



# NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 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: OCT. 11 & 12, 1997 AT U.S.F. (SEE PROGRAM BELOW)

PROGRAM: Because of illness, our scheduled speaker, Tom Economou, will be unable to attend our October meeting. In addition, the USF Plant Festival is scheduled for our regular meeting date, the 11th & 12th of October. Consequently, our scheduled program for October will be participation in the USF Fall Plant Festival. All members are invited to participate and to bring plants to donate or to sell. Parking is free this time but admission is \$1.00, an amount which the club will reimburse workers and participants in the sale. This is an interesting affair and well worth the \$1.00 admission. Likewise, it is a social affair as well as a money maker for the club. There will be no tasting table nor plant raffle at this time.

THE RFCI WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN THE USF PLANT FESTIVAL ON OCT. 11 & 12, 1997. THIS is an important fund raiser and all members are invited to attend, to assist in the sale, to sell plants, to enjoy the camaraderie and to visit other groups.

Our participation will begin about 1:00 Friday afternoon, October 10, setting up tables, arranging plants and posters, til about 6:00.

On Saturday, October 11, the Gardens will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. for our final preparations. Price for admittance is \$1.00.

The front gate will close at 9:00 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, and participants will have to enter by the side south gate after the front gate closes.

From 7:00 a.m. until 9:00 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday, traffic will be one way, in the front gate and out the side gate. The Festival will end at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday and 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, and only after 4:15 and 3:15 respectively, will we be allowed to bring vehicles in to remove plants or re-supply.

Parking for participants not bringing supplies or plants is across the street from the front entrance to the Gardens.

The U.S.F. Botanical Gardens takes 10% of our gross sales; the remaining 90% will be split 50/40 between the participant and the RFCI, so mark your plants accordingly, remembering that your get 50% of the selling price.

We have provided a list of RFCI workers to the Gardens. Only those on the list will be allowed in before the sale begins. If you are refused entrance, someone from our group will vouch for you to gain your admittance.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE AMAZON by Paul Beaver

Paul Beaver began by stating that it had been his privilege to work in the Amazon rain forest for the last 17 years, in the western Amazon in Peru, known to biologists as the "Green Paradise of the Amazon". This area has the greatest diversity and abundance of flora and fauna found in any ecology in the world. One of the areas in which he has done a lot of work and where he has a lodge is the National Preserve of Peru. More scientific research and articles have been generated by scientists working in the area than in any other place in the Amazon.

Many people, perhaps, think of the Amazon as a nightmare part of the world, swarms of mosquitoes, lots of snakes and alligators. Of course you can find all this in the Amazon, but it is also perhaps the most beautiful environment as well, a virtual Garden of Eden. The greatest variety of flowers is found there; nearly half of all flowering plants in the world are native to the Amazon and Paul had slides of many of these flowers, passion flowers, Heliconia and innumerable others.

Many of the flowers found in the Amazon are a bright red color because that is the color attractive to hummingbirds which are the local pollinators for most of the flowers. There are many different species of hummingbirds which are attracted to a variety of different flowers and here again Paul had slides of some of the most beautiful, including a hummingbird feeding upon the nectar of a flower called the hot lips flower because of its resemblance to human lips.

Also, the Amazon sports the greatest variety of orchids in the world. Many people have gone on his tours just to see and photograph the variety of orchids.

The Amazon also has the greatest varieties of trees, many of which are unusual in leaf form, growth habits and medicinal properties. There are also many varieties of very unusual palm trees, some of which produce edible fruit. Paul had slides of several of the trees and palms unique to the Amazon Basin. He also had slides of the breadfruit and some of the native fruit grown nowhere else in the world, fruit similar to the Caimito and another

fruit similar to kiwi but not that tart, gelatinous and very sweet. And also the cocona which I believe some of our members are presently growing. It is an orange colored fruit about the size of a small orange and somewhat citrusy in flavor with lots of seeds growing on a small bush. Paul also mentioned an extremely large annona, the seeds of which he has given to Ray Jones in Bradenton. Ray, who is very familiar with annonas, suggested that it might be a new species.

