



# THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY

Apr. 2023

NEWSLETTER

## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1

Aloha from Hawaii and the 32<sup>nd</sup> International Palm Society Biennial.

Whether it's fine art, automobiles or even palms, the best collectors rely on years of study and travel to advance their connoisseurship. This is the first of a two-part survey of passionately curated private palm collections visited on the Big Island of Hawaii.

### Floribunda Palms & Exotics

Grown men high-fiving, and I believe I even saw somebody kiss the ground. Yes, the International Palm Society was making a pilgrimage to the legendary Floribunda Palms and Exotics!

Left: Christine Brusseau and *Chrysalidocarpus leucomallus* at Floribunda. Right: Jeff Marcus pointing to the waxy crownshaft of *Cyphokentia cerifera*, one of two species in *Cyphokentia* (the other is *C. macrostachya*).





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Suchin Marcus, welcoming the IPS to Floribunda Palms & Exotics.

Su Marcus with *Borassodendron machadonis* (a vulnerable palm found in southern Thailand and Peninsular Malaysia). Apparently, this is the most viewed photograph ever posted on the IPS Facebook forum.



Jeff Marcus, aka the slim Kahuna, preaching the gospel of “backyard conservation.” *Cyphophoenix nucele* (Lifou Island, New Caledonia) and *Carpoxylon macrospermum* (Vanuatu) in the background.

Jeff, dwarfed by sky-high stilt roots of a *Pandanus*.





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1 – Madagascar



At one time, Jeff referred to *Chrysalidocarpus leucomallus* simply as “white petiole.” Its epithet, derived from the Greek word *leucomalla* meaning white wool, describes the thick indumentum observed on the petioles. This superb palm species was initially studied here at Floribunda Palms by Dr. John Dransfield. It has been found in nature on the eastern escarpment forests of central Madagascar.

*Chrysalidocarpus hovomantsina*



*Masoala madagascariensis* with Director Gregg Hamann, palm paparazzo, in the background.

*Ravenea musicalis*, discovered in 1993 by Henk Beentje, is an aquatic palm. The Antanosy culture refers to this plant as torendriky which means “submerged trunk.” Its wood is used to build temporary canoes known as pirogues. *R. musicalis* seeds germinate underwater at depths up to eight feet!





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– Madagascar



*Chrysalidocarpus mijoroanus*

Tiffany and Andrew Street admiring the impressive inflorescences and bracts of *Vonitra perrieri*. Su Marcus, to the right, leading the way.



*Lemurophoenix halleuxii*

*Vonitra nossibensis*, a critically endangered palm found in a single forest (Lokobe) on the island of Nosy Bé (hence the epithet).





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– Madagascar



True *Ravenea glauca* “Andringitra” grown from seed collected by Directors Len Geiger and David Tanswell in Madagascar.

Clearly Jeff is stoked by the size of this leviathan, *Chrysalidocarpus tokoravina*. In his words: “I’m hugging Madagascar!”



*Ravenea krociana* honors Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonalds, for funding a 4-year Madagascar Palm Project at Kew.

*Orania trispatha* has a distichous (single plane) leaf arrangement, so the crown resembles a large fan.





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– New Caledonia



For many years *Basselinia moorei* was confused with *Basselinia velutina*. In 2011 *B. moorei* was described as a distinct species, primarily due to its conspicuous orange-red fruit (the other members of the genus have black fruit). *Basselinia moorei* also nearly reaches the summit of Mont Panié, replacing *B. velutina* at higher altitudes.

*Basselinia vestita*.



*Basselinia velutina*.

*Basselinia humboltiana*, exceedingly rare in cultivation. We may view this species in habitat via a possible extra day in New Caledonia during the upcoming 2024 biennial.





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– New Caledonia



*Basselinia glabrata* (formerly *Aloschmidia*) “stacks” its inflorescences.



*Chambeyronia lepidota*, crownshaft detail.

*Cyphophoenix alba*.



*Kentiopsis piersoniorum*, a colorful palm with powdery blue-green leaves, pink petiole, yellow petiole base, and purplish crownshaft.



## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– Precious Palms



*Heterospathe califrons* (Philippines).



*Licuala mattanensis* 'Mapu' (Sarawak).

*Licuala ferruginea*.



*Geonoma epetiolata*, the stained-glass palm, the only New World palm with substantial mottling.





