



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 10, Issue 8

Editor: Reggie Whitehead October 2008

September in Review

Reggie Whitehead called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m. He welcomed all members and guests.

To open the meeting, Reggie acknowledged the generous \$5,000 donation from Dale Magrew. Dale's wife Wilma, passed away in June of this year, and Dale wanted to make a sizeable donation to our society in her memory. Reggie asked members to consider projects that this donation could go towards.

The evening's Raffle Table was supplied by Sid and Regina Gardino and new member Steve Correale. One of the highlights of the Gardino's plants was a beautiful trailing impatiens. Steve's contributions included beautifully grown **Tillandsias**, complete with great colorful inflorescences. Bob Benaim brought in a nice specimen of a Ponytail palm and two **Plumeria** species for the table.

It appears that our refreshment table is turning into a feast. Martha Bogaards and Emaly Israel, once again did a beautiful job of hosting our refreshment period.

Bob Benaim mentioned that we have in our treasury \$17,711.71. Our treasury is a little bigger because of the generous Magrew donation.

Reggie reminded us that our Annual Plant auction was coming up on October 27, and that members needed to begin preparing plants to donate to our annual fund-raiser.

The topic of the evening was **Amorphophallus**, and so Reggie introduced our speaker, Mike Twy-

ford. Mike is a horticulturist whose specialty is growing begonias, but he has many other plants in his collection, including **Amorphophallus**.

Mike brought in several species of these unique plants with their unique aromas, when they are in bloom.

One of the first species he introduced us was **Amorphophallus paeoniifolius**. This is probably one of the commonest of the **Amorphophallus** group, he said.

A. paeoniifolius has a rather interesting flower, or inflorescence. When this plant is in bloom, you should be able to find it by the obnoxious scent it sends out, and by the swarm of flies that are always attracted to it.

Mike mentioned the flies because they are one of the chief pollinators of these stinky plants. Other pollinators include sweat bees. Mostly, he said, pollinators can be found in the indigenous areas where the plants live.

The **Amorphophallus** plants hail primarily from Southeast Asia, India, and Africa. There are no native species to the Americas (however, their cousins, **Dracon-**

(Review continued on page 2)

Annual Auction October 27

It is time for our wonderful, Annual Plant Auction. Our auction will once again be held at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, in the Garden House on Monday, October 27, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

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 credit cards will be accepted.

Our hospitality committee has planned a wonderful repast for us. If you would like to bring something for the refreshment table, please contact Martha Bogaards or (305) 661-2305 or Emaly Israel (305) 235-0886.

**Annual Auction
Monday, October 27**

**Did somebody say:
AUCTION**

See you at 7:00 p.m.

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.

Officers for 2008

President

Reggie Whitehead (305) 666-0219

Vice President

Tom Moore (305) 666-0219

Secretary

Karen Mashburn (305) 661-7488

Treasurer

Bob Benaim (786) 243-0502

Hospitality

Martha Bogaards (305) 661-2305

Emalyl Israel (305) 235-0886

Librarian

Juan Espinosa-Almodovar (305) 444-3103

Raffle Table

Sheila O'Dea (305) 253-4907

Michael O'Dea (305) 253-4907

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

Trinity Churchside Garden

Behind the Eleventh Street Annex Restaurant

*Landscape Design, Consulting;
Medicinal, Weird, and Native Plants*

DAVID MCLEAN

14 S.W. 11 Street Open Sat and Sun and by appointment (954) 768-0423
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315 Just west of South Andrews Avenue

The first Saturday of each month is a special day!

Benches, Pots and Cement Blocks

Dale Magrew has several orchid benches for sale, along with clay and plastic pots and cement blocks that you might use in your garden. Please call him to make an appointment

(305) 235-9265

SHERRIN A. SMITH

PLANT, PET, AND HOUSE SITTING; Personal Assistance

Miami Native

305 448-2598 Phone 305 668-4622 Fax

E-mail: sas56chevy@bellsouth.net

tium can be found in South America).

Amorphophallus actually translates to “formless phallus” alluding to the interesting spadix that is found on **Amorphophallus** plants. Mike said that there are approximately 200 species, and these 200 species can be identified by their unique spadix.