In addition, Paul said they have the Mamey americana, which is a very delicious fruit on a very large tree. The fruit frequently reaches the size of a grapefruit.

Paul spoke of their trips up into the cloud forests on the mountains and a cactus fruit being grown up there called Pitajaya by the natives, some seeds of which he also brought back for Ray Jones, a very delicious, gelatinous fruit unusual for a cactus, but similar to another cactus fruit called pitajaya roja that is red where this one is white inside.

He had many slides of unusual vines, bromeliads and lily pads with beautiful flowers. Paul also indicated that the Amazon has the world's greatest variety of different types of insects, perhaps even up to 30 million different varieties, and also some of the largest spiders in the world including the tarantula, and some of the most beautiful butterflies. There is also a variety of multi-colored frogs, tropical fish, piranhas and numerous snakes, including the anaconda, boas and other constrictors.

The Amazon has three crocodilians. The most common is the spectacled Caiman, never reaching more than 6 or 7 feet in length; the black Caiman that may reach lengths of 20 feet. There are over 700 species of birds, some of which are very beautifully marked and colored, several of which Paul had on slides. He also had slides of several mammals, kinkajou, tree anteater, the larger terrestrial anteater, and the tree sloth, a strange, rather silly looking animal known for its upside down, slow moving gait. Also, he had slides of the jaguar and ocelot, and the tapir, a rather large animal related to the elephant.

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**FROM THE PRESIDENT**  
**Charles Novak**

The results of the vote on the future of the clubhouse were:

#1: Sell the clubhouse and move our meeting to USF:	49
#2: Sell the clubhouse and move to another location:	1
#3: Continue meeting at the present clubhouse:	7

I will have the ballots at the USF plant sale and at the November meeting. At the November meeting we will decide when to start having our meetings at USF.

In the spotlight this month is: Lillian Smoleny for her super job of handling the club voting ballots. Thank you, Lillian!

Our September speaker, Dr. Paul Beaver, spoke on the Amazon and had many very interest-ing slides on the plants and animal life of the Amazon. He will have some unusual fruit and vegetable seeds mailed to us. I look forward to visiting his jungle camp some day.

Note: Scheduled program change. Tom Economou is unable to be at our October meeting, so we will be participating in the USF plant sale both Saturday and Sunday. We need your help at the sale. This is your opportunity to sell your extra plants.

The following is a list of scheduled programs/speakers:

October 11 & 12	USF Two Day Plant Sale
November 9	Chris Rollins
December 14	Christmas & Hanukkah Social
January 11 '98	Maryon Marsh - Herbs
February 15	Marian Van Atta - Living off the Land
March 14 & 15	Our 19th Annual Plant Sale

Mark your calendar for January 31, 1998. The club is co-sponsoring a citrus festival at USF, to be held at the USF Botanical Gardens. This will be a major event for both USF and our club. We plan to have as many different citrus fruits as are available for tasting, foods prepared with citrus for tasting, citrus trees & fruit to purchase, and experts to answer questions about citrus. We are currently contacting persons and companies who might be interested in participating. If you know someone who might like to be part of this event or you have ideas or suggestions, please call me at (813) 754-1933, or contact the event chairman, Victor Peyron, at (813) 752-9126. We will need everyone's help at this large event. We hope it will become an annual event for our club and the USF Botanical Gardens.

