



NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2000

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL, Inc.

EDITORS: BOB HEATH, THERESA HEATH, CHARLES NOVAK, LINDA NOVAK, JIM LEE, SALLY LEE

PRESIDENT: BOB HEATH

MEETINGS ARE HELD THE 2nd SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 2:00 PM.

NEXT MEETING: NOV 12

MEETING PLACE: UNIVERSITY OF SO. FLORIDA, Bldg BSF100

PROGRAM: SIDNEY PARK-BROWN will be our speaker this month on Nov. 12. She will be speaking about fertilizers of mostly commercial varieties, discussing the numbers associated with fertilizers, such as 6-6-6, soil pH and other conditions, and concerns of organic gardening in regard to commercial fertilizers. This should be an interesting and informative program. We will also have our normal delicious tasting table and our exciting plant raffle.

FIGS ARE AN ENIGMA

by Art Hedstrand

Some strange things we have observed:

- A 40 year old 25' tall pair of figs in a backyard in Ocala with no mulch.
- Thriving plants in heavy black or red-brown soil underlain with clay in many locations in Brooksville.
- Thriving Celeste partially under a Hamlin orange tree in Chulvota with light gray sand. Moved to similar soil $\frac{1}{2}$ mile south and declined almost to death. Moved to organic garden patch with rich soil next to a lake. Came back bigger than ever.
- Nice 6' plant with huge root mat from friend in Cocoa Beach moved to Christmas, FL to location with typical gray sand. Kept mulched with leaves & grass trimmings. Dead in 3 years.

Conclusions may be:

- Lots of lime in Ocala may be beneficial?
- Nematodes don't like clay?
- Symbiotic relationship with other plants or citrus?
- Rich, black soil with much organic enhancement adverse to nematodes?

Nematode deterrents include:

1. Sesame seed hulls - yellow bag at Home Depot according to Jules Cohan.
2. A bacteria strain which Bill Adrian has available.

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Our club participated in the USF Botanical Gardens Fall Plant Festival on October 14 & 15. The Festival gets bigger with each passing year and this one was bigger than ever. There were more garden clubs represented, more commercial nurseries & suppliers, more miscellaneous sellers with garden furniture, statuary, pots, etc. The hibiscus, crotons & ferns were exceptionally interesting and beautiful. In addition to an excellent array of fruiting plants, we also sold fruit juices, jellies and jams, persimmons, avocados, atemoyas and ice cream. The weather was beautiful, couldn't have been better, and the turnout of our membership to work at the sale was very good, so let me take this opportunity to thank all our workers who put in many hours on Friday, Saturday & Sunday.

The Citrus Celebration in January is fast approaching and we need a club member, a good organizer, to step forward and take the reins of organizing this important function. We have people who will help with phone calls and other assistance, but we need a kingpin to pull it all together. Don't be shy!

We appear to be in a world class drought at the moment. My rain forest is beginning to look like the Sonora Desert. Experts are saying this is the worst in 100 years and many are blaming it on global warming. However I think it is a natural cycle that we go through regularly with drought conditions and rainy conditions. I also believe we're entering a warm cycle with fewer and less severe winter freezes, similar to conditions we had 60 to 70 years ago.

Don't forget our Members Corner is still available to those who would like to sell something, buy something, or wish to ask questions or pass on some important information.

Following is a list of scheduled programs in advance for the next few months:

- Nov 12 Dr Sidney Park-Brown on fertilizers.
- Dec 10 Christmas Party & Covered Dish Luncheon at Dr Berns Creighton's home.
- Jan 20 & 21 Citrus Celebration at USF.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Oct-Nov 2000

by PAUL ZMODA

Persimmon season is here! This is our first crop and we are finding that they may become our favorite fruit. Of the Oriental varieties, I've only planted non-astringent selections. These are fruits tht can be eaten before becoming soft-ripe without causing that puckery, uncomfortable sensation in the mouth. After becoming soft-ripe, the non-astringent cultivars are heavenly treats (as are the astringent varieties, but only then).

First of ours to ripen is 'Izu'. 'Izu' is large and colored very nicely. Next, 'Fuyu' (Fuyugaki) becomes ready to eat. It is smaller and not as attractive. Finally is 'Suruga' which I expect to be ready in November. I haven't found a seed in any persimmon yet. No wonder the Latin name Diospyros translates to "fruit (pear) of the gods".

New plantings: Chinquapins, Noni, onions, 'Page' orange.

