



# NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 1995

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH, THERESA HEATH, ARNOLD STARK, LILLIAN STARK

PRESIDENT: PAUL ZMODA

CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: 313 PRUETT RD, SEFFNER FL 33584  
(Including Renewals)

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH.

NEXT MEETING: AUGUST 13, 1995

MEETING PLACE: RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL 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 world traveler, Al Hendry, will report on the exciting meeting of the Inter American Society of Tropical Horticulture held in Homestead July 14, 15 and 16, with a description of the gardens and agricultural facilities that they visited, and a synopsis of the talks presented at the meeting. He will also touch on the tropical and semi-tropical trees that they encountered which may be suitable for this area. There was a large turn-out for the meeting and I understand from talking to several people that it was very exciting.

Our tasting table and raffle table have been well supplied recently and I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who have contributed. Also, I would like to add, "Keep up the good work." Our tasting table and raffle are two of the items at our meetings that are really enjoyable to our members and friends.

## SEEDLINGS...

At the next meeting we will have a variety of small seedling plants for distribution to members who are willing to take them home and grow them to bearing size for their own use. A vote of thanks should go to Charles Novak, who is supplying most of the plants. For those who propagate on a large scale as Charles does, a surplus of desirable seedlings is an inevitable result. Anyone who has surplus seedlings and wishes to contribute to this giveaway, may do so at the next meeting.

## RFCI HORTICULTURAL GARDENS

With the advent of the rainy season, we have begun planting trees once again. In the last couple of weeks, we have planted a horseradish tree, a tropical almond, two more chestnuts, a ruby red guava, a Java plum, a lychee and a haws.

In addition to the tree planting, we have recently built an arbor for kiwis, which will be donated by Charles Novak, who is presently producing kiwi fruit at his home in Plant City. Also, we will soon be planting a rare South Brazilian tree brought back by Al Hendry from the International Society of Tropical Horticultural Meeting in Homestead. This is an *Araucaria angustifolia*. It is a cone bearing nut producing tree related to the Norfolk Island pine and a variety of other conifer-like trees. Southern Brazil is roughly on the same parallel with central Florida and the tree should do well in our gardens.

This summer we expect to plant a lingaro, a plum, a rose apple, a white sapote, some *Monstera deliciosa*, and a bignay. We are also looking for additional donations. Items we need are key apples, chinquapins, loquats, carobs, lychees, Surinam cherries, yellow catley guavas, feijoas, apple trees, jujubes, avocados and unusual citrus.

# PASSION FRUIT *by Paul Zmoda*

Paul gave us a pretty good rundown of about all that is known at this time about passion fruit, albeit without benefit of slides or movies. However, he had a good assortment of flowers and different types of passion fruit, which is probably better than slides anyway, for a hands-on demonstration. Paul has been growing passion fruit for 8 to 9 years and like most of us, he started with a single plant, the common purple passion fruit which he found growing in a neighbor's yard. At that time Paul was surprised to see a passion fruit growing in this area; he figured it was too tropical for central Florida but since then he has found that many people are growing passion fruit of one kind or another. Also, there are 2 or 3 passion fruits native to this area, including the commonly known maypop.

The passion fruit family is Passifloraceae. The genus is *passiflora*. There are 23 divisions in the genus and well over 400 known species. More and more are being discovered in the jungles and classified, primarily in the New World tropics and subtropics, with a few in temperate regions. In addition, there are many cultivars and crosses, too many to count, being produced in nature and by horticulturists seeking new and better passion fruit.

The passion fruit plant is usually a climbing fruit, growing up from the forest floor into the canopy of trees, seeking the sun. The vine uses tendrils at the leaf nodes to aid in its climb towards the sun, which is one of the most common methods of vining plants. In addition to the vining passion fruit, there are some trees in the *Passiflora* genus, although they are quite rare and in the tree form, the tendrils have been reduced to spines.

The different varieties of passion fruit produce extremely varied leaf designs. There are single-lobed leaves, 3-lobed leaves, 5-lobed, 7-lobed, all of which Paul had samples of for us to examine. Textures range from thick and leathery to thin and flimsy, coarse and soft, and with a variety of veining. They are woolly, smooth, shiny, dull, almost no end to the variety.

Nectar glands are also a characteristic of many of the passion fruit. These are small glands on the petioles, that exude a small amount of nectar which attracts ants. This is a kind of symbiosis between the plants and the ants in that the ants will protect the passion fruit from predators and at the same time, the passion fruit provides nectar for the ants.

Paul also had a variety of flowers, ranging from red to white with purple and green interspersed. Some of the flowers are very beautiful and passion plant vines are frequently grown for the flowers as ornamentals.