## **Tasting Table: September 1997**

Novak: Tropical UpSide Down Cake; Blueberry Cheesecake; Pink Banana Butter

Janet Conard: Lemon Squares; Banana Nut Cake; Cheese Snacks

Jud Newcombe: Chocolate Macadamia Nuts

Pat Jean: Cookies

Mills: Carrot Squares; Pomegranates

Sherry Baker: Fudge

Bob Heath: Downy Myrtle Cake

Edith Freedman: Gatorade

B. Reddicliffe: Fudge Brownies

Lillian Smoleny: Banana Cake

M. Simkins: Potato Salad

Lillian Wentz: Cherry UpSide Down Cake

Stark: Limeade

## Raffle: September 1996

Plant Name	Donor	Winner
Orange Berry	Heath	James Lee
Rose Apple	Heath	Ron Opat
Chaya	Heath	Ron Opat
Loquat	Heath	R. Shigemura
Papaya	Heath	Walter Vines
Pineapple	Heath	Nancy McCormack
Raja Banana	Heath	Polly Shewfelt
Sugar Apple	Heath	Ricky Maseda
Bunny Poop	Heath	Ricky Maseda
Red Banana	Yuku Tanaka	Jery Tennant
Red Banana	Yuku Tanaka	Walter Vines
Red Banana	Yuku Tanaka	?
Breadnut	Stark	Ricky Maseda
Orchid Tree	Stark	?
Loquat	Janet Condard	?
Feijoa	Jules Cohan	?
Guava	C. Novak	Joan Marshall
Imbe	C. Novak	Joan Marshall
Screw Pine	C. Novak	Betty Fairbanks
Custard Apple	C. Novak	Leland Brooks
Pink Annona	C. Novak	Jim Davis
Cuban Oregano	Ricky Maseda	?
Lemon Grass	Ricky Maseda	N. McCormack
Dwarf Papaya	Ricky Maseda	Rpn Shigemura
Aloe	Ricky Maseda	?
Sweet Potato	Ricky Maseda	?
Cattleya Guava	Ricky Maseda	Joan Marshall
Nepo Fig	Fred Born	Al Jean
Lotion Ginger	Walter Vines	Jerry Tennant
Lotion Ginger	Walter Vines	Leland rooks
Lotion Ginger	Walter Vines	Vic Peyron
Lotion Ginger (2)	Walter Vines	Pat Woodruff
Lotion Ginger	Walter Vines	John Gibson
Lotion Ginger	Walter Vines	Ron Shigemura
Lotion Ginger	Walter Vines	Kyle campbell
Lotion Ginger	Walter Vines	Jim Davis
Acerola cuttings	Walter Vines	Jerry Tennant
Acerola cuttings	Walter Vines	Nancy McCormack
Acerola cuttings (2)	Walter Vines	Ron Opat
Acerola cuttings (2)	Walter Vines	Jim Davis
Acerola cuttings	Walter Vines	Ricky Maseda
Acerola cuttings	Walter Vines	Joan Marshall
Coleus and Begonias (30)	Charles Simkins	(many lucky members)
Papaya	Al Jean	Nancy McCormack
Papaya	Al Jean	Andy Hendrickson
Papaya	Al Jean	Walter Vines
Pots	Fred Born	?
Mango	Joan Marshall	Vic Peyron
Hawaiian Orchid	Joan Marshall	Ricky Maseda
Orange Orchid	Joan Marshall	Al Jean
Blue & White Orchid	Joan Marshall	Al Jean
Banana	Polly Shewfelt	?
Pineapple (2)	Vic Peyron	??



It is not really an artichoke and it certainly isn't from Jerusalem. In fact, it is a first cousin to a family of 60 some odd species of sunflowers. And concerning the name Jerusalem, the story goes that early in the 17th century, Samuel De Champlain, having obtained some of the tubers from the Indians on Cape Cod, carried them back to Europe, referring to them by the name girasole, which is the Italian word for sunflower. Jerusalem is considered to be a corruption of girasole. Where the term "artichoke" came from is anybody's guess, but the ivory flesh is sweetly fresh with a subtle suggestion of artichoke heart. It is too bad that the Indian name "sun root" (certainly more descriptive than Jerusalem artichoke) was not packaged with the tuber when it was introduced to Europe.

