

# GROWING *Calypstrocalyx* IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

*Submitted by Charlie Beck*

*Calypstrocalyx* is a genus of solitary or clustering, pinnate, undergrowth palms of the rainforest. Approximately 27 named species exist – all from New Guinea except *C. spicatus* which is native to the Moluccas. Many *Calypstrocalyx* specimens are identified only with a common name and are not yet officially described species. There is a scientific effort to describe all of the palms of New Guinea so many of the unnamed palms will soon be described in a forthcoming book.



*Calypstrocalyx leptostachys*

We have been growing *Calypstrocalyx* for many years. Most species and varieties grow well in our garden with two exceptions. *C. pachystachys* appears to be cold sensitive. *C. polyphyllus* grows well during the warm months but suffers in the winter exhibiting extreme minor nutritional deficiency. All appear to thrive in moist soil in a shady location.

Many *Calypstrocalyx* have pink, salmon, or red emergent leaves and many have bifid leaves which are much desired. Two of our standout species are *C. doxanthus* and *C. leptostachys*. *C. doxanthus* has brightly colored pink new growth. The pinnate fronds are divided into leaflets with 3 inch long drip tips. *C. leptostachys* grows either solitary or clustering and bifid or divided leaves. The new leaves are spectacular as shown on the front cover.

The winter of 2009 was the coldest in Palm Beach County since 1989. I decided to take a photo inventory of our *Calypstrocalyx* to document any effects from the 35 degree low temperatures which occurred on several nights. As you can see, *Calypstrocalyx* are not as cold sensitive as described in other publications.

*Note: Photos on inside front and back covers included a 12 inch ruler or a yard stick for scale.*



