



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 13, Issue

Editor: Reggie Whitehead October 2011

September in Review

Date—September 26, 2011

Speaker—Dr. Bruce McAlpin

Topic- *Growing and Propagating Rhipsalis, Cacti and Succulents*

Treasurer's report balance - \$12,666.88. Tom Moore announced that anyone who joined at this time would essentially get a 15 month membership for the price of just 1 year, such that a new member would be current through to January 2013.

President called meeting to order at—7:40 p.m.

Hospitality-Martha Bogaard, Emalyl Israel, and Fern Hartnett

Raffle provided by—Sid Gardino of Gardino Nursery

Meeting ended at— 9:35

President Mike Twyford opened the meeting with an announcement that the Giant African Land Snail has been recorded in Coral Gables, and brought informational brochures with him. The snail is quite large (up to 6 inch shell length), and breeds as quickly as other snails. The snails were imported for religious ceremonies in Miami, and have established local populations.

Marie Nock announced that the Fairchild Ramble is coming up on

November 11th, 12th and 13th. Any vendor can sell whatever types of plants he wishes to.

She introduced Dr. Bruce McAlpin, formerly of Miami-Dade Community College where he taught horticulture for 30 years, New York Botanical Garden, and Las Cruces Botanical Garden in Costa Rica. Bruce has spoken here several times, and always shows his prowess with his excellent speaking ability as well as a great show-and-tell for interesting plants. He is a superb grower, and now lives in the town of Muse, Florida, about 25 miles east of Ft. Myers. Bruce announced his long time friend from Hawaii, Paul Weissich, former Director of the Honolulu Botanical Garden, visiting and touring Miami for a week or so.

(Secretary's note: I spent several hours with Paul, and he is an oracle of botanical, horticultural, and historical information, as well as being a fun guy to talk to.)

Bruce started his talk with some basic taxonomy about cacti and succulents. cacti are in the Family **Cactaceae**, and in short, succulents are everything else. There are 3 main types of succulents: root succulents, such as **Desert Rose**; stem succulents, such as **Mammillaria**; and Leaf succulents,

(Review continued on page 2)

Annual Plant Auction

The time has arrived for our Annual Plant Auction at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, on **Monday, October 24, beginning at 7:00 p.m.**

People all over South Florida look forward to our auction, and we don't want to disappoint them.

Members are asked to participate in our annual fund-raiser.

Your donations may be of any plant of your choosing. Whether it is a fern, bromeliad, heliconia, aroid, flowering tree, orchid, or any plant that you feel would be a nice addition to our line-up of special plants. Please have plants at the garden no later than 6:30 p.m. so that they may be arranged.

If you are not able to donate a plant to the auction, we still hope you will come out and support us with your presence. To make things easier for purchase, checks and cash, will of course be welcomed. We will need volunteers to help serve as arrangers, runners, and people to help man the holding area.

Another way you may donate is to assist our hospitality committee. In the past, many people have been very generous in providing wonderful treats for our refreshment table.

If you would like to bring something for the refreshment table, please contact **Emalyl Israel** (305) 235-0886 or **Martha Bogaards** (305) 661-2305.

Please bring a friend along and of course an appetite, and don't forget your checkbook!

Annual Plant Auction
Monday, October 24
7 p.m.

See you there!!!

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.
Officers for 2011

President		
Mike Twyford	(305) 444-6332	
Vice President		
Marie Nock	(305) 232-2257	
Secretary		
Craig Morell	(305) 667-1173	
Treasurer		
Tom Moore	(305) 666-0219	
Hospitality		
Martha Bogaards	(305) 661-2305	
Emaly Israel	(305) 235-0886	
Special Sales		
Marie Nock	(305) 232-2257	
Librarian		
Juan Espinosa-Almodovar	(305) 444-3103	
Raffle Table		
Skye Palmer	(305) 595-9291	
Webmaster		
Bob Benaim	(305) 793-9755	

Board of Directors will consist of the above officers and chairs; and the following individuals.

Steve Forman	(305) 662-2368
Debbie Lamb	(305) 251-8675
Reggie Whitehead	(305) 613-5944

REE GARDENS PLANT SALE

7860 SW 124 ST.
 MIAMI, FL

305 232-2257 snock1@earthlink.net 9:00 – 5:00

Oct. 22-23 & 29-30

A great selection of rare and unusual plants including: **Bromeliads; Medinillas; collector Alocasias, Anthuriums and Philodendrons; Osmoxylons; Crotons; Tabernaemontanas; Coccoloba pubescens and rugosum; Saracas; understory Palms; Breadfruit trees; Hoffmanias; Tacca Integrifolia; Gingers; Heliconias; Calatheas; Hoyas; Ficus dammaropsis; Thai Aglaonemas; Angiopteris and many other interesting species.**

Trinity Churchside Garden

*Landscape Design, Consulting;
 Medicinal, Weird, and Native Plants*

DAVID MCLEAN

14 S.W. 11 Street Open Sat and Sun and by appointment (954) 768-0423
 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315 Just west of South Andrews Avenue
The first Saturday of each month is a special day!

