



Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

Affiliate of the International Palm Society

Monthly Update

June 2013

IMPORTANT NEWS REGARDING THIS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

In an effort to minimize costs, beginning in July, you will receive this newsletter via e-mail. We will send a hard copy and an e-mail copy to members in June to ensure a smooth transition. We will continue to mail a hard copy (with limited color pages) to those individuals that do not have e-mail.

The e-mailed version, in addition to reducing our costs, will enable us to provide you with a full color copy with as many pages as necessary to share news for the month.

If you did not get your electronic version, please check your spam folder.

We hope that you will enjoy receiving this monthly newsletter in the new format.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

June 5, 2013

6:30 p.m. - Board Meeting

7:30 p.m. General Meeting

Speaker: Sara Edelman,
Palm and Cycad Manager
at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

JUNE FEATURED AUCTION PLANTS

Neoveitchia storckii
Dypsis psammophila
Licuala grandis

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SPECIAL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENT

It has been 19 years since we had the curator of palms from Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (FTBG) speak at our meeting. We are excited to announce that Sara Edelman, Palm and Cycad Manager at FTBG, will be the guest speaker at our June 5th meeting. Her presentation will be "Shedding Light on the *Pseudophoenix* Decline." This decline is potentially lethal to our native palm *P. sargentii* and other non-native species within this genus. I am sure Sara will share her knowledge of growing palms and cycads at FTBG, so have your questions ready for her.

See you at Mounts Botanical Garden!

VISIT US AT www.palmbeachpalmcycadsociety.com

**ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION ON**

Copernicia ekmanii

by Charlie Beck

Last month we featured *Copernicia ekmanii*. We suggested that the success of growing this palm west of Military Trail was questionable due to cold sensitivity. Mike Harris has reported growing this palm in the ground successfully in Loxahatchee (see photo on page 6). He also said that Paul Craft has a healthy specimen of *C. ekmanii* planted at his property in Loxahatchee. Apparently this palm is more cold hardy than was reported although potted palms of this species appear to be cold sensitive.

**FEATURED PALM
NAME CHANGE**

by Charlie Beck

In the April issue of our newsletter we featured *Dypsis paludosa*. The source of this plant was Floribunda Palms and Exotics. John Dransfield, formally of Kew Garden and leading authority on palms of Madagascar, recently visited Floribunda Palms and verified that palms sold as *Dypsis paludosa* were actually *Dypsis mirabilis*.

**COLONY COLLAPSE
DISORDER: EUROPEAN
BAN ON NEONICOTINOID
PESTICIDES**

France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia have banned seed treatment of certain crops with Neonicotinoid Pesticides. This pesticide has been associated with Bee Colony Collapse Disorder. Imidacloprid is the commonly available form of Neonicotinoid Pesticide. Use this insecticide sparingly if at all.

FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Dypsis lanceolata*

by Charlie Beck

Dypsis lanceolata is a medium size pinnate palm native to the Comoro Islands near Madagascar. This palm grows in rainforest at elevations of 1,000-3,000' in habitat. It grows in light shade to full sun. Stems reach heights of 15-18'. This palm is usually clustering but can occasionally be solitary. Stems are quite attractive - waxy green with tan leaf scars. The crownshaft can be covered with reddish pubescence. The leaves are slightly irregular and are somewhat plumose and arching. The leaflets are broad and are puckered similar to *Chamaedorea oblongata*.

Our oldest specimen of *D. lanceolata* is 10 years old. Its tallest stem is 13' in overall height. The stems are 3-1/4" in diameter and the leaves measure 8' long. We have two specimen plants in very light shade and have one planted in full shade. Both light conditions seem to suit this palm. The palm planted in full shade has not yet suckered.

This palm is well adapted to growing in Palm Beach County. Although reference books claim that this palm is cold sensitive, all three of our plants showed no damage due to our record cold winters of 2009-2010. Reference books also claim excellent drainage is required but our specimens have been inundated for weeks at a time with no ill effect. I have not noticed any minor nutritional deficiencies on this palm when fertilized at recommended rates. We did have a stem die but a new bud sprouted from the base of the dead stem. At the base of another live stem we also had a side shoot appear (see fig. ? & ?).

