



NEWSLETTER

MAY 1997

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

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: BOB HEATH
THERESA HEATH
ARNOLD STARK
LILLIAN STARK

PRESIDENT: CHARLES NOVAK

CHAPTER MAIL ADDRESS: 313 PRUETT RD, SEFFNER FL 33584
(including renewals)

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

NEXT MEETING: MAY 11, 1997

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: GENE JOYNER, DIRECTOR OF THE PALM BEACH COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE, will be talking about avocados and mangos. Those of us who have had the pleasure of hearing his presentations know that he will have beautiful slides and interesting and important information on these wonderful fruit. The meeting is on Mothers' Day but all mothers are welcome, so bring your mother along for an enjoyable afternoon. Our generous members will make sure you have plenty to eat and provide a potpourri of plants for our raffle. Also, we will have a report on the Armory Sale and the USF Sale.

May 17, 1997 10 am to 12 noon

Fruit Trees for Florida's Climate

Learn about all the wonderful and unique types of fruit trees that can be grown in our semitropical climate. Charles Novak from the Rare Fruit Council will introduce you to the many delicious possibilities for your garden and landscape. Fruit trees are a lovely alternative to standard landscape plants and provide so much more. Learn basic pruning, tree care and grafting. \$12. members, \$15. non-members.

For more information, call the
Garden 813/974-2329

RECIPE: ORANGE-RAISIN-PECAN BREAD

1/2 cup orange juice
1/2 cup water
1 tablespoon grated orange peel
1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons butter, melted
1 egg, beaten
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup raisins
3/4 cup coarsely chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine ingredients in order listed. Mix just until blended. Pour into greased 9 x 5 inch pan. Bake for 50 to 60 minutes or until top is nicely browned and pick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pan 10 minutes. Turn out of pan onto rack to cool completely. Wrap in plastic wrap or foil.

The Goldfinger has been developed to take the place of the Grand Name which is in jeopardy of being devastated by the Panama Disease, a soil borne fungus which is presently affecting the Cavendish cultivars in the South Pacific. Up until the late 50's the banana of choice in the plantations and being imported into the United States was the Gros Michelle, but the plantations were devastated by the Panama Disease and the Gros Michelle is no longer planted in plantations in South America. At that time they had to completely replant all the plantations with the Goldfinger. The Goldfinger grows to about 12 feet, has racemes that weigh 50 to 65 pounds, and is partially resistant to Cigatoga and is resistant to the Panama Disease.

Don had some beautiful slides of the inflorescence of the Raja Puri and several slides showing the development of the fruit. After four or five days the flower has emerged and has turned over and down and the outer petals have begun to turn back exposing the female flowers and small immature bananas.

Another slide showed the Williams, which is another banana in the same family as the Grand Name and about the same size. Another slide, the Mysore, which is a banana from India, a tall growing plant, 14 to 16 feet, with a thin skinned, very pleasant tasting fruit. The Mysore tastes very similar to the apple banana but is not subject to the Panama Disease as the apple banana is. It is frequently grown by people who like the apple flavor. The Mysore is pretty with a lot of red and brown in the pseudostem and leaves and has racemes up to 40 pounds.

The Raja Puri is from India, a semi-dwarf growing about seven or eight feet tall which Don calls bullet proof because it

is resistant to all of the diseases that bananas are subject to. It's very nice in the landscape, is excellent for eating and may be a little more cold hardy than other varieties.

Don recommends that the bananas be harvested when they are plump but before they turn color because if they yellow-up on the tree, the fruit has a tendency to split. He advised us when we remove bananas from the tree that we turn the stalk upside down and hang it in a cool place, such as a garage, with the large stem hanging down. This will cause the bananas to hold better as they ripen. Don indicated that as the bananas are developing, there isn't any advantage in removing the male flower although it is a common misconception that the male flower will detract from the development of the fruit if it is not removed. He has never found this to be the case.

Don also had some slides of the Macaboo or red banana. The bananas, as they come out, are very red but fade into orange and finally yellow as they ripen and the flesh within the skin is orange in color. The reds have a tendency to sport into a green banana with green fruit but they still have the same orange colored flesh and good flavor. Then they are called green reds. Don indicated that he has never known of a green red to mutate back to red. He also had slides of the double banana which puts on two or more racemes of bananas at the same time. It is actually a Dwarf Cavendish banana that has mutated to produce two or more heads.

