



Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

Affiliate of the International Palm Society

Monthly Update

February 2015

UPCOMING MEETING

February 4, 2015
7:30 p.m. at
Mounts Botanical Garden

Speakers: Ruth & Terry Lynch
and Tom Whisler

Subject: 2014 Post Biennial
IPS Trip to Cuba

February Featured Auction Plants:

Cyrtostachys renda x elegans

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JANUARY "THANK YOU"

Door: Charles & Brenda Beck
Food: Don Bittel, Ingrid & Marshall Dewey, Ruth
& Terry Lynch, Pat Morris, Ed Napoli, Rod
Silverio, Greg & Chris Spencer
Plants: Susan Cioci, Marshall Dewey, Dale Holton

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All photographs in this issue were provided
by Charlie Beck unless otherwise specified.

Photos associated with "Back to Belize"
were taken by Dale Holton.

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.

FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Chamaedorea adscendens*

by Dale Holton

Chamaedorea adscendens is a very attractive, easy to grow, small palm. I first saw this palm in the south of Belize in 1996. The habitat is on the tops of the low mountains. It is only found growing on the top 50 feet of the mountaintops growing in a foot or two of rotting leaf litter under tree canopy. These hills are quite steep and you would think that some seeds would roll down the hill and germinate, but no. There are none below the invisible line. Most of the plants were about 3' to 4' tall and in dense colonies. You can grasp a plant by its base and lift it up. They are growing in about 2 to 3 feet of rotting leaf litter on limestone rock.

I have found through the years that they do best in acidic organic soil. They look best planted in clumps and must be grown in shade. They will flower and set seed readily. Like *C. metallica*, if they

get too tall, you most likely could air layer them and replant them.

Since I last visited the area, there have been one or two hurricanes that leveled many of the tall trees. I went there a year after the first storm, but the local Indians would not take me out in the woods. They said it was too dangerous with all of the fallen trees. I plan to go back in early 2015 to see how the plants have recovered.

The description of *C. adscendens* in Hodel's book on *Chamaedorea* said that he found them growing on bare limestone rock. I wonder about that as I have not seen that in Belize. They do best in acidic mediums.

These plants are available from Mike Harris or me.

Chamaedorea adscendens

by Charlie Beck

Chamaedorea adscendens is a small pinnate palm native to the Atlantic slope in Belize and Guatemala. It is reported to be rare in the wild. It grows to elevations of 2000' on limestone covered in organic mulch. Native forest habitat is typically moist to wet, but this palm is reported to be quite hardy during time of drought.

Immature plants can have simple bifid leaves but the leaflets tend to separate as the palm matures. The leaflets are thick and leathery. They are a blue green color with a velvety texture. This velvet leaf texture is the main attraction of this palm. It is a unique feature which makes this palm very desirable.

C. adscendens is a dioecious palm with very attractive male and female inflorescences. The female infructescence is bright orange and displays mature black fruit. The drooping male inflorescence is bright yellow. If you have male and female plants they readily set seed.

C. adscendens has a solitary stem which measures about a quarter inch in diameter. Ultimate height of this palm is about 7'. Sometimes the stem can become decumbent but this is not common. Leaves measure only one foot in length.

We planted a few of these gems in our garden in 2006. They are planted by the house in

packed shell rock brought in to form a base for home construction. I typically add a thick layer of mulch to conserve moisture and to enrich the soil. I believe this planting method mimics this palm's native habitat. They are strong growers and have never suffered from minor nutritional deficiencies when regularly fertilized and irrigated.

Although some reference books recommend planting this palm in USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 10b and 11, I didn't notice any evidence of cold sensitivity during the record cold winters of 2009 or 2010. I think this palm would be cold hardy throughout zone 10a.

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (FTBG) lists only eight *C. adscendens* planted in their garden. This low number of plants at FTBG reflects the limited availability of this choice little palm. Due to Dale Holton's exploration, this palm is readily available at Holton Nursery and Caribbean Palms Nursery. I hope you find a place in your garden for *C. adscendens*.

Chamaedorea adscendens



Inflorescence with a mature seed
(Photo courtesy of PalmPedia)



Male inflorescence



Specimen in the Beck garden

Back to Belize Introduction

by Charlie Beck

This month's featured palm, *Chamaedorea adscendens*, was introduced to Palm Beach County palm enthusiasts by Dale Holton. Dale is the past president of The Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society and also owns and operates Holton Nursery. Dale took many trips to Belize to locate choice species of palms any cycads. Though his seed collecting adventures, we are lucky to now have *C. adscendens* and *Zamia variegata* readily available.

