



Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 7

Editor: Reggie Whitehead September 2010

June in Review

Date—June 26

Speaker John Banta

Topic- The Realm of the Peacocks

Treasurer's report balance-
\$14,385.31

President Mike Twyford called the meeting to order at— 7:50

Hospitality-Emaly Israel, Martha Bogaard, Marie Nock

Raffle provided by—Larry and Glenda Weed, Anne-Marie Scherr, Bob Benaim

Meeting ended at—9:20

John Banta has been growing and collecting gingers, aroids, and a dazzling array of odd and unusual plants for nearly 50 years. His expertise seems limitless, and tonight he spoke primarily on the **Kaempferias** and allied genera of Thailand. With the help of dueling slide projectors, 2 carousels of slides, and an extensive handout, John did service to a large group of plants that deserve more attention in the horticulture trades. Some of the many dozens of species have kaleidoscope foliage, while some allied genera such as **Siphonochilus** have large richly colored flowers.

Some of the slides John had showed us were plants in their native habitat, one species had leaves as large as a platter! John mentioned that discovering this plant was one

of the greater moments in his life. There are myriad subtle differences in these genera, and that in many instances they represent a spectrum of differences which may be highly related, in that every valley and mountain range has subtle (sometimes rather bold) differences in a given species. This can be expanded to say that even very distinctly different species may be anciently related, with only cosmetic differences showing up overtly.

John has produced, collected, and hybridized dozens of plants for modern horticulture, ranging from **Impatiens** through gingers and aroids. One of his better **Kaempferia** creations is called "Raven", and has striking dark feather patterns on upright silver-green foliage. Although many species in this genus go dormant briefly, the foliage and

(Review continued on page 2)

Next Meeting, Monday, September 27

The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society presents **Tom Moore** who will speak on the morphology or shapes of ferns. Tom is one of the founders of our plant society as well as its treasurer.

Tom will bring in plants to illustrate the diversity of ferns that he has in his own collection.

This month's Raffle Table is supplied by **Richard Button** and **Dolores Fugina**. See you there — 7:30 p.m.

Tricia Frank



Photo by Ron Weeks

Sadly, on June 25, we lost a beloved and important member of our horticultural community. Tricia Frank, mentored and encouraged many of us in the plant world.

We all learned much from this remarkable and beautiful woman. When I first began coming to Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, I would see Tricia everywhere, at any time, always busy with the Garden's business. She volunteered at Fairchild in almost every capacity. Later in her life she became a devoted employee of the Garden.

Tricia was also very active in many plant societies, including our own. One year she and her husband Chayo hosted our Annual Holiday Party at their architecturally stunning home. Tricia, we will greatly miss you — Reggie Whitehead

tivation. John's programs are always educational and entertaining, and the standing-room only crowd was a testament to his reputation as a great speaker. John brought interesting plants for sale, which sold rather quickly, especially the 'Raven' now residing on my doorstep.

Respectfully submitted,
 Craig Morell,

New Lifetime Member

Nick Marchand
 4551 N. W. 15th Avenue
 Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309

New Members

Ron & Jackie Arrick 5100 60th Street, East Lot D-17 Bradenton, FL 34203 (941) 727-3293 rlarrick@hotmail.com	Eugene Tannenbaum & Gloria Lee 6230 S. W. 83rd Avenue Miami, FL 33143 (305) 271-1722 Gloleek@comcast.net
Theresa Chormanski 1655 S. W. 10th Street Miami, FL 33135 (305) 804-2677 theresameis@yahoo.com	

***Annual Plant Auction
 Monday, October 25
 7 p.m.
 Get those plants ready!***

Raffle Tables for 2010 — 2011

<i>September 27</i>	<i>Richard Button and Dolores Fugina</i>
October 25	Annual Auction
November 22, 2010	Peter Kouchalakos
December 2010	Holiday Party
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

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: \$** _____

The Shadow Knows

by John Banta

When I was a kid I used to listen to a radio program called “The Shadow”. My memory of it was jogged while I was talking to an old timer about growing greenhouse plants. I asked his opinion about fertilizers: “is urea as good a source for nitrogen as nitrates or ammonia?” He responded as follows, “Son, there are so many different fertilizers on the market today to respond to the multitude of growing conditions and various plants that you have to have a PhD to make a wise choice. But I’ll give you some good advice that I got years ago when I asked “ what is the best fertilizer?”

The best fertilizer is the grower’s shadow. The dumb look on my face let him know that I had no idea what he was talking about. He was a good teacher as well as a good grower so he explained that plants cannot communicate with us so it is incumbent on the grower to observe and detect problems while they are minor. Look for mites before you see their silken strands, knock a plant out of its pot and check the roots and move plants that show signs of water or light stress. The grower is far more important than the blend of fertilizer.

Next Meeting, Monday, September 27, Tom Moore on the Morphology of Ferns, 7:30 p.m.

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

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South Miami, FL 33143***

Annual Plant Auction

Monday, October 25

7 P.M.