

IPS Biennial 2006. Destination: Dominican Republic

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Photos by Paul Craft

1. Inside view of the Botanical Garden Dr. Rafael Ma. Moscoso.



During October 1–8, 2006, the International Palm Society (IPS) will celebrate its biennial in the Dominican Republic.

The island of Hispaniola, located in the Caribbean Sea, covers an area of 74,000 square kilometers and is shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Palms are an essential element of the biology, culture and landscape of the island and are represented by 30 species, of which half are endemic.

Eighteen genera are present, occupying an amazing diversity of ecosystems and landscapes; they include *Roystonea*, *Sabal*, *Copernicia*, *Coccothrinax*, *Pseudophoenix*, *Acrocomia* and the endemic genus *Zombia*. On this occasion palm lovers will have the opportunity to see these palms in their native habitat. For a week we shall travel between Santo Domingo and Pedernales, on the border

with Haiti; this is the region where the most interesting species grow.

Program

Sunday, October 1: We shall meet at the Hotel Occidental El Embajador, in Santo Domingo, and the first activity will be a welcome cocktail followed by dinner, which will formally initiate the 2006 Biennial.

Monday, October 2: We shall have our first contact with native and exotic palms grown in the splendid Botanical Garden Dr. Rafael Ma. Moscoso, in Santo Domingo (<http://www.jbn-sdq.org/>) (Fig. 1). In the central square we shall see impressive specimens of *Sabal domingensis*, *Roystonea borinquena*, *Coccothrinax argentea*,

2. *Coccothrinax boschiana* in habitat on the coastal Martín García Mountains.



3. *Pseudophoenix ekmanii* in Jaragua National Park.





4. *Coccothrinax ekmanii* in habitat.

Bactris plumeriana, *Calyptronoma rivalis* and *Pseudophoenix vinifera*, as well as magnificent Haitian *Attalea crassispatha*. At noon we shall leave the city toward the east to visit a golf

course where hundreds of adult *Acrocomia aculeata* were transplanted (<http://www.guavaberry.org/index.html>). We shall eat lunch in that spectacular landscape, enjoying the



5 (top). *Coccothrinax scoparia* in Sierra de Bahoruco National Park. 6 (bottom). *Copernicia berteroana*.

native flora of the Caribbean coast, which was respected as part of the landscape by landscape architect Rosángela Bobea.

Tuesday, October 3: We shall set off for the southeast region of the country to Barrera, Azua, where we shall enjoy a population of thousands of *Coccothrinax boschiana* practically

emerging from the Caribbean Sea to the mountains of Martín García (Fig. 2). After eating lunch by the sea we shall continue to the Hotel Costa Larimar, in Barahona (<http://hotelcostalarimar.com/>).

Wednesday, October 4: We shall have the opportunity to visit the Jaragua National Park,



7. *Coccothrinax spissa* in habitat.

where helicopters will be waiting to take us to visit populations of *Pseudophoenix ekmanii*, without a doubt the most charismatic palm of the Dominican Republic (Fig. 3). It will be a unique opportunity to view thousands of specimens of this spectacular palm from the sky as well as to be able to walk among them.

Thursday, October 5: we shall travel to Pedernales, on the Haitian border. On the way, we shall stop to see a population of *Coccothrinax ekmanii* (Fig 4), then continue to the high altitude Sierra de Bahoruco National Park (http://www.geocities.com/falco67_99/pnsb), where, at 1000 m and within pine forests grows *Coccothrinax scoparia* (Fig. 5). We shall also see this small, resilient palm in small populations on the way to Hoyo de Pelempito (<http://members.aol.com/aperez11/pelempito.html>), an impressive depression in the depths of which we shall contemplate as we eat lunch at the lookout constructed by the park authorities.

Friday, October 6: We shall travel back to Santo Domingo, visiting populations of *Pseudo-phoenix vinifera* (Back Cover) and *Copernicia berteriana* (Fig. 6) in Azua, as well as the spectacular "belly palms" of Baní, *Coccothrinax spissa* (Fig. 7).

Saturday, October 7: Back in Santo Domingo, there will be several options – tours of the historic center of the colonial city (<http://www.sdq.com/colonial/>), shopping at craft bazaars, or lunch at the Vivero

Inmaculada. At night we shall have a farewell dinner, which will include a colorful Caribbean show.

Sunday, October 8: The biennial will conclude. Attendees will be taken to the airport to return home, or for those attendees not affected by the US embargo of Cuba, a separate trip to the neighboring island of Cuba is planned by a travel agent in the Dominican Republic. Cuba has a fascinating palm flora. This Cuba trip is not sponsored or sanctioned by the IPS.

We have chosen the month of October because it is after the hurricane season of August and September. Each evening, after dinner, we shall present lectures by specialists from various countries who will discuss the palms of the Antilles and South America, along with the latest advances in palm biology and landscape uses. In Barahona, we shall enjoy presentations of the local culture. Throughout our travels, we shall be in modern air conditioned buses. Breakfasts will be included, as well as lunches and dinners, except for the two nights in Santo Domingo. The official language will be English, and we shall have at all times guides who speak English, French and Spanish. This is the first time that the IPS has held its biennial within the Caribbean, and we shall surely take back great memories of the Caribbean sun, color and Latin flavor, as well as its palms.

We look forward to seeing you all on October 1, 2006, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

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