Dale wrote an article for our newsletter back in October 1999 in which he described several expeditions to Belize. This is where he discovered *C. adscendens* growing in habitat on a mountainside within a defined altitude range. We have reprinted this article below. Unfortunately we could not provide color photos of his discoveries.

Note that *Zamia variegata* was previously known as *Zamia picta* back in 1999. We did not update this name change in the reprint. Also, the unidentified cycad that Dale discovered on the mountaintop and in the sinkhole turns out to be the recently named *Zamia decumbens*. This cycad was a new species described by Michael Calonje and Patrick Griffith of the Montgomery Botanical Center and by Jan Meerman.

Also, for any of you who did not know Chuck Hubbuch who is referred to in the article, he was the Curator of Palms at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in 1999. And that really is Paul Craft in the photo with *Zamia picta*.

Back to Belize

by Dale Holton

(Note: this is a reprint of this article which appeared in the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society's Palm & Cycad Times in October 1999.)

After having found *Zamia picta* plants so easily on my first trip to Belize, I knew it was just a matter of time before I would be able to add this desirable and colorful plant species to my collection. Many months have gone by since my first trip to Belize and I had been talking with cycad collectors that have *Zamia picta* in their collections. I found that the plants in Florida have ripe seed from January to February. With this new information, I set out to organize a return to Belize in January or February 1997.

On this trip, Jeff Butler, who worked at Gainsville Tree Farm, would travel with me. I believe it was to be his first trip out of the country. He was quite excited to be going. I made the same travel arrangements as on my first trip. Unbeknownst to me I had an uninvited guest on this trip. His name was "Murphy." Murphy has a law that states that "if something can go wrong, it will." In making airline reservations, I was only able to make reservations on the Miami-to-Belize portion of the trip and I was assured that we would have seats on the plane that was to take us on the second half of the trip to Punta Gorda, but that we could not pay ahead of time. We started out this trip with lighter luggage as we did not bring bottled water. The trip from Miami to Belize went as planned, but when we checked in at Tropic Air, we were told that there were no seats available and that there would be no more flights that day.

Murphy was right again! This was to be a short trip and this delay was very disheartening. We were told to be at the Belize City airport at eight in the morning and we could be on the first plane going south. We took a taxi to town and checked into a "minus one star" hotel. The next morning we were at the airport at eight and purchased tickets. The price was double what I paid the first year. We didn't want to use up all of our cash, so I put it on my Visa. I later learned that even though I had asked for the price in U.S. dollars, it had been quoted to me in Belize dollars. The trip south was uneventful except for a short stop at Placentia. Here the runway started at the water's edge and ended at water's edge.

We arrived in Punta Gorda in mid-morning and checked in at the hotel. I called Max Requena to see if he would drive us around to the areas which I deemed necessary to check. Max was agreeable to this and came to the hotel. We set out to check with the Indians that I had talked to the year before. The first two huts where we stopped, the men were off in their fields. On the third stop, we found a couple of men who had just gotten back from the bush. I had the pictures that I had used to show the native people the year before and showed them to the men. After looking at pictures of *Zamia* cones, they broke up in laughter. Yes, they had just seen such a cone this day and explained that one of them had broken the cone off and made a comment to the other, which I cannot repeat in this newsletter. He then discarded the cone.

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After I told them I would give them \$1.00 Belize for each good seed, they felt sure that they could locate the cone. We would have to come back later in the afternoon as the area was some distance away.

We decided that it would be a good idea to check along the roads where I had seen several plants the previous year. This was the year that the government decided to start paving the road, and of course this being Belize, they started at the far end first. Several miles of roadside had been cleared and flattened by bulldozers. Road building in Belize is quite interesting. They first send out many men with machetes to hack down the overgrowth. Then they send out the bulldozers. What takes weeks for the men to clear with machetes, could have been done by the large machines in a matter of days, but I guess this is good for unemployment. Anyway, back to the subject matter, many of the plants that I had seen the previous year were no longer there. In one freshly flattened area I did find a few ripe seeds in the mud. The plant

and its cone were nowhere to be found. We eventually got to an area that had been cleared but not bulldozed and decided to relocate any large plant we found to Max's farm on the Columbia River. We dug several large caudexes and piled them in the back of the truck for later planting at the farm. We saw one plant that was quite nice, but no in the way of the road project, and decided to move it also. Alas, after removing three feet of red clay and rocks, we still had not found the top of the caudex and gave up. If I buried one of my plants with three feet of sand, it would surely die. On one of our stops for a cold soda, an old man saw the caudexes in the truck and inquired as to who we were going to kill. The local Indians believe that people use these plants to kill others that they may have had a disagreement with. We were unable to convince him that we were going to replant them.

