

**GROWING**  
*Zamia dressleri*  
**IN PALM BEACH COUNTY**

*Submitted by Dale Holton*

In 1993, Dennis Stevenson named *Zamia dressleri* in honor of Robert Louis Dressler. This cycad is found only in Panama and is considered endangered. Its habitat is wooded areas around the city of Colon, which is located at the Caribbean mouth of the Panama Canal. Much of the habitats have been destroyed for cattle grazing and or urban development. I recently was able to go to this location to look for plants in habitat with Chip Jones and Tom Whistler. Someone who had been to this area told me we would be lucky to locate more than two plants. We were extremely lucky as we saw more than fifty plants in one location.

*Zamia dressleri* is a plicate (corrugated like a Ruffles potato chip) leaf plant that usually has no more than one or two leaves. Then new emergent leaves are somewhat reddish. In habitat they are very widely located and usually there is only one plant at any location. Most of the plants that we saw were growing near streams. These plants are very tropical and will defoliate in cold weather. They grow in red clay and the entire caudex of the plant is underground. I have been lucky to have acquired a few plants over the years and found out the hard way that they like to be underground. The plants that I planted with the caudex above ground, eventually died. *Zamia dressleri* is an understory plant and does not like to be in bright light. As this *Zamia* is quite rare in cultivation, I consider it a collector plant. If you can find them for sale, they will be quite expensive. I believe that this plant will become extinct in habitat sometime in the future.



*Zamia dressleri*

*(Photo contributed by Rolf Kyburz to the Palm and Cycad Societies of Australia website.)*



*Zamia dressleri* growing in habitat.

*(Photos by Dale Holton)*



*Zamia dressleri* growing in habitat.

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**ABOVE AND BOTTOM RIGHT:** Photographs of *Zamia dressleri* growing in the Panamian rainforest.  
(Photos contributed by Rolf Kyburz to the Palm and Cycad Societies of Australia website.)



Chip Jones with *Zamia dressleri* found growing in habitat.  
(Photo by Dale Holton)