Don also had several slides of ornamental bananas which produce seedy fruit, normally very tiny, but the flowers are beautiful and the leaves may be multi-colored with lots of red, yellow and pink.

advertisement

****Hard to find Paw Paw trees (*A. triloba*) \$16.00, Shitake Mushroom logs (you can grow your own!), Large Macadamia Nut Trees, Miracle Fruit, Allspice, Large Pummalos, Thornless Key Limes, Jaboticabas, Cold Hardy Avocados (down to 18°), Banana varieties, Bamboos, flowering and edible Gingers. Send \$2.00 for 18 page catalog.**

****Costa Rica Tropical Fruit Tour! A 7 and 12 day trip to the real tropics of Costa Rica. Visit the Tropical Fruit Experimental Station for all of Central America at Terrilba, a real-live volcano - The "Arenal Volcano", the Salva Verde Rain Forest. Fruits and much more!.**

**Call: Our Kids Orchids & Nursery, 17229 Phil C. Peters Road, Winter Garden, FL 34787
(407)877-6883**

New Members:

Sandra Johnston & Stephen Bechdolt 1341 N. Crause Pt. Lecanto, Fl 34461 (352)527-2790

Ed Sweeting 5816 Rose Lane Tampa, Fl 33619 (813)622-6222

Jerry & Sue Tennant 9828 49th Avenue North St. Petersburg. FL 33708 (813)398-3013

Rare Fruit Club Conference:

The Metro-Dade Fruit & Spice Park and the Tropical Fruit & Vegetable Society of the Redlands have announced a Rare Fruit Club Conference. It will be held at the Park in Homestead on

July 11, 12, & 13, 1997

The meeting schedule looks very exciting:

Friday, July 11

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| 9:00-10:00 | Registration |
| 10:00-1:30 | Tropical Fruit Nursery Open House |
| 2:00 | Tour of Brook's Tropicals Packing House |
| 3:00 | Tour Univ. of Florida Tropical Research & Education Center |
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Saturday, July 12

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| 9:00 | Mango Morning at Fairchild Tropical Garden |
| 11:30 | Tour the Kampong of the National Tropical Botanical Garden. Hosted by Larry Schokman |
| 12:45 | Lunch at the Kampong (included in registration fee) |
| 3:00-5:00 | Tour the Fruit & Spice Park (evening picnic banquet included). Share your tropical fruits, jellies, special dishes, club publications, club T-shirts and plants you may bring to the conference to sell, exhibit or trade. Also:
Mango Tasting. |
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Sunday, July 13

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| 8:30 | Welcome. Each represented organization will share their activities, special projects and goals and discuss future cooperative programs. |
| 9:00 | "A New Approach to Growing Guavas" - Luc Vannoorbeeck |
| 10:00 | "Important New Fruit Crop Insects and Diseases in Florida" - Dr. Robert McMillan Jr. |
| 11:00 | "Planting, Fertilizing Tropical Fruit Trees" - Gene Joyner |
| 12:00 | Lunch |
| 1:00 | "Genetic Improvement of Bananas and Plantains" - Dr. Phillip Rowe |
| 2:00 | "The Best Rare Tropical Fruits for South Florida" - Chris Rollins |
| 3:00 | "Mamey, Carambola and Passionfruit in South Florida" - Dr. Carlos Balerdi |
| 4:00 | "Lychee and Longan Workshop" - Dr. Noble Hendrix and panel |
| 5:00 | Meeting of Fruit Club representatives |
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Conference Registration is \$25 per person. To register, send your name, address and number of people attending along with a check (payable to the Tropical Fruit & Vegetable Society of the Redlands) to: Rare Fruit Club Conference

Fruit and Spice Park

24801 SW 187 Ave.

Homestead, Fl 33031

phone: (305)247-5727 fax: (305)245-3369

Thank You Thank You Thank You

To returning member George Merrill who not only worked at the March sale but also donated a number of lovely plants for the club to sell.

To the members who participated in the USF Plant Show activity in April:

Jerry Amyot
Isabel Arencibia
Modesto Arencibia
Bob Baker
Sherry Baker
Phil Brown
Alice Burhenn
Frank Burhenn

Lois Buxbaum
Bob Heath
Al Hendry
Gyula Nemeth
Charles Novak
Linda Novak
Beth Reddicliffe
Vern Reddicliffe

George Riegler
Bill Ryland
Elaine Sarrasin
Arnold Stark
Lillian Stark
Walter Vines

What's Happening

April-May, 1997

by Paul Zmoda

Mmmmm. There are a few early treats growing out in the yard these days/ Blackberries are so good right off the bushes. The wild varieties seem to ripen earlier than 'Brazos' does.

Mulberries are about finished, but you may force another crop if you prune your trees heavily. You are pruning them, right? If left to themselves, mulberries will get out of control quickly and most of the fruit will be too high to reach. I like the dark red ones best.

You can't beat Cherry of the Rio Grande. They ripen up so quickly-one day they are green and the next day they are red. If you taste them then, they are as tart and tasty as sour cherries. Another day or two and they become darker and very sweet like Bing Cherries are.

Atemoyas are flowering now and may or may not set fruit without hand pollinating. It's only a once-a-year thing, so to be sure, hand pollinate. Using a small artist's brush, transfer pollen from a flower that has been open two days to one just opening the first day, when the whitish stigmas are glistening.

PawPaws are blooming now also and pollination can be attempted in the same way. PawPaw seedlings are leafing out, which means now is the time to transplant them from pots into the chosen place in your landscape. They can do well in shade or even sun when a few years older.

Muscadine and bunch grapes are awakening from their winter's rest. Tiny clusters of flower buds can be seen among the newly developing leaves.