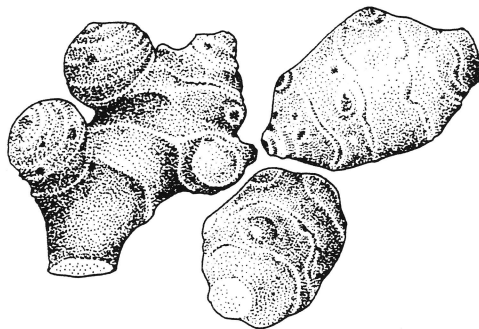
The plant grows as a coarse perennial, obtaining a height of 10 to 12 feet by late fall, with an abundance of small sunflowers. The tubers are bulbous and lumpy with a thin skin covering a flesh extremely crisp like water chestnuts. The tubers contain little sugar and almost no starch, which allows the pleasant tasting root to be consumed by diabetics without increasing their intake of sugar.

Originally, we obtained our Jerusalem artichoke tubers from a supermarket where they are sometimes available in Florida in the late fall, November and December. But they are also available from the seed companies such as Burpee's, Mellinger's, and Thompson & Morgan. We grow them as an annual, enjoying the flowers during the summer and digging the tubers in the fall. The literature says to leave a few tubers in the ground for next year's crop, but we find it best to dig all the tubers, eating most and saving a few to plant next spring. Bury the tubers in moist builders sand or

Vermiculite in a closed container such as a butter dish or Tupperware with a lid. Label with a permanent marker and place in the back of the refrigerator out of the way until spring. In March remove the tubers and plant about 3" deep in the garden in a full sun location. As the weather warms, the sprouts will break the surface and grow rapidly with tall straight stems covered with coarse leaves and capped with the small yellow sunflower-like flowers in mid summer.

Jerusalem artichokes require very little attention other than watering. Diseases and pests tend to be no problem. Authorities say removing the flower buds before they open will help the plant to grow and produce more tubers, but we prefer to enjoy the flowers and the plants produce a super abundance of small tubers sufficient for our needs. Use a spading fork to dig the tubers in the fall as needed. Because of their knobby formation, Jerusalem artichokes require vigorous scrubbing with a brush and careful inspection to remove all the sand and soil. We usually cook them without peeling but they can be peeled if one so desires. Usually, as a simple hot vegetables side dish, we steam or boil the tubers for about 10 minutes and serve them hot with salt and pepper and melted butter or a cream sauce. Occasionally, we slice the tubers and prepare them stir fried with other vegetables for only a few minutes to provide a crunchy dish.

Fresh Jerusalem artichokes can be stored for weeks in the refrigerator wrapped in plastic. They take very poorly to canning or freezing but will pickle fabulously. Eaten raw, they have a crisp clean texture that makes them ideal for dips and sauces with carrot sticks and celery. They add crunch and flavor to salads and are a great accompaniment to meat and fish.



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# What's Happening

September-October, 1997  
by Paul Zmoda

I've been pretty busy lately re-potting my tropical fruit tree collection. Those that are too tender to put in the ground are getting treated to more spacious containers with finished compost, after a root and top pruning. A top dressing of aged stable waste doubles as fertilizer and mulch and looks nice too.

We enjoyed some tasty Orinoco plantains prepared the Spanish way - as Arañitas (little spiders). Select mature, green plantains. Peel and then grate into small slivers. Pick up a golfball-sized mass and press together before dropping into hot oil. Turn once when lightly browned and drain before serving hot and lightly salted. These snacks are really great anytime.

We ate fresh-picked Pineapple (Natal Queen) and it was the best tasting pineapple

you could imagine. Nopale cactus are always reliable for a quick addition to any meal. The sliced, young pads are briefly sautéed with onions in olive oil and served as an authentic Mexican dish with a good hot sauce.

An ~~Iranian~~ co-worker told me about a tasty item to feast on. You select large, tender grape leaves and roll them around a stuffing made with ground lamb, raw rice and seasonings. Use egg whites as a glue and stick them in a saucepan with some water, but not too much. Cover and simmer for an hour or so and then enjoy hot, or later, when cold - anytime you feel like eating one.

New plantings: Rosemary, Tropical Almond, PawPaw, Cacti, Surinam Cherry, Palms, Guava.



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