



June 2023

NEWSLETTER

Aloha Edition — Private Gardens, pt. 1

Aloha from Hawaii and the 32nd International Palm Society biennial.

This is the first of a two-part survey of breathtaking private palm gardens visited on the Big Island of Hawaii.

CASA DE LAS PALMAS

It has been said that Jerry Hunter was born to be a nurseryman. His parents owned the legendary Rosecroft Gardens situated on peninsular Point Loma (San Diego), a nursery once associated with horticultural pioneers Alfred D. Robinson and Kate Sessions.

After earning a degree in Ornamental Horticulture from UCLA, Jerry founded Mt. Soledad Nursery in 1954. And in 1980, he acquired land in Hilo, Hawaii where he transformed seven acres of rural farmland into the “palms of paradise”. Past IPS President Bo-Göran Lundkvist recounts his favorite memories of spending “entire afternoons” with Jerry at his Palms of Paradise nursery in Hilo.

Fun fact: Jerry was considered the dean of California landscape architects, and remarkably his license was #33.

In 2017 Casa de Las Palmas was acquired by Lars and Irene, or is it the other way around? Irene describes the garden, which is clearly demanding in terms of daily upkeep, as our “dominatrix.” The garden takes advantage of 200 inches of annual rainfall at elevation on the slope of Mauna Loa (the largest volcano in the world). Design elements include color (green, yellow, gray, and burgundy) and the Frank Lloyd Wright architectural strategy of compression and expansion.

Upon arrival at Casa de las Palmas, we were fortunately accompanied by author Jason Dewees, who spent considerable time at the garden while researching his excellent book, *Designing with Palms*. He very wisely recommended that we be dropped off at the foot of the long driveway to enter the garden as a pedestrian.





Upon reaching the first vista at the end of the driveway, everyone stopped dead in their tracks and past IPS president Horace Hobbs exclaimed (quite loudly), "OH WOW"!





Jaws dropped when we saw this stand of *Vonitra utilis*.

Our hosts, Irene and Lars welcoming the IPS on the grand lawn.

One of the design elements favored at Casa de las Palmas is the "stacking of the palms," readily apparent behind Irene. And in the background behind Lars is *Cyrtostachys elegans* and *Burretio-kentia koghiensis* (expected to be seen in habitat during the 2024 New Caledonia Biennial).





Orange crownshafted *Euterpe*.



Archontophoenix purpurea, with its distinctive purple crownshaft, Mt. Lewis, Queensland.

Daniela Noblick with the decorative sheath of *Chrysalidocarpus hovomantsina*, "immediately distinguished by the patch of thick reddish-orange hairs near the mouth of the leaf sheath" (Dransfield, *Palms* 44(3): 131). The source of the sheath is at right.





Chrysalidocarpus baronii, stunning white crownshaft offset by black petioles.



Male ivory nut palm (*Phytelephas*) in flower.

Salacca magnifica.



Iguanura wallichiana.





Heterospathe cf. barfodii at Casa de las Palmas.

At the conclusion of our tour Irene and Lars, along with Joe and Tom from the Hawaiian Island Palm Society, personally served us an incredible lunch culminating with a table of homemade desserts. Nobody wanted to leave.

Bo and Kim

Our hosts (below left) with a spectacular *Tahina spectabilis*, the fairytale result of Bo skillfully germinating 86 out of 100 of the first batch of seeds.

Former IPS President Bo-Göran Lundkvist and former IPS Director Kim Cyr have cultivated gardens, rich in palms, on contiguous lots in Leilani Estates, Hilo. We visited Bo's magnum opus, the Moani: Lundkvist Garden, in last month's newsletter. As explained by Kim: "Bo's current garden is driven by very different objectives, combining palms with native plants, and will always retain, in his own words, a more wild aspect."

This must be the place! Kim's driveway, lined with *Neoveitchia storckii*.





Kim, our fabulous host, with a fabulous palm (*Chrysalidocarpus mananjarensis*).



A giant *Chrysalidocarpus*.

A fetching colonnade of *Areca vestiaria* (note the long stilt roots due to the shallow soil).



Cyphophoenix alba. This is one we'll see in habitat during the 2024 New Caledonia Biennial!





Dypsis pachyramea.