I rooted the top half of a tree tomato (*Cyphomandra betacea*) last October. Now, at 5 feet tall, it is flowering profusely and giving off a pleasing perfume. Fruits are not setting, so I will hand pollinate if I can only figure out when it is receptive to the pollen which has to be gently teased out of the tiny pollen sacs.

New plantings: muscadine and bunch grapes, Kwai Muk, Jakfruit 'Manatee', Mango 'Black Gold', sapodillas, passion fruits, *Arbutus unedo*, PawPaw, Miracle Fruit, White Sapote 'Homestead', Coconut Palm, Persimmon 'Jiro', Peach 'Red Ceylon', Medlar 'Breda Giant' and white dogwoods.

From the President
Charles Novak

Thanks to the club members who helped with the USF Spring Sale. We were threatened with rain on both days, but our luck held and each day was beautiful. Our grafting demonstrations drew a lot of interest and we met many nice people.

You should try to attend the May meeting. Gene Joyner always presents an interesting and informative program. If you are growing - or planning to grow - Mangos or Avocados, this is your chance to learn more about them.

At the May meeting I will have the free plants for the members who worked both days at our plant sale at the Armory. Also, the remaining club plants will be available to members at the club's cost.

The following is a list of scheduled programs/speakers.

May 11	Gene Joyner (Mangos and Avocados)
June 8	Vivian Murray - The Treehouse
July 13	Winston Kao
August 10	Larry Shatzer - Edible Ginger
September 14	Paul Beaver
October 12	Tom Economou
November 9	Chris Rollins
December 14	Christmas & Hanukkah Social
January 11, 98	Maryon Marsh - Herbs
February 9	Marian Van Atta - Living off the Land

In the spotlight this month are: George Merrill for his generous donation of Macadamia nut trees to this year's annual sale. The club and I thank him for the donation. The sharing of information and plants is an important goal of the club.

Did you know? The Chinaberry tree is closely related to the Neem tree (and the Chinaberry tree is cold hardy). Both have insecticidal properties. Seeds and extracts from both are poisonous if consumed.

There will be an important board meeting in May. Club members are encouraged to attend.

Costa Rican Adventure

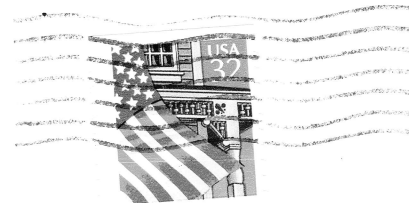
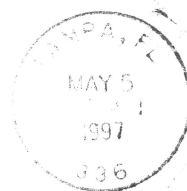
by Arnold Stark

I've just returned from a week long trip to Costa Rica with some of my students; it was our second trip to this jewel of Central America. Costa Rica is a land of extremely friendly people, delicious food, active volcanoes, lush tropical forests, amazing wildlife, and fruits, fruits, and more fruits! We visited 2 active volcanoes, (1 of which, Arenal, erupted about 7 times for our benefit, climbed on a 5 year old lava flow, swam in pools of volcanically heated water, traveled twice through the canopy of the rain forest (once by rappelling and once by tram), walked through secondary and primary rain forests, ate iguana (delicious!), walked through a tropical fruit orchard, boated along a river banked by riparian rain forests, walked through a garden of exquisite topiary, saw a legendary oxcart, bought native handicrafts, and visited the major archaeological site. We saw howler, white-faced (capuchin), and spider monkeys, sloths, coati mundis, bats, toucans and many other beautiful birds, caimans, iguanas, basilisk lizards, eyelash vipers, tree frogs, dart poison frogs, blue morpho butterflies, leaf-cutter ants, bullet ants (huge - get stung by one and you feel like you've been shot!), and the ants which protect cecropia and bullhorn acacia trees.

Best of all, for a tropical fruit enthusiast, we stopped at roadside fruit stands, fruit markets in several towns, and, on Saturday, spent a couple of hours wandering through a weekly regional marketplace. We bought, sampled, and brought home seeds of cainito, sapodilla, peach palm, mamey sapote, Malay apple, rose apple (big enough to deserve the name "apple"!), red and yellow-fruited cashews, inga (ice cream bean), guanabana (some huge 8 to 10 pounders!), bilimbi, breadnut, mamon chino, (a rambutan relative), 2 types of passionfruit (1 especially delicious!), papayas, mangos (no seeds allowed!), naranjilla (the real one, not the fuzzy seedball-producing weed some of us have grown!), white winter squash, huge pumpkin, several varieties of chili pepper, and some non-chill blackberries, peaches, and plums. We also brought back tops of huge, delicious pineapples, and 7 varieties of chayote. In the forests we found wild guava, inga, raspberry, and cashew. (Last trip I found a strange passionfruit!)

What a remarkable place - an ideal family vacation! If any of our members and their families would like to go there, I would be happy to organize a trip for the end of July. Just let me know.

RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTL.
313 PRUETT RD
SEFFNER FL 33584



FIRST CLASS MAIL

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