



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 3

Editor: Reggie Whitehead March 2010

February in Review

President Mike Twyford called the meeting to order at 7:55. The treasurer reported that the Society has **\$14,442,93** in the bank. The refreshment table was beautifully stocked by Emaly Israel and Martha Bogaard.

Raffle donations were also made by Michael and Sheila O'Dea, who donated two tickets to the Orchid Show, and Chris Migliaccio who donated a very nice palm.

The raffle table was generously provided by Tim Anderson, and the tables contained some very handsome plants indeed.

Marie Nock introduced the program and speaker for the evening, Chris Migliaccio from Miami Dade College (new name for Miami-Dade Community College). Chris has been growing palms in this area for over 20 years, and had a lot of experiences to relate, along with an excellent 6 page handout. The handout lists the important characters for several dozen palms, including water needs, required shade levels, fertilizer, and how to select the right plants for the right place. Chris is also a palm consultant (perhaps he does 'palm reading' ...) and can be reached at chrismig@bellsouth.net, or at 786-218-5012.

Chris made excellent points, and as he spoke we could tell he had been a teacher, with a clear and organ-

ized delivery. Chris also made note of a number of topics that we sometimes downplay, such as using micronutrient mixtures such as AFEC Fer-A-Gro or AFEC Liquid Green 3 times per year for some of the understory palms; using time-release fertilizers for container growing; palm species conservation; and keeping in mind the mature size of a palm even when you plant it as a seedling. The extensive handout lists sources of palms, supplies, fertilizers, and containers.

Some examples from the list include:

Small Palms for Filtered Light; *Chamaedorea cataractarum*, *Guihaia argyrata*, *Schippia concolor*, and *Veitchia sessilifolia*.

lia.

Small Palms For Shade areas; try *Arenga caudate* or *Arenga hookeriana*, *Balaka seemannii*, one or more of a long list of **Chamaedoreas**, or *Licuala lauterbachii*.

Medium Palms for Filtered Light; *Archontophoenix purpurea*, *Arenga engleri*, *Kerriodoxa elegans*, *Licuala peltata*, numerous *Ptychosperma* species and the "Zombie" Palm, *Zombia antillarum*.

Medium Palms for Shade areas; many **Pinanga** species, and *Drymophloeos beguinii*.

Understory Palms for Container Culture -Filtered Light —The infamous Sealing Wax Palm, the orange crownshaft *Areca vestiaria*, and several of the stilt-root spine palms such as *Phoenicophorium* and *Verschaffeltia* need annual soil changes in the pots, controlled release fertilizer and usually some protection from weather under 50F and strong dry winds. For **Shade Growing**, Chris listed several *Calyptrocalyx* species, the genus **Reinhardtia**, and the Rhaps group of Lady Palms. Chris brought several plants for demonstration. The meeting concluded at 9:15, with a full house of members and visitors.

Next Meeting, Monday, March 22

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society presents **Dr. Bruce McAlpin** who will speak on **Propagation Techniques and Secrets**.

Bruce always presents wonderful working knowledge on plants and how we can make the most of our gardens. Please join us on for this great presentation. Raffle Table will be supplied by Richard Button and Dolores Fugina of **Bloomin' Good Nursery**.

*Tropical Fern
& Exotic Plant Society
Show and Sale*

June 5 and 6

At Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden

Reserve this date

Raffle Tables for 2010

March 22 *Richard Button*

April 26.....

May 24..... Ree Garden and Rebecca Tannenbaum

Please make check payable to:

**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: \$ _____

Tomatoes
by John Banta

The great range of tomato fruit size, shape and color almost matches the wide range of characteristics found in our pet dogs. This is the result of human selections. A major partition of tomato varieties is based upon the nature of fruit production. Large commercial producers of tomatoes want a plant that produces all of its fruit at one time so that fields can be harvested at one time. Thus, we get the determinate varieties used for ketchup and Campbell's tomato soup that was first produced in 1897. The home gardener wants the fruit to be produced over a long period so they can be enjoyed over the entire season. Thus, we have the indeterminate varieties that continue to grow, flower and set fruit continuously.

The range in tomato varieties includes the length of time it takes a seedling to produce ripe fruit. This can range from the Siberian tomato that sets fruit in 48 days after flowering and sets fruit in 38 degree weather to the common garden varieties that don't pollinate well if the night time temperatures are much above 77 degrees . A useful source for information about tomato varieties is the catalog put out by: *Tomato Growers Supply Company, P.O. Box 60015, Fort Myers, Florida 33906*. Most of its hundreds of varieties are pictured and described. Aside from neat tomato information it includes hundreds of pepper varieties.

Next Meeting, Monday, March 22, Dr. Bruce McAlpin, Propagating Techniques, 7:30 p.m.

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

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

