November in Review

Speaker Peter Kouchalakos

Topic – Neoregelia culture

Treasurer’s report balance — $12,801.51, without credit card receipts tallied yet from Ramble

Vice President Marie Nock called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m., President Mike Twyford was absent

Hospitality– Emalyl Israel, Martha Bogaard,

Raffle provided by— Peter Kouchalakos

Meeting ended at— 9:10

Peter Kouchalakos speaks often on orchid and bromeliad growing, considered an authority in both. He is a well known grower of both, and practices as a lawyer as a hobby (we’re not sure about which came first). He also owns a company called PCK Orchids, tending to orchid and bromeliad care for many dozens of clients. He is also a fixture at many plant sales, always with new and interesting plants in his sales booth. Tonight’s program was about culture of the genus Neoregelia, a popular genus of bromeliads well know for their surreal and day-glow colors in the foliage.

“Neos”, which is much easier to say than the full genus name, are really quite easy to grow, and in some cases the plants literally grow on a sunny rock.

Peter illuminated us to the # 1 factor in growing Neos successfully: proper light levels. While many Neos can withstand a wide range of light levels, bright filtered light all day, with direct morning sunlight, is the best scenario. Peter also cautioned the crowd about the difference in summer light strength versus winter light strength. A plant located in the shade in the afternoon in summer might be in blazing afternoon sun in the winter.

There are hundreds of Neo species and hybrids, most of which grow as epiphytes or terrestrial, rarely as pure rock-dwelling lithophytes. A great many of the modern hybrids can grow in trees, provided they are given adequate water and proper sunlight. Unfortunately, there is no good monograph for this genus, detailing every known species and hybrid. (Secretary’s note: there is a registry for hybrids of this genus, but it is hard to define the lineage of many hybrids, and the book is wildly out of date.) One of the favored parents in the high-light group of the genus is Neo. carcharodon, meaning ‘shark tooth’. It will grow well in all-day sunlight, but looks its best in a little afternoon shade. It has produced some excellent hybrids, including ‘Red Tiger’, ‘High Voltage’, and several color variants like ‘Rainbow’ and ‘Tiger II’. The species’ jet black teeth, set against a tiger-bar leaf pattern, make this a desirable species.

In the landscape, Neos can make a bold statement, but should be mixed in groups, i.e. not a giant

Next Meeting
Monday, January 24

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society presents John Criswick. His talk for the evening will be My Life in the Caribbean.

John will speak on his life operating a tropical and exotic plant nursery on the island of Grenada. His talk will include a PowerPoint presentation touching on how he arrived in Grenada and running a nursery on a small island. This should be an interesting talk.

This month’s Raffle table is sponsored by Sid Gardino.

See you at 7:30 p.m.

(Review continued on page 2)
The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.
Officers for 2010

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
Emalyl 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

(Review continued from page 1)

block of all one type, nor the one-at-
a-time pattern so commonly seen
in rookie landscapes. There are
types for every light level, so a
good long term design can be made
without difficulty. Plants can be
potted and set into the ground, us-
ing a well-drained soil mix. Many
growers use perlite mixed with cy-
press mulch, or lava rocks mixed
with mulch. Plants can also be af-
fixed with locking cable tie-wraps
to tree trunks. **Neos** have very
few pest problems, although some
growers report that the plants har-
bor snails. The snails don’t do
much damage to the bromeliads,
but can devastate other nearby
plants. There are several snail bait
products on the market, but read the
labels carefully. One of the most
popular types is a blue pellet called
**Deadline**, but it’s toxic to pets,
wildlife, and children. There are
organic snail killers on the market,
of varying effectiveness. Peter has
reported, unofficially of course,
“that late at night, snails fly out of
his bromeliads, and onto the road
nearby.” He denies all personal in-
volve ment with this action, but sev-
eral members agreed that they have
seen the same phenomenon in their
collections. In any scenario, physi-
cal removal of snails is an excellent
long term tactic to strategic control.

Peter concluded his high-
voltage talk with some hefty exam-
ple s of the genus, including a large
plant of **Neo. Tiger**. Peter’s pro-
grams are always informative and
highly entertaining, injected with
tales of lawyers and lawmakers
gone amok, good plants gone bad,
and the blood letting he incurs
when working with certain plants.

Other announcements included
the invitation to the Christmas party
at Sallye Jude’s wonderful estate on
the bay, December 19 at 4:30. It
will undoubtedly be a grand dinner
with a king’s table of food and des-
(Review continued on page 3)
2011 Dues are due!

Membership dues for the Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society are currently being collected.

- Dues are: $15.00 - single
- $17.00 - for two members at the same address

Lifetime Memberships are available at: $125 per individual, $150 for two members at the same address. This one-time rate is valid for the life of the Society. Please make check payable to: TFEPS, and mail to:

Thomas G. Moore
c/o TFEPS
6880 S. W. 75 Terrace
South Miami, FL 33143

Dues may also be paid at the next meeting Monday, January 24.

Leigh Elliott — Died December 19

It is with deep sadness that we report that one of our longtime members passed away in December. After suffering a long bout with cancer, Leigh Elliott passed away on December 19. Leigh was a vice president of our society, and an avid grower of very beautiful specimens of orchids and a dedicated plantsman who will sorely be missed. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his grieving family.

Raffle Tables for — 2011

January 24, 2011 .......................................................... Sid Gardino
February 28, 2011 .......................................................... Tim Anderson/Redland Nursery
March 28, 2011 .............................................................. Steve Nock/Philip Iloo
April 25, 2011 ................................................................. David McLean/Craig Reid
May 23, 2011 .................................................................. John Lucas/Rebecca & Duane Tannenbaum

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: $_____________
Plant collectors are always on the look-out for a new plant to add to the collection. Jungle collected plants such as from *Ecuagenera* are a prime source but various forces are at work to diminish this availability. Where will new and novel plants come from? If the past is any indication; from the growers of plant collections. Many of the choice plants in our collections originated from growers like us. We owe them a debt of gratitude. Many thanks to Bob McColley and Ralph Davis for their efforts to produce neat, new and novel plants for us. Too often these breeders are forgotten as time passes. Let us refresh our memories. In the 1960’s Bamboo Nurseries, in Apopka, was the epicenter for neat, new aroids, especially *Philodendrons*, thanks to the efforts of Bob McColley. Until Bob started his breeding efforts only 2 Philodendron hybrids were known. *P. corsianum* made in Italy in 1887 and *P. hastatum X erubescens* made in New Jersey in 1936 by Manda. It was in 1951 when Bob made his first hybrid, *P. squamiferum X laciniatum*. That was the beginning of a stream of colorful *Philodendrons* that are found in nurseries and collections even now. ‘McColley’s yellow’ is still a widely grown *Philodendron*. The widely grown *Aglaonema “Silver Queen”* was also one of Bob’s introductions. *Origins to be continued.*

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**Next Meeting, John Criswick, My Life in the Caribbean , Monday, January 24, 7:30 p.m.**

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This Newsletter is also available through PDF and our www.tfeps.org website.

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*South Miami, FL 33143*