The passion flower vine attributes its name to the early Spanish explorers who could see in the flower the passion of Christ at His crucifixion. The passion vine grows best in rich, well drained soils in high humidity conditions such as in the rain forest and at times in central Florida.

Paul doesn't recommend fertilizing passion fruit because the fertilization tends to result in rapid vegetation growth and lack of flowering and fruiting. However, in young plants before the vine reaches maturity, fertilization will cause more rapid growth of the vine and benefit fruiting in the following year. Because these plants are climbing vines, they may be used decoratively on a dead tree, fences, trellis, walls and some varieties as ground cover. Passion fruit vines are somewhat tender to cold but will stand a moderate amount of frost, and if frozen will, as a rule, come back from the root. Common varieties of *edulis*, the yellow and purple, will normally survive quite well on the amount of rainfall we get here, so it isn't necessary to waste water on them. Since they don't need to be fertilized and they don't need to be sprayed for pests, everybody should be growing them.

To produce fruit, pollination of the flowers is necessary and requires that pollen be transferred from one flower to the receptive parts of another flower. The insects that fertilize the flowers in the jungle fortunately were left there when we

brought the plants into our area, so frequently hand pollination is necessary. On those vines that are self compatible, pollen from one flower may be used on another flower on the same vine. In this area, bumblebees, leaf cutter bees and carpenter bees seem to perform well in pollinating passion fruit. To hand pollinate, it is a simple matter of removing the anther from one flower and brushing it against the three stigmas in the center of another. In the center of the passion flower is the ovary, a pea sized round object. This is the future fruit if it's pollinated. The fruit will normally reach its full size in about 3 weeks after pollination and will ripen in anywhere from 40 days to 5 months, depending on the species. The ripe fruit will fall from the vine and may be harvested from the ground. The fruit will not ripen off the vine unless it is already beginning to color. The exceptions to this rule are the largest passion fruit, the giant grenadia, and *Passiflora alata*, the fragrant grenadia, both of which have

edible rinds and can be picked mature but green and allowed to ripen. Also, some red varieties are edible before they ripen and these are also suitable for picking. After ripening, passion fruit begin to wrinkle, drying out somewhat and becoming sweeter. The sugars are concentrating and the flowers are developing.

Some passion fruit, particularly the maypop, are alleged to have mild sedative qualities. One product is sold under the trade name of Passiflorene for relief of occasional nervous insomnia. It is also claimed to relieve Parkinson's Disease.

Spider mites seem to be one of the major pests of passion fruit. Another pest is nematodes in the soil, which causes a rapid decline of the plant with a major infestation.

Paul also had the address of Passiflora International, which is a passion fruit society, for anyone interested in contacting them.

## What's Happening

July-August, 1995

by Paul Zmoda

I had an occasion to visit a residential grower in Temple Terrace recently. My friend, Lou, has been growing coffee there for years, in the shade of the nearby woods. He harvests coffee beans with which he starts new plants. The established trees are 4 to 5 feet high and don't seem to need cold protection. I am now growing several of these offspring plants. I hope I have his luck.

Snake gourds are now making those long fruits. I harvest them at 18-20 inches. After seeding and slicing them, I boil them for 20 minutes. They taste like crook-neck squash. I believe they could be stuffed and baked also.

I've heard it said that the pineapple won't ripen off the plant. The fruit of the Natal Queen Pineapple, when picked somewhat green/yellow will turn all yellow

and very aromatic within several days. The sweetest, tastiest pineapple I've ever enjoyed. I don't even grow 'Smooth Cayenne' anymore. It doesn't reproduce fast enough and takes too long to ripen up.

After getting rid of 8 squirrels, I have a nice setting of *Monstera deliciosa* fruits. The cream colored flowers last only a day or two and then comes a long (6 months ?) wait for ripening.

The Opuntia cactus is growing *VERY* well: I've enjoyed stir-fried Nopales with onions and jalapeños. These are so good that everyone should grow them.

I had to re-graft my Kumquat tree with the Meiwa variety. It is budding out nicely. New plantings include coffee, miniature guava 'Dube' and Scotch Bonnet pepper.