As it was getting into late afternoon, we made our way back to the village where the two Indians lived who were going to locate the cone they had

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Chamaedorea geonomiformis growing near Pueblo Viejo, Belize

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discarded. Well, they did find it and they had about 100 seeds. They had searched for others, but were unable to find any more. As it was getting late we had Max take us back to the hotel for the night.

The next morning, Max said he had a friend at Rio Blanco that could show us many *Zamia picta* plants in the mountains there. The mountains are referred to as "The High Bush" and the coastal areas as "The Low Bush." Before leaving for the hills, we stopped at a town market and purchased an assortment of fruit and some water. The market is in the town square and the Indians bring their produce and



Ceratozamia robusta at Pueblo Viejo, Belize

trinkets there on Wednesday and Saturday each week. When we arrived at the village of Rio Blanco, Max located his friend and arranged for him to take us into the bush and show us the *Zamia picta* plants. The path was the usual red muddy clay and rocks and was mostly uphill. The guide was on a marathon race and Jeff had decided he was going to keep up with him. I fell quite far behind and eventually came to a fork in the path. Not being able to determine which way to go, I yelled out for Jeff. He eventually heard me and yelled back instructions. After doing this two or three times, they stopped and allowed me to catch up with them. I explained to our guide that I was an old man and no longer did marathons. I think that this was lost on him as he again set out at a brisk pace. After about forty-five minutes, I began to see *Z. picta* plants along the path and called Jeff back. There were seedling plants everywhere on this down slope. Our guide said that he hadn't farmed this area in about ten years, so it was quite overgrown. He wanted us to go to an area that he had farmed more recently and look there. After another twenty-minute race, we arrived at the area that he thought would have lots of *Z. picta* plants. We searched this area and could find no plants, so I reasoned with the guide that we should go back to the other spot and search the top of the hill to locate the mother of all the seedlings we had seen. We spent an hour or so climbing the hillside, but could find no large plants. We gave up and returned to the village as it was getting late and we still had to drive back to town.

Before leaving home, I had been given the name of a young man, Marcello Bull from the village of Pueblo Viejo, who knew where there were many plants. The next morning we set out for his village, which was about three miles beyond Rio Blanco. Along the way we came upon two young men hitchhiking, so we stopped to give them a ride. Fortunately for us one of them was the man we were coming to see. When we got to his village and told him that we wanted him to take us to the *Z. picta* plants that he knew of, he said that he also knew where there were some *Ceratozamia robusta* plants, but he would not

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"By appointment only"

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take us to them as it was too far. We did manage to persuade him to show us the *Z. picta* plants and set out along another muddy path. Along this path we saw some very nice *Reinhardtia gracilis* and several types of *Chamaedorea*. We eventually got to the *Z. picta* area and saw many plants of all sizes, but no female plants with cones. There was one rather impressive *Z. picta* that he showed us. It was highly speckled and had leaves about seven feet tall. Marcello said that he had never seen seeds on these plants. I asked him if he knew where *Chamaedorea adscendens* grew and he indicated that he would take us to them. We crossed a small stream and climbed a steep mountainside. About fifty feet from the top, Marcello pointed out some *Chamaedorea* and indicated that they were *adscendens*. There were also two other *Chamaedorea* growing in the area, *C. ernesti-augusti* and one that I could not identify. It looked similar to *C. glaucifolia*. While searching in vain for seeds I noticed that if you went about 50 feet below the mountain top, there were no more *C. adscendens*. These palms have a very specialized habitat. While searching the hilltop, we came upon three *Zamia* plants that were like the one plant I had seen the year before. This was quite exciting as I felt that this was an unnamed species. Marcello thought that they were *Ceratozamia*. We searched the entire mountaintop, but could find no more of these plants.

