RFCI NEWSLETTER

MAY 1989

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: AL HENDRY CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 260363, TAMPA FL 33685
(Including Renewals)

MEETINGS ARE HELD THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 2:00 p.m.

NEXT MEETING . . . . . MAY 14, 1989

MEETING PLACE . . . . . HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS CENTER. (COUNTY AG. AGENTS' BUILDING, SEFFNER) Take I-4 to Exit 8 South, State Road 579. Go past traffic light at U.S. 92 intersection. Building is less than 1/2 mile on left (East) side of U.S. 92. Use parking lot. Meeting room is in rear of building. Main door will probably be locked. Walk around.

PROGRAM. . . . . "GROWING BUNCH GRAPES FOR FUN AND PROFIT" BY LARRY FISHER. LARRY FISHER is a grape grower in Apopka, Fla., growing several varieties of bunch grapes. He supplies grape vines for our tree sales and propagates vines for retail and wholesale. He will give us pointers on the care and feeding of bunch grapes. In June we are expecting the return of Gene Joiner with slides and another interesting presentation.

NEW MEMBERS: Max & Virginia Means, 4315 Autumn Leaves Dr., Tampa FL 33624, 961-2109.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Events: May 13, 9:30 a.m., Palm Beach Chapter RFCI will hold a plant sale at the Mounts Botanical Garden, 531 North Military Trail, West Palm Beach.

July 15-16, Tropical Agricultural Fiesta at the Fruit and Spice Park, 24801 S.W. 187 Ave., Homestead, Fla. (305) 247-5727.

July 23-30, 7th Annual International Rare Fruit Conference. Call Chris Howell (305) 962-0715.

July 30, Rare Fruit Council International plant sale at Miami.

10th ANNUAL TREE SALE:

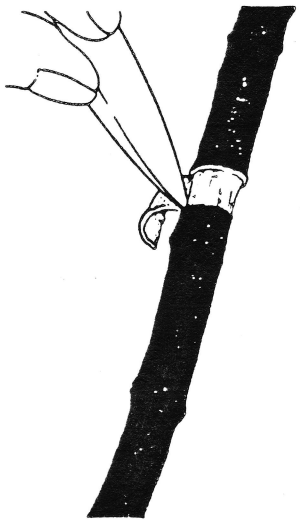
We will hold our 10th Annual Tree Sale on September 24 this year at the Fort Homer Hesterly Armory. Much work from many workers will be required for Saturday, the 23rd set up date and Sunday, the 24th sale date. We need immediately a publicity chair person to start on publicity for the sale. Volunteers?

* * *

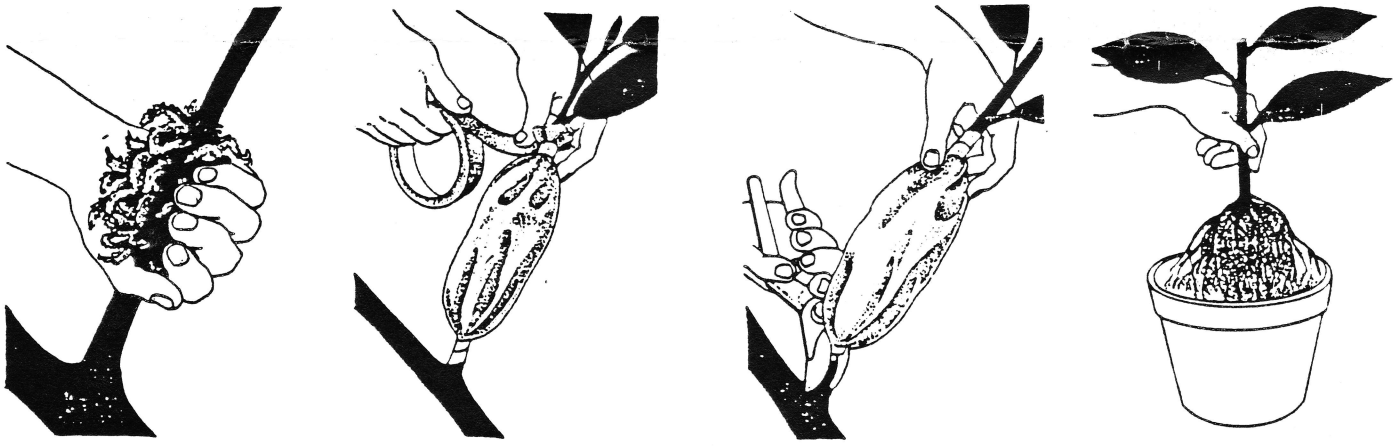
AIR LAYERING

Air layering is a method by which branches, while still attached to a plant, are induced to form roots. It is one of the oldest artificial techniques of propagation. It is reputed to have been used in China over 4000 years ago. Because of its use in French gardening in the seventeenth century, air layering is also referred to as marcottage.

