



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 16, Issue 1

January 2014

November in Review

Date—November 25, 2013

Speaker- **David McLean** of Wide-spread Notoriety, Great Fame and Trinity Churchside Gardens in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Topic- **Different and Unusual Ferns**

Treasurer's report balance-
\$11,250.32

President called meeting to order at—7: 35 p.m.

Hospitality - **Emaly Israel** and **Martha Bogaard**

Raffle provided by— **Oasis Nursery** and **Palm Hammock Orchid Estate Nursery**

Meeting ended at— 9:15 p.m.

From **President Marnie Valent** - Welcome to new member **Richard Tiberius**, who joined TFEPS at the Fairchild Ramble sale event. The auction garnered \$3883 for the society, a new record. Highest kudos go to **Tom Moore** for his marathon auctioneering skills, aided most capably by a set of assistants who moved purchased plants out of the way and into storage. The record bid of the evening was \$250 for a plant of **Codiaeum 'Milky Way'**. The Christmas dinner is scheduled for the Ballroom at Fairchild Garden on December 16th at 6:30 p.m.

We are saddened to report the passing of long time member **Bob Mills**. He was a lifetime plantsman and will be missed, the society sends its condolences to his wife, Elaine Mills and family.

David McLean spoke to the Society once again, to the mirth and education of all. David has spoken to TFEPS on several occasions, always bringing with him a spectrum of interesting plants, and he fills in the roles of educator, raconteur, salesman and pitchman for both plants

Next Meeting, Monday, January 27

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society proudly presents **Georgia Tasker** who will speak on **The Botanical Riches of Ecuador** on Monday, January 27th at 7:30 pm. The meeting will take place at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, in the Corbin Building.

Georgia is a writer on staff at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Gardens and has written 3 handbooks in her on-going series, *Gardening with Fairchild*. She is also a passionate traveler, having traveled to such destinations as the Arctic and Antarctica, Madagascar, Papua New Guinea, Myanmar, Nepal, Australia, China, Japan, South America. In this talk she will follow a small group of plant collectors as they explore Ecuador.

Prior to joining the Garden staff, Georgia was garden writer with *The Miami Herald* and author of 3 garden books.

Invite your friends and family. There will be plants donated by Fantastic Ferns (**Frank and Sally Tastingner**) for Raffle. Refreshments will be served. See you at 7:30 p.m.

and the methods to grow them. Tonight's program dealt with interesting and uncommon ferns, one of our favorite topics.

David has an excellent tactic in presenting his programs: he hands out a list of plants and their salient points of interest, no doubt a tactic borne of decades as a teacher at Nova Southeastern College and points near and wide. He is widely regarded as an authority on medicinal plants, as well with landscape design and nursery practices.

Among the plants he brought for show and sale were *Acrostichum danaeifolium*, *Asplenium antiquum*, *Diplazium esculentum* (with edible croziers), a 'Dragon Tail' version of *Nephrolepis exaltata*, and a really interesting variant of *Pyrrhosia longifolia* 'Cristata'. He brought enough ferns to fill the tables in the front of the room, in which room were enough people to fill it. David spoke of good books to use as references, citing authors **Barbara Joe Hoshizaki** and **David Jones**.

On the subject of culture, David added that **Boston ferns** like extra calcium in the potting soil, and that many "running" ferns grow better in shallow bowls than in pots. Diluted coffee, as well as spent coffee grounds are beneficial to many ferns, and to many non-ferns as well. (*secretary's note: I can vouch for the tactic; coffee grounds in large quantities make an excellent addition to mulch, and*

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The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.

Officers for 2014

President

Ron Keifert (305) 445-7228

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

Marnie Valent (305) 233-5929

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

My friends,

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve as your president for the past two years. It has been such a good experience for me and I have learned so much from you. Your generosity with both your time and talents have made it pleasure to work with you. I appreciate your support and your patience with my inexperience. I personally feel that our society is the best in every respect.

I would like to thank our officers who have made my job easy by doing theirs so well.

I would also like to thank our various committees who have done everything from recruiting new members to feeding us at our various functions and conducting a great raffle at each meeting.

I am excited to have Ron Kiefert stepping up to be our new president and hope that you will show him the same support that you have shown me. In closing, I wish you a healthy, happy, holiday season and look forward to being “just a member” again next year. Regards, Marnie

Marnie

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Contact – Bob Benaim, 305-793-9755 or

staghomrescue@gmail.com

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can repel many ground-dwelling insects as well as boost plant color, add acidity to the soil, and retard nematode growth).

David sold most of the plants he brought with him, a mutual benefit for members and the speaker. We hope that his fern culture sheets can be scanned and added to a future newsletter so that all may enjoy his writing, even if you didn't attend the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Craig Morell C.P.A.

Certified Plant Addict

DUES ARE DUE

Dues for 2014 are currently being collected. Have you rejoined TFEPS? If not, *Please* do so today.

Please make checks payable to **TFEPS** (and mail to):

Bob Benaim, Treasurer
P.O. Box 902094
Homestead, FL 33090-2094

Dues are (still):

\$15.00 - single

\$17.00 - for two members at the same address

(Dues may be paid at our January meeting.)

(Also, if there are changes that we should know about, e.g. phone number or e-mail address, please use the application and include it with your dues.)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR NEEDED

The current editor is retiring from this post and so, we are looking for a new editor. If you are interested in putting our newsletter together, please contact, Ron Keifert at (305) 445-7228, or e-mail him at: hwy253@hotmail.com



*Happy and
Prosperous New
Year*

January 27

**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: \$** _____

Parthenocarpy

by John Banta

Few events are more disappointing to a plant breeder than to squeeze a plump red berry and find it seedless. Yet there are times when parthenocarpy (fruit formation without any seeds) is a joy — eating bananas for instance that lack their normal seeds as large and hard as that of the Lotus. A recent trip to the fruit market renewed my interest in seedless fruits. I encountered the most remarkable grape I had ever seen. The huge, over an inch long, red seedless “Flame” grape. A real joy to eat! In order to achieve this marvelous grape over one hundred-thousand seedlings were tested and 5 different varieties used in breeding it.

The more common seedless grape, the Thompson seedless green, widely grown for raisin production in California appeared as a chance mutation in a variety named

“Lady de Coverly” that William Thompson introduced in 1875 to California. No longer content to wait for a chance mutation, plant breeders are ready to produce seedless fruits on demand. Genetic work on **Arabidopsis** revealed a mutation that prevented the seed coat from developing. When this mutation was introduced into a **Cherimoya** it resulted in a normal size fruit but without any seeds. “The most delicious fruit known to man” according to Mark Twain, is now on the way to providing us with seedless **Cherimoyas**.

Next Meeting, Botanical Riches of Ecuador, Georgia Tasker, Monday, January 27, 7:30 p.m.

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