We returned to the village early so that we could go by Max's farm and plant the *Z. picta* that we had rescued from the road construction. With that done we had one day left and I decided that we should go to the Pine Ridge area that I had been told of the prior year. This area was about thirty-five miles north of Punta Gorda and was quite desolate. It had been a dense pine forest at one time. Now there were only scattered pines and what looked to be miles of waist-high grass with occasional muddy tracks heading far into the grass. Max wanted to go and see a friend in the next village, so Jeff and I picked a track heading east and told Max to come back there when he finished with his friend. Before Max left, I had

him cut me a stout stick. This looked like serious snake area and I wanted to move the grass ahead of me as I walked. These tracks were made by large log moving machines and the tires made deep ruts which were filled with water. I decided that the safest place to walk was between the tire tracks as the grass was not quite as tall there. We must have walked for a mile before we came to an area where there were quite a few trees left. At this time we started to see a few *Zamia* plants. These were not *Zamia picta*, but



Reinhardtia gracilis, San Jose Belize

something else. Maybe a type of *Zamia loddigesii*. We found several plants but no cones or seeds. After determining that there were no *Zamia picta* there we cautiously hiked back to the road. Max hadn't returned yet, so we found a shady spot and ate some snacks that we had brought with us. Max did eventually return and expressed alarm that he had gone in there without a machete to kill snakes with. We still had a few hours of daylight left and decided that we should get back to the hotel so we could clean the seeds and many bromeliads that we had collected.

I considered this a most successful trip as I now had seeds of *Zamia picta* that I could grow and place in my collection. I knew that I would now have to come back to Belize at least one more time to try and collect seeds of the really nice *Zamia* that I had

seen in the hills. The trip home went smoothly and uneventfully. The *Z. picta* seeds grew quite well, but most had no speckles.

The following year I again made plans to return to Belize. This time I was unable to locate anyone to go with me, so I went alone. On this trip I decided to rent a pickup truck so I could see some other areas. I made arrangements with the Dulooy's to take me to see Tikal in Guatemala. That was a great excursion. Besides the ruins, I saw many palms and one type of *Zamia*. On this trip I also made contact with Lou Thomas, in Teakettle Village. Lou wanted to go south with me, but was unable to leave when I did, so

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he was to meet me in Punta Gorda a couple of days later. The 150 mile drive down the dirt road to Punta Gorda was somewhat depressing as all the native vegetation was gone on both sides of the road, and replaced with citrus trees.

My first day in Punta Gorda, I located Max and convinced him to ride with me to act as my guide. We returned to Rio Blanco and found his friend whom I had met the previous year. I pointed to the higher mountains and asked to go there. I was told that it was a tough hike, but that we could do it. It took about two and a half hours to get to the nearest one, but it was well worth the hard hike. As I had noticed before, the top of the mountain was covered with *Chamaedorea adscendens*. There were also maybe fifty of the unknown *Zamia* there. I was very impressed and noted that there were no seedlings to be found and no cones anywhere. All of the plants were adults and quite old as most had a foot or more of trunk. Most had decumbent trunks. The reason for this was that all were growing on rock outcrops in about six inches of leaf litter. When they get too tall, they fall over and grow up again. Most were quite twisted as they had fallen over and grown up several times. As I had noted in other populations of tropical *Zamia*, cones are produced infrequently, sometimes many years apart. I did manage to locate a few *C. adscendens* seeds, most of which germinated nine months later. I also collected a few *C. adscendens* seedlings.

The next day I went to an area called Blue Creek. Here Max found a guide to take me into the hills to see if some of the unknown *Zamia* might be found. This guide carried a shotgun in addition to his machete. He thought that maybe he could bring home some dinner. He was constantly pointing out Gibnut trails that I would not have noticed. We trudded around the area for a few hours and found none of the *Zamia* I was looking for. We did see a few *Zamia picta* though.

Lou Thomas got in to town that evening, so we made plans to go to Rio Blanco the next day. Max, who knew Indians in all the villages, got some-



Paul Craft and *Zamia picta* on the Temash River in southern Belize

one to take us into the hills. After a long arduous hike, we ended up on one of the taller mountains. There were many of the unnamed *Zamia* here. At this location I saw the largest of these plants that I had yet encountered. Its times like this that make the tough hikes worthwhile. In addition to the *Zamia*, there was an abundance of *C. adscendens* and here as in other locations, there was no evidence of new population growth in the *Zamia* colony. On our way out of the hills, Lou, who was coming down the very steep hillside behind me, suddenly went flying past me, head first down the hill. His fall was broken by a nicely placed *Astrocaryum mexicanum*. Fortunately he suffered no broken bones, just a few nasty stab wounds. Before going back to the hotel, Lou wanted to check on some workers that he had left in Pueblo Viejo the previous day.

