



Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

Affiliate of the International Palm Society

Monthly Update

January 2014

JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS CANCELLED DUE TO THE HOLIDAY

(See a list of 2014 upcoming meeting dates on page 6)

Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

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Brenda Beck, Web Master and Historian

COURTESY OF:

International Palm Society Newsletter dated 12/16/2013



Introducing Palmworld – a new web tool and app for palms

Palmworld is a new web site and app (iPhone, iPad, iPod; Android version coming soon) that provides expert information about all >2500 palm species within a single user-friendly and freely accessible interface.

Users of Palmworld can search or browse all species of palm to find detailed information on distribution, morphology, habitat, taxonomy, cultivation and conservation, as well as almost 6000 high quality images, mostly taken in the wild.

Palmworld has been built by French software developer and palm enthusiast Bertrand Duvall, in close collaboration with Bill Baker and Lauren Gardiner at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Ben Clark at the



University of Oxford.

The information presented by Palmworld is based extensively on data supplied by Kew from Palmweb (www.palmweb.org; a palm biodiversity information portal) and eMonocot (www.emonocot.org), and from Kew's palm image library.

These data are augmented with additional content from sources such as Wikipedia and IUCN, and additional images have been generously supplied by numerous individuals. Further submissions of images, which are fully credited, are welcomed – contact info@palmworld.org.

Palmworld puts the world of palms at your finger tips – download the app from the App Store or explore the web site at www.palmworld.org.

DECEMBER THANK YOU

Food: All Members

Plant Donations: All Members

Door: Tom Ramiccio

SPECIAL THANK YOU FOR JANUARY NEWSLETTER PREPARATION

Brenda A. La Platte in
Brenda Beck's absence

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FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Arenga undulatifolia*
by Charlie Beck

Arenga undulatifolia is a monoecious, pinnate palm native to the Philippine Islands, Borneo and Sulawesi. It reportedly grows on limestone soils. This is primarily a clumping palm but it has also been reported to grow as a solitary palm. In habitat this palm might reach 30' in overall height. The most distinguishing feature of this palm is its wide leaflets which have wavy (undulating) edges. The leaflets are dark green above and silver below. As with all *Arenga* species, this palm is monocarpic. Inflorescences emerge at the top of mature stems and then continue to emerge down the stem. After this process is complete, the stem dies. *Arenga undulatifolia* was also known as *Arenga ambong* in the past. Both have been lumped together as *Arenga undulatifolia*.

My first palm book was Palms in Australia by David Jones. This book was first published in 1984. At the time it was one of the most complete palm references available. On page 162 was the most exotic palm that I have ever seen. *Arenga undulatifolia* looked so tropical I was sure it could never grow in Palm Beach County. I still remember showing this picture to my friends at work even though my friends did not share my enthusiasm for palms. Along with *Cyrtostachys renda*, this palm was instantly my favorite. Then on a trip to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden I saw *A. undulatifolia* growing outside the Rare Plant House. I was still certain it would only be short lived 80 miles north in Palm Beach County.

In our Palm and Cycad Society's early days, society volunteers helped plant and maintain the Norton Sculpture Garden. At one of these work days, Brenda and I first befriended society members, Dale Holton and Bob Grimm. Almost 25 years later both of these members are still friends and are still palm enthusiasts. There are some real benefits to volunteering! During work at the Norton Sculpture

Garden I discovered a beautiful mature specimen of *A. undulatifolia*. Wow, it can be grown in Palm Beach County.

We planted our first *A. undulatifolia* in 1993. It was the year we bought our "garden to be." We planted three more a year later. Our plants have grown well over the years. The only setback occurred after the record cold winters of 2009 and 2010. Our oldest specimen lost its tallest stem due to the cold but it hardly affected the beauty of this palm. The original planting is located in full sun. Our three additional specimen plants are grown in shade. The shaded palms are not as vigorous as the one grown in full sun but they are quite healthy in that situation.

This palm is a vigorous clumper and can take up a lot of real estate. The footprint of our 21 year old palm is a diameter of 22 feet. Its overall height is 15 feet. In the early days I trimmed off all of the suckers so that a single rosette of fronds remained. As work in the garden multiplied, I gave up on this trimming and let this palm take on its natural form. If you read the literature on this palm moist soil and good drainage is recommended. All four of our palms flood regularly after repeated heavy rains. Sometimes our palms are inundated for days at a time with no negative effects. As with most *Arenga* species minor nutritional deficiencies do not seem to be a problem when fertilized at recommended rates.

Arenga undulatifolia is rarely planted in Palm Beach County. This would be an excellent choice as a ground cover below a grouping of three taller palms. This palm is a showstopper and will attract a lot of attention. Remember that you can trim away all of the suckers to reduce its footprint. This palm is probably untested in the western portions of our county but it is certainly worth a try.