D. lanceolata could be confused with *D. pembana* or *D. cabadae*. *D. pembana* is a much faster growing palm with a larger stem caliper and longer fronds with leaflets in a single plane. *D. cabadae* is about the same scale as *D. lanceolata* but the leaflets form a V when looking down the rachis. *D. cabadae* is also more cold sensitive than *D. lanceolata* and *D. pembana*.

Give this beautiful *Dypsis* a try. It has a distinctive tropical look and it does not take up much space. The 15-18' ultimate height is just right for a foundation planting. It thrives in our sandy soils and seems to love our humid climate. (See photos on page 3. All photographs for this article were provided by Charlie Beck.)

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LAKE OSBORNE ANIMAL CLINIC

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"By appointment only"

Dypsis lanceolata



Stem sideshoot



Leaf sheath



Stem detail



Burretiokentia hapala in January, inflorescences visible.



Half the open flowers have fallen off in night temps in the 40s. Unopened flowers (left) are OK.



Faintly striped crownshaft of the palm.

A TALE OF NEW CALEDONIA PALMS

by John Kennedy

Once upon a time, in the last century, Mike Dahme and I visited a Famous Palmperson who, in that phase of his life, was the proprietor of a palm nursery in Loxahatchee (he has since moved on through subsequent phases). An interesting place but not for browsers since there were no tags on any of the thousand or more pots. However, the proprietor knew where everything was, it was only necessary to name a species before he moved to an area where all of these were located.

I can't remember what Mike was looking for—probably palms from New Caledonia, completely unknown to me. My awareness of New Caledonia was limited to the highly unflattering description of the island and its capital, Nouméa, from my much older brother who had been stationed there as a very young sailor in World War II. Anyway, I bought two juvenile palms, no more than 1-gallon *Burretiokentia vieillardii* and *B. hapala*, each identified by tag after purchase.

When I got home, the *hapala* died in the pot almost right away, reminding me of adventures with tropical fish during my college years that waited only till I got them home to die. The *vieillardii* continued in the pot for a year or two more, put out some divided leaves and got to about a foot high overall before I planted it out about 1995 on the west side of my house (half-acre lot), just north of a big bald cypress and south of a sizeable *Tabebuia umbellata* (now felici-

tously renamed *Handroanthus umbellatus*). There the little palm received the advantages of benign neglect, mitigated by occasional watering and fertilization, to grow to about 7 feet high.

Hurricane Jeanne in 2004 knocked over the supposedly wind-resistant 50-foot bald cypress to a 50-degree angle while nearly flattening the Yellow Trumpet Tree. The palm was a bit wind-tossed but suffered no real damage. As a matter of fact, it now had an opening to more sun and space than previously and began to put on height.

Its handsome symmetry began to be apparent. I sent a picture to Dave Reid, who replied that it was not *B. vieillardii* but *B. hapala*. I asked why this was so, but never received an answer. I had looked into my copy of *Palms and Cycads of New Caledonia* (Hodel & Pintaud) and had thought that my palm matched the *vieillardii*. True, the stripes on the tan crownshaft were not as pronounced as those in pictures in the book but the pictures of *hapala*'s crownshaft didn't reveal any striping at all.

Eventually, the palm began to flower. The first flowers on the single inflorescence fell off (I think in 2007), so no fruit. In fall 2008, the buds appeared, didn't open, then the winter of that year brought some freezing temperatures. To my amazement, the flowers opened in the spring of 2009 and actually produced fruit with viable seed, which has continued since then, even after a second cold

winter. I was impressed. The seed has begun to germinate in about four months, and continues sporadically for about a year. Spotty leaf damage occurred from frost, though the leaves were not killed outright by the cold.

Faith Bishock was impressed that I actually had a flowering *B. vieillardii*. My reply was a modest, Aw shucks! But I still wondered about the palm's identity. I sent an e-mail to the Famous Palmperson last September, asking for clarification.

His response, from the IPS biennial at Nong Nooch was, oh yes, the seed had been misidentified by the supplier. What you have is *Burretiokentia hapala*, congratulations. Ummm. I learned that the distinctive characteristic of this species in the genus is its thick bottle-brush off-white rachillae. Three flowers in a little row, a male in the center with a female on either side. The fruit is a dark orange, very small, thin over an even smaller seed.

