



# THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2017

NEWSLETTER

## Palm Weevils!

Palm weevils (*Rhynchophorus* spp. - Curculionidae), even if they are really good looking ([Video 1: Redweevil Walking](#)), are a devastating plague for palms around the world. They attack many palms and can kill an adult specimen quickly as the weevil larvae eat the apical meristem. This inflicts irreversible damage ultimately leading to the plant's death.

Usually treatment of this pest is expensive, involving systemic injections or the spraying of other products. The trunks of dead palms must be incinerated to prevent the spread of new adults onto nearby palms.

(Read: [Canary Islands Becomes First Territory in the World to Eliminate the Red Palm Weevil, article from 2016](#))

There are several species of weevils attacking palms, *R. palmarum* and *R. cruentatus* among them. In southern Europe the Red Palm Weevil (*Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*) has become a problem



Above: *R. ferrugineus*, photo: [Luigi Barraco](#) (CC BY-SA 3.0)



Above: Cultivated Canary Island Date palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), attacked by *Rhynchophorus ferrugineus*. Els Poblets, Comunidad Valenciana, Spain. 22 Dec 2010. Photo: [Katja Schulz](#) (CC BY 2.0)



that has killed many palms. Palm production and demand in Europe have decreased in recent years as a result.

In Spain a team led by biologist Dr. Berenice Güerri is trying to solve this problem by using the fungus *Beauveria bassiana* (Bb) as a biological control, specifically *203 Bb Strain* which they now distribute as a commercial product in Spain. This team has observed up to 99 percent of infected palms become weevil-free after the control was applied.

Biological controls have the advantage of being safer for the environment by not leaving chemical traces. This can also make it a more attractive option in urban areas where chemical applications may be restricted. The *Beauveria bassiana* fungus attacks and kills the weevils. Also, it is considered much less likely that the insects could develop resistance against the fungus, as they might do with some conventional pesticides. Dr. Güerri is convinced *Beauveria bassiana* has much to say about the control of this plague. ¡Enhorabuena for this project!

[Good Results on Battle Against Reed Weevil, article from 2017 \(In Spanish\)](#)

[Berenice Guërrri: Red Weevil Tamer, article from 2012 \(in Spanish\)](#)

[Documentary about \*R. ferrugineus\* in Spain and its life cycle \(in Spanish\)](#)



Above: Canary Island Date Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) with initial signs of infestation signs.  
Photo: [Küchenkraut](#) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

## About our Affiliates and Sections: Tropical Garden Society of Sydney

Last month we had a note provided by Ian Edwards, one of the members of Tropical Garden Society of Sydney, giving us updates about a Cabbage Palm (*Livistona australis*) project started 20 years ago! This month we have a note about this organization working in Australia:

The Tropical Garden Society of Sydney began in 1979 as the NSW Chapter of the Palm Society which became the IPS in 1983. Later they became the Sydney Branch of PACSOA (Palm & Cycad Societies of Australia). Starting in 1982 they published a magazine called *Principes minor*. In 2003, because of falling membership and widespread interest in decorating their palms with orchids, bromeliads, aroids, etc., they changed their name to the Tropical Garden Society of Sydney and their magazine to *Tropica*.

The Tropical Garden Society of Sydney website <http://sydneytropical.org/>



## The “Enigmatic” *Nannorrhops*: Is One Form Enough?

The Mazari Palm (*Nannorrhops ritchieana*) is the sole species in the genus *Nannorrhops*. Named after its original collector David Ritchie, this palm is native to southwestern Asia from the southern Arabian Peninsula countries of Yemen, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and east through Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and into northwestern India.

The Mazari Palm, a clustering fan palm with several stems growing from a single base, has been gaining popularity as an ornamental palm. This species is especially valued for its tolerance of cold and drought. While requiring warm summers for growth, it is one of the most cold-hardy palms, tolerating frosts down to about  $-12^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $10^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). The general wisdom about this palm, however, suggests that wet, cold weather can be lethal.



Left: A silver *N. ritchieana* at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, Florida, USA. Photo: Kevin Hrycay

Of course, given the wide geographical distribution of the Mazari palm, some investigation into various forms of the species has been considered. Formerly four species were recognized: *N. ritchieana*, *N. stocksiana*, *N. arabica* and *N. naudiniana*. Harold E. Moore later categorized them into just one variable species—the *N. ritchieana* recognized today. Robert Lackner, in a 2003 article “*Nannorrhops, The Enigmatic Palm*” published by the European Palm Society,

offered that “It is still unclear if all the different forms of *Nannorrhops* can be lumped together into just one species. Now, doubts from experts arise, suggesting that some of the different forms found in habitat may indeed be separate species.” Lackner continued to describe three forms: a green Pakistani form, a silver Pakistani form, and a silver form from Iran sometimes still referred to as *N. arabica*. For anyone interested in this palm and variations in cold hardiness of different forms of the species, Lackner’s full article is definitely worth a read: [Nannorrhops, The Enigmatic Palm!](#)

