



NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2001

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

EDITORS: BOB HEATH, THERESA HEATH, CHARLES NOVAK, LINDA NOVAK, JIM LEE, SALLY LEE

PRESIDENT: JAMES LEE

WEBSITE: www.rarefruit.org (Charles Novak)

MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH @ 2:00 PM.

NEXT MEETING: SAT. JUNE 9 - ECHO TRIP

PROGRAM: OUR PROGRAM THIS MONTH IS OUR CLUB TRIP TO ECHO IN FT MYERS. This is a chartered bus excursion which promises to be very interesting & exciting. The bus may be boarded in St Petersburg @ the DAV 9 parking garage between 6:00 & 6:15 AM, Sat. June 9. SEE MAP ON PAGE 01-40. The bus will be leaving the parking lot @ 6:15 sharp so don't be late. The bus may also be boarded in Hillsborough County @ the Brandon Town Center parking lot before 7:30. See map on page 01-41. The bus will leave the parking lot promptly @ 7:30 so again don't be late. Soft drinks will not be available for the trip but if you wish to snack along the way bring your own. We expect to arrive @ ECHO around 10:00 for a guided tour of their facilities & a presentation of their work feeding the world, after which several options will be open for discussion before returning to the Tampa Bay area, projected to be around 8:00 pm. Obviously, there will be no tasting table or plant raffle. See you there Saturday, bright-eyed & bushy-tailed!

Tasting Table

Jan Eliot: Coconut pork & beans	Paul Zmoda: Canned Lychees
Beth Reddicliffe: Peanut butter cookies	Al Roberts: Drop cookies
Julie Barrios: Greek salad & juice	Rose Terenzi: Chocolate cake
Judy Cimafranca: Ube Jam with tiramisu	Thom Scott: Sliced tomatoes
Musgraves: Guava juice, Barbados cherries, Surinam cherries	
Tess Anthony: Sesame seed candies & glazed ginger	
Angel Branesky: Chips and mango-pineapple salsa	
Lorraine Walsh: Tomato salad & eggplant dish	
Sally & Jim Lee: Egg rolls, fried wontons, Lychee-raspberry lemonade	
Linda Novak: White chocolate-macadamia nut-coconut cookies, Guava-mango sugar cookies, very-berry lemon cake, fruit juices	

The tasting table was sensational-as always. Thanks for your delicious donations!! They are appreciated by all!

There are a few grafting knives left. Also, parafilm for grafting has been ordered. If interested in obtaining one or both please contact Charles Novak (813)754-1399.

If you have any suggestions for trips, speakers, improvements, etc. please let us know.

A new membership directory will be printed soon. If any changes need to be made to your name, address or phone number please contact Charles Novak.

DAV-9 PARKING FOR ECHO BUS TRIP, 4801 - 37th ST. NORTH - St PETERSBURG

DIRECTIONS FROM THE NORTH:

South on Mullen Booth Rd (becomes 49th St N.) to 46th Ave N. Turn left, go to 37th St N, turn left. Go about 1 block. Parking on right.

OR:

