



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue 9

Editor: Reggie Whitehead November 2013

Auction in Review

Eye candy was on display for the plant hungry during the giant annual auction of the Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society.

And as in the past, the Auction was as spectacular as ever. President **Mar-nie Valent** opened the auction, and then turned over the proceedings to masterful auctioneer, **Tom Moore**, aided by **Michael O'Dea**, **Argeo Hernandez**, and **Reggie Whitehead**.

Many of us in the South Florida area have come to know the auction for a source of the very rare, strange and unusual. With the reduction of activities with other garden clubs and plant societies, this once a year auction has become one of the key events of the Fall season.

The society specializes in tropical and native ferns but also includes other plant groups, such as Crotons, Aroids, Begonias, Bromeliads, Tropical Flowering Trees and other exotics. Actually, the society is open to any plant group. As a result of this broad definition, *any* plant of *any* rarity can appear in the auction. As you will see, this fact draws people to the meeting from all over the region. The society has meetings throughout the year and an active schedule of activities. Many of their meetings include a speaker and an auction and/or raffle. This night however, was their annual auction, which is their fundraiser.

It was early in the auction preview as attendees started to look through the plants, find their seats, grab some great food and pick up their official bidding paddles. With people attending from all over the area, you got a chance to visit with plant personalities you might have not seen in some time. Palm Society Director **Lenny Goldstein** was seen talking about plants and palms with **Jeff Searle**.

The sumptuous food spread was in an adjacent room, but what everyone came

for was spread around the room on several tables. More plants were added continually as people arrived.

Many of the plants, especially the ferns were unknown to me, so it was a good time to learn new species. One of the ferns I learned about was the **Silver Dollar Maidenhair**, *Adiantum peruvianum*. The leaflets are large for a maidenhair fern, and grow to a size roughly larger than a silver dollar. As seen on the lower part of the plant, the newly emerging leaflets are a bronze-silver color.

There was also a nice 3-gallon pot of *Heliconia indica*, a rare colorful species that used to reside in the Rare Plant House at Fairchild. It was removed for renovation and has since been divided up and distributed among growers and collectors.

The reactions to plants and plant names were exuberant. I began to believe that this auction might have some heavy bidding involved. People were doing their mental checklists as they walked around, ate food and greeted friends and fellow enthusiasts.

Next Meeting, Monday, November 25

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society presents **David McLean** who will present **New Ferns and Some New Tricks**, Monday, November 25, at 7:30 p.m. at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, the Corbin Building.

Some new ferns have been introduced into cultivation and David will explore these. He will also share some of their cultural preferences as well as some tricks he's learned over his long career. He will bring some ferns that will be available for sale after his presentation.

There is no admission fee and the public is invited to attend this presentation. This month's Raffle Table will be supplied by **Palm Hammock Nursery and Oasis Nursery**. Refreshments will be served.

They mentally arranged favorites, must-haves, spending limits, etc. Plants were donated from more than just people in attendance. Nurseries from far and wide, including the nursery of **Charles Alford** in Vero Beach, and **Denis Rotolante's** Silver Krome Nursery, in Homestead, made sure their plants made it to the auction. Some specimens came with descriptions and care information.

Oh, the **Croton** fanatics. There were many beautiful and new varieties this year, and the croton collectors certainly knew what they wanted and made vigorous bids to make sure that plants went home with them. Collector **Jose Lopez** debated a description with **Ron Kiefert** and with fellow collector and grower **Marie Nock**, who was innocently caught in the middle of a lively discussion.

Cycads were few, but were represented in the auction. A 3-gal. *Encephalartos hildebrandtii* (female) was on the back of a table and sold for a very nice price.

The weird, strange and very rare could be found all in one plant. There was a *Psilotum complanatum* a species of whisk fern, originally collected near Kota Bharu, Malaysia. Society member, and theater actor **Reggie Whitehead** was passing by, re-arranging some of the plants so I asked him to hold up the *plant*



Psilotum complanatum

(Auction continued on page 2)

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.
Officers for 2013

President

Marnie Valent (305) 233-5929

Vice President

Marie Nock (305) 232-2257

Secretary

Craig Morell (305) 667-1173

Treasurer

Bob Benaim (305) 793-9755

Board of Directors

Steve Forman (305) 662-2368

Debbie Lamb (305) 251-8675

Mike Twyford (305) 444-6332

Reggie Whitehead (305) 613-5944

(and current officers)

Committee Chairs

Membership — Sherrin Smith (305) 213-2598

Hospitality—Emalyl Israel (305) 235-0886

Martha Bogaard (305) 661-2305

Raffle Table — Skye Palmer (305) 595-9291

Argeo Hernandez (305) 633-9099

Special Events —Marie Nock (305) 232-2257

Webmaster — Bob Benaim (305) 793-9755

Message from the President

Dear Members —

I would like to thank those of you who donated so generously to our auction [on October 28]. We had so many wonderful plants which brought in a lot of money for our society, and the food was incredible (thanks to our incredible Hospitality Committee, headed by **Emalyl Israel, Martha Bogaard and Sally Jude**). So many of you shared special recipes and everyone certainly enjoyed it.