The spadix is the central, prominent, feature arising from the center of the plant when it is in bloom. The spadix is the common unifying feature on all members of the aroid family. An accompanying feature to the spadix is the spathe, the outside sheath that envelopes the spadix.

Mike talked about several other species of **Amorphophallus** like, **Amorphophallus bulbifer**, a rather familiar aroid in our gardens. Mike mentioned that **A. bulbifer**, can be propagated by removing the small “bulbils” the plant produces on its leaflets. It was also mentioned that this species also can self-pollinate, and becomes quite the nuisance due to seed dispersal in the garden.

Mike told us that the interest in **Amorphophallus** species was heightened when **Amorphophallus titanum**, captured local and national headlines when it first bloomed at Fairchild Tropical Garden. He, mentioned that when these interesting plants are not up and causing a stink, they are dormant, usually during our winter months. They usually begin poking their single leaf stalk through the soil in the springtime, and the cycle begins again.

The leaf stalk, the tree-like structure, is considered a single leaf. It arises out of a tuber, or more accurately a corm. The corm takes different forms in the different species. Some can be rather large, and some are decidedly small.

We gratefully thank Mike Twyford for giving us such an insightful talk on these mysterious plants. We also thank Home Chaovanich for donating 5 species of **Amorphophallus bulbs** for *give aways* at the meeting.

Sporotrichosis, a footnote

In last month's newsletter, we learned about the perils of working with tainted sphagnum moss.

After the newsletter came out, one of our members, Jerry Horne, gave us his take on his association with **Sporotrichosis**; and he offered a remedy that he highly recommends: KELP tablets.

That's right Kelp, as in seaweed, which is a wonderful source of potassium iodide. "If it saves at least one person from having to have drink the iodine, then it is worth it," said Jerry.

At one time, Jerry Horne's name and nursery are synonymous with great plants.

New Members

Rebecca Tannenbaum
Duane Tannenbaum
18345 S. W 206 Street
Miami, FL 33187
(305) 238-4859
Oasisnursery@bellsouth.net

**TFEPS Annual Plant Auction
Coming Soon to a
Botanic Garden Near You
Monday, October 27**

Raffle Tables for 2008 — 2009

October 27	Annual Auction
November 24.....	Peter Kouchalakos
December	Holiday Party
January 26.....	John Lucas
February 23	Tim Anderson
.....	Craig Reid
March 23.....	Richard Button
April 27.....	David McLean
.....	Home Chaovanich and John Banta
May 25.....	Ree Garden

Please make check payable to:

**Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society
17850 S.W. 280 Street
Redland, FL 33031-3321**

___ Individual Member \$15. ___ Household Membership \$17.

___ Life Membership \$125. ___ Life Household Membership \$150.

Members Name: _____

Name of additional member: _____

Street Address: _____

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

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____ **Amount enclosed: \$** _____

A Bright Idea

by John Banta

It was Saturday evening after our sale and show at Fairchild and a few of us, reluctant to let our enthusiasm cool down too quickly gathered together around an old oak table and enjoyed some fine cheese and wine. Our conversation proceeded like Brownian motion. I must admit that things that glow in the dark fascinate me greatly. My bedroom walls have plastic luminescent insects on them ; the ceiling has a constellation of glow in the dark stars, comets and planets. Most useful are the ceiling fans with luminescent tabs on the pull chains to safely adjust the speed without the need of lights. It was only natural that a new fish was mentioned. I like fish almost as much as I like

plants. This fish named TK-1 is a genetically altered Zebra fish marketed as GloFish. California has banned the sale of this fish. While it does raise some debate regarding ethics. We wondered about the following.

Suppose an easily grown plant like a *Syngonium podophyllum* "**White Butterfly**" was engineered to glow in the dark. This can be effected by altering the sugars present on the outside sugars on the cell wall. It may well be that our grandchildren will have a *Syngonium* "**Moon Glow**" glowing brightly on their bedroom window sill. I wish to thank Steve for the clever title of this prognostication.

Next Meeting, Annual Auction, Monday, October 27; 7:00 p.m

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