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"By appointment only"

FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Arenga undulatifolia* (continued)

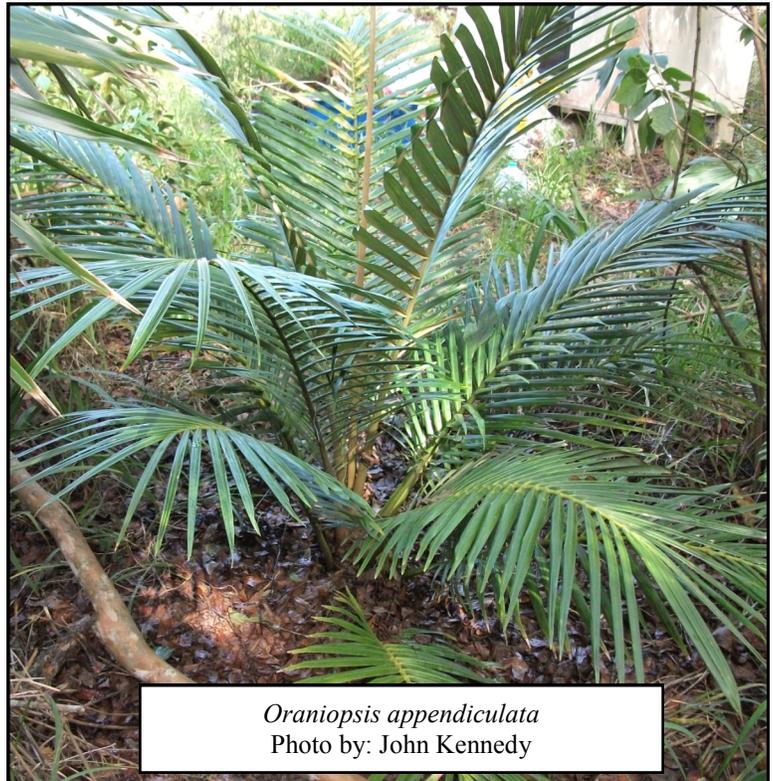
Arenga undulatifolia, 21 years old
grown in the Beck garden



Top leaf detail of *Arenga undulatifolia*



Under leaf detail of *Arenga undulatifolia*



Oraniopsis appendiculata
Photo by: John Kennedy

FAIRCHILD TROPICAL BOTANIC GARDEN TOUR



Oncosperma tigillarum
15 years old



Sabal causiarum
27 years old



Corypha utan
18 years old



Sabal yapa
56 years old



Livistona inermis
29 years old



Pseudophoenix vinifera
17 years old



Arenga microcarpa
unknown age



Pseudophoenix ekmanii
12 years old



Nypa fruticans
unknown age

Photographs in this issue were provided by Charlie Beck unless otherwise noted.

Opinions expressed and products or recommendations published in this newsletter may not be the opinions or recommendations of the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society or its board of directors.

GARDEN CARTS

by Charlie Beck

Over the years I've bought many different garden carts. Some were more useful and durable than others and some of these carts had inherent design flaws. I'll share my experiences with you. Keep in mind none of these carts replace a wheelbarrow, which is designed for dumping. Even though these "pull carts" are easier to maneuver than a wheelbarrow none of them (except the power wagon) are better at dumping.



Figure 1

a problem. I would steer clear of carts with this configuration.



Figure 2

be replaced with a solid bar. The small wheels do not rotate on ball bearings so they are not meant to carry heavy loads. Larger wheels roll much easier. Another disadvantage of this cart is the shape of the front legs. These wide, stump legs can cause a drag when pulling this cart over tall grass or a meadow. The body of this cart has no seams and is quite durable when left outside. This cart is properly balanced over the wheels. Rubbermaid makes a larger version of this cart with 20" wheels. That cart still has the same wide stump front legs, so if high grass is not an issue for you, the larger Rubbermaid cart might work for you.



Figure 3

Figure 3 is a well balanced cart with a handle of adequate length. The 16" wheels feature no flat tires and roll quite easily with heavy loads. The tubular steel frame glides through high grass, but it is not galvanized. If you leave this cart outside, the frame will quickly rust away. The poly tub is bolted to the frame. Cracks can form around the tub mounting holes which reduce its durability. This would be a great cart if you can store it inside out of the weather.

Figure 4 is a large capacity cart with a galvanized steel tubular frame and an exterior grade plywood box. It has 26" pneumatic tires and each wheel hub has two ball bearings.

