



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1995

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

CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: 313 PRUETT RD, SEFFNER FL 33584

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 2:00 p.m. NEXT MEETING: DEC. 10.

NOTE: THIS MONTH'S MEETING STARTS AT **1:00 PM** (NOT 2:00 AS USUAL).

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: **BIG CHRISTMAS PARTY!** We have decided to end this year with our first annual social Christmas Party. Our club is heading up and we want to celebrate with good food, good drink and good cheer. Let's have a party. No formal speaker, no plant raffle, but lots of fun. We are planning a pot luck lunch starting at 1:00 (bring your best Christmas fare and don't be shy!) We will have a door prize, a 3-gallon grafted black sapote, a Best Home-Grown Fruit Contest with a plant for a prize. If you have a fruit worth showing, bring it to show. We will also have other plants for drawings as special prizes. All club members are invited and we would like to have the biggest club turnout ever. There will be wine tasting and a prize for the best wine. Many of our members have never been to a club meeting; this is your chance to meet other club members and view our clubhouse and grounds, which are beginning to look very good. There will also be a special announcement of interest to all the club members. Participants who have a table suitable for dining, please bring it, if possible, because we are short of table space. We do have enough chairs. Hopefully, God willing and if the weather is fine, we may even have a foot race. Remember, this is a special event, a social event and a club event. If you're a member of the club, please try to come. We have great new plans for our club and we want to celebrate!

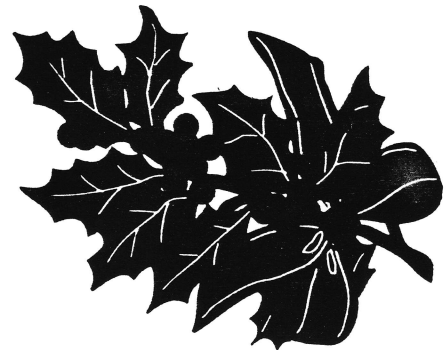


ANNUAL TREE SALE

'Tis time to change our October tradition
to match our sale with the best planting condition
'Tween the Ides of March and April Fools
When people are checking their garden tools,
We'll schedule our Sale this time of year
For the chill of winter we need not fear.
Start preparing now the trees you grow
Let's make this Sale a Super Show!

★ ★ ★ ★

Watch for further details on our 17th Annual Tree Sale, March 30 & 31, 1996.



Cindy Marks, the Bat Lady, entertained us with some excellent and beautiful slides of bats, many in flight, and gave us an opportunity to see five real live bats close up, three of which were insectivores from the local area, and two were fruit bats from foreign countries. These five are among her pets which she keeps in her home and feeds, as she says, "with the most expensive fruit in the market." The fruit bats like their fruit expensive and they like it ripe. As she presented the slides, she told us about some of the habits of bats.

There are over 900 different species of bats and they are found almost everywhere on earth. Bats are mammals just as we are, and nurse their young. They have their own order among the mammals called Chiroptera, which literally means "hand wings". Bats are the only mammal capable of true flight. Like birds, bats have greatly modified hands and forelimbs with leather-like skin stretched between the greatly elongated digits of the hand. The order Chiroptera is sub-divided into two sub-orders, the Mega Chiroptera, the large fruit bats of Africa and Asia; and Micro Chiroptera, usually of small size. The largest of the Mega Chiroptera are the great flying fox of Malaysia, which may have a wing span of five feet and weigh two pounds.

The first slide she showed us was of the heart-nosed bat, which has heart-shaped nose leaves, and then the Mexican funnel-eared bat, which has enormous ears and very tiny eyes.

The next slide showed a fruit-eating bat with tufts of fur on its shoulders. Also a beautiful free-tailed bat which has no membrane between its hind legs and tail but has a brilliant mane or "Mohawk haircut" as Cindy called it. Bats come in an array of brilliant colors, and Cindy showed us a yellow-winged bat from Africa, some tiny white bats from Honduras, and a beautiful red bat which is native to Florida with bright red fur and white spots on its shoulders, and a spotted bat which is black with white spots on its fur. It has humongous ears which it can roll up when it sleeps. The largest bat on the North American continent is only

about 4" long in body but much bigger than our smallest bat. In Thailand they have what is called a bumblebee bat, which is the smallest in the world and not much bigger than a bumblebee. It only weighs about 1 gram. Unfortunately, it is endangered, as many of our bat species are.

