



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue 7

Editor: Reggie Whitehead September 2013

June Meeting in Review

Date—June 24, 2013

Speaker- Dr. Ron Mossman, professor at Florida Int'l University

Topic- Seed Dispersal in the Florida Everglades

Treasurer's report - \$ 8446. 91

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

Hospitality— Emalyl Israel and Martha Bogaards

Raffle provided by— Larry and Glenda Weed

Meeting ended at—9:15 p.m.

President **Marnie Valent** welcomed the volunteers who served so well to make the Annual Sale such a success. Three honorary Lifetime memberships have been awarded: to **Sallye Jude**, **Emalyl Israel** and to **Martha Bogaards**, for their individual and combined dedication to the Society.

Marie Nock introduced the speaker, **Professor Ron Mossman** from Florida International University (FIU). Dr. Mossman spoke on the esoteric topic of seed dispersal in the Florida Everglades, which turned out to be an outstanding program on seed and propagule dispersal in general. Dr. Mossman spoke on some highly technical aspects of seed dispersal, making each point in an easily understood form. One of the primary topics he covered was that of functional trait evolution i.e. filters

that select species for a destined ecology. For instance, climate, the frequency of disturbances in an area (fire, drought, storms, floods, etc), and the unending impacts of humans on an ecology are all ecological filters that may steer a species to adapt to a defined ecotype. The small changes in 'Glades topography were the keys to plant and animal diversity, not the flat areas we often call Everglades. Sloughs and solution holes have long hydro-periods, and rarely burn, traits which foster particular ecological niches, such as epiphyte communities and aquatic life which resides in small sheltered pools of water.

The methods that plants have devel-

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Next Meeting, Monday, September 23

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society proudly presents **Sid and Regina Gardino**, who will speak on **All About Hoyas**, Monday, September 23, at 7:30 p.m. at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, in the Corbin Building.

This presentation will focus on the many species of **Hoyas** and on tips in growing and caring for this amazing genus. **Hoyas** are fascinating for both their flowers and their leaves. Regina and Sid will share pictures from their amazing collection and will share their best practices for cultivation. They will bring plants for sale at the close of the talk.

There is no admission fee and the public is invited to attend this presentation. There will be plants for Raffle donated by **Gardino Nursery**. Refreshments will be served.

Annual Plant Auction

It is almost time for our wonderful, Annual Plant Auction. Our auction will once again be held at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, on Monday, October 28, beginning at 7:00 p.m. This year we will use The Corbin Building as our venue.

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.

To add to our collection we are also asking our usual friends at nurseries and plant shops to participate. Their generosity in the past has been tremendous and it is only matched by our own members' generosity.

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.

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.

Officers for 2013

President

Marnie Valent (305) 233-5929

Vice President

Marie Nock (305) 232-2257

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Craig Morell (305) 667-1173

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Reggie Whitehead (305) 613-5944

(and current officers)

Committee Chairs

Membership — Sherrin Smith (305) 213-2598

Hospitality—Emaly Israel (305) 235-0886

Martha Bogaards (305) 661-2305

Raffle Table — Skye Palmer (305) 595-9291

Argeo Hernandez (305) 633-9099

Special Events —Marie Nock (305) 232-2257

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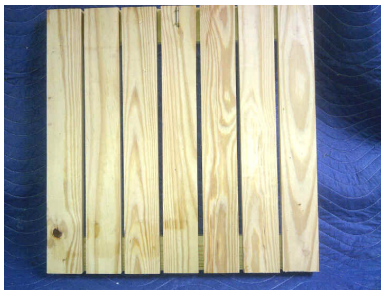
The first Saturday of each month is a special day!