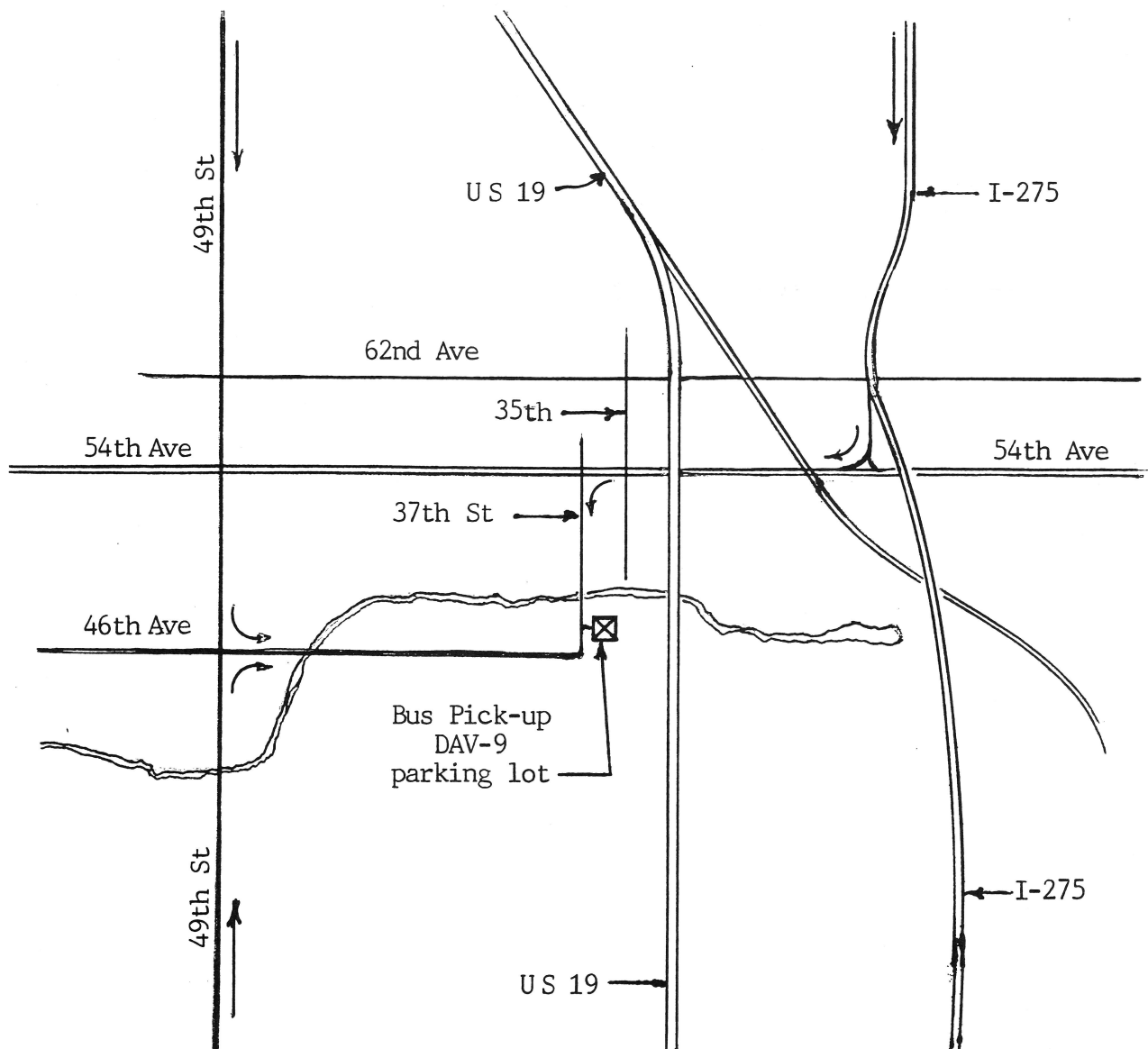
Take I-275 to the 54th Ave N. exit. Go west on 54th Ave to 37th St N. Turn left on 37th St. Go about 1/4 mile to parking on left.

DIRECTIONS FROM THE SOUTH:

Go north on 49th St N. to 46th Ave N. Turn right on 46th Ave.
Go to 37th St N. Turn left. Go about 1 block on right.

