mission is also common in this area. It makes a small tree with large leaves but is deciduous from December to April. At maturity the fruit ranges from a light yellow through green and brown to a purple color, almost black. They frequently have a very light pink interior and are very excellent flavored. The fruiting season is late spring and early summer, although there is frequently a fall crop which is fewer in number and of smaller, poorer quality. Figs are propagated very easily by air layering or cuttings. However, grafted figs are more desirable provided they are grafted on a nematode resistant root stock. Nematode resistant root stocks are more tender to cold than fruiting varieties, therefore, it is necessary to bank up around the fig in the winter time to cover the root stock and protect it from the cold. Figs can be trained as a tree 20 feet or more in height or kept pruned as a bush. One of the main problems is fig rust, which is brought about during the rainy season by the high humidity. As soon as the rainy season starts, fig rust begins to defoliate the plants and loss of leaves results in smaller, poorer quality fruit.

Carambola. The carambola has been grown as far north as Gainesville in protected locations but was badly damaged by the cold that we have had the last three years. Carambolas always attract a lot of attention when they are bearing because of the uniqueness of the fruit. It produces a very beautiful dooryard tree with heavy production of beautiful, waxy, star-shaped fruit, in color from a very light yellow to a dark orange. In size, they can range from 3" to 7" in length. The slide showed a tree in Gene Joyner's yard fairly loaded down with carambola fruit. From a mature tree it is possible to get from 300 to 400 pounds of fruit per year. Fruit in the Miami area now is selling from \$1.00 to \$1.50 a pound which makes it very attractive to the fruit grower. In South Florida there is presently about 60 acres of commercial carambolas being grown but that is expected to double in the next couple years. Carambolas can be used in several ways, in salads, floated in punch bowls and in drinks. They make very good pies, jellies and jams. They can be dried and they can be used to make fruit leather. They fruit over a very long season, in some cases from August to February, barring a freeze. They may be grown from seed but a grafted tree is more desirable because they produce fruit of known quality and fruit much earlier. Seedlings may take four to five years to fruit and the quality will be unknown until fruiting. The carambola may also be grown in a large pot and will bear under these conditions if provided with

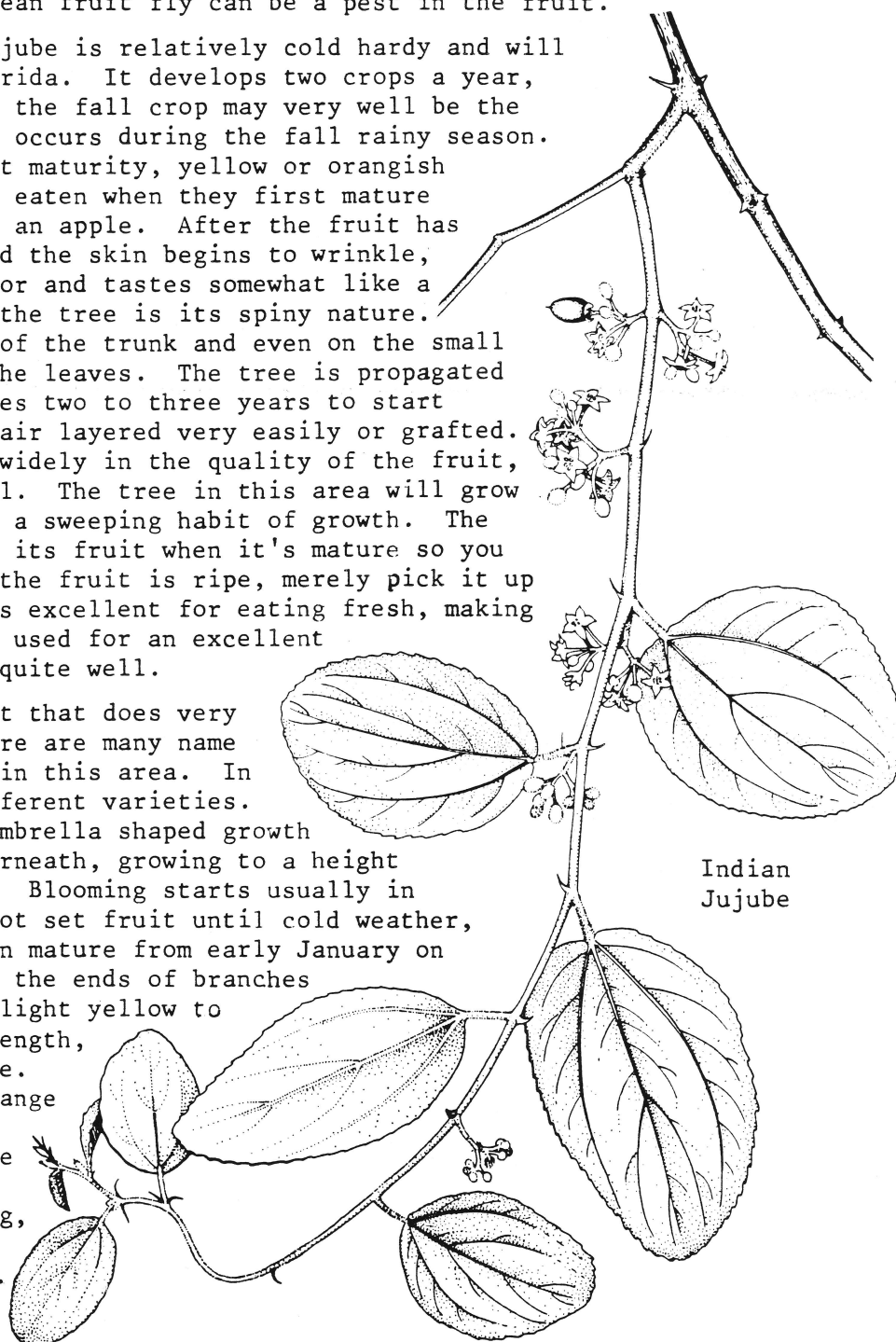
adequate water and fertilizer. Carambolas have little problem with pests and diseases and they don't seem to be bothered particularly by birds and rodents.