NEW MEMBERS

Lee Abbott, 1302 S Pine Lake Dr, Tampa FL 33612 813-933-2442 abbottlelee@yahoo.com

Silas Beach, 1788 Overbrook Ave, Clearwater FL 33755

Brad & Bert Bradish, 4841 Foxshire Cir, Tampa FL 33624 813-961-8050

Ilona & Dominic Bruno, 4115 Whittner Dr, Land O' Lakes FL 34629 813-995-3759

Jean Carter, 3113 SR 580 #377, Safety Harbor FL 34695 727-669-5374

Bill Couture, 8505 S Apache Ln, Yuma AZ 85364 520-329-9277

Gene & Dionne Crouch, 3524 Stearns Park Rd, Valrico FL 33594 813-689-6808,
namaste44@earthlink.net

Eugene Dagon, 7236 Hammett Rd E, Tampa FL 33647 813-972-4540

Mary Driver, 9561 Sunshine Blvd, New Port Richey FL 34654 727-868-3047,
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Judith Hall-Kiernan, 14709 N 37th St, Lutz FL 33549 813-971-6439

Dianne & Armando Ponce de Leon, 9903 Trevino Dr, New Port Richey FL 34655
727-376-3700 Payne, Marge

Peggy & Tony Reindl, 1608 Dusty Rose Ln, Brandon FL 33510 813-643-8720

Valerie Sheets, 4202 E Fowler #1293, Tampa FL 33620 813-905-7584

Alan Shobert, 15604 Hutchinson Rd, Tampa FL 33625 813-963-7234

Larry & Jean Valdes, 416 S Riverhills Dr, Temple Terrace FL 33617 813-988-1729

Edward & Lorraine Walsh, 3121 Bay Lane, Clearwater FL 33759 727-799-8851

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PHONE NO. CORRECTIONS

Janet Conard 813-239-9246

Paul Zmoda 813-677-5985

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A GUIDE TO TROPICAL FRUIT TREES AND VINES

From time to time where space permits we will be reprinting excerpts from "A Guide to Tropical Fruit Trees & Vines" by Nick Acrivos. Harold Nicholas "Nick" Acrivos (9/6/18 - 10/20/87) was the founder and leader of the Brevard Rare Fruit Council, Inc. He was greatly involved in fruit crop research, visiting many countries to obtain first hand information. His vast knowledge of fruits made him a frequent participant in programs pertaining to fruit, fruit care and propagation.

A GUIDE TO TROPICAL FRUIT TREES AND VINES

FAMILY - ACTINIDIACEAE

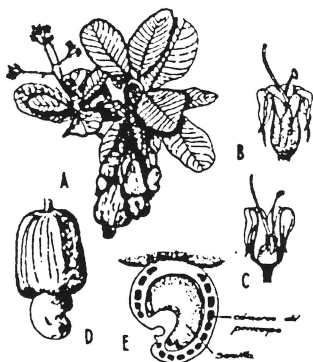
1. *Actinidia chinensis* - Kiwi, Yangtao, Chinese Gooseberry



Evergreen vine native to China but widely grown commercially in New Zealand. Its heart-shaped leaves are 6 inches long, dark green above and hairy and whitish underneath. Flowers are yellowish-orange and about 1-1/2 inches across. Its roundish greenish-brown fruit ranges 1 to 3 inches in diameter and has emerald green flesh with many small seeds. Male and female plants are needed to produce fruit. Pulp of the fruit is eaten fresh or cooked for preserves and pies. Propagated from seed by cuttings and grafting.

FAMILY - ANACARDIACEAE

2. *Anacardium occidentale* - Cashew



Evergreen tree attaining a height of 40 feet. Related to mango, poison ivy and poison sumac. May cause allergic reaction in some people. leaves are simple, leathery, light green,

with a copper-red blush when young. Yellowish-pink flowers are followed with fleshy yellow or red "cashew apple". The edible nut is produced below this apple. The nut is not edible nor safe when raw and smoke given off when roasting is irritating and poisonous. Touching an uncooked nut can cause skin rash. The nut is also used for jellies and liquor.

3. *Harpephyllum caffrum* - Kafir plum

A small tree from South Africa attaining a height of about 30 feet. Glossy leaves are pinnate and are 2-1/2 inches long. White flowers produced in spring followed by dark red edible fruit in summer. Fruit is used for jellies. Plants propagated from seed.

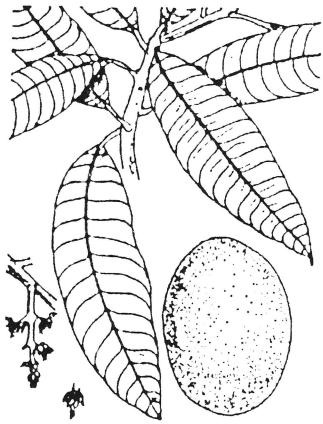
4. *Mangifera indica* - Mango



A dense, medium-sized evergreen tree, native to Asia. Some trees have upright habit of growth, others have a broad base and conical top. Pink flowers are produced in terminal panicles - including male and bisexual types. Fruit size will vary - ranging from 3 to 5 inches or more in length. Its tough, thin skin varies in color from green to yellow, reds and reddish, yellow when mature. Fruit contains one seed surrounded by good juicy pulp. Husk is removed from seed prior to planting. Desired varieties can be reproduced by grafting.