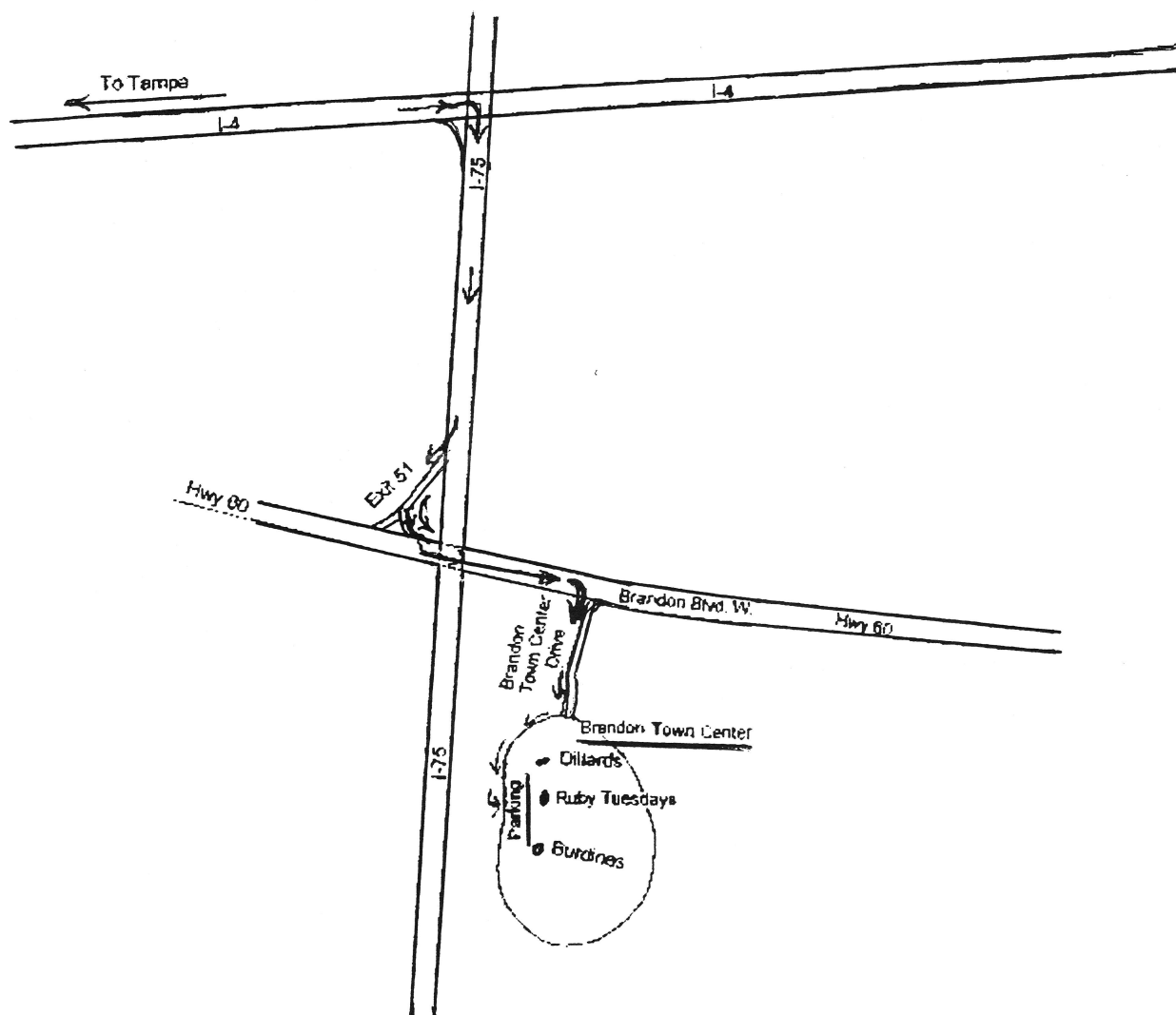
OR CALL PAUL @ 727-515-6073. He will give you directions.

DEPARTURE TIME FROM DAV is 6:15 AM SHARP. BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH.



ECHO Bus Trip: 2nd pickup location: Brandon Town Center Mall; Parking Lot in front of Ruby Tuesday restaurant. **DIRECTIONS:** From Tampa; East on I-4 to I-75 south. Take exit 51 to Hwy. 60/Brandon Blvd. East on Brandon Blvd. Turn right onto Brandon Town Center Drive (big mall sign-just past Barnes & Noble). Turn right at 1st stop sign. Ruby Tuesday is located between Dillards and Burdines. Park out near the Drive. Please be at this pickup location by 7:15AM. as the bus leaves at 7:30. **BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH.**

There are 4 bus seats still available. If you would like to join us on the bus please call Linda Novak (813)754-1399. The cost is \$10 per seat.



Directions to ECHO (north Ft. Myers) for those who plan to drive themselves: South on I-75. Take exit 26. Go 1 mile east on Bayshore Rd. (Rt. 78). Turn left on Durrance Rd. at the prominent ECHO sign. Turn in at 2nd left to park. Plan to arrive there about 9:30.

Paul Branesky's cell phone number: (727)515-6073 - for anyone needing to contact him the morning of Saturday, June 9, concerning meeting the bus at the DAV Hall in St. Petersburg.

FRUITING TREES SUITABLE FOR CENTRAL FLORIDA

by GENE JOYNER

Gene Joyner honored us with a slide presentation of many of the fruiting trees presently growing in his Unbelievable Acres in Palm Beach. His gardens have many of the fruiting trees that we can grow here in central Florida, plus many more that are slightly more tropical, over 170 different kinds of fruiting trees. Gene presented a broad spectrum of different types of tropical fruit, some of the latest varieties and updates on the proper care.