The next slide showed the renowned South American vampire bat, which is one of only three species of blood-sucking bats in the world. They are only found in South and Central American countries, so we have no vampire bats in the United States. She got her vampire bat, which she has named Igor, from the Atlanta Zoo.

Most bats, about 70%, feed on insects, and that's why bats are so important. In the Tropics where fruit is so abundant is where the fruit-eating bats thrive. Some bats even live on the nectar of flowers like the hummingbird and some insects, and are very important for the pollination of certain plant species which only bats pollinate.

Very few bats are carnivorous. She showed us pictures of the frog-eating bat and the fishing bat which scoops fish up off the surface of the water in flight. All bats in Florida and most of the bats in the continental United State feed on insects. She showed us pictures of the grey bat, which is endangered and consists of only one colony in Florida. Each night one bat can eat up to 600 insects an hour. One of the caves in Texas has the largest colony of bats in the world, approximately 22 million Mexican free-tailed bats. Cindy showed us a slide of the inside of the cave, and the bats literally cover the ceiling and walls, and of course, the floor was covered with bat guano. The entire colony emerges at dusk and this one colony can eat a quarter of a million pounds of insects every night. In effect, they must eat a quarter of a million pounds of insects every night to sustain themselves. Different species have different tastes in insects and this allows several different species to thrive in the same area without being in competition with one another.

She showed us a round-eared bat carrying a katydid. She showed us the pallid bat of the west, whose favorite food is the scorpion. It's alleged that his hearing

is so acute that he can hear the foot-steps of a scorpion on the desert floor.

The fruiting bats in the Tropics are important for dispersing the seeds from the fruit. She showed us a Jamaican fruit bat carrying an allspice berry. The fruit bats are very important for pollinating the wild crops in the forest. Unfortunately, every year millions of these fruit bats are killed by the farmers because they fear that the bats will hurt their crops. But since the crops are usually harvested before they are fully ripe, bats, in distinction to rats and squirrels who will eat green fruit, will only eat the fruit if it is very ripe. The baobab tree, which is a very important tree in Africa, depends on the bats for pollination. The flower is designed in such a way that it fits the head of the bat and is only pollinated by bats. In taking the nectar from the flower, the bat gets pollen all over his fur and then transfers it to the next flower he visits. The balsam tree, from which we get balsa wood, in Central America, is also pollinated by bats and we were shown a picture of a bat virtually covered with balsam pollen. The saguaro cactus and the agave plant out west are also pollinated by bats and Cindy showed us three or four slides of bats entering flowers and receiving the pollen. Since these flowers are only reproductively active at night, it is the bats that do the pollination.

Most bats produce only one young at a time and only one birth a year, so reproduction is very slow. When the mothers go out at night to feed, they leave their babies hanging in the cave huddled together in vast numbers. But when the mother bat returns, she returns unerringly to her own baby. And although it's pitch dark in the

cave, the mother can recognize her baby by its scent and its sound, and she will feed milk only to her own baby. In about three weeks the babies begin to fly and the mother begins to teach them how to catch insects.

In colder climates, bats hibernate through the winter, usually in caves. They are able to lower their heartbeat and their body temperature almost down to the freezing point in order to conserve energy and carry them through the winter. One big problem for bats hibernating in caves is that people enter the caves during the winter and disturb the bats, which wake up, raise their heartbeat and their body temperature while the people are there, and after people leave, go back into hibernation. This would not be a problem except that the little bats have only stored enough energy to last them through the winter and if they're disturbed once or twice, they will die because they don't have the energy to maintain their heartbeat and their body temperature as low as it is. Hubbard's Cave in Tennessee, which used to be the hibernating cave for millions of bats, was visited so much by people that the bat population was rapidly declining. Today the cave is closed to visitors during the winter and the bats are allowed to hibernate in peace and are returning to a more normal population.

Many bats roost in trees and palm trees, barns and attics of houses, but very few bats are willing to roost in bat houses as built by people specifically for bats. People like bat houses better than bats do.

Cindy further advised us to avoid any bats we see laying on the ground, alive or dead, during the day time particularly, because they may be rabid or bite from a feeling of self protection.