When picking mangoes, avoid contact with sticky sap as it is caustic and can cause a rash.

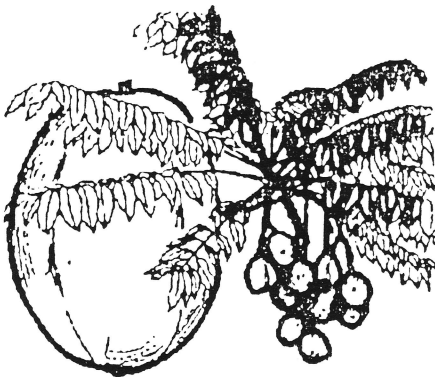
Fruit is eaten in fresh stage and is also of value for jellies and jams.

5. *Mangifera odorata* -- Kuwini

A large evergreen tree from Southeast Asia. Large oval fruit has green skin and sweet orange aromatic pulp. It is eaten fresh - although some feel odor of fruit is objectionable. Plants propagated from seed or grafting.

6. *Pleogynium cerasiferum (solandri)* - Burdekin plum, Hog plum

Evergreen tree to 60 feet, native of Australia. Compound leaves to 4 inches in length, clustered greenish flowers followed by plum-sized, purple fruit. Thin, sub-acid pulp is used in jellies. Fruit contains a number of seed from which new plants can be started.

7. *Spondias cytherea* - Otahette apple, Ambarella

A large deciduous tree native to Asia and South Pacific. Tree attains a height to 60 feet and has smooth gray bark. It is resistant to drought. Its compound leaflets range from 11 to 23, entire and 3-1/2 inches long. Flowers are small, whitish and in large terminal panicles. Fruit is tough, oval with orange-yellow skin. Flesh is pale yellow, juicy and on acid side. Fruit is produced in

August and February and eaten fresh or used in jellies.

Plants are propagated by air layering, cuttings, or budding.

8. *Spondias mombin* - Yellow mombin, Hog plum

Medium-sized tree, native to tropical America and is similar to *S. cytherea* except bark is rough and leaflets have smaller basal than tip sections. Fruit is small, yellow, with a large seed and soft pulp, juicy and sub-acid. They usually mature after leaves drop. Fruit is eaten fresh or in jelly. Propagation is by seed or cutting.

9. *Spondias purpurea* - Purple mombin, Spanish plum, Hog plum

Deciduous tree to 30 feet, native to tropical America. Leaflets 7-23 and entire. Flowers purple or greenish, and fruit yellow to deep red. When young, shape of fruit follows outline of knobby fruit. Later they become round, but retain a lip which covers the apex of the large seed. Flesh is a bit more acid than other *Spondias*, but when cooked is delicious. Propagation is by seed or cuttings.

10 *Spondias tuberosa* - Imbu

A medium-sized, deciduous tree native to northeast Brazil. Fruits are yellow, the size of an olive. Skin is tough, but flesh is soft and pleasant tasting. It is more difficult to grow than other *Spondias*. Propagated from seed or cuttings.

MY MYSTERY PLANT

by Bob Heath

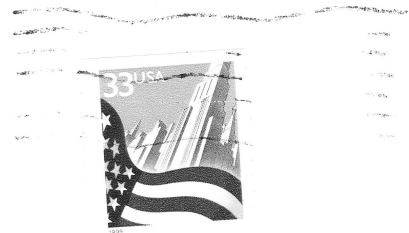
When I was over at Alan Smith's nursery about 3 months ago, I asked him if he had a cocoplum. He said yes, he did and proceeded to find a potted plant which he gave to me. Anyone can make a mistake occasionally and I knew what Alan gave me was not a cocoplum, but I took it anyway. "Don't ever turn down something someone wants to give you." It was a pretty plant with large leaves, about 30" tall, in a 2 gallon pot. I brought it home and immediately repotted it. But what was it if it was not a cocoplum? The leaves are 6" to 10" long and 4" wide on short petioles growing from alternate sides of the trunk. It has a red growing tip with a growth habit resembling the sea grape. I showed it to Paul Zmoda and to Charles Novak. Neither could identify it. I took it to the Plant Festival at USF and bothered everybody there with my "what is it?" I asked Charlie Crawley and his people and I asked Ray Green and all our members. I looked for it in Nick Acrivos' "A Guide to Tropical fruit Trees & Vines", in "Fruits of Warm Climates" by Julia Morton, in "Uncommon Fruits & Vegetables" by Elizabeth Snyder, in "Florida Fruit" by Lewis Maxwell, in "Fruits of Southern Florida" by Sturrock, but with little to go on, I found nothing.