Feijoa, or pineapple guava. The feijoa is seldom bothered by the cold in this area and since it requires a certain amount of chilling to produce a good crop, it does better in central Florida than it does in South Florida. The tree will grow 15 to 20 feet tall but it may be kept trimmed and is used a lot for hedging because of its spreading habit. Beautiful little flowers appear in the spring, usually in April and May, quite showy with bright red stamens and little purple petals. The flowers are an inch or so across and the tree in bloom is very attractive. The fruit, $1\frac{1}{2}$ " to 2" long, oval or round, ripens in the fall but stay green even at maturity so it is difficult to tell when they are ripe. However, when ripe the fruit will drop to the ground and may be picked up and harvested this way. The fruit is very sweet for fresh eating and can be used for jellies and jams. The seeds are very tiny and may be eaten with the sweet pulp, usually without notice. The feijoa is very difficult to root from cuttings or to graft, so seed propagation is the normal method of propagating the feijoa. The seedlings only take from two to three years to start fruit under ideal conditions. The feijoa has very few problems as far as pests or diseases are concerned, but the Caribbean fruit fly can be a pest in the fruit.

Indian Jujube. The Indian Jujube is relatively cold hardy and will grow very well in central Florida. It develops two crops a year, a spring and a fall crop, and the fall crop may very well be the heavier of the two because it occurs during the fall rainy season.

The fruit is golf ball size at maturity, yellow or orangish yellow in color. They may be eaten when they first mature with a flavor very similar to an apple. After the fruit has been picked for a few days and the skin begins to wrinkle, it develops a much darker color and tastes somewhat like a date. The main objection to the tree is its spiny nature. There are spines on the base of the trunk and even on the small branches and at the base of the leaves. The tree is propagated very easily from seed and takes two to three years to start producing fruit or it may be air layered very easily or grafted. Seedlings, as expected, vary widely in the quality of the fruit, some being very poor and small. The tree in this area will grow to 30 to 35 feet tall and has a sweeping habit of growth. The tree, like the feijoa, drops its fruit when it's mature so you don't need to determine when the fruit is ripe, merely pick it up from the ground. The fruit is excellent for eating fresh, making jelly and desserts and may be used for an excellent wine. It may also be frozen quite well.

Loquat. The loquat is a fruit that does very well in central Florida. There are many name varieties, over 25 available in this area. In Japan they list about 600 different varieties. The tree forms a very dense umbrella shaped growth and provides dense shade underneath, growing to a height of about 30 feet at maturity. Blooming starts usually in September but the tree will not set fruit until cold weather, about december. Fruit may then mature from early January on up until May. Fruit forms at the ends of branches in bunches, very attractive, light yellow to orange in color, 1 to 2" in length, usually oval to round in shape. Fruit grown from seeds will range from very acid to very sweet and tasty. Name varieties are usually the sweeter fruit. They are used for fresh eating, jellies, jams, pies, fruit leather, or they may be dried.