Tasting Table: November 1995

Stark: Limequat Ade
 Reddicliffe: Sugar Cookies
 Linda Novak: Tropical Kumquat Cake
 Janet Conard: Banana Pudding
 Al Roberts: Papaya Juice
 Lillian Smoleny: Banana Nut Bread
 Kass Scott-Rivera: Raspberry-Orange Juice, Spice Tea

Walter Vines: Candied Kumquats
 Sherry Baker: Assorted Cookies
 Lillian Wentz: Raisin Cookies
 Dolores Canter: Cookies
 Nancy McCormack: Muffins, bananas
 Althia Musgrave: PinaColada Cake

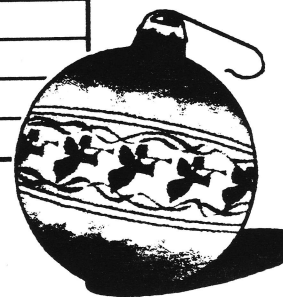


Raffle: November 1995

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Ice Cream Banana	Phil Brown	Beth Reddicliffe
Grumichama	Phil Brown	?
Rukam	Phil Brown	?
Miracle Fruit	Phil Brown	Beth Reddicliffe
Miracle Fruit	Yuku Tanaka	Elaine Sarrasin
Miracle Fruit (2)	Yuku Tanaka	Beth Reddicliffe
Miracle Fruit (2)	Yuku Tanaka	?
Chery Tree	Beth Reddicliffe	?
Cactus	Beth Reddicliffe	D. Canter
Night Blooming Cactus, Pink	Beth Reddicliffe	?
Night Blooming Cactus, White	Beth Reddicliffe	?
Rattail Cactus	Beth Reddicliffe	Walter Vines
Governor's Plum	Charles Novak	Nancy McCormack
Tamarind	Charles Novak	?
Spanish Red Pineapple	Stark	Phil Brown
Spanish Red Pineapple	Stark	Ron Webster
Spanish Red Pineapple (2)	Stark	Nancy McComack
Spanish Red Pineapple (2)	Stark	??
Yellow Grenadila	Stark	Polly Shewfelt
Yellow Grenadilla	Stark	Ronald Webster
Yellow Grenadilla (2)	Stark	??
Avocado	E. Freedman	D. Canter
Atemoya	Heath	Zmoda
Papaya	Heath	Al Hendry
Bunchosia	Heath	Lillian Smoleny
Tamarind	Heath	?
Pineapple	Heath	Kass Scott-Rivera
Tre Basil	Heath	Al Hendry
Mountain Soursop	Heath	?
Mulberry Jelly	Heath	Elaine Sarrasin
Carambola fruit (3)	Zmoda	Kass Scott-Rivera
Sugar Apple	Zmoda	Dale Eckley
Sugar Apple	Zmoda	?
LaLot	Zmoda	Ron Webster
Ora banana Mornata	Zmoda	?
Cattleya Guava	Zmoda	Heath
Cassava	E. Musgrave	Walter Vines
Monstera	E. Musgrave	D. Canter
Loquat	E. Musgrave	Polly Shewfelt
Loquat	E. Musgrave	/
Passion Fruit	E. Musgrave	Kimberly Hunt
Passion Fruit	E. Musgrave	?

New Members:

Floyd & Ardythe Ohler 6326 Muck Pond Road Seffner, FL 33584 (813)685-9491



What's Happening

November-December, 1995
by Paul Zmoda

Let's imagine that you have a good harvest this fall - maybe too good. In fact you're worried whether all those fruits will be put to good use or not. Don't fret, for you have many options when planning to store your bountiful harvest.

Freezing is one option: fruits and vegetables can be processed and then stored in the freezer for later use. Canning is another way to go when preparing for the leaner months of winter. Also, many fruits can be dried using any of the many available drying appliances. Persimmons are good this way.

Lot's of your extra produce may be turned into jellies, jams or syrups. Fruit leather (dried pureé) is an excellent way to enjoy the



harvest later on. How about wine? Almost any fruit can be made into a decent wine and will keep for years to come.