He started with slides of the banana, which is a very rewarding plant. You can put in a little sucker, maybe knee high, and have bananas in about a year. Likewise, if you get damage during the winter, the plant which is actually underground is not killed, just set back. By April they're up & growing again. If there is frost damage, just leave the banana alone and in the spring trim off the damaged leaves and often the new leaves will sprout out of the center of the plant's fruiting stalk. For extensive damage, even if you have to cut it off at the ground, new suckers will sprout and you're back in business. There are about 90 varieties of bananas grown in Florida: Gene has 70 varieties himself at Unbelievable Acres. He showed us one called Grand Name which is a commercial variety grown in Costa Rica & Puerto Rico. It produces bunches of over 100 lbs. with up to 200 individual fruit, which is one reason they are a commercial variety. Of course, as we know, bananas tend to ripen all at once, so you need to have a lot of friends when they start ripening or be prepared to freeze a lot of banana bread.

Gene showed us one called Java Blue or Ice Cream banana. It has a silver gray color & is one he highly recommends because it has pretty fruit which at maturity turns yellow just like most other bananas. It has very soft custard like pulp and a very strong banana flavor. It's one of the best bananas for making banana bread because it adds its very strong banana flavor to the bread. We also saw the Jamaican Red banana which has a pink to red skin. They are

red from the day they form until they reach maturity and only get a slightly lighter shade of pink as they ripen. They have a yellow pulp of excellent quality. The standard Jamaican Red grows to 20 ft or more but there is a dwarf variety of 8 or 9 ft which is preferred for home use. The Apple banana is another excellent fruit for dooryard growth. It grows to about 6" and has a very thin skin which is the main reason it is not a commercial variety, but for the dooryard it is excellent. Here again, the tree grows 18 or 20 ft tall, which makes it a problem for harvesting. They are an excellent fruit for eating out of hand and do have a slight apple flavor.

The Ae Ae banana from Hawaii has variegated white & green leaves and is very pretty. The fruit is also striped when immature but turns yellow at maturity. Gene also had slides of the Praying Hands banana in which the fruit all grow together in each hand, which is a very unusual formation. It is common to eat the entire hand at one time but each individual banana can be pulled from the hand & eaten separately since only the skins are grown together and the individual bananas are separate. We also saw the Thousand Finger banana which produces a stalk as much as 8 ft long. Since all of the flowers are female, each produces a small finger sized banana. The Hua Moa is a short plump banana from Hawaii. Each fruit is about the size of a soft drink can. There aren't a lot of bananas on a stalk because the bananas are so big, but the quality is excellent and can be eaten out of hand or baked or fried like plantains.

Plantains, another form of banana, are usually cooked, but if fully ripe, may be eaten out of hand. They have a higher starch content than other bananas so are not as sweet. Plantains come in short trees like the Puerta Rican Dwarf but others, like the Orinoco, may grow 18 to 20 ft tall. Plantains tend to be more angular in cross section than bananas, which are very rounded.

Bananas are easy to grow if they receive

lots of water and fertilizer and heavy mulching. If they receive a lot of fertilizer, they'll frequently fruit in the first year. After the banana fruits, it should be cut down because that fruiting stalk will never fruit again. But the suckers that come up around the original tree will grow up & produce additional fruit for the next crop.

The Barbados Cherry is another excellent fruit for this area. The plant is a shrub up to maybe 18 ft but if you don't want it that big, you can keep it trimmed back. It produces a fruit with the highest source of Vitamin C among any of the tropical fruit. The ripe cherries are brilliant red, look similar to the Surinam Cherry but are filled out better and don't have that pumpkin shape. Gene says he has a crop on his plants right now & they will bear 3 or 4 more times this summer, which is normal for Barbados cherries. The fruit are about an inch in diameter & range from very tart to sweet, depending on the variety, but the sweet varieties have less Vitamin C. One fruit has all the daily requirement of ascorbic acid so if you're taking Vitamin C tablets you can dispense with those during the bearing season of the Barbados cherry. The fruit are used for making jellies and jams and a fruit drink with a high Vitamin C content.

The Black Sapote is another excellent fruit for this area & one of Gene's favorites. It is native to Mexico & is frequently called the chocolate pudding fruit. The fruit looks like a large green persimmon, to which it is related. At maturity they do not change color except to become a lighter green and become soft to the touch. Inside, they have a deep chocolate colored pulp & a consistency like custard. They are eaten fresh or made into milk shakes, ice creams, breads & muffins. The tree tends to be very full with large dark green leaves and may grow to 30 or 40 ft at maturity. It's advisable not to leave the fruit on the tree after it ripens as it will fall and you will get a 10 or 12 inch chocolate spot on the ground. With experience one learns to determine when the fruit is ready to pick by its size and slight change in color. It is normally picked hard and allowed to

ripen on the counter for 2 or 3 days until it softens.