Problems of the loquat include damage of the fruit during the winter due to low temperatures and damage by the Caribbean fruit fly in warm weather. Propagation is usually by seed but for good quality and early fruiting, grafted trees are much more desirable. The tree grafts and air layers exceptionally easy so it is wise to find a good variety and graft it or air layer it yourself.

Macadamia Nut. The Macadamia Nut should grow well in central Florida with very little damage in most winters since the tree will take 22° without significant damage. It is a very upright growing tree with a thick large holly like leaf 8 to 10" long. It flowers from February to the end of April, very showy, blossoms almost white with a pink flush. However, the nut will not mature until the following winter, December til about March of the following winter. The nuts when mature will fall to the ground like pecans and other nut trees, so we don't have to worry about picking them from the tree. The nut is round, 3/4" to as big as 1 1/4" with an extremely hard shell. One of its problems is random bearing, producing big crops some years and almost none in other years. However, trees in Florida do not produce heavy crops at best. Another problem is that any squirrels within 5 miles are going to home in on the tree when the nuts begin to mature. The trees may be propagated from seed but they take 6 to 7 years to bear. However, they graft and air layer relatively easy.

Mulberry. Most of our members are familiar with the mulberry. It is grown throughout central Florida and further north. The mulberry is deciduous but is one of the first trees to flush out in the spring with the fruit ripening about the end of March and the middle of April. The black mulberry is the most common but there is also a red mulberry and a white mulberry. The name does not designate the color of the fruit. It is the tree that is different with a different shape of leaf. All three varieties of mulberries are black when mature and range from about 1" to 1 1/2" in length. They are excellent for eating out of hand, for making pies, cobblers and things of this nature. The tree is extremely productive with almost every leaf node producing a berry. The mulberry is very rapid growing, up to 30 or 35 feet with an even greater spread. The tree may be propagated from hard wood or softwood cuttings or from seeds. The main problem with mulberries is the birds, who love the fruit and will swarm over it when the tree is in full bearing.

Pineapple. This is an easy plant to grow and if we are concerned about cold weather we can grow it in a 3 gallon pot. The plant is quite cold sensitive. There are a number of name varieties: smooth cayenne, which is popular because of its smooth leaves without thorns, red Spanish, abacca and a number of others. For home use, the pineapple should always be allowed to ripen completely on the plant before picking. The size will grow to 3 or 4 pounds and each plant will only produce one fruit, which is common for the bromiliad family, of which it is a member. After the fruit is produced, the plant dies but at the bottom of the plant and at the bottom of the pineapple there will develop starter sprouts which may be taken off and planted to produce new plants and consequently new fruit. The fruit can be produced in as little as 18 months from the time the sprouts are planted if they are pushed, watered and fertilized well. After 18 months of growing, if the plant is mature but hasn't fruited, it can be forced by covering the plant with a plastic bag in which an apple or two has been inserted. Apples produce ethylene, which is a natural ripening agent. It promotes the flowering and production of pineapples.

* * *

A recent article in the Tampa Tribune told of Edwin Menninger of Stuart, Florida, author of 12 books on flowering trees, who is now 90 years old, and still maintains his interest in plants. It would seem that a green thumb helps keep you young! Fellow member Albert Greenberg will also soon be 90, and is a shining example. Every day he's out in his garden checking on the many varieties of fruit trees and tropical flowers and foliage. If you want to see some beautiful plants, drop by; he enjoys visitors. Also check out beautiful Eureka Springs Park, right next door, which Albert Greenberg donated to the county as a perpetual natural area.

* * *

Plant Raffle: June

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Pillar Cactus (4)	Stark	Walter Vines
Pillar Cactus	Stark	Bill Ryland
Cucumbers	Stark	Bob Heath
Kuta Squash	Stark	Liz Jackson
Sunburst Squash	Stark	Liz Jackson
Armenian Cucumber	Riegler	B. Beasor
Peaches	Riegler	Liz Jackson
Golden Delicious Squash	Riegler	Rome Vaccaro
Guyana Chestnut	Hendry	A. Mendez
Tamarind	Hendry	Geo. Riegler
Tamarind	Hendry	Bob Duke
Vase of Roses	Alice Beasor	Stark
Pigeon Pea	Bob Heath	Glen Myrie
Atemoya	Bob Heath	Mary Jo Cross
Pomegranate	Bob Heath	A. Mendez
Papaya	Bob Heath	Liz Jackson
Giant Fuyu Persimmon	Bob Heath	Pat Duke
Canadria Fig	Bob Duke	George Riegler
Celeste Fig	Bob Duke	Pearl Nelson
Malanga	A. Mendez	Pearl Nelson
Mysore Raspberry	A. Mendez	Pat Duke
Hot Peppers	A. Mendez	Sandy & Harry Klaus
Grape Cowart	Harry Klaus	Rome Vaccaro
Grape Cowart	Harry Klaus	?
Black Walnut	RFCI	Tom Goldsworthy
Cavendish Banana (2)	Harry Klaus	Walter Vines
Cavendish Banana	Harry Klaus	Liz Jackson
Triumph Grape (2)	Will Unruh	Glen Myrie
Triumph Grape	Will Unruh	W. Yedkois
Triumph Grape	Will Unruh	Lloyd Shipley
Pomegranate	Herb Hill	?
Okinawa Peach (2)	Paul Rubenstein	Mary Jo Cross
Okinawa Peach	Paul Rubenstein	Bob Heath
Cactus	Edith Freedman	Lloyd Shipley
Papaya	Glen Myrie	Mary Jo Cross