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– Colorful Crownshafts



*Dictyocaryum lamarckianum* (Colombia and Ecuador).



*Areca macrocalyx* 'Red' (the Huon Peninsula of Papua New Guinea). Brought into cultivation by Jeff's mentor, the late Queensland palm grower Maria Boggs.

*Pinanga maculata* (Philippines) with its showy purple crownshaft.

*Physokentia petiolata*, endemic to the Fijian island of Viti Levu.





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1



*Clinostigma haerestigma*, a rare species, distinguished from the other members of the genus by its pendulous leaflets and short stature (ca. 30 ft max).



*Clinostigma gronophyllum* a stilt-rooted species from Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands. Its high altitude habitat might evince cool-tolerance in cultivation.

Floribunda is renowned for its abject dedication to ex-situ conservation. Jeff describes it as a “botanical life-boat.” Jeff grows two species of near extinct (in habitat) palms: *Pritchardia viscosa* and *Hyophorbe vaughanii*. *Pritchardia viscosa* (below), an extremely rare and threatened palm from Kaua’i. A single population remains with only four individual trees.





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1



*Hyophorbe vaughanii* from Mauritius. Only fifty individuals remain in the wild, hence seed is extremely desirable. The inflorescence bract, distinctive for its shape, is long and angled acutely upwards.

And finally, a genus that few of us had ever seen before, *Sclerosperma*. *S. mannii* is an acaulescent, clustering palm from swampy forests of Gabon. Photo by Andrew Street.



### Mike Merritt's Garden

Long time director Mike Merritt kindly invited rabid biennial palm aficionados to visit his eight-acre garden, occupying a former sugarcane plantation, in rural Hilo. Mike has been a director since 2008 and served as IPS treasurer from 2008 through 2013 (he was recruited by then President Bo-Göran Lundkvist). Mike joined the IPS 43 years ago, as he explains: "When I reported to the Miami USGS office in January 1980, one of my colleagues was interested in palms and was an IPS member as well. He introduced me to the yearly sales at Fairchild Garden, so I sent in my dues to the IPS and have been a member ever since. I knew little or nothing about palms, so at the Fairchild sales, I plied the vendors with really idiotic questions. Jeff Searle would run and hide when he saw me coming."



## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– Mike Merritt

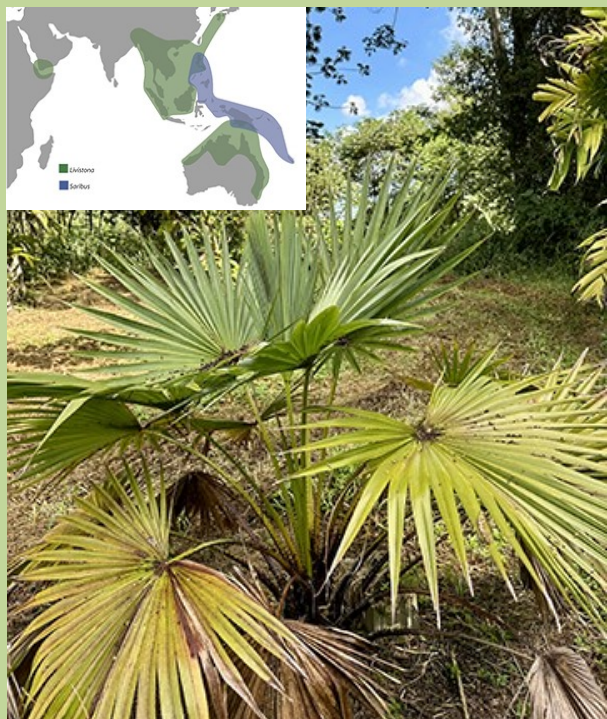
Driving directions provided by HIPS President Rick Kelley proved quite accurate despite our early misgivings over phrases such as: “there is no street sign” and “turn on a very tiny dirt road with lots of weeds growing in the road. If the weeds get higher the farther you go, your headed in the right direction.” Mike was a tad embarrassed that his mowing equipment had been on the fritz for a long period of time, however I can assure you that all anyone noticed were the palms!

A true gentleman (palm) farmer in his proverbial “back forty.” Before Hawaii, Mike had a home in southern Dade County Florida, which was demolished by Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

*Clinostigma ponapense*, endemic to Pohnpei in the Caroline Islands of Micronesia, soaring overhead.