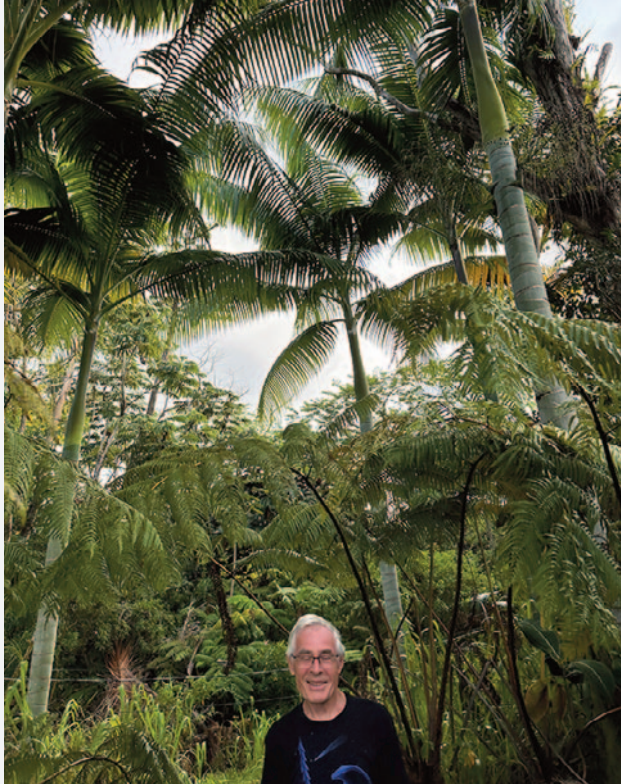
Geonoma atrovirens.

It's good to live in Hawaii, part 1. *Loxococcus rupicola* sprouting like weeds; Kim's toes for scale.



It's good to live in Hawaii, part 2. *Cyrtostachys renda* with bromeliads "that just showed up"!





Bo surrounded by his favorite palm, *Clinostigma savorianum*.



Chrysalidocarpus saintelupei planted in a grove.

From Pentecost Island, Vanuatu, *Neoveitchia brunnea*, quite rare in nature and in cultivation.

On one of Bo's many "forest trails," the emerging red leaves of *Calyptrocalyx albertisianus*.





The road ends here.

But by the grace of Pele, Bo and Kim were spared the 2018 lower Puna eruption, with overwhelmingly high lava flows barely 200 yards away. Proceeded by earthquakes and ground deformation, Kilauea volcano's East Rift Zone began erupting on May 3, 2018, via 24 fissures. In the process, 716 homes in Leilani Estates were destroyed. The total financial loss was nearly a billion dollars.

Bo and Kim described the deafening roar which "sounded like a jet plane" and being engulfed by the volcanic vapor, which killed many plants (including 13 out of 14 *Dictyocaryum lamarckianum*).

Homes (and gardens) tragically buried under as much as thirty feet of lava. Gregg Hamann for scale.





Signs of life: the bromeliads are returning. (Editor's Note: These *Aechmea* bromeliads are not native to Hawaii and drive home the need for conserving the native flora.)

Postscript:

Now after the privilege of visiting Bo's two superlative palm gardens in Hilo, it's fun to look back at his early days in palm growing. We all had to start somewhere, and for Bo it was Poway (North County, San Diego), November 1989. As Bo reported in *The Palm Journal of the PSSC* (No. 113, pg. 34); "...we had just started on our landscaping. I knew very little about palms, except that I wanted a number of them in my backyard. Our landscaper suggested a number of *Phoenix* and *Brahea* palms for the yard, and a King Palm right next to the swimming pool. This sounded good to me, so we ordered the palms and had them delivered and planted in January 1990."

Bill Austin's Garden

Bill Austin worked side-by-side for many years with his friend and colleague Jeff Marcus at Floribunda. So it's certainly not surprising that he has many of the choicest palms growing at his enviable garden in Hawaiian Acres.

That's Bill in the center, along with the lucky IPS Biennial attendees who opted to visit Bill's garden.





Bill with *Beccariophoenix fenestralis* background.



Cyphosperma tanga (Fiji), rare in cultivation and highly threatened in habitat.

The blue form of *Chrysalidocarpus decipiens* (Betefaka), Christine Brusseau for scale.



And Jeff Brusseau with the same species, now colossal.