The method is very simple and the materials needed are few, a sharp knife, moist sphagnum moss, polyethylene plastic, aluminum foil and tape.



A suitable branch on a preferred tree is selected, one quarter inch in diameter or larger. The branch is girdled just below a dormant bud, removing the bark and cambium down to the hard wood. This will entirely interrupt the sap flow and if no further action is taken, the branch will die. The wound may now be treated with a rooting hormore such as rootone. The wound is next covered with sphagnum moss which is the preferred rooting medium because it holds water, is well aerated and is readily manipulated. Soak the moss for several hours so it is completely saturated. Squeeze the moss into a ball to remove excess moisture and shape the ball around the wound. Next wrap the moss ball with a square of polyethylene and secure the ends of the plastic with tape. The plastic may now be covered with aluminum foil to keep out the light. It is important to ensure that rain water cannot run down into the moss and waterlog it. So, wrap the tape around the ends of the plastic and foil, overlapping on to the stem.



The cover applied this way will retain moisture, maintain a warm environment and allow gases to permeate the moss.

Development of roots will take from four weeks to several months. When roots are well established, the branch may be severed immediately below the cover, which is removed to expose the roots. Most of the moss is removed and the branch may be set in a suitable sized pot. Firm the soil and water well. Also, prune the entire branch by at least 1/3 to prevent expiration of moisture. Keep moist and shaded until the branch shows vigorous growth.

* * * *

GRAFTING

Grafting is a method of joining a part of one plant with another in a way that will cause them to unite and grow as a single unit. Since any mechanical means which achieves proper contact between parts of two different plants may lead to a successful graft, it follows that practically unlimited methods of grafting are available. However, we are concerned here with the simpler and more common means of grafting as shown in Figures 1 through 5.

Grafting of deciduous trees such as apples, peaches, pecans, jujubes and persimmons is normally done during the dormant season, preferably immediately before the tree is due to bud out. Non-deciduous trees such as oranges, loquats, carambolas, may be grafted at any time during the year when new growth is imminent. Avocados are normally grafted late in the winter just before spring growth begins. There are many reasons for grafting but the most common is probably to propagate a desirable plant by joining small portions on to an established seedling tree. With certain plants, propagation by rooting of cuttings may be more satisfactory but with most fruit trees, grafting has many advantages. Since seedlings from desirable fruiting trees frequently results in undesirable fruit, some methods of propagation which preserves the quality of the fruit is necessary. Only plants with close botanical relationship can be grafted successfully; unrelated plants have physiological differences which prevent a union. Viruses also may cause a grafting failure. A successful graft can only be obtained when the scion is oriented as it normally grows. The scion fitted upside down on a root stock will not grow properly.

The established plant or seedling onto which a graft is made is called the root stock. The portion of the desirable fruiting tree being grafted onto the root stock is called the scion. In making the graft, it is important that the scion be protected from drying both before and after joining. This is usually done by covering the exposed surfaces of the scion with a plastic bag or grafting tape, entirely covering the scion. After grafting it is important that the soil moisture be kept relatively high. If the root system of the root stock is allowed to dry out grafting will be a failure. It is important that the graft union be a clean snug fit with intimate contact of the cambium layers in both the scion and root stock. Wrapping the union with grafting tape provides this intimate contact as well as providing support for the scion on the root stock.

Splice Graft. This method is the simplest way to join scion to root stock. Stock and scion should be of equal thickness, from 1/8" to 1/2" in diameter. Make a long diagonal cut of equal length on the scion and root stock. Fit cut surfaces together and use grafting tape to hold the parts together as shown in Fig. I. As the scion and root stock are the same size, the cambium layers should match exactly. Allow at least two active buds in the scion wood and cover the entire scion with a plastic bag until the scion buds out.