*Livistona carinensis* (Dransfield and Uhl, 1983) is endemic to Djibouti, Somalia, and Yemen, thus representing a disjunctive population, isolated geographically from the other members of the genus, found in SE Asia, Australia, New Guinea, and Melanesia. Inset: The global distribution map of *Saribus* (and *Livistona*) from Bacon and Baker (2011) *Palms* 55(3): 111.





## Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 1– Mike Merritt

At right, IPS Vice President Jeffry Brusseau theatrically presenting one of the grails, *Voanioala gerardii* (the forest coconut), from Madagascar.

Below, after a monumental day of palm viewing, the gang reconvened at the Moon and Turtle in downtown Hilo, for dinner.





## Affiliate News: The South Florida Palm Society (SFPS)

On Saturday, March 25, 2023, the annual Spring field trip and picnic included the SFPS's inaugural visit to the offices of renowned landscape architect Raymond Jungles in Coconut Grove.

Next the group was treated to a picnic lunch and garden tour at the residence of Dr. Laz Priegues (IPS Director and Benefactor). Dr. Priegues garden is especially noteworthy for his focus on the palms of Cuba. His collection includes some of the largest *Coccothrinax borhidianas*, *Copernicia fallaensis*, and *Copernicia cowellii* anywhere in the continental USA. Further, he is a practitioner of "gorilla gardening," and as a result the adjacent pocket parks (recently installed by the City of Miami) and public swales are now filled with many rare palm species—to the delight of the residents of this 100-year old historic neighborhood.



Raymond Jungles (in hat) conducting the tour of his landscaping office.

Dr. Lazaro Priegues welcoming the SFPS to his home and garden.





## Save the Species 2023 Update

Funds have been received by the National Tropical Botanical Garden and plans are underway to begin to conserve DNA and save *Pritchardia woodii*. Troubling articles like these, see below, illustrate the critical importance of our actions.

[Major palm oil companies broke their promise on No Deforestation—recovery is needed, says researcher](#)

However, there is some good news on the conservation front:

[Kew's "Noah's Ark" Seed Vault Hits 40,000 Species From Around The World | IFLScience](#)

(Editor's note: The IPS will be visiting The Millennium Seed Bank during the midterm meeting on May 24.)