Satranala decussilvae, a monotypic genus from Madagascar, renowned for its distinctive seed. Fewer than 200 mature plants remain in habitat.



Chambeyronia magnifica will be seen in habitat during the 2024 Biennial in New Caledonia!

Bill hugging *Lemurophoenix halleuxii*. Inset: ripe fruits. How could anyone resist?

A pair of *Dypsis mirabilis*, split leaf and whole leaf forms (right and left, respectively).





During heavy rains, Bill seeks dry shelter under these *Marojejya darianii*, which efficiently funnel water down their stems.

Orange crownshaft form of *Cyrtostachys renda*.



Bill and *Chrysalidocarpus basilongus*, with its black trunk and powdery-pink crownshaft.





"Lost," the Hawaiian Acres edition.



Become an IPS Benefactor

IPS Benefactor one-time dues will increase to \$5000 on January 1, 2024.

If you love palms and wish to support the International Palm Society's mission of research, education, and conservation, this would be an ideal time to become an IPS Benefactor. Benefactor benefits include lifetime membership, our journal *Palms*, the webinar library, and invitations to small group travel (led by noted experts) to very desirable and exotic palm habitats. Furthermore, benefactors will typically be invited to attend the board of directors midterm meetings (e.g., Peru 2025) which occur in the years between Biennials.

A Benefactor membership is currently \$2500 but will be raised to \$5000 effective January 1, 2024. So now is the time! Moreover, if you are already a lifetime member, a one-time donation of \$1500 prior to December 31 will make you a Benefactor member, a level of support we hope you will strongly consider.

Travel with the IPS

The International Palm Society is proud to present a true bucket list destination over two years in the planning:

The International Palm Society's 33rd Biennial destination: NEW CALEDONIA in 2024 (Southwestern Pacific Ocean)

Sunday, September 22 to Monday September 30 (8 days!).

Capacity 150.

Expected to sell-out.

Registration tentatively opens late August, 2023.

Organizers have worked tirelessly to arrange a once-in-a-lifetime itinerary that includes access to palm-rich areas normally off limits to island visitors. The package will include hotels, all but two meals, ground transportation, and expert guidance. Outings will be suitable to all levels of fitness, but we hope to include some optional, more strenuous hikes for the more adventurous attendees. Mark your calendars and watch this space for further information.



Past Presidents of the IPS 2004–2021

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

2004–2008 Paul Craft, Florida

An acclaimed author of several palm books, Paul Craft published the *Palms of Cuba*, a definitive tome covering all 98 endemic Taxa. He also founded the Palm Beach Palm and Cycad Society and served as its first president.

Initially trained as a chemist, Mr. Craft functions as a horticultural consultant and, remarkably has experience with around 1500 palm species.



2008–2012 Bo-Göran Lundkvist, Hawaii



Born in Sweden Bo-Göran W. Lundkvist moved to San Diego and became quite active in the Palm Society of Southern California, serving as editor of PSSC journal. His passion for growing more tropical palms led him to Hilo, where by dint of hard work (planting at least three palms each day) he created two astonishing gardens with groves of rare trees.

An expert in the field of aviation, Mr. Lundkvist owns and operates Lundkvist Aviation Research.

2012–2016 Leland Lai, California



Leland Luke Lai made the unprecedented move (at least for our tropical tree loving society) from Hawaii to Los Angeles, where he created a palm oasis in the Santa Monica Mountains. He also served as the President of the Palm Society of Southern California.

Leland and his wife, Shirley, have been kind and generous hosts for many local, regional and international palm society meetings, at their home and garden, Jardin Topagonia. These events are especially memorable as Leland is an accomplished chef and sushi connoisseur.

A pioneer in the field of sustainable aquaculture, Mr. Lai earned an undergraduate degree from UCLA and MBA from the University of Southern California.

2016–2021 Ray Hernandez, Florida

The second rocket scientist elected as IPS President, Ray Hernandez is a graduate of the University of South Florida School of Engineering and works in aerospace technology. As a native Floridian (Tampa), he had several legendary local palm gardeners to inspire him; he now grows over 300 species of palms.

Previously Mr. Hernandez served as President of the Central Florida Palm and Cycad Society. He is the longest tenured president in the history of the IPS, helming the Society for an additional year during the pandemic.



Parting Shot

A nighttime visit to Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park on the Big Island. Photo by Dr. Boyd Marts.

