



NEWSLETTER

MAY 1994

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH
THERESA HEATH
ARNOLD STARK
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(INCLUDING RENEWALS)

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

NEXT MEETING MAY 8, 1994 (IT'S MOTHERS' DAY, SO BRING YOUR MOTHER!)

MEETING PLACE. RARE FRUIT COUNCIL CLUBHOUSE, 313 PRUETT ROAD, SEFFNER.
Take I-4 to Exit 8 North, S.R. 579, go one mile to
Pruett Road. (See McDonald School sign.) Turn right
(EAST). Go one mile. See Clubhouse on left immediately
past McDonald School.

PROGRAM. OUR PROGRAM THIS MONTH WILL BE A TWO-PART PROGRAM AND
will require membership participation. The first portion will be
a question and answer session with questions from the general mem-
bership fielded by our in-house plant experts. Bring plants that
require identification, bring problems which you have encountered,
capture insects you want identified and in general be prepared to
participate. The second part of our program will allow you to test your
knowledge of fruiting plant identification and also will help our
membership learn to recognize some common rare fruit trees. A variety
of seedling plants will be on display and it will be up to the members
to give them names and hopefully win one as a prize. The plants will
be numbered and each member participating will be able to write their
guess of the identification next to the plant number on paper which
will be handed out. Plants may be identified by scientific or common
names. Members having the top five high scores will win plants. Our
in-house experts will not participate. Judges will be our program
directors, Al Hendry and Paul Zmoda. You have a few days to study,
so get to it and good luck! And of course, as usual, we will have
our tasting table and plant raffle, so please contribute.

CHINESE JUJUBE (Zizyphus jujuba)

One of the five main fruits of China is the jujube, which has been cultivated there for at least 4,000 years. It was brought to America in the mid 19th century and is sparsely distributed throughout the states. Trees are presently growing and bearing as far north as Illinois and as far south as south Florida.

The jujube, also known as the Chinese date, belongs to the Buckthorn family, the Rhamnaceae. It is commonly a thorny tree which can be grown as a shrub or pruned into a single stemmed tree. In about 15 years it reaches 25 to 30 feet in height with open spreading branches. The branches of all varieties are supple, densely covered with bright green foliage reminiscent of citrus. The color and sheen of the leaves is one of the most striking things about the jujube.

Flowering usually begins in May in Florida with small light green flowers borne by the hundreds up and down the branches. Most jujubes are scentless, but 'Lang' and a few other Asian selections have a faint cinnamon fragrance. The flowers are worked by the bees and yield a good honey. The fruit, which resembles a large date, ripens in early October and are usually 1-1/2" to 2" long. Ripe fruit range in color from dark red through brown to very dark, almost black. The flesh is sweet with a crunchy texture similar to a hard apple. They make a delicious preserve or jam and can be dried to taste much like a date.

They jujube is very drought resistant and thrives in an alkaline soil, but will grow in almost any kind of soil if it has good drainage and full sun. It is fairly resistant to pests, insects and diseases, so requires little spraying. It is very hardy down to 0° or below and will stand hot summers that would wither many other fruit.

Some varieties are self-pollinating, others are self-sterile. A balanced fertilizer, 6-6-6 or 8-8-8, is recommended for the jujube in late winter or early summer. The soil should require dolomite limestone if it is acid to provide the high pH that jujubes prefer.

Plant the tree anywhere you want a medium sized ornamental tree. It is excellent for the lawn and lives for many years, and its lacy foliage doesn't shade out grass. Do not place it where the falling fruit may stain sidewalks or bricks. The Chinese variety is preferred over the Indian, grafted on a Chinese jujube root stock. The tree is deciduous with the strange habit of dropping its small branches as well as the leaves in the fall. It is ornamental through the summer but in the winter is a bare skeleton.

Raffle: April

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Tree Basil	Heath	Kimberly Hunt
Tree Basil	Heath	Ronald Webster
Limequat	Heath	S. Tate
Pineapple	Heath	Jeff Dodson
Grumichama	Honeycutt	F. Pupello
Giant Papaya (2)	Pupello	J. Brewer
Ginger	Yuku Tanaka	F. Pupello
Ginger (2)	Yuku Tanaka	Diana Mills
Ginger	Yuku Tanaka	Ronald Webster
Ginger	Yuku Tanaka	Alice Miller
Spanish Pink Lemon	Zmoda	S. Tate
Spearmint	John Bell	J. Brewer
Custard Apple	MaryAnn Campbell	V. Reddcliffe
Chayote plant	Samm	G. Diaz
Brown Turkey Fig	Samm	Diana Mills
Tomato Plant (Hurst)	Samm	Al Hendry
Tomato Plant (Pounder)	Samm	Kimberly Hunt
Tomato Plant (Better Boy)	Samm	?
Cactus	Reddcliffe	?
Celery	Reddcliffe	Kimberly Hunt
Aloe Plant	Redcliffe	Kimberly Hunt
Tabebuia seed	Reddcliffe	Monica Brandies
Tebebuia seed	Reddcliffe	?
Pommelo	Janet Conard	Monica Brandies
Pink Pommelo	Janet Conard	Pat Jean