## Raffle: July 1995

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Java Plum	Stark	E. Musgrave
Sweet Tamarind	Phil Brown	?
Ice Cream Banana Plant	Phil Brown	Sally Starr
Capulin Cherry	Phil Brown	Heath
Coffee	Charles Novak	Armando Mendez
Coffee	Charles Novak	?
Red Surinam Cherry (2)	E. Musgrave	Kass Scott-Rivera
Chaya Spinach	Heath	?
Orange Berry	Heath	Gertrude Pierre
Fig	Heath	Kass Scott-Rivera
Pineapple	Heath	E. Musgrave
<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>	Heath	Nancy McCormack
Guava	Heath	Beth Reddicliffe
Night Blooming Cactus (white)	Beth Reddicliffe	Elaine Sarrasin
Night Blooming Cactus (pink)	Beth Reddicliffe	?
Fishtail Fern	Beth Reddicliffe	Doris Baer
Petticoat Fern	Beth Reddicliffe	David Mitchell

## Tasting Table: July 1995

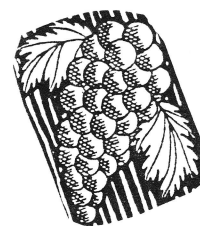
Charles Novak: Papaya Jam, Figs  
 Althia Musgrave: Lemon Bars  
 S. Brewer: Fruit-filled Bread Pudding  
 Beth Reddicliffe: Fudge Brownies  
 Bob Heath: Jelly Palm Salsa  
 Gertrude Pierre: Fresh Fruit  
 Zmoda: Passion Fruit Juice, Passion Fruit Ice Cream

Pearl Wente: Crabmeat  
 Doris & Len Baer: Pineapple Jam  
 Lillian Smoleny: Pineapple Chunks  
 Kass Scott-Rivera: Cranberry Drinks  
 Nancy McCormack: Muffins

## Thank You Thank You Thank You

To our neighbor to the north, Mr. Nonnenberg, for mowing the back of the property. To the Heaths, Bob & Terry, for taking such good care of our plantings. They are at the clubhouse working every week!

To Frank Pupello for assisting in planting of some trees. To Alice & Frank Burhenn for donating several trees and working in our gardens, including mowing and planting trees. To John Bell for working in the garden and helping with erection of the kiwi arbor. To Arnold Stark for burning a pile of dead wood which had accumulated in the front yard. To Charles Novak for donating kiwi plants and to Arnold Stark for donating Corsican and Buddha's hand citron plant for our garden.





RECIPE: Carambola-Raisin-Nut Cake

Cream together      1-1/2 cup sugar  
                              3 tablespoons butter or margarine

Beat together in      3/4 cup carambola juice  
 separate bowl and    1/4 cup water  
 mix with above      2 eggs

Mix and add to      2 cups flour  
 above                2 teaspoons baking soda  
                              1 teaspoon salt  
                              1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Add to above mix  
 and turn into      1 cup raisins  
 greased 8 x 8 pan    1/2 cup chopped walnuts  
 or bundt pan

Cook at 300°F for 40 minutes or until wood pick inserted in center comes out clean.



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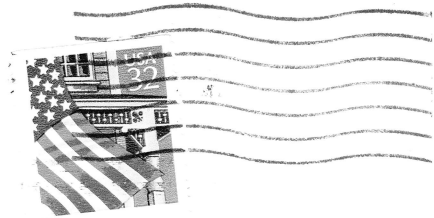
# TREE SALE

Get Ready!

October 7th & 8th at the Armory



**RFCI Tampa Bay Chapter**  
**313 Pruett Rd**  
**Seffner FL 33584**



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**

P. JUDSON NEWCOMBE  
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# 16th Annual FRUIT TREE SALE

2 DAYS! 2 DAYS! 2 DAYS!

Saturday, October 7, 1995, 1:00 - 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, October 8, 1995, 1:00 - 5:00 P.M.

FT. HOMER HESTERLY ARMORY

500 N. Howard Ave. – Tampa

I-275 Exit 24 – 5 blocks South on Armenia Ave.

## EDIBLE LANDSCAPING

APPLES  
ANNONAS  
AVOCADOS  
BANANAS  
BARBADOS CHERRIES  
BLACKBERRIES  
BLUEBERRIES  
CARAMBOLAS  
CHERRIES OF RIO GRANDE  
CHINESE CHESTNUTS  
FIGS  
GRAPES

GRUMICHAMAS  
GUAVAS  
JABOTICABAS  
LOQUATS  
LONGANS  
LYCHEES  
MACADAMIA NUTS  
MANGOS  
PAPAYAS  
PEACHES  
PEARS  
PERSIMMONS

PECANS  
PINEAPPLES  
POMEGRANATES  
BLACK RASPBERRIES  
TREE TOMATOES  
GRAPEFRUIT  
KUMQUATS  
LEMONS  
LIMES  
NECTARINES  
ORANGES  
TANGERINES

**... AND MANY OTHERS**

ALSO RARE HERBS AND VEGETABLES  
All Varieties Subject to Availability at Time of Sale

**TAMPA BAY CHAPTER**  
**RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INT'L (INC.)**  
(A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION)