The cashew is too cold sensitive to be grown outdoors in this area normally but it may be grown as a container plant. Just bring it inside on cold nights. Cashew blooms in May in Palm Beach; maybe a little later here. The fruit come in late June & early July. The cashew apple is about the size of a Bartlett pear, only bright red or yellow, depending on variety. The nut itself hangs on the bottom of the fruit, as Gene showed us in the next slide. The tree reaches about 30' at maturity but it can be pruned back and kept small so it may be covered on cold nights. The cashew nut cannot be eaten without cooking; it must be processed to be safe to eat. The apple, however, can be eaten as a fresh fruit or pressed to make a drink. In Brazil they use the juice for making wine, which is sold all over Latin America.

The star fruit, or carambola, comes from the Far East & always attracts a lot of attention where it is displayed. Carambolas come in a range of colors from almost white to very deep orange and the taste ranges from very tart to sweet and insipid. The carambola makes a big tree that can bear up to 600 lbs. of fruit at each fruiting. Also it may fruit 2 or 3 times a year; very prolific. The size of the fruit can be anywhere from 2½" long to 8" depending on variety. The fruit may be eaten fresh out of hand or may be used in making jellies, wines & a drink. When green, they can be made into pickles. There are a lot of new varieties available now, a total of about 35 different varieties available in Florida. Gene indicates he has 17 varieties in his landscape. They are good in fruit salads & as a garnish on top of the punch in a punch bowl.

* * *

NEW MEMBERS

Robin Musolino	Tampa FL
Eve Peters	Tampa FL
Celeste Welch	Archer FL

MAY PLANT EXCHANGE

PLANT	DONOR	RECIPIENT
Pineapple	Bob Heath	Jim Burch
Eugenia Confusa	"	?
Beauty Berry	"	Cathy Rooks
Banana	"	Andrea Topoler
Solanum Diaphelum	"	?
Lilly Pilly	"	?
Chaya	"	?
Yellow Passion Fruit	"	Georganne Baker
Orange Berry	"	?
White Sapote Seedling	"	V. Reddicliffe
Cabbage (4)	Lee	?
Teapot Gourd	"	J. Murrie
" (2)	"	?
Grape	"	V. Reddicliffe
Papaya	"	?
Avocado	"	Kent Helmick
Banana	"	John Stonehouse
Tomato	"	B. Reddicliffe
Rollinia	Zmoda	Keith Dwyer
Zuchini	Lee	J. Murrie
Passion Fruit	"	Marv Hymes
Hot Pepper	Phil Brown	Ted Matthews
Surinam Cherry (4)	Jim Stout	?
Purple Passion Fruit (2)	Thom Scott	?
Numwah Banana	Sharon B.	B. Reddicliffe
Cavendish	Janet Conard	?
Alamawda	W. Bradish	Betty List
Plumeria	R. Bradish	?
Bromeliads (4)	B. Reddicliffe	?
Egg Plant	Ed & Lorraine Walsh	?
Mickey Mouse Plant (2)	Susan Reed	?
Pineapple Fruit	Myren Branesky	Kent Helmick
" "	Steven Branesky	?
Pineapple	Paul Branesky	?
Guava	Fred Roush	?
Avocado	Neil Leonard	?
Carambola		?
Orchid Plant	Kent Helmick/Ted Matthews	Keith Dwyer
Pint Blueberries	Novak	Kent Helmick
Banana	?	Ed Walsh

WHAT'S HAPPENING

May-Jun 2001

by PAUL ZMODA

We are so busy these days, mainly just providing water to our plants. Watering chores take up a large chunk of our time. We've lost a few prized specimens; they dry out and die suddenly - it's very disturbing. We need rain. Soaker hoses are allowed by authorities without regulation. I realized that, by using them, I can water plants when I'm not even home.

Grafting experiments are ongoing all the time for me. Ichikei kejiro persimmon cleft & whip grafts are doing fine atop the Fuyu persimmon. 'Yates' American persimmon chip-grafted onto the trunk of 'Meador' seems to be sprouting all right. "Drying out" in this dry weather is a serious obstacle.

I needed to include alternate clones of various wild plums to our orchard so that the trees already planted could have another source of pollen; otherwise, these trees may rarely set fruit. I've been grafting a twig or bud here and there so I will have all the bases covered in the future. Usually, the more varieties you plant together, the better are your chances of obtaining a good fruit set - this is true for a wide variety of species.