Similarly, palm expert Tobias Spanner has offered Mazari palm seed separately under three descriptions (*N. ritchieana*, *N. “Kashmir,”* and *N. arabica* silver) and has posited that: “there are more than one species of *Nannorrhops*.” He presented the possibility that one *Nannorrhops* species (*N. ritchieana*) was native to eastern Afghanistan and northern- and central Pakistan, while the other—often still called *N. arabica*—was native to southwestern Pakistan, perhaps southern Afghanistan, southern Iran, and into the UAE, Oman, and Yemen. “What I find strikingly different in the two,” Mr. Spanner explained, “are the seedlings. The first few leaves of *N. ritchieana* are long, narrow and green while *N. arabica* has short, almost white leaves. There are also consistent



differences in the orange wool on the leaf stalks, in growth rate and cold hardiness and tolerance towards cool and wet conditions.”



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Above: A massive "green" *Nannorrhops* at Fairchild Tropical Garden, Miami, USA.  
Photo: Gibbons/Spanner.



Above: *Nannorrhops ritchiana*, photography taken in September 1986 in Pakistan, Baluchistan, near Hoshab.  
Photo by [Gabriele Kothe-Heinrich](#) (CC BY-SA 3.0)

## Latania Magazine: Coming from Indian Ocean

Situated in the Indian Ocean and east of Madagascar, La Reunion Island has all environmental conditions to grow tropical palms. And it is there that IPS-affiliate Palmeraie-Union Society issues Latania Magazine which includes information about trips, palm facts and other details.

They are planning a *Vogaye à Madagascar* for late March! What a great opportunity for a *reunion* with other IPS members!

You can access the December 2016 issue by following this link [Latania N° 36](#). Their webpage is: [Palmeraie-Union Webpage](#)





## Metallic Palms

For many of us when we hear about metallic palms our mind goes instinctively to dense, wet forests and limestone slopes of southern Mexico, the home of *Chamaedorea metallica*, commonly known as the “Metallic Palm” for its metallic blue-green hue.

Others, however, have taken a much more literal sense of the term metallic palm in pursuit of creating more decorative cellular

towers designed to appear (at least to a casual observation) as tall palms. These cell towers—produced by several different manufacturers—are commonly available in both date palm and fan palm configurations and often include either a “pineapple” or a “skirt” as appropriate to help mask the antennae.

Right: The Metallic Palm (*Chamaedorea metallica*) is an understory palm named for its metallic appearance. Photo by Daniel Meza.



Above: A cellular tower apparently disguised as a *Phoenix* date palm phone service. Does this fake date palm give new meaning to “Pseudo Phoenix?” Photo by [Scott \(Flickr user\)](#) (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)



Above: A cell tower designed as a fan palm. In this model the pineapple and skirt serve to conceal the tower’s antennae. Photo taken from: [Custom Made Palm Tree Co.](#)

See more at [Custom Made Palm Tree Co. - Concealed Cell Towers](#)

More pictures in [Flickr](#)

**DOES YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER/PALM SOCIETY HAVE AN EVENT? Let us know by advertising it here! Or share your experiences afterwards! Contact us and send us pictures!**

## Showing IPS Spirit!

In addition to renewing your International Palm Society membership online this year, keep in mind that the IPS also offers merchandise online that can help you show off your membership, present your palm passion, and help spread the word about our community of palm enthusiasts!!



How do you get your own IPS items that include jewelry, shirts, caps, mugs, glasses, and many other practical items? Simply follow the “caps, t-shirt, totes, and more!” link from the IPS homepage [IPS Home](#), or go directly to this link: [IPS CafePress](#).

Remember to support our organization by participating with us! You can contribute by participating in our Palm Talk forum, our Facebook group, or by writing an article for either Palms journal or a note for IPS newsletter. You can also make an extra donation to the International Palm Society.



**Let's keep this alive!**

Visit the discussion board to ask questions about palms: [www.palmtalk.org](http://www.palmtalk.org)

Visit the new INTERACTIVE FaceBook Group: International Palm Society

Follow us on Twitter: @IPS\_PalmSociety; on Instagram: @thepalmsociety; or

Email address for contact: [info@palms.org](mailto:info@palms.org)





**Stolon Palm (*Chamaedorea stolonifera*) at Ken Johnson's palm farm in Goulds, Florida, USA.  
Photo: Ken Johnson.**