What if you have an abundance of food in your field and are unable to harvest it? Luckily there exists an organization called "The Gleaners". These folks are dedicated to harvesting what would otherwise go to waste. The crops saved from spoilage are turned over to the poor, the hungry, and the needy. Even if you have only one overbearing orange tree and wish to share it's surplus, please contact our member Polly Shewfelt at 689-8632 and you will become an important link in providing valuable food crops to those less fortunate. Happy Holidays.

Club Information

by Charles Novak

Most of you know the club owns the land and clubhouse. The main source of income for the Club is our big plant sale in October. The past two years have not been as profitable as in previous years. This year was especially bad. To pay all the club expenses throughout the year (mortgages, newsletter, insurance, etc.) we need a profitable sale. We will *NOT* be able to pay all the club's bills without your help. We are in need of any donation you would care to make. Unfortunately, donations are not tax deductible. I will start off the donation drive with \$350.00. Please mail your donation (check payable to Tampa Bay Chapter, RFCI) to Alice Burhenn, 7307 Summerbridge Drive, Tampa, FL 33634. The club would like to acknowledge your generosity by listing donor's names in the newsletter. If you do not wish your name listed, but would prefer to remain anonymous, please let us know when you send in your contribution. In advance, thank you for your help.

HERBERT H. HILL, SR.

The club wishes to express its most sincere and heartfelt sympathy to Weilna Hill for the passing of her husband Herb on November 10. Herb and Weilna have been members of the Rare Fruit Council for many years, both in Miami and here in Tampa. Herb has contributed much to our Chapter by his knowledge of fruiting trees and grafting techniques, and by his friendly demeanor and helpful comments at the meetings. Herb will be missed by those members who knew him and will be remembered in our prayers.

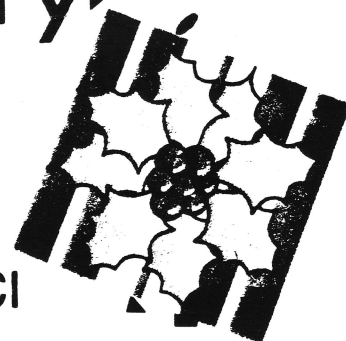


Come to a Party

DEC. 10

1:00 pm

Our December Meeting will be a pot-luck luncheon in the best RFCI tradition: great food (including smoked turkey!) and fruit wines. Please bring some food to share, (and a place setting to eat with) and get set to have a great afternoon.



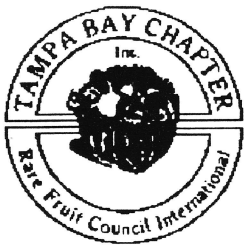
Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI
313 Pruett Rd
Seffner FL 33584



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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





Tampa Bay Chapter, Rare Fruit Council, International

313 Pruett Road

Seffner, FL 33584

November 25, 1995

Dear Member:

The Tampa Bay Chapter RFCI is in a financial crisis. Our approximate minimum annual expenses are:

• first mortgage	\$5900
• second mortgage	\$4200
• real estate taxes	\$1500
• property/liability insurance	\$1250
• tractor payment	\$ 700
• corporate annual fee	\$ 130
• newsletter	\$1100
• speakers	\$ 600

total: \$15380

and our current income is:

• rent	\$4800
• tree Sale	\$4400
• dues	\$2000
• raffle	\$ 450

total: \$11650

This means that we have a shortfall for the current year of \$3730. In addition, we are technically in arrears for the second mortgage principal of \$3000. These figures do not include current and deferred maintenance costs for the buildings and grounds.

We find ourselves focusing most of our energies not on promoting tropical plant propagation and popularization of new species, but on making enough money to satisfy our current obligations. Therefore, we must as a club make some financial change.

The Board of Directors has passed a motion that "the board will consider divestiture of the clubhouse and one acre on which it sits; a decision will be made within sixty days of this meeting, November 19, 1995". This is one alternative to resolving our financial crisis. It is not a done deal, nor is it the only option which we would like to consider. If any member has a suggestion, we want to hear it. We will furnish any financial information that you need, either to develop an option, or simply because you want to know. Consideration of the divestiture of the building must be an entirely open process. Help us make it that.

We will discuss the options at both the December and January membership meetings. Detailed information will be available to all members. Please attend and help us make a good decision.

Your Tampa Bay RFCI Board of Directors