The next day Lou and I had decided to find someone with a boat to take us up to Temash River to find *Reinhardtia latisecta* that Lou heard existed there. Marcello, who was now working for Lou, was to go with us as he sort of knew where the plants

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LAKE OSBORNE ANIMAL CLINIC

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were located. Lou brought several gunny sacks along as he wanted to collect some *Manicaria saccifera* seeds while there. This is the northernmost area where these palms can be found in Belize. The trip to the Temash took about an hour in a boat with two large outboards. We went up the river for quite a distance and were unable to see much in the woods on either side. There was an abundance of *Acoelorrhaphes wrightii* growing on either bank. Some of the trees which were hanging out over the river were covered with orchids and bromeliads. We also saw an occasional caiman. Marcello thought that we had gone too far up river, so we turned and started back. Eventually, Marcello had the boat pull into the mangroves so he could go into the woods to look for *Reinhardtia*. We made several stops before finding the location. There were many *Manicaria* here and they were loaded with seeds. There were also many large *Reinhardtia latisecta* as well as a variety of *Euterpe* and some *Desmoncus*. I also saw the largest *Zamia picta* that I had ever seen at this locality. The leaves were seven to eight feet tall. This was a brackish water swamp. If I tried to grow *Z. picta* under these conditions, they would all surely perish. We filled Lou's sacks with *Manicaria* seeds and went back to town. This was my last day in Punta Gorda as I had a flight home in two days.

The next day I drove back north to Lou's farm to spend the night there and tour his farm. I also had to clean the seeds and plants that I would bring home with me.

This had been a good trip even though I had come alone. Meeting Lou was really great as he was able to identify most of the palms that we encountered.

Later in the year, I decided that another trip to Belize was in order. I really liked this country, and there were a few things that I had not yet seen. Lou wanted me to get Paul Craft to come with me, as he had been trying to get him down there for a couple of years. After talking with Paul and another friend, Mike Harris, we decided to go in February of 1999. Lou had told Chuck Hubbach about the *Reinhardtia* in the swamp, and Chuck was very dubious. Lou fig-

ured that Paul could see them and assure Chuck that they were really there.

We rented a Pathfinder at the airport and assigned Mike as the driver. Along the way we spotted a stand of *Schippia concolor*. This was one of the palms that I had not seen yet, so we stopped and went into the brush for a closer look. Walking through the waist-high grass, we spotted several *Zamia* growing. These *Zamia* resembled some plants that I had purchased as *Zamia polymorpha*, which comes from Belize.

Further down the road, we stopped at the zoo to look at more *Schippia* and get a soda. We were now about 35 miles from Lou's place. I wasn't sure about the turnoff as most of the dirt side roads look alike. We tried one or two roads before finding the right one. We spent the evening on Lou's veranda talking and listening to the distant howler monkeys.

We spent the next morning visiting Ken Duplooy and looking over the botanical garden that he is building. The afternoon was spent visiting an area where there were hundreds of *Zamia polymorpha* plants and also looking around in a National Preserve.

The following morning we set out for Punta Gorda. There was a large sink hole down there that I wanted to go and see, and Lou knew an Indian that would take us to it.

The first day there, we went to Pueblo Viejo to see the *Ceratozamia* that a relative of one of Lou's workers had discovered. The hike in was up and down over very muddy trails.

We finally arrived on the side of a steep mountain. We had to pull ourselves up by grabbing trees and vines. Near the top I saw my first *Ceratozamia robusta* in the wilds of Belize. There were maybe a dozen plants around the top of the hill. One large plant had a few seedlings around it. The top of this hill also had many *Chamaedorea adscendens* on it. We took a different trail back to the village. This trail followed a small stream. The flat areas on either side of the stream were covered with many different kinds of palms. I decided that this would be a good hike for a tour group, as it was easy walking and not too muddy.