Many of you also donated your time to volunteer and help with various jobs making it a very smoothly run event. We made \$3,883.00 which will help with our operating expenses this year. I am so appreciative of our membership and thank you all for helping to make our society not only successful but lots of fun. For those of you who didn't make it [to our auction] I can only say that you missed a great event and the opportunity to take home some amazing plants. We hope to see you at the auction next year.

Remember that our election of officers will take place at the November meeting (Nov. 25th) so please make every effort to be there and make your voice heard.

My sincere thanks,

Marnie

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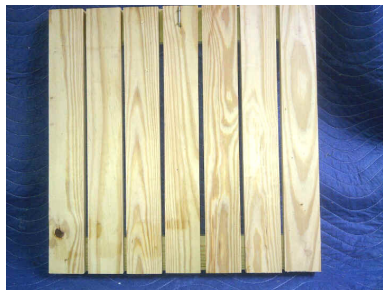
The first Saturday of each month is a special day!

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Contact – Bob Benaim, 305-793-9755 or

staghomrescue@gmail.com

(Auction continued from page 1)

for a photo. I found out a little bit later this 'photo of the moment' was symbolic in a way, since it was **Reggie** who introduced it into cultivation.

Reggie mentioned that when he collected it, he then sent it to Charles Alford who he know would be able to grow it to perfection and distribute it. Charles, donated one of his specimens for the auction. And some very lucky person got it at a very good price.

There were very many spectacular species and specimens at this year's auction, and it really does appear that "a good time was had by all." The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society did it again — **Ryan Gallivan**

This article was written by Ryan Gallivan for the International Palm Society forum. You can see the entire article, with accompanying photos at: <http://www.palmtalk.org/forum/index.php?/topic/39283-tropical-fern-exotic-plant-society-annual-fall-auction/>

New Members

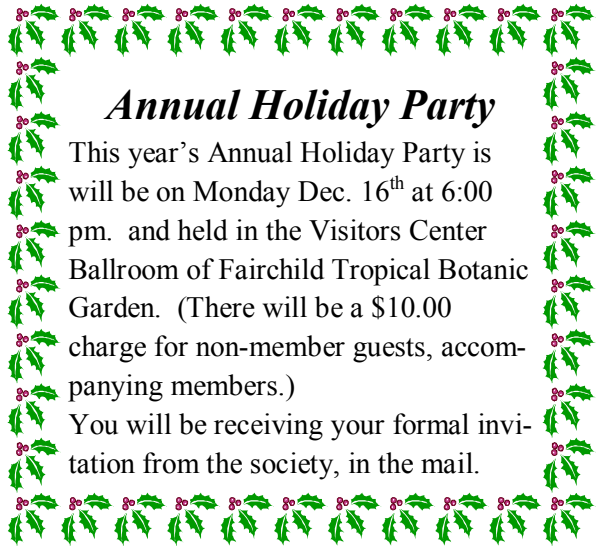
Jo Beth & Cliff Carr
8955 S. W. 83 Street
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(305) 274-5173—H
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Cecile Sanchez
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Key Biscayne, FL 33149
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ceci@realestatekeybiscayne.com



Annual Holiday Party

This year's Annual Holiday Party is will be on Monday Dec. 16th at 6:00 pm. and held in the Visitors Center Ballroom of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. (There will be a \$10.00 charge for non-member guests, accompanying members.)

You will be receiving your formal invitation from the society, in the mail.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR NEEDED

The current editor will be retiring at the end of this year and so, we are looking for a new editor. If you are interested in putting our newsletter together, please contact, Marnie Valent at (305) 233-5929.



Happy Thanksgiving

November 25 *Palm Hammock Orchid Estate and*
..... *Oasis Nursery*

**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: \$** _____

New Kid on the Block

by John Banta

It isn't often that an entirely new fruit is added to our gardens. The "Canbuci", native to Southern Brazil, is known botanically as *Plinia edulis*. Its common name, "Flying Saucer Fruit" is derived from the appearance of the fruit. First noted around the 1820's, it has gone through a number of name changes, yet in spite of its qualities as a delicious fruit it has remained little noticed. That may be about to change. As the expensive seeds become more available and the qualities of the fruit recognized, it shines with a bright future as a grand new addition to our available fruits.

The tree, in the *Myrtaceae* family grows to fruiting



size in 3 to 5 years and reaches a height of about 20 feet. The fruit is best harvested once it has dropped to the ground as the fruit while on the tree is usually astringent and hard. The tree is hardy, withstanding some frost and has few known pests or diseases. The fruit is widely used in Brazil for the finest sorbet, an amber colored marmalade and a most enjoyable ice cream. The Springtime flowers are relatively large with 5 white petals and are followed with yellowish-green fruit about 3 inches in diameter.

I suspect that it will prove to be a popular and widely grown fruit in Florida.

Next Meeting, New Ferns and New Tricks, David McLean, Monday, November 25, 7:30 p.m.

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