SHERRIN A. SMITH (Miami Native)

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E-mail: sas56chevy@aol.com



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Contact – Bob Benaim, 305-793-9755 or

staghomrescue@gmail.com

(Meeting in Review continued from page 1)

oped to disperse seeds are both diverse and ingenious. If there is a way to disperse seeds, plants will find it, and carry on with life. It is reminiscent of the old Paul Revere cry “one if by land, two if by sea !” Seeds can be distributed on the fur of animals; in flowing water; underwater; on the water’s surface; via bird’s feet; inside animals or fish after seeds are ingested in fruits or seed pods; by air currents; by hurricanes (also know in the real estate business as “wind events”) and in many permutations thereof. Using some stout words such hydrochory (water dispersal), epizoochory (seeds that stick to animal fur) and endozoochory(seeds eaten by animals), we were introduced to the technical side of Mother Nature. Some plants need a fast-moving grass fire to burn down dense brush and provide enough heat to open hardened seed pods. The newly cleared area allows enough light to get to the ground to sprout seeds and some fresh potash nutrition from the fire to get the seedling established fast.

Dr. Mossman also made note that small seeds are often distributed in the wet season and germinate quickly while the rains last, while hard seeds are produced in the dry season, to sprout when the next rainy season arrives. In the end analysis, Dr. Mossman turned a highly specialized topic into something that enriched our understanding of the natural world so close to us, yet still such a mystery to many of us.

The program ended at 9 p.m. amidst many questions. Dr. Mossman’s dissertation is available online at the FIU website, although be prepared to use a LOT of copy paper. The thesis is filled with data and photos, and is a valuable resource for any good naturalist.

respectfully submitted,

Craig Morell CPA

Certified Plant Addict

In Memoriam

We lost two of our valued members this past summer:

John Bender, who introduced many of us to staghorn ferns in the 70's died this summer. An avid grower of these "new" ferns, he would grow them from spores, up to maturity. Regularly at plant shows, he would sell and display his staghorns from small pups up to their full, and giant sizes.

John grew other plants, as well **Lycopodiums** and **Crotons**. He amassed one of the largest **Croton** collections around.

Another valued member, *John Lucas*, passed away recently. He grew the most beautiful **Bougainvilleas** and Desert Rose Plants, (**Adenium** species). John supplied all of South Florida with colorful plants that enhanced all of our lives.

We extend our deepest sympathies to their families and many friends. Goodbye and thank you to John Bender and John Lucas for your beautiful contributions.

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Ramble 2013

TFEPS members who would like to sell plants at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden's Ramble, Nov. 8-10, should request an application from Marie Nock at snock1@earthlink.net. Applications and payment must be returned by Sept. 27 at 10:00 am.

Welcome New Members

Holt, Robert and Valerie
1050 N. E. 122 Street
North Miami, FL 33161-5827
(305) 893-8729
bobandval@att.net

Raffle Table for September

Sid and Regina Gardino *September 23*

Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society
P.O. Box 902094
Homestead, FL 33090-2094

___ Individual Member \$15. ___ Household Membership \$17.
___ Life Membership \$125. ___ Life Household Membership \$150.
(Yearly dues are for calendar year - January - December)

This is for a New Membership: ___ or for Renewals: ___

Member's Name: _____

Name of additional member: _____

Street Address: _____

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

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____ Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Neighborhood Watch

by John Banta

I have long noted that some plants such as ginger and aroids thrive better when planted in beds rather than in pots. I assumed that this might just be the result of better root aeration. In fact it might have resulted from enhanced communication. We know that plants can communicate via chemical odors but there are additional means of communication between plants that have eluded us until recently. David Johnson of the University of Aberdeen has discovered a subterranean internet. It wasn't just root connections. It seems that bean plants when attacked by aphids send out a chemical vapor that attracts wasps that are parasitic on aphids. Surprisingly, nearby bean plants that weren't

infested with aphids also produced the volatiles that attracted wasps and repelled aphids. By careful isolation of roots and gas exchange, Johnson demonstrated that fungal hyphae was responsible for chemically alerting neighboring bean plants to spring into defensive action. Plant-fungus symbiosis is being recognized as an important agent in nutrition and communication in plants. When it comes to seeing the intricate web of life we still have much to learn.

Next Meeting, All About Hoyas, with Sid and Regina Gardino, Monday, September, 23, 7:30 p.m.

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