And *B. vieillardii* is quite rare though *B. hapala*, while uncommon, is not rare.

In a previous phase of the Famous Palmperson's career, I had bought seed from him, now have a handsome *Borassodendron machadonis* with a small trunk, leaves 7 feet high. Ah, but is it really *Borassodendron machadonis*?

(See photos on page 4. All photographs for this article were provided by John Kennedy.)



PALM BEACH PALM & CYCAD SOCIETY ANNUAL PICNIC AND MOST SPECTACULAR AUCTION OF THE YEAR

Our annual picnic and auction is scheduled to take place on June 8, 2013. It will take place in Terry and Ruth Lynch's fabulous garden located at 2802 Lake Osborne Drive in Lake Worth.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Garden Tour
10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Auction
12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. Potluck Lunch

WHAT TO BRING

Plant donations (of any kind)
Potluck dish
Please bring a chair

MAY THANK YOU

Food: Don Bittel, Ruth Lynch, Ed Napoli, Tom Ramiccio,
Plant Donations: Charlie Beck, Steve Garland, Mike Harris,
 Dale Holton, Ted Sheldon
Door: Tom Ramiccio



Copernicia ekmanii growing in Mike Harris' garden in Loxahatchee.
(Photo by Mike Harris)

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MEALYBUG DESTROYER TO THE RESCUE

by Charlie Beck

If you notice what looks like giant mealybugs in your garden, DO NOT spray with insecticide. These are the larval form of a black lady beetle (*Crptolaemus montrouzieri*), native to Australia. The larvae are named mealybug destroyers. These beneficial insects love to eat aphids, mealybugs and scale, especially croton scale. I've seen these all over my crotons eating the scale. They can also be found on the lower surface of palm leaflets devouring scale and whitefly larvae. They look so much like mealybugs, they are easily confused. They also consume honeydew which is excreted from scale and other sucking pests. This honeydew is what causes the black mold found on scale and whitefly infested plants. These beneficial insects can be purchased online but my mealybug destroyers arrived naturally. If you stop spraying insecticides or applying Imidacloprid, they should show up in your garden all by themselves.



Crptolaemus montrouzieri
Beneficial insect



RECENT FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN TRIP

by Charlie Beck

On a recent trip to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden I discovered some interesting palms. Some of these palms were new finds for me and others were old favorites.

A few new sightings were located in the Rare Plant House. *Sommieria leucophylla*, previously named *Sommieria affinis*, was a first sighting. It was newly planted in a controlled temperature setting. There were three nice sized plants with stiff bifid leaves with brown undersides. *Dypsis boiviniana* had a newly emergent red bifid leaf. I revisited some old favorites in the Rare Plant House. A magnificent specimen of *Itaya amicornum* is still thriving. This palm can be successfully grown in the ground in Palm Beach County. A large specimen of *Salaca magnifica* with its dangerous spines and huge leaves is still growing right next to the path. Also inside was a fruiting specimen of *Kerriodoxa elegans*.

Outside in the garden I photographed a tall specimen of *Cyphophoenix nucele*. This palm has been growing in the rainforest for many years. It probably survived Hurricane Andrew in 1992. We have been offering this palm at our society auctions. *C. nucele* has an upright, feather duster growth pattern and grows well in Palm Beach County. We will share more finds in our future newsletters. (See photos on page 8)

Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society 2013 Officers & Executive Committee

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Appointees

Charlie Beck, Librarian
Ruth Lynch, Refreshment Chairman
Brenda Beck, Web Master and Historian



Adult Australian
Lady Beetle
(*Crptolaemus*
Montrouzieri)

Recent Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden Photos



LEFT TO RIGHT: *Sommieria leucophylla*, *Salaca magnifica*, *Dypsis boiviniana*, *Itaya amicum*, fruiting *Kerriodoxa elegans*, *Cyphophoenix nucele*, *Tithonia* bloom with nectaring Monarch butterfly in the Beck Garden. (This plant was recently offered at our monthly meeting.)

See these photos in full color in the electronic copy of this newsletter you will receive.

