



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 1991

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

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(INCLUDING RENEWALS)

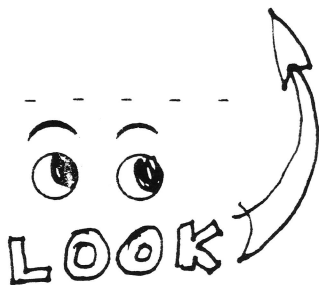
MEETINGS ARE HELD THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 2:00 P.M.

NEXT MEETING - - - - - SEPTEMBER 8, 1991

MEETING PLACE - - - - - THE HOME OF JANET CONARD, 919 W. HENRY AVE.,
TAMPA, PHONE 239-9246. You will find Janet's
house on the north side of Henry Ave., between
Kenneth Ave. and the river, nine blocks west
of Florida Ave., and four blocks north of
Hillsborough Ave. Take I-75/275 to the
Hillsborough exit and go west to Florida,
Highland or Ola, and then north to Henry Ave.,
then west on Henry to Janet's.

NOTE: MEETING WILL BEGIN
AT 1:00 THIS MONTH.

PROGRAM - - - - - POT-LUCK (COVERED DISH) LUNCHEON AT 1:00 p.m.
Please bring cold dishes such as salads,
luncheon meat, breads, desserts, etc. that
do not have to be warmed up, unless you have
a favorite you would like to bring that is
hot. We do have a microwave. If you have
any folding chairs, please bring them too.
There will be a plant raffle and a very
important planning session for next month's
annual plant sale. PLEASE BE THERE!!



New Members:

Kevin Bambery P.O. Box 272393 Tampa, FL 33688 (813)962-1936

Gregg Steiner 734 36th Street SE Largo, FL 34641_(813)535-0442

Gregory J. Cardin & Charity Reece 9813 Elm Way Tampa, FL 33615
(813)884-3992

The 12th Annual Fruit Tree Sale is Coming...ARE YOU READY?

Publicity for this sale, our "main event" of the year is crucial to its success. Please post the enclosed fliers in public places-and tell everyone you can about this really great upcoming event!!!! Our club is its members, and we depend on each and every one of us to participate in whatever ways we can for this project to meet it's goals.

PLANT RAFFLE :August.

<u>PLANT NAME</u>	<u>DONOR</u>	<u>WINNER</u>
Loquat	F. Honeycutt	M. Pueckler
Barbados Cherry	F. Honeycutt	Jules Cohan
Celeste Fig	F. Honeycutt	Jim Murrie
Celeste Fig	F. Honeycutt	Charity Reece
Tamarind Seedling	F. Honeycutt	Bruce Pearson
Conadria Fig	F. Honeycutt	Paul Zmoda
Chives	Heath	?
Spinach subst.	Heath	Jules Cohan
Pitomba	Heath	Al Roberts
Cherry of the Rio Grande	Heath	Mark Bennett
Rangoon Creeper	Heath	F. Pupello
Glycosmos	Heath	Al Hendry
Lychee	Charles Novak	Bob Wente
Tamarind	E. Freedman	?
Guava	Frank Tintera	?
Barbados Cherry	Zmoda	Heath
Sugar Apple	RFCI	Jim Murrie
Cherimoya	RFCI	Janet Conard
Custard Apple	RFCI	Gregg Cardin
Sweet Potato Vine	Nancy McCormack	Maggie Maquet
Pineapple	Nancy McCormack	Maggie Maquet
Pineapple	Nancy McCormack	Jules Cohan

Hospitality Table: August

Al Hendry: Passion, Mayhaw, guava jellies

Charles Novak: Bananas

Joan Murrie: diced Mangos

Maggie Maquet: Lemon Cake

Ted Langley: Cattleya Guavas

Bill Ryland: Keitt Mangos, Downy Myrtle, Carambola

Rome Vaccaro: Lemon Butter Wafers

Frank Burhenn: Pineapple Muffins, Oatmeal Raisin Muffins

Janet Conard & Al Roberts: Papaya juice, Banana cookies

Nancy McCormack: Orinoco Bananas

THE INCREDIBLE EDIBLE PALMS by Dr. Fred Essig

Dr. Essig began his presentation with a description of the typical palm fruit. He used the coconut as the example. The outside of the coconut is the husk or fruit, which is not edible in the coconut palm but is useful for the fiber. The inner portion, the nut, which is the part we eat, is actually the seed. This is typical of palm fruit which normally have the outer flesh and one seed. In some palms, both the fruit and the nut are edible or useful in some other manner. In some the fruit is edible and in others, the seed is the part that is eaten. There are two other ways that palms provide food; one is the palm bud, which is called heart of palm or swamp cabbage. The cabbage palm is our state tree. It received that name because people cut them down and remove the bud, the soft tender inner portion that is edible and is a very tasty food. But it is a shame to kill a palm tree to eat its only edible bud and hopefully this is a practice that is declining around the world.