Hospitality Table:

Irene Rubenstein: Carob Brownies, dried Persimmons
 Alice Beasor: Dried Carambola with black cherry dip
 Arnold & Lillian Stark: Zucchini Cake, Pineapple Cake
 Riegler: Armenian Cucumber

Recipe of the month: Carob Brownies (Irene Rubenstein)

1/2 cup butter or margarine
 2 cups sugar
 4 eggs, beaten well
 1 cup flour
 4 oz. carob powder
 1 tsp vanilla
 1 cup chopped pecans

Beat together in above order and pour into a greased 7"x 11" pan.
 Bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, Gene Joyner did it again! Another excellent and informative program about tropical fruits. I'm sure everyone attending went home with some practical tips. I went home and planted trees which have been sitting in pots for a couple of years. Thanks again Gene, very much, and we'll see you next year.

Some news about the tree sale: this year's sale will be held at the Fort Homer Hesterly Armory rather than at the State Fair Grounds. Conditions at the Armory have much improved since holding our third plant sale there in 1982. We have a better deal, more space, and less hassling, and are really looking forward to the experience. The date is Sunday, October 19, 1986 (please excuse the typo in last month's newsletter, wherein the date was erroneously given as October 9). Setup, of course will be Saturday, October 18. As usual, we need your help, both then and now, so PLEASE VOLUNTEER. We desperately need someone to organize publicity!

If you're interested in apples, be sure to come to the next meeting! Our old member Earl Martin will present a program on apple culture, and will be bringing some trees for sale. He also can answer your questions on pears, blueberries, and bunch grapes. That's all for now, see you then!

* * *

NOTES. . .

The University of Florida Agricultural Research and Education Center in Leesburg is planning its annual bunch grape field day July 8 and muscadine field day August 22. Both will begin at 9:30 A.M. The Center is south of Leesburg off U.S. Highway 27. The bunch grape field day will include information about and sampling of the Orlando Seedless, the first seedless bunch grape developed in Florida.

* * *

Yard-Long Beans, Vigna sesquipedalis, are a far eastern, climbing variety of cowpea producing beans up to 3 feet long. Like other varieties of cowpeas, they withstand our summer heat better than other types of beans. They can be planted from seed now. They can be used shelled, fresh or dried, or the younger pods may be eaten like green beans, or stir fried. Like other legumes, their nutritional value is a high protein content. The young leaves are also sometimes cooked and eaten.

* * *

Several of our members are planning to attend the Fourth Annual International Rare Fruit Seminar in Plantation, Florida, July 18-20. Not only are we looking forward to the Seminar activities, and meeting fellow enthusiasts, but we also hope to gain much information about organization and preparation of the Seminar; our Chapter is slated to organize the next one. If you are interested in participating in this project, contact Bill Ryland.

* * *

It was great seeing members Pat and Bob Duke after so many months. Bob has had both a knee and hip replacement, and now faces surgery on the second knee. GOOD LUCK to you, Bob; our hearts are with you both.

* * *

ANNUAL PLANT SALE NOTES

Volunteer Telephone Committee for Pre-Sale Publicity:

We need people who will volunteer to answer simple questions from the general public for about two weeks BEFORE our annual plant sale. We will provide you with a typed list of answers for the common questions. The following people have volunteered so far to let us publish their telephone numbers:

1. Leland Terrell (Tampa) 876-3548
2. Harry J. Klaus (St. Pete) 526-5112
3. Lloyd & Lottice Shipley (Temple Terrace) 626-1030
4. Bruce & Alice Beasor (St. Pete) 896-2432

We need more people to volunteer, so that no one person will have to do so much. Here is a task that many club members could help out with; just answer the phone a few times. We need to recognize that these phone calls are an opportunity to talk with people who may be interested in joining our club. Personal contact, more than anything else, is the most effective way of finding new people who share our interests and might make good contributing club members. Contact Tom Goldsworthy to volunteer for this pre-sale project.