This cart has a huge 13 cubic foot capacity. This unit currently sells for \$389 on Amazon and requires assembly. Smaller units with 20" wheels are also available. The advantage of a wooden box is that you can easily add provisions for holding shovels, loping shears, and other garden essentials. I even added hooks to the sides so I can overload the cart with trimmings and then use a strap to compress and secure the load. The large wheels are easy to roll with most loads. The weight capacity is 400 pounds. I even mounted a hitch to the cart so I could pull heavy loads with the lawn tractor. The end panel is hinged so that you can dump a load of soil or rock. The disadvantage of the hinged end panel is that it can leak the contents from the cracks at the joint. The large capacity is great but its size makes the unit less maneuverable. Because the box was made of plywood, I have always kept this unit in a storage shed. I doubt the plywood would last long if stored outside. As for balance, this cart is designed to never tip over.



Figure 4

Figure 5 shows a Muller's Smart Cart. It is manufactured in the USA. This cart has a 7 cubic foot capacity but also is available with a 12 cubic foot tub. Both sized tubs snap in place on the same sized frame (no bolt holes). The tub has a lip around the top edge so you can strap oversized loads down for easy transport. This cart has 20" wheels with ball bearing hubs. I first saw these carts at Lotusland in California. Even though the \$349 retail price seems high, everything about this cart is top quality. The best feature of this cart is the aluminum frame which has a lifetime guarantee. My cart has been stored outside year round for over 14 years and the frame looks brand new. The tub is UV treated but after 14 years in the sun it did develop a crack which I fixed with a fiberglass repair kit. Replacement tubs are offered for sale by the manufacturer. The only other repair I did was to replace the wheel bearings, which was quite easy to do. We have two bearing outlets in the WPB area so replacement bearings are inexpensive and readily available. Balance, durability, design and maneuverability are all highpoints of this cart and I repeat "made in America."



Figure 5

Figure 6 shows the DR Power Wagon sold by DR Industries. DR Industries offers a whole line of garden equipment which you might have seen advertised on TV or in magazines. Their



Figure 6

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

products are made in Vermont, USA. I have bought many pieces of equipment from them and I can attest that their customer service is first rate. They keep record of all of your purchases and stock replacement parts for their equipment. They even have technicians which can guide you in diagnosis and repair of their equipment. I use this power wagon more than any other piece of power equipment. If I couldn't repair it, I would immediately replace it. This wagon is meant for large gardens. It has 6 cubic foot capacity and a removable stake side box. It is powered by a 6.75 hp motor and has an electric start and dump feature. It has an 800 pound load capacity. The front wheels are drive wheels and the swivel rear wheel allows zero turn radii. At times I have 2 tons of fertilizer delivered to our front gate. I can move 500# of fertilizer at a time with

this cart. Any heavier loads are hard to steer on sugar sand. I can transport a dozen concrete blocks or 4x4 fence posts with this wagon. I transport 12 bins of mulch at a time with this wagon. You can attach an electric 25 gallon tank sprayer to its battery and motor around while spraying. It also has an optional poly tub that can replace the stake side box. I've owned this wagon for more than 10 years. Of course you want to store this \$2600 wagon (retail price) inside.

In conclusion, weigh the following features before buying a cart: handle length, load balance, load capacity, rust or rot resistance, wheel size, wheel bearing type, and overall durability. My first choice is the Smart Cart for its light weight aluminum frame which can be stored outside. For a large garden the Power Wagon is a useful asset.

PALM DISCOVERIES

by Charlie Beck

See page 4 for some sightings from my last trip to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. *Oncosperma tigillarum* is a heavily armed palm from SE Asia. This tropical beauty is rarely grown in South Florida. After 27 years of growth, *Sabal causiarum* cannot be described as a fast grower but it did have a characteristic stout stem. The *Corypha utan* was an impressive specimen after 18 years of growth. *Sabal yapa* and *Livistona inermis* both display a sparse crown of leaves and medium sized stature. I wish *Pseudophoenix vinifera* would grow as fast here as it does in Miami. After 17 years of growth, *P. vinifera* is displaying its distinctive vase shaped stem. *Arenga microcarpa* and *Nypa fruticans*

were growing at the lake's edge. Finally, a 12 year old specimen of *Pseudophoenix ekmanii* might be a Florida Champion size palm.

On page 3 is a photo of an *Oraniopsis appendiculata* successfully growing in John Kennedy's garden in Vero Beach. This specimen is approximately 23 years old, so it's seen its share of cold snaps. I've tried and failed to grow this palm. Maybe it's worth another try.

Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society 2014 Meeting Dates

Our meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month at 7:30 PM at the Mount's Botanical Garden building.

CANCELLED, January 1, 2014	Wednesday, May 7, 2014	Wednesday, September 3, 2014
Wednesday, February 5, 2014	Wednesday, June 4, 2014	Wednesday, October 1, 2014
Wednesday, March 5, 2014	Wednesday, July 2, 2014	Wednesday, November 5, 2014
Wednesday, April 2, 2014	Wednesday, August 6, 2014	Wednesday, December 3, 2014



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PEOPLE JUST DON'T LIKE PALMS!

by John Kennedy

Here we are, in beautiful La Florida, where many species of palms may be grown. OK, maybe most of the visible palms are the usual 6-8 species that snob palm collectors look down on. And folks in Miami smile at how few worthwhile palms us poor relations in Central Florida can plant.