I finally got a clue, and this from Alan Smith again when he said, "I know it's some kind of plum, if it's not cocoplum, it's some kind of plum." At that point something clicked in my mind. The sea grape is *Coccoloba uvifera*. If not a cocoplum, maybe a *Coccoloba*. I finally found the sea grape in "Cornucopia - A Sourcebook of Edible Plants". Sure enough there was *Coccoloba diversifolia*, the pigeon plum or dove plum.

Finally now we know. The fruit are dark purple, juicy, acid to sub-acid, astringent and may be eaten raw or made into jelly or wine. If held for a few days, they lose their astringency and dehydrate somewhat.

They are sold in the local markets of Nassau and the Bahamas.

RFCI Tampa Bay Chapter
8621 Foxtail Ct
Tampa FL 33647



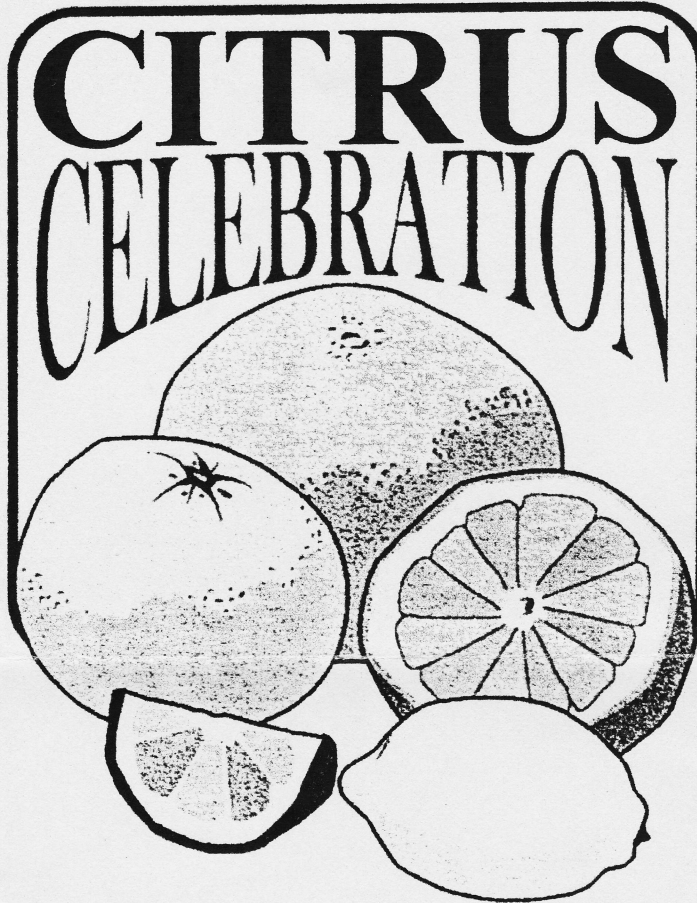
P. JUDSON NEWCOMBE
314 DEER PARK AVE.
TEMPLE TERRACE, FL 33617



The Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Council

And The USF Botanical Garden

Present the Fourth Annual



Door Prizes

Door Prizes

Free
Citrus Fruit Tasting
& Juice Samples
in our covered tasting area

Citrus Tree Sale:
Oranges, Lemons,
Limes, Pommelos &
many other Varieties;

Children's Play Area
Games and Prizes

Tropical Fruit Tree Sale:
Mango, Star Fruit,
Banana, Sugar Apples &
many others

Workshops:
Learn to Graft
Fruit Production
Herbs & Spices
Plant Selections
Grow Healthy Trees
Insect & Disease Control
Questions Answered

Herbs, Books, Seeds, & more

**Admission: \$2.00 Adults,
\$1.00 Seniors & Students,
Children under 12 Free**

Free Parking

**Food Sample Plates
\$1.00 Donation**

"Taste before you buy"

**Saturday - January 20, 2001 - 10 am to 4 pm
at the USF Botanical Garden**

The USF Botanical Garden is located at Pine & Alumni Drives off Bruce B. Downs, just north of Fowler Avenue. For more information call (813) 754-1399 or (813) 974-2329
E-mail: c.novak@worldnet.att.net

Proceeds benefit the USF Botanical Garden and
The Tampa Bay Chapter of the Rare Fruit Council International

USF University of
South Florida
Botanical Garden