SHOPPING CARTS. If you know where we can buy one or two shopping carts for our collection, please let us know. We need about 35 to 50 more.

* * *

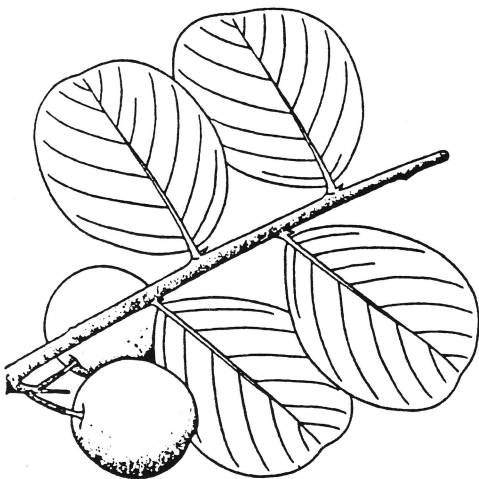
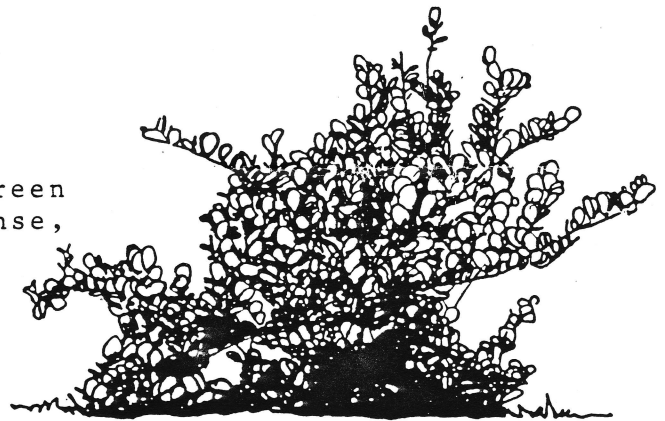
FLORIDA NATIVE FRUITING TREES No. 9

COCO-PLUM

Member Rose Family (Rosaceae)

The coco-plum is a subtropical evergreen tree 25 to 30 feet in height, with a dense, broad crown of upright branches, trunks 10 to 12 inches in diameter with reddish-brown flaky bark.

Leaves alternate, dark green with polished, leathery texture, one and one-half (1-1/2) to four (4) inches long, sometimes nearly round, but usually slightly heart-shaped at the tip, and rounding wedge-shaped base giving an over-all valentine-like appearance, margins smooth.



Tiny, flat, white flowers borne in clusters on short creamy-colored stem. Small, round fruit about the size of a half dollar, with purplish skin and thin, white juicy pulp, slightly aromatic, ripens in summer. Solitary round seed nearly as large as fruit.

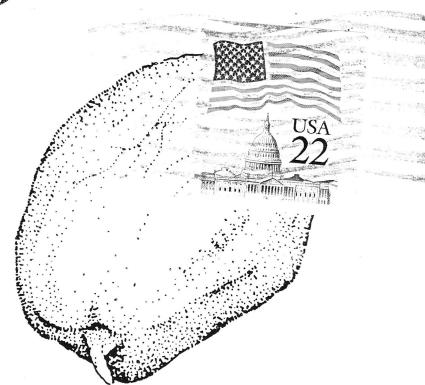
They are usually found growing in a wild state near the coast. Makes an attractive yard plant.

* * *

Update on Last Month's News Flash. . .

We deeply regret that we must announce that we cannot bring to you the next episode in the saga of the Dung Hill community, due to the death of our on the scene reporter, Meyer Lemone, who, while recently visiting Anna Maria Island, contracted a fatal case of citrus canker. (It must have been a penicillin resistant strain). At this time, we would like to hire a new reporter. Applicants must have a good scents of humus, a seedy background, a cherry disposition, and a fertile mind. No blooming idiots need apply. This job offers a great growth potential. Send your resumes to the RFCI Newsletter mailing address.

Tampa Bay Chapter Newsletter
Rare Fruit Council International
P O Box 260363
Tampa FL 33685



P. JUDSON NEWCOMBE
314 DEER PARK AVE.
TEMPLE TERRACE, FL 33617

LOQUAT