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Zamia sp. growing in sinkhole
Pueblo Viejo, Belize

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When we arrived at the village, we were asked to take a mother and small child back to town with us. The doctor said the child was quite sick with an infection and needed to get to the hospital. We agreed to do this, but when it was time to leave we had the child's mother, father, and grandmother all in the Pathfinder. There was not enough room. It took another 10 minutes to get the grandmother to understand that she could not go with us. This family spoke no English. As we drove slowly down the road, we were stopped two villages later by a man standing in the road. He said that there was a child there that needed to get to the hospital right away. This child had an infected leg that was quite swollen. We were not able to carry any more people, so he asked us to stop at the next village and ask the nurse to send the ambulance for the child, which we did. I don't know if the ambulance ever did go for the child, as it didn't pass us on the road into town.

The next day we went to San Jose to meet Lou's friend, who was going to take us to the sink hole. The guide told us it would take us "Gringos" two or three hours each way. With this in mind, we each carried ample water and snacks, we thought. The

trail was used often by horses and was quite muddy and rough. It was also quite humid and warm. I think most of us, except our guide, slipped and fell in the mud at least once. These Indians get somewhat dismayed with us as we stop frequently to admire some unknown plant that they think of as a weed. Eventually we got past the area of worst mud and entered an area of forest that was very rich in plant life. We saw many varieties of palms and many of them had ripe seeds which needed to be plucked. After a considerable time, we reached the top of a steep hill and were looking down into the sinkhole. It looked to be about 200 feet deep with sides that dropped straight down. The highest point overhung the hole by about 70 feet. From the top, it looked like the bottom was overgrown with *Chamaedorea tepejilote*. This was a good place to rest, eat, drink, and take pictures. The guide asked if anyone wanted to go into the sinkhole. It seems that I was the only one stupid enough to say yes. There were *Zamia* down there and I wanted to see them up close after coming this far. After all, Dr. Alfred Lowe, who is several years my senior, had gone down there several times. If he could do it, so could I. With fresh film installed in the camera and

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A forest of *Chamaedorea tepejilote* in the bottom of giant sinkhole. San Jose, Belize

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flash attached, I followed the guide about a third of the way around the sinkhole to a spot that he assured me we could get down. I had my doubts, but followed. I was mostly holding on to small loose trees and finding tiny crevices in the rock for my feet. Somehow we made it safely to the bottom and walked through the *Chamaedorea* to the area under the overhang.

What a great sight to behold! There were maybe 200 of the *Zamia* that I had seen growing on top of the hills to the south. These plants were all growing on bare rocks and only under the overhang. There was a downward sloping cave in the bottom which served as a drain. I think that bats most likely lived in the cave and had in years past, eaten fruit of the *Zamia* and dropped the seeds there. This is the only plausible explanation as to how these plants got there. There were none of these plants on the top of the sinkhole or the surrounding area. When I used up the entire roll of film, it was time to think about how I was going to get out. The guide assured me that we just had to go back the way we came. "No problem." After a very scary 15 minute climb, I was out and vowed that I would never attempt that again without a rope.

With everyone rested except me, we started the long trek back with many stops to collect the

seeds that we missed coming in. When we finally arrived at the village we were all out of water and very thirsty. A short drive got us to a small store where we all got refreshments.

The last day in Punta Gorda was to be a boat trip back up the Temash River. This time Lou and I decided that we would go all the way to Crique Sarco, a small village several miles up the river. As we left the dock, we could see that it was raining to the south, which was the direction that we were heading. When we came into the rain, it became quite cool, so we all huddled under tarps to keep warm and dry. About two miles upriver, it stopped raining and became very pleasant. It seems that every time I go into an area that I have visited before, I see a lot of things that I didn't notice before. As we went further up the river, we began to see large trees submerged in the water. This was the result of the bad hurricane that hit Central America the year before. The captain had to slow the boat to a crawl to avoid the underwater hazards. Once or twice we did bump over a large submerged tree. Eventually, as the river narrowed to become a small creek, we came to the village. This was a small settlement consisting of about two dozen houses and a school with a nice mural painted on its outside wall. The boat captain took us to a house at the far end of the village, where a man was carving rosewood. He

(Continued on page 12)



Chamaedorea adscendens in the mountains above Pueblo Viejo, Belize

(Continued from page 11)