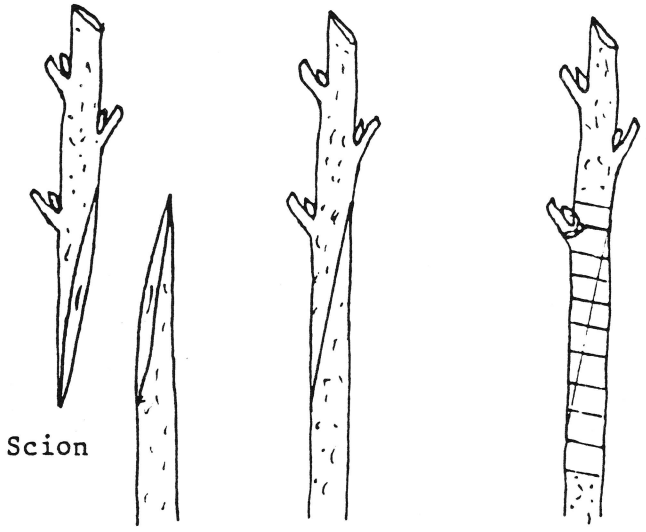


Fig. I Splice Graft

Whip & Tongue Graft. This is one of the most commonly used and useful grafts for woody plants. It is used for top working and producing new plants primarily on deciduous trees. It works best with stock and scion or equal diameter and less than 1/2" in thickness. Make a long diagonal cut in both the scion and stock as in the splice graft. Make the second or tongue cut on stock and scion by splitting at the center of the first cut down through the center core of the stem until the split is opposite the base of the first cut. After the tongues are cut, pry open the tongues and insert into each other until they are interlocked as shown in Fig. II. Secure the parts by wrapping tightly with grafting tape. If the scion is smaller than the stock, fit the tongues together so that the outside surface of the stock and one side of the scion are aligned. Cover the entire scion with a plastic bag until the buds sprout.

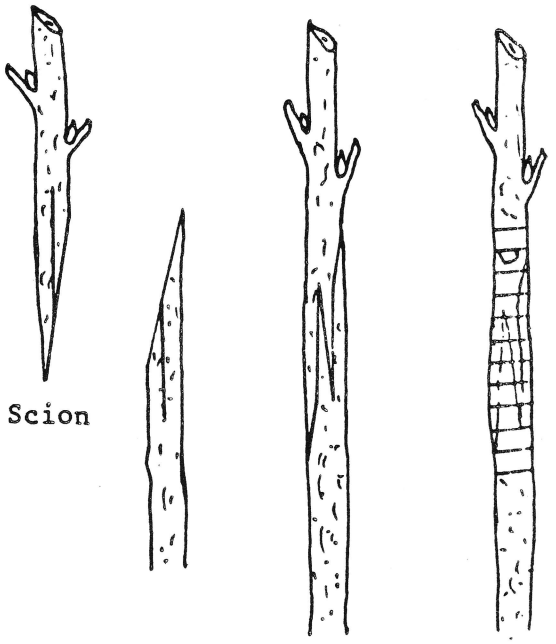


Fig. II Whip & Tongue Graft

Cleft Graft. Cleft grafting is a very simple and commonly used grafting method. The scion may be anywhere from 1/8" to 1/2" in diameter and should have two to three active buds. The stock may be from 1/8" to 4" in diameter. Cut off the root stock at a right angle in relation to its main axis. Use a knife for small stock and a clefting tool for large stock to split the stock down the center for 1 to 3 inches. If the stock is large, it may be necessary to drive a wedge down the center of the stock to open the split to receive the scion. If the scion is within half the diameter of the root stock, only one scion will be used. If the scion is less than half the diameter of the root stock, two scions will be used. The scion is tapered as shown in Fig. III. Insert the wedge of the scion into the stock so that the cambium layers are in contact on one side or both. The scion should completely fill the split in the root stock so that contact exists along the length of the entire wedge. Wrap the union with grafting tape and cover the entire scion with a plastic bag.