## Upcoming Travel with the IPS

2023 IPS Mid-Term Meeting, London:

Sunday May 21–Thursday May 25

Including RBG Kew, RHS Chelsea Flower Show and Wakehurst Place

**SOLD OUT**

**waiting list:** [info@palms.org](mailto:info@palms.org)

2023 IPS Premium Travel: Reunion Island (West Indian Ocean)

Hosted by the Palmeraie-Union

Sunday October 29– Monday November 6

**SOLD OUT**

**waiting list:** [info@palms.org](mailto:info@palms.org)

2024 The International Palm Society's 33rd Biennial: New Caledonia  
(Southwestern Pacific Ocean)

Sunday, September 22– Monday, September 30

Capacity 150

**Expected to sell out.**

Registration opens August 2023

2025 Mid-Term Meeting: Peru

2026 The International Palm Society's 34th Biennial: Thailand

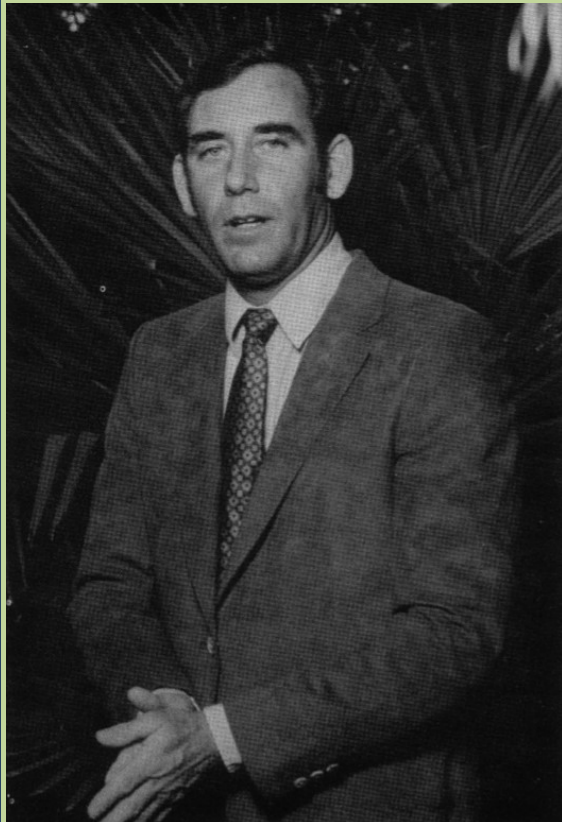
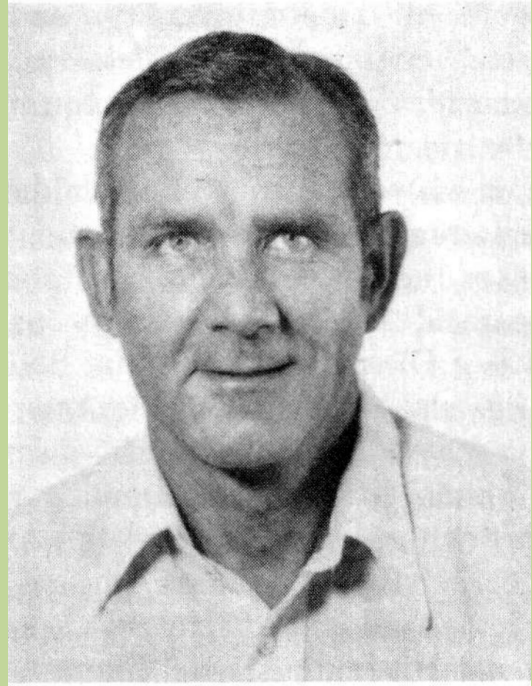


## Past Presidents of the IPS: 1980–1988

This is the fourth of a six-part series recognizing the 24 former presidents of the International Palm Society. Each entry will include a portrait with an accompanying vignette. These will be compiled on our webpage at palms.org for future reference.

### 1980–1982 Paul Drummond, Florida

A native New Yorker, Paul Andrew Drummond fell in love with palms at the World's Fair "Florida Pavilion" (curated by David Fairchild). He lived on Old Cutler Road, near his "second home", the Fairchild Tropical Gardens, for over fifty years (his garden was an essential stop for palm dignitaries traveling "way south" of Miami to visit the FTG). Additionally, the IPS made several official visits to his garden. His advocacy contributed to the creation of the palm research center at Chapman Field. Mr. Drummond, a US Naval combat veteran, studied philosophy at Fordham University.



### 1982–1984 Richard Douglas, California

Born in rural Georgia, Dick Douglas, cultivated a premier cold-hardy palm garden in Walnut Creek, California. Additionally, he founded the Northern California affiliate palm chapter. The cultivar x *Jubautia splendens* 'Dick Douglas' honors him as he grew the much celebrated (and photographed) original plant from seed obtained via the IPS seed bank in 1973. Mr. Douglas studied landscape architecture at the University of Georgia. He flew as a pilot for United Airlines, based at SFO.



## Past Presidents of the IPS: 1964–1972



### 1984–1986 Allan Bredeson, California

Born in North Dakota, Allan G. Bredeson followed his dreams of the tropics, creating magnificent palm gardens first in Lemon Grove, California and later in Papa Bay, Hawaii. Admired as the first president to regularly post on the IPS forum Palmtalk, he used the moniker “Al in Kona.” The hybrid *Chamaedorea* cultivar ‘Allan Bredeson’ is named in his honor. Mr. Bredeson taught public school in San Diego and Kona.

### 1986–1988 Ed McGehee, Florida

Ed McGehee never missed an IPS meeting, nor a South Florida chapter gathering (unless he was out of town, often attending the event of another IPS affiliate). Despite medical limitations, he and his wife Peggy personally cared for their garden (on the Intercoastal Waterway in Fort Lauderdale), with 140 species in the ground, and an additional 150 palms in containers. Sadly, he died just after being re-elected to a second consecutive term as IPS president. Mr. McGehee earned a degree in engineering management from Carnegie-Mellon University and later a law degree from the University of Florida. He practiced real estate law in Lighthouse Point, suburban Fort Lauderdale.





## Parting Shot

Yes, palm nerds enjoy other hobbies as well during biennials. Director Anthony Glomski with his ubiquitous surfboard riding shotgun. Hilo, Hawaii.