Palms provide food in three ways, the fruit, the seed or nut and the heart of A fourth product is the starch which is available in the trunk of certain r

The true Sago palm from the Malaysian region is used for this purpose. The tree is cut down at a certain age and opened to obtain the pithy core of the trunk which is very soft and is dug out to obtain the starch. There are several other palms that are used in the same way.

There is somewhere between 2700 and 3000 different species of palms in the world. Most people do not realize the magnitude of the palm family. Everybody is aware of the coconut and date palms but most palm species occur in the tropical regions and are not familiar to the general public in the United States.

Dr. Essig remarked that some of us may have seen the statement that all palm fruit are edible or at least not poisonous, but this statement is not quite true. Of course, the statement may have confused fruit with seed, since what we call the fruit of a coconut is actually the inside of the seed. But in addition to this, there are some palms whose fruit are poisonous.

Dr. Essig showed us a slide of the Arenga palm from New Guinea, which is a rather large conspicuous palm. The fruit of the Arenga is unusual for palm trees in that it frequently has three seeds. This is one of the poisonous palms. The fruit is poisonous, the seed is poisonous and even the heart of the palm is poison. But it is one we're not likely to run into because it grows in New Guinea and it is very cold tender.

The next slide was a picture of the betel nut, a typical palm fruit which is chewed by the natives along with a little lime, and seems to be mildly addictive.

The fishtail palms and their relatives are another group of palms, the fruit of which you would not like to bite into because the fruit have a very irritating crystal in the flesh. It's almost like a stinging nettle and I'm sure no one would like to bite into that.

Among palm fruit, the cultivated date is undoubtedly the sweetest but the wild dates have sour, astringent, or dry fruit, and that's the case with some of the other date palms that we grow here. Different species produce sweet, sour, astringent or a watery fruit but some have an aromatic flavor. A palm fruit of Southeast Asia, the Euterpe Oleracea, is a fruit whose juice is made into drinks and ices and used to flavor all manner of sweetmeats and resembles a mixture of raspberry and blackberry.

If you live in a tropical area, primarily Southeast Asia and tropical America, there are a lot of tasty palm fruits to sample. There is the peach palm which is grown in tropical America. And of course the one we grow around here which is easy to grow, is cold hardy and has an edible fruit, is the jelly palm. It is native to Argentina, south of the tropical areas. The fruit in appearance and method of fruiting, resembles the cocoplumosa or queen palm. But the fruit is much juicier, sweeter and has more flesh in relation to the seed size. The fruit is fibrous, of course, which is typical of most palm fruit and can be used to make jelly.

Our native sabal palmetto or cabbage palmetto also produces an edible fruit. It produces an abundance of small blackberries which may be eaten raw or made into syrup. The pulp is scanty but sweet and prune-like in flavor. The sabal palmetto also develops an edible fruit but the quality is somewhat questionable.

Dr. Essig next showed us some slides of sections thru fruits under a microscope that showed the cells of the fruit and the tannin which occurs in some of the palm fruit. The tannin seems to be there to protect the fruit or to keep the fruit from being eaten before it is mature, because tannin is a very bitter substance. However, when the fruit is ripe, the birds eat the fruit and drop the seeds to propagate the species. It is unfortunate, of course, as far as we're concerned, that some fruit have tannin, because it makes many of the palm fruit inedible by humans.

There is a small palm in Costa Rica that produces a beautiful blue or purple fruit that's very sweet. It's a small spiny palm that grows in large thickets almost like bamboo and produces large clusters of small grape flavored fruit.

(CONTINUED NEXT MONTH)

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU

Janet Conard and Al Roberts for coordinating the hospitality table, and to all members who brought goodies.

Michelle Pueckler and Donna Livenspire (Aloha Palms Nursery) for donating the beautiful *Phoenix dactylifera* (true date) as the August auction plant. This magnificent specimen was won by Ted Langley.

To all members who put a little something in the basket to help pay for the lawn mowing. When a lot of people each contribute even a little, it really mounts up.

To member Connie Price for her generous contribution to our building fund. Connie sent a lovely note expressing her excitement at our having a place of own, and her interest in the newsletter and club. We hope you all share her enthusiasm for our Tampa Bay RFCI, and that you will also share in the effort needed to continue our club's successes. If you haven't already done so, please make a contribution to the building fund.

Bob Heath, Frank Honeycutt, Jud Newcombe, and Arnold Stark for brute labor and massive efforts in yard cleanup at our last work day. (Many more hands would have made for much lighter work).

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER, RFCI
313 PRUETT RD.
SEFFNER, FL 33584



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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