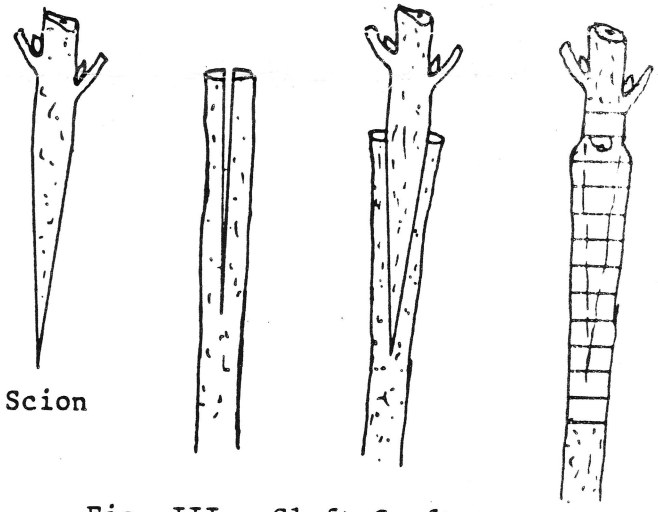


Fig. III Cleft Graft

Side Graft. The side graft may be used for producing new plants and is very successful on citrus, avocados, carambolas, loquats, etc. It provides for a large surface of cambium contact and for this reason a union is most likely to occur. Make a rather shallow cut about 1-1/2" to 2" long on the side of the stock, cutting slightly inward as the cut is made. At the base of this cut, make a short inward and downward cut to intersect with the first cut, thus allowing removal of a piece of wood and bark. It is preferable that the stock and scion be relatively the same size. The depth of the cut in the stock will be dependent upon the size of the scion wood. Prepare the scion

with a long cut the same length and width as that of the first cut on the stock. Make a short cut on the opposite side of the base of the scion to match that in the root stock. Insert the scion in the root stock as shown in Fig. IV. Secure the scion by wrapping with tape and covering the scion wood with a plastic bag. It is not necessary to top the root stock until the scion buds begin to grow.

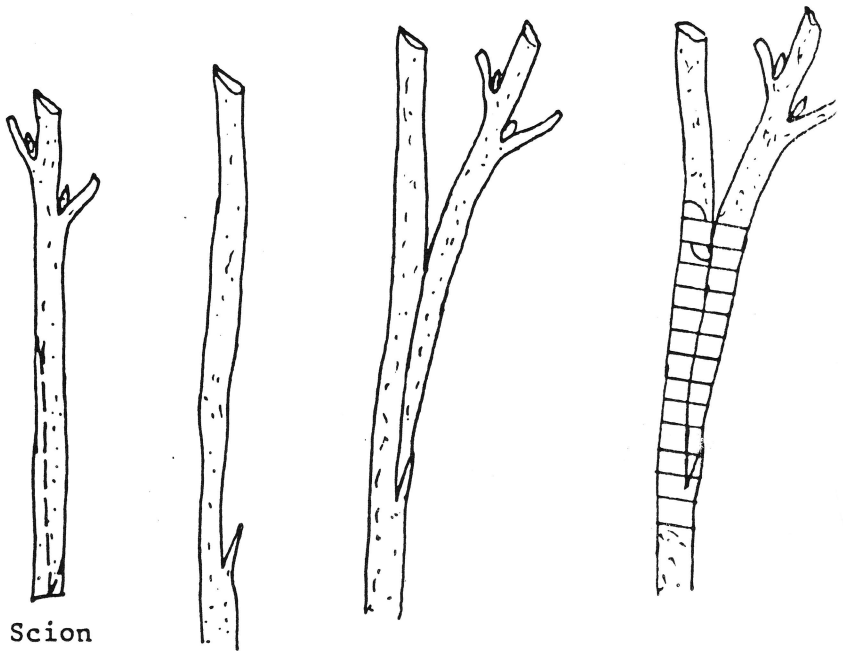


Fig. IV Side Graft

Approach Graft. The approach graft is used to graft together two plants while both remain on their own roots. This is particularly advantageous in grafting plants that are exceptionally hard to graft. It affords the least shock to the scion wood and is almost 100% effective. The scion in this case is usually a limb of a tree growing in the ground. The root stock is normally in a pot which can be tied up to the growing tree so that the scion limb is adjacent to the seedling tree in the pot. A single long smooth cut is made on adjacent surfaces of the scion and root stock. The cuts are brought together and wrapped tightly with grafting tape. No additional treatment is necessary with the exception of maintaining the moisture in the potted plant. After the graft union is assured, the top of the potted plant is removed and the potted plant is cut loose from the tree below the graft union as shown in Fig. V.