Speaking of clones: despite some media alarm at such "work of the devil", cloning is a natural and desirable activity which botanists, such as yourselves, regularly participate in. To clone something (such as a plant) is to make a copy of that plant using a small piece of tissue from the original. I clone trees all the time. For instance: from a well-shaped and productive fruit tree, I select a small, out-of-the-way branch. I force roots to form and plant it out in the ground when it is strong enough. This is a clone - an exact, genetic copy of the original. No monster here; just artistic plant manipulation.

We canned 10 jars of fresh peaches. We can't eat them fresh all at once. Better to save some for another time.

Happy 80th birthday to Janet Conard!

New plantings: Italian drying tomatoes, hot peppers, mayhaw, hibiscus, Macadamia nut 'Teardrop', avocado, chori beans.

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A GUIDE TO TROPICAL FRUIT TREES & VINES (continued from May)

FAMILY - BUSERACEAE

40. *Canarium album* - Chinese olive

Large tree native to Asia. Fruit is eaten fresh or preserved. Seed is also edible, but is rather small and seldom used. Pulp is used for making oil. Tree is propagated from seed.

41. *Canarium ovatum* - Pill nut



Large tree native to the Philippines and East Indies. Its hard-shelled, triangular black fruits are produced in clusters maturing in 90 days. Internal fruit is white or cream. Pulp is eaten fresh and seeds are roasted and also used as a source of oil. Plants are propagated from seed.

FAMILY - CACTACEAE

42. *Cereus peruvianus* - Peruvian apple

South American shrub to 10 feet. Branches are thick, green with series of giant ribs and needle-like spines to 1 inch long. Its white flowers have faint fragrance. Reddish fruit is 2-1/2 inches in diameter and has white flesh and sweet flavor. Eaten fresh or made into jelly or jam. Plants propagated from seeds and cutting.

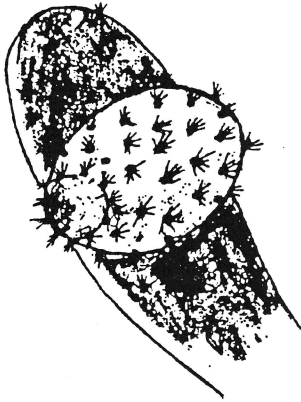
43. *Hylocereus triangularis*

South American cactus with green, 3-angled stems, about 1-1/2 inches thick. Needle-shaped spines have swollen bases. White flowers are produced at night and should be hand pollinated to produce fruit. The red fruit is about 4 inches long and very tasty. This plant is used as a base plant for grafted cactus. New plants are easily started from cuttings.

44. *Hylocereus undatus* - Night blooming cereus, Strawberry pear

Vine native to Central America and Mexico. Stems are 3-winged with the wings 1 to 2 inches wide. Spines are short and found along stems. Flowers are white, opening during the evening hours and closing by daylight. Fruit is red and 4-5 inches in diameter. Its white pulp is sweet and eaten fresh or used in desserts. Plants are started from cuttings or seed.

45. *Opuntia ficus-indica* - Indian fig, Prickly pear



Bushy or tree-like plant to 18 feet in height - originated in Mexico. Joints to 20 inches long with few spines. Flowers are yellow and up to 4 inches across. Fruit is pear-shaped, about 3 inches long and red or purple when mature. Pulp is red, sweet and pleasant. Fruit is eaten fresh, dried, made into jellies, candy or preserves. Plants propagated from seed or cuttings.

46. *Pereskia aculeata* - Barbados gooseberry

A tropical American vine to 30 feet in length. Leaves are thick and have spines in clusters of 2 or 3. Flowers are white, yellowish or pink and up to 1-1/2 inches across. The yellow spiny fruit is less than 1 inch in diameter with white flesh. Pulp is eaten fresh or preserved. Flavor is sweet to sour. Propagation is from seeds or cuttings.

FAMILY - CYCADACEAE

52. *Zamia integrifolia* - Coontie

Native evergreen plant from Cuba and South Florida. The plant attains a height of 1-1/2 feet and the fern-like leaves are dark green, glossy, with pointed tips and 6-18 pairs of leaflets. Its thick, underground stems are starchy and edible. Roots are very toxic if not properly prepared. They must be peeled, pounded, ground, boiled, mashed, washed with plenty of water, drained and then dried. Run off water is capable of killing cattle. Plants are started from seeds.

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER RFCI
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