SHERRIN A. SMITH (Miami Native)
 PLANT, PET, AND HOUSE SITTING; Personal Assistance
 305 448-2598 Phone 305 668-4622 Fax
 E-mail: sas56chevy@aol.com

(Review continued from page 1)

such as **Aloe**. Bruce showed a beautiful new **Aloe** he acquired from the International Succulent Institute based at the Huntington Bot. Garden in California.

Bruce prefers a simple 2-part potting mix equal parts of perlite and potting soil, making the point that he uses bagged potting soil, not topsoil. For large, heavy or very tall plants, he'll mix an extra portion of pea rock into the mix to add ballast to the pot. Bruce made the distinction to use pea rock and not the more alkaline limestone rock. In local parlance, we'd call the two materials "Chattahoochee rock" and "limestone gravel", respectively.

Bruce displayed a wide array of succulents and cacti, including several plants of the same species which looked markedly different just by way of different growing conditions. He showed some very simple propagation techniques, including using 6-12 tip cuttings and branch cuttings of **Rhipsalis** and **Epiphyllum** in a hanging basket to make a fuller, denser basket rather than a single cutting in a pot. One of the most interesting points mentioned in the program was that most succulents grow in the Spring and Fall, not during the Summer. For this reason, fertilizing at these times of the year will bring on bigger plants than Summer fertilizing will.

Bruce summarized the salient growing points of :

--very bright light, but not all-day sunlight

--excellent soil drainage and allowing plants to go dry between waterings

--light doses of controlled-release fertilizer such as Osmocote or Dynamite

--growing plants in hanging baskets for pendant species.

Bruce ended his program by raffling numerous cuttings of **Rhipsalis** and **Epiphyllum**. His programs are always informative and something new is learned every time, even if one has seen his programs many times before.

Respectfully submitted,

*Craig Morell, C.P.A.
 Certified Plant Addict*



Ramble 2011

The **Ramble at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden** will be held on November 11, 12 and 13 (Friday, Saturday and Sunday). Any member who would like to be a vendor, is cordially invited participate in our sales booth. If you are interested in selling plants please contact Marie Nock at (305) 232-2257 or at msnock@gmail.com. Members may sell plants from any plant group (with the exception of carnivorous plants). It's Ramble-time!

Welcome New Members

Small, Bernadette and Lawrence
10904 S. W. 72nd Street #51
Miami, FL 33173-2708
(305) 271-1290
Smallstart@aol.com

Strickland, Nancy
6220 N. W. 40 Street
Virginia Gardens, FL 33166
(813) 361-6692

Raffle Tables for 2011 — 2012

October 24	Annual Plant Auction
November 28.....	Peter Kouchalakos and Steve Correale
December.....	Annual Holiday Party
January 23.....	Frank and Sally Tastinger
February 27.....	Redland Nursery
March 26.....	Steve and Marie Nock
April 23.....	Philpp Iloo and David McLean
May 28.....	Tim Anderson and Craig Reid

Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society
6880 S. W. 75 Terrace
South Miami, FL 33143

___ Individual Member \$15. ___ Household Membership \$17.
 ___ Life Membership \$125. ___ Life Household Membership \$150.

Member's Name: _____

Name of additional member: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip + 4:** _____ + _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____ **Amount enclosed: \$** _____

Sleeping Beauty

by John Banta

As in most tales; timing was a critical factor. If the warm tropical rains had not occurred early that year I would have missed her flowers. The plant reminded me of the temperate **Convallaria majalis**; Lilly of the valley. The white flowers even had the crepuscular fragrance almost like **Convallaria**. But this was a tropical plant that went dormant due to drought rather than cold. I was told that this wonderful sleeping beauty was **Peliosanthes javanica**. I accepted that name as **Peliosanthes** is in the Lily family of plants and I did collect it in Java. How wrong could I be?

Plenty! Michael Ferrero put me on the right track. Not in the Lily family but rather a family new to me the family, **Tecophilaeaceae**. The genus was an old friend of mine, **Cyanastrum** (blue star) I first met



in Andromeda Gardens in Barbados. The ever generous Iris Banochie insisted I should grow **Cyanastrum cordifolium**. This plant has the most unusual tuber. It looks

like a vertical stack of flattened biscuits and it was this shared characteristic that allowed Michael to convince me that my “Sleeping Beauty” was actually **Cyanastrum hostiifolia**. My dreams of crossing the blue flowered “cordifolium with “hostiifolium” were encouraged when Michael gave me **Kabuyea (Cyanastrum johnsonii)** also from Africa that may allow the dream hybrid to grace our gardens. These “Sleeping Beauties” are the answer to Florida gardeners who complain about the lack of Spring bulbs. These beauties deserve to awaken in our gardens.

Next Meeting, Annual Plant Auction, Oct. 24, Preview begins at 7 p.m.; Auction 7:30 p.m.

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