What is always puzzling, however, is how many houses have no palms whatsoever. And I don't just mean the all-grass-all-over-lawn-with-two-shrubs frequently seen next to a CFPACS member's house which is dimly visible through all the greenery. Not even a rickety, sick-looking Queen Palm that the builder put in years back, slowly inching toward the grave.

On my long walks from my house—largely suspended during the height of the summer—I am always struck by the number of properties (I'd say 1 in 5 or 6) that has no palms whatever. Not even five small *Washingtonias* planted out front, so cute and small, or the line of 3-gallon Triangle Palms, 12 inches back on either side of the driveway.

And there is a house a few blocks away that is remarkable for the lushness of its lawn and no tree, no bush at all. Maybe one or two builder's shrubs pruned nearly to extinction. Well, true, no tree limb or tree will fall on that house in hurricane; the roof thus is entirely safe. Possibly another interpretation—more sinister—is that the inhabitants regard the world of plants much as the Puritans in Nathaniel Hawthorne's stories, as a place of unbridled sensuality, the haunt of Satan. Let the greenery get too close and you're damned! (Hey, the couple of little bushes each have about 10 leaves, can't let the devil in by the back door.)

A family connection moved in retirement to Stuart 20 years ago from Oak Park, Illinois—though I knew his formative gardening years were in North Jersey—to whom I gave a 3-foot Queen Palm, playing it safe. New house, almost two acres, completely bare. He thanked me with a grimace, then planted it in the rear of the lot out of sight once he had put in 20 citrus trees. Told me palms did nothing, just sticks with some leaves coming out at the top. His idea of what his acre should look like was suburban Morris County, New Jersey. OK, citrus doesn't grow there but what he had planted reminded me of peach trees in the past. (Oh, he would pay when all the trees fruited at the same time with enough to feed his whole development. I said nothing. His wife, my 'aunt' made a face at me. She had learned long ago to say nothing.)

Someone I know is a marvelous gardener for whom just about everything grows lushly, quickly, overwhelmingly. Her revulsion about palms is beyond articulation or—maybe—she just doesn't want to hurt my feelings. However, I did spot a couple of small palms (Queens), self-seeded from the neighbors and asked how come. She won't pull them up if they arrived on their own. I was tempted to drive by some dark night and throw *Livistona saribus* seeds (of which I always have plenty in the fall) onto her property. Or, better yet, *Allagoptera arenaria* seeds that take forever to germinate

but would likely do so for her in a month. But she'd know, and would call me to book.

I wonder sometimes whether negative feeling about palms is a consequence of seeing so many palms in such bad shape: unfed, unwatered, unloved. And, certainly, at least half of the palms I see look terrible. Folks have told me how much trouble palms are, drop debris constantly, particularly thousands of seeds that have to be gotten up before mowing (Queen Palms), and then the dead leaves don't fall off, requiring much trouble to remove those eyesores. I don't really have an answer to that one but have figured a response, anyway, a counter-attack.

Do you have a tree, I ask. Often—though not always—I inquire whether it drops any debris. Hesitation, then (grudgingly), a bit. Need to be picked up before mowing? Um, yes. Then I talk—diversion—about my big Southern Magnolia. Gorgeous big flowers for a few weeks, dead leaves the size and consistency of plastic dinner plates year-round. Plus seed pods, flowers, twigs, etc. Whole branches, even. And the damned thing keeps getting bigger, wider, needs pruning back off the roof at the beginning of hurricane season.

I also point out that the size of palms is pre-determined and if planted prudently, there are few surprises. But this doesn't sway those whose idea of how a house landscape should look has been formed Up North. And, occasionally, the criticism is that palms provide no shade.

But then I ask what the person is growing, if not palms. If it's nothing much aside from whatever cheapie stuff the builder put in, I have my unspoken answer: not really interested in gardening anyway. Or if crotons and hibiscus, at least it's something.

Then there are those like my city-boy brother-in-law who objected to a street dept. planting a line of maples across the street from his house in an inner-city Philadelphia neighborhood: "Trees belong in parks," he told me. Yet, when the local kids destroyed most of them, he protected the one directly in front of his house and even learned about tree fertilizer spikes which he hammered in annually.

Oh, yes, my 'uncle' in Stuart inadvertently fertilized his unloved hidden Queen Palm when he fed his citrus trees and eventually it was obvious that he really thought it lush and beautiful. He was even presenting volunteer seedlings to his neighbors.

What do YOU say when someone tells you he/she doesn't like palms?

What about cycads? *Who?*

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2014 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOW DUE

Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

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Membership Application

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