Thank You Thank You Thank You

To Frank Pupello for arranging for the drawing of an irrigation plan for our plantings.

To Jeffrey & Sherry Dodson for handling our display at the Pinellas County Fair. It won a first premium award. The beautiful blue ribbon is on display in our library.

What's Happening

April- May, 1994

by Paul Zmoda

After Samm Philmore's informative talk on organic growing methods, I am inclined to share more information on natural pest controls. Organic growing techniques are those that closely follow the course of nature - plants' pests are usually held in check through the active presence of the predators which feed on them. Once a balance is made, rarely do you need to intervene.

To achieve this beneficial balance of nature you must put some energy into the gardens. Build birdhouses and put them up. You will invite insect and rodent eaters to live close by and gain by having fewer pests, as well as music and colors flying by all day long. Just because a large tree dies doesn't mean it must be felled automatically - these too can be as beautiful and useful as living ones. Many woodpecker species depend on such snags for housing and will scour your property in search of larvae, especially while raising young.

Consider installing bat houses also. Most bats in our area are voracious insectivores, intercepting night-flying meals until dawn. Red bats will sleep in large clumps of spanish moss during the day, so don't remove it.

Encourage the lizards to live around your land. They eat insects and need a bit of

sun to bask in and crevices in which to hide. If you see snakes in your gardens, good for you! I'll be willing to bet you don't have mice either. The majority of snakes are helping you and are as harmless to humans as songbirds are. You don't have to kill every snake you come across.

If you let some of your vegetables go to flower, you will be amazed at what they attract: a myriad of flies, bees and wasps. Lots of these are adults of beneficial insects which parasitize harmful insects. Once in a while you will spot a tomato hornworm or other caterpillar covered with what appears to be grains of rice. This is natural predation at work: a parasitic wasp deposited eggs on the caterpillar some time ago. The young fed within and destroyed the larva. The "rice-grains" are, in reality, the pupae of the wasp. Eventually they each will develop into an adult wasp. When they emerge, they are immediately in search of more caterpillars to destroy.

You might install small pools, simply 5 gallon buckets of rainwater flush with the ground among cover. These encourage treefrogs to breed. Treefrogs eat insects. Enough said. {editor's comment: be observant of such pools to prevent mosquito breeding}



Correction to last month's speaker report: The acronym OGLA should have been OCLA

O = Organic

C = Crop

I = Improvement

A = Association

Tasting Table: April

Diana Mills: Lemon Cake

Pat Jean: Maple Walnut Coffee Cake

Monica Brandies: Surinam Cherries

Frank Burhenn: Calamondin Pie

Zmoda: Doyvalis, Orinoco Plantain

MaryAnn Campbell: Strawberry Muffins & Butter

Kimberly Hunt: Thumb Print Cookies with Loquat Jam

Janet Conard: Papaya Upside-down cake

Al Roberts: Papaya Juice

Frances Wagenseller: Banana Nut Bread

B. Reddicliffe: Macaroni Tuna Salad

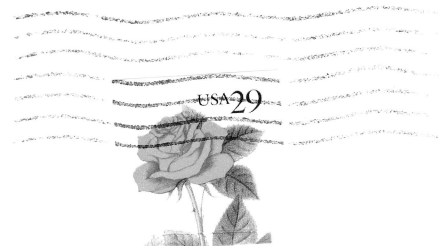


Do you enjoy the tasting table? Janet Conard has been managing it for quite some time, but she has requested a substitute for a few months. If you attend meetings regularly, this job is ripe for you. Please volunteer. For more information about the job, call Janet at 239-9246 (Tampa).



Plant for Sale: Member Jules Cohan has a magnificent 4' tall 42" wide Siamese Pommelo in a 14" pot. It is in full bloom, and should be setting fruit by the time you read this. The price is \$25.00, pick-up only. Call Jules at (904)688-1940

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