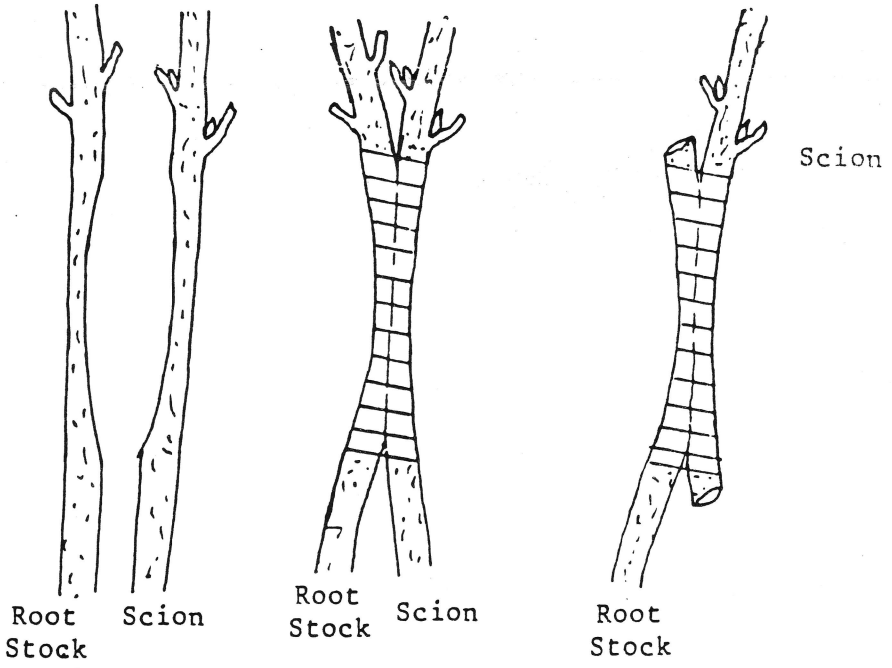


Fig. V Approach Graft

For additional information on grafting, see the following:

"The Why and How of Home Horticulture" by D.R. Bienz; W.H. Freeman and Co., San Francisco.

"The Grafter's Handbook" by R. J. Garner; Oxford University Press, New York.

* * * *

Recipe of the Month:

Kumquat Bread by Bea Seekins

Wash, halve and seed enough kumquats to produce 1c puree in a blender or processor. Mix pureed fruit with 1/2c honey or 1c sugar, 1c walnuts, 2 eggs, 1/2c milk, 3Tbs safflower oil, and 1tsp salt. Then add 1/2c Zante currants, 2c whole wheat flour, and 1Tbs baking powder. Barely blend about 30sec. Butter a 5"x9" loaf pan, and cover with rolled oats. Spoon in batter, and bake in 350° oven for 75min. Cool in pan 10min. (NOTE: Calamondins may substitute for kumquats.)

April Plant Drawing:

PLANT	DONOR	WINNER
Lychee	Armando Mendez	Beverly Hall
Tamarind	Armando Mendez	?????
Spanish Lime	Armando Mendez	Frank Honeycutt
Pineapple	Armando Mendez	Jim Murrie
Annato	George Riegler	?????
Italian Cypress	Frank Pupello	?????
Morning Glory Bush	Frank Pupello	Jo Ann Cimino
Cactus	Steve & Molly Charlton	?????
Peach Tree	Bruce & Sherry Pearson	Robert Hall
Peach Tree	Bruce & Sherry Pearson	Frank Pupello
Peach Tree	Bruce & Sherry Pearson	Steve & Molly Charlton
Peach Tree	Bruce & Sherry Pearson	Bob Hall
Loquat	Bruce & Sherry Pearson	?????
Pomegranate	Larry Fox	Maya Byvoet
Loquat	Celso Gomez-Sanchez	Kay Netscher
Loquat	Celso Gomez-Sanchez	Jim Murrie
Loquat	Celso Gomez-Sanchez	Pearl Luxenberg
Loquat	Celso Gomez-Sanchez	?????
Loquat	Celso Gomez-Sanchez	?????

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE SIGN YOUR NAME (LEGIBLY) TO THE PLANT DRAWING LIST IF YOU DONATE OR WIN A PLANT!!!!!

