

PALM BEACH PALM & CYCAD SOCIETY

LOCAL CHAPTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY

Monthly Update

March 2009

FEATURED THIS MONTH *Neoveitchia storkii*



Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society Officers

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Winner of the February 4th Name Drawing Prize
was **Shawna Price**

who was not present. She missed out on receiving a copy of Betrock's
Cold Hardy Palms by Alan W. Meerow.

Front Cover: *Neoveitchia storkii* 15 years after planting
Back Cover: *Neoveitchia storkii* leaf showing lateral twist

UPCOMING MEETINGS

GENERAL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, March 4, 2009
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Mounts Botanical Garden
Speaker: Paul Craft
Subject: Cultivated Palms of Hawaii

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday, March 25, 2009
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Ruth Sallenbach's Home
 6285 S. Military Trail, Lake Worth
 (561) 965-5430



Phone
 (561) 722-8106
 (561) 798-4562
 BETTY AHLBORN

13823 Paddlefoot Lane
 Loxahatchee, FL 33470

Exotic Palms
 &
 Tropicals

FEATURED THIS MONTH:

Neoveitchia storkii

Neoveitchia storkii is native to a limited area on Viti Levu, Fiji Islands. *Neoveitchia storkii* grows in moist alluvial plains and are canopy emergent. This palm is in danger of extinction due to habitat loss. Most areas where this palm appears naturally have been converted to agriculture or mahogany plantations.

In habitat, the trunks are 10 inches in diameter and normally 35 to 40 feet high but can reach 60 to 65 feet tall under high canopy. Fronds can grow 15 feet long with a distinctive lateral twist to 90 degrees. Crownshafts are incompletely formed and are glossy dark green to black. Trunks are used in house construction and young fruit is eaten.

My first glance of *Neoveitchia storkii* was approximately 20 years ago. The South Florida Chapter of the International Palm Society sponsored a garden tour on Key Biscayne. We toured a high-rise condo

community which was completely landscaped with rare palms. The most memorable palm on that tour was *Neoveitchia storkii*. It was nestled in a protected area between several buildings. It was a stunning pinnate palm which looked too exotic and tropical to grow on the mainland. It was 25 feet tall with a jet black crownshaft and long fronds with a distinctive 90 degree twist on the end. The leaflets were wide and bright green.

I discovered that *Neoveitchia storkii* can be grown in Palm Beach County. I purchased and planted my first *Neoveitchia* 15 years ago. It now has an eight inch diameter trunk, seven feet of clear wood, 10 foot long fronds, and a jet black crownshaft. I also planted one eight years ago which has developed three feet of wood.

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GROWING CONDITIONS IN OUR GARDEN FOR THIS SPECIES

Location	4 miles from ocean in suburban Lantana
Soil	Sand over a layer of hardpan (pineland flatwood habitat)
Irrigation	¾ inch applied twice a week
Flooding	Periodic inundation in sandy soil acceptable
Fertilization	3 times a year with Palm special analysis
Light	Partially shaded emerging to full sun
Micronutrient Deficiencies	None observed
Insect Damage	None observed
Hurricane Resistance	Good

MARCH OF THE MIGHTY MITE

As you may be aware, the red palm mite (*raoiella indica*) has invaded Florida. In December 2007, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Animal Health Monitoring System (APHIS) confirmed detections of the red palm mite in Palm Beach County. This mite, which hitchhikes on imported plants or is carried by wind currents, can also be found in many other countries and islands, including Egypt, India, Iran, Trinidad, St. Martin, and Puerto Rico.

This mite has very specific taste and seems to prefer coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) and areca palms (*Dypsis lutescens*), hurricane or princess palms (*Dictyosperma album*), Christmas palms (*Adonidia merrillii*), and date palms (*Phoenix dactylifera*). It also snacks on bananas, heliconias, bird of paradise, and gingers.

The life cycle from egg to adult is approximately 28 days for females

and 22 days for males. Reddish eggs produced by females are ovoid and are approximately .003 inches long and are attached to the underside of the leaf by a slender hairlike structure or stipe that is about twice as long as the egg. The eggs are deposited in groups. All eggs laid by unmated females develop into males while mated females produce females. The larva is red and has three pairs of legs. It feeds for up to five days and then becomes quiescent for up to two days before molting into the protonymphal stage. The reddish protonymphal emerges with four pairs of legs and feeds for up to five days prior to becoming quiescent for up to four days. Deutonymphs are larger than protonymphs but feeding and other habits are similar. The active phase lasts for up to five days followed by a quiescent phase that can last for up to four days. The

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HOLTON NURSERY
PALMS and CYCADS

5221 3rd Road
Lake Worth, FL 33467
Phone (561) 965-6792
Email cycadnut@gate.net




"By appointment only"

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I have never noticed any damage from the cold since 1994. Literature suggests that this palm is hearty to Zone 10. My experience has shown that this palm is not sensitive to periodic inundation and actually prefers moist soils. They adapt to full sun at an early age. These palms are very hurricane resistant.

I put *Neoveitchia storkii* in my top five pinnate palm list. Its graceful tropical appearance combined with the black crownshaft make it a standout specimen.

Submitted by Charlie Beck

References:

1. Watling, Dick: 2005: Palms of the Fiji Islands
2. Kew: Dransfield, John and Uhl, Natalie W. and Asmussen, Conny B. and Baker, William J. and Harley, Madeline M. and Lewis, Carle E.: 2008: General Palmarum, The Evolution and Classification of Palms



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adult mites