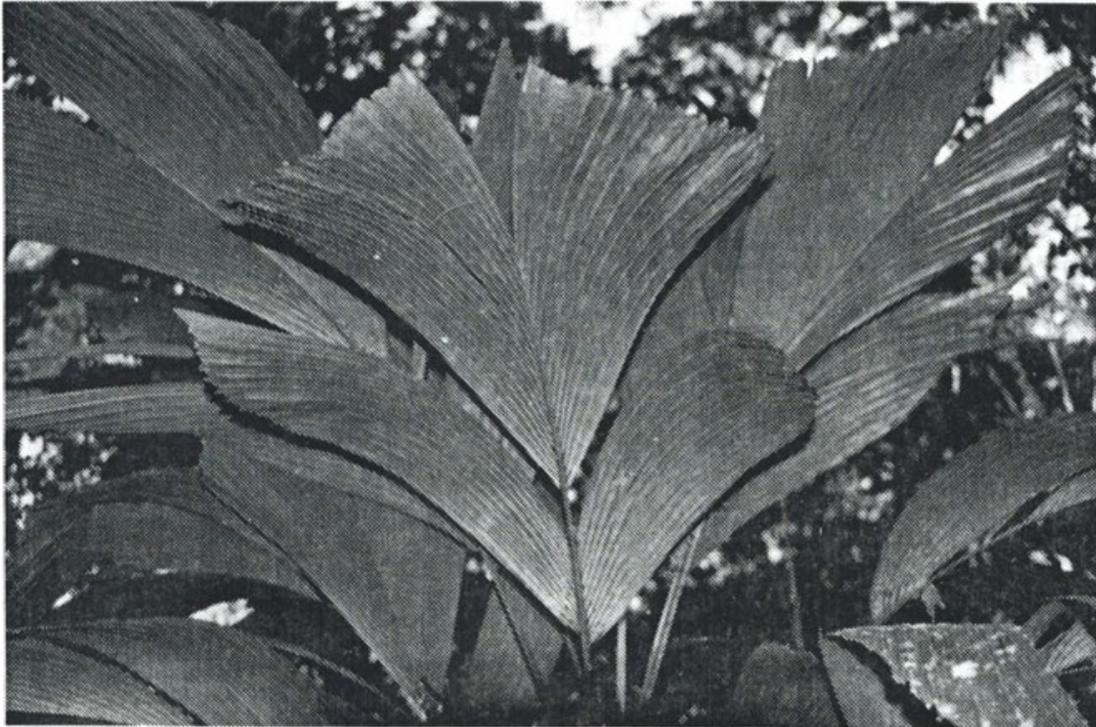
took us into the house, where he had several tables set up with all of the rosewood carvings that he had made. We were quite impressed with the quality of the items on display. It became a feeding frenzy as each tried to get the best items. The others all said that I managed to somehow get the best prize and continued to harass me about it for the rest of the trip.

On the way back down the river, Lou and I attempted to locate the area that we had been to the previous trip. We stopped several times and climbed over the mangrove roots to hunt for the elusive *Reinhardtia latisecta*. Paul and Mike ventured into the woods with us on the first two stops, but on the third stop, they both refused to leave the boat. They both insisted that this swamp had to be literally crawling with snakes and they were not going to risk getting a snake bite. As it happened, this was where the

R. latisecta was growing. Lou was insistent that Paul see these palms so that he could tell Chuck Hubbach that they really grew in this swamp. He finally persuaded both of them to come out of the boat. Besides the many varieties of palms, there were a number of *Zamia picta* growing here. Many had leaves in excess of seven feet tall. We were unable to collect many *Manicaria* seeds this trip, as the hurricane had stripped the palms of most seeds.

The next morning, it was time to head back north. We were going to spend a couple of days at Lou's farm and see some of the surrounding area.

In closing, I would like to say that all of my trips to Belize have been most enjoyable and I would recommend that if you are physically fit, go there at least once. The people are warm and friendly, and they do speak English, most of the time.



Close up of a *Reinhardtia latisecta* growing in a tidal-marsh on the Temash River, Belize

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

March 7th - 10:00 a.m. to noon
Palm Society Ramble
to the garden of Paul Humann
4980 SW 61st Ave., Davie, FL 33314

More details will be provided in
the March newsletter.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

2015 Annual Spring Palm & Cycad Sale
March 28 & March 29
at Mounts Botanical Garden

More details will be provided in
the March newsletter.