April Hospitality Table:

Bea Seekins.....Kumquat Bread, Almond Cheese Spread, & 2gal Orange Juice
Johan Cimino.....Blueberry Muffins
Celso Gomez-Sanchez.....Calamondin Jam & Vanilla Ice Cream
Rome Vaccaro.....Carambola Jam and Cheese Biscuits

THOSE LOW-CHILL PEACHES

Wayne B. Sherman Fruit Crops Dept. U of FL Gainesville, FL 32611

Don't try them unless you plan to grow them in areas where the traditional cultivars like Redhaven, Elberta, and Loring fail for lack of winter chilling. They bloom early when spring frosts are prevalent. These cultivars were developed by the University of Florida to grow in subtropical climates. The breeding program began in the early 1950's and cultivars releases in the last 15 years rival similar high-chill cultivars in size, color, firmness, and flavor. These cultivars are grown from central Florida to south Georgia, along the Gulf coastal states to south Texas and westward through south Arizona and south California. These low-chill cultivars are also grown in many subtropical countries. Additional information on them is available from the Extension Service of the Fruit Crops Department. Listed below are cultivars I consider to be best for trial. Because these cultivars ripen in less than 100 days from bloom, fruit thinning is essential to obtain fruit 2 inches and up in diameter.

Evaluation of low-chill peaches at Gainsville, Florida.

Cultivar	Flesh color	Bloom	Harvest	Bacterial spot
Flordastar	yellow	Feb. 10	May 2	resistant
Flordaprince	yellow	Feb. 3	May 5	susceptible
Flordaglo	white	Feb. 8	May 10	mod. resistant
Flordaking	yellow	Feb. 25	May 10	resistant
Tropic Beauty	yellow	Feb. 8	May 12	susceptible
Tropic Snow	white	Feb. 10	May 15	resistant
Flordacrest	yellow	Feb. 23	May 15	resistant
Flordagem	yellow	Feb. 13	May 18	resistant
Flordagold	yellow	Feb. 16	May 22	susceptible
Tropic Sweet	yellow	Feb. 10	May 28	mod. resistant

Flordastar - replaces Flordaprince in areas where bacterial spot is a problem.

Flordaprince - very attractive fruit, for central Florida, good flavor for early ripening.

Flordaglo - attractive firm fruit, low acid and non-browning, white flesh, for central Florida.

Flordaking - large fruit for season, for north Florida, many split-pits with light crop, severe fruit tip in central Florida.

Tropic Beauty - very attractive firm fruit, flavorful, susceptible to bacterial spot, for central Florida.

Tropic Snow - first freestone, moderately high acid, white flesh, high fruit set.

Flordacrest - very attractive firm fruit, for north Florida.

Flordagem - short fuzz on attractive sweet fruit, for north central Florida.

Flordagold - large firm fruit, high flavor, for north central and north Florida.

Tropic Sweet - freestone, very sweet fruit, for central Florida.

THE DATE OF THE LYCHEES

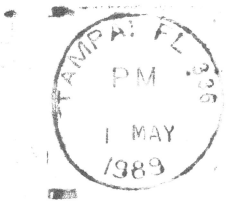
One upon a thyme, longan ago, in the valley of the Loquats, there grew a pear of Lychee sisters, Mauritius and Bengal. Mauritius was married but Bengal was swingle. This made Bengal blue, berry, berry blue. Her buddy Brewster seed the problem and deciduoused to dew sunthing about the citrusation. So Brewster oranged a vine date for Bengal to meet his camponion, Sweetcliff, on the following Sodurday, at the local compost bar, Auntie Septics'. Bengal blossomed with anticipation as she brambled in. Apple only one look, Sweetcliff knew she was the tree of his dreams, the epitome of fruitiness. As he threw his fronds about her, he sprouted passiflorately: "My dovyalis, bee mamey to our offsprigs and never leaf me alawn." But Bengal raisined a cry: "Unfrond me, you Monstera, or my papaya will peach your persimmon!" "Carambola!" he cried, "you have blighted me to the pith!" "Lime sorry," she rebarked, "but I'm no tree tomato for easy plucking." She turnipped her rose in thorn and runnered out. Sweetcliff tendrilled over to a pretty pomegranate for solanum, and said, "Frangipani my pear, I don't guava damson!"

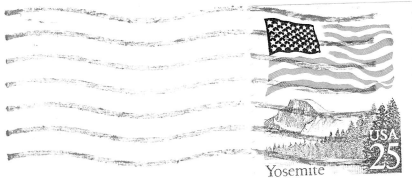
* * * *

Reserve the weekend of September 23 and 24 for our next ANNUAL TREE SALE at the Armory. We'll need everyone to lend a hand to make this the biggest and best sale ever! We need a volunteer to be in charge of Publicity for the sale. Please let us know if you can handle this job.

IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR DUES, THIS IS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER!

Tampa Bay Chapter
RFCI
P O Box 260363
Tampa FL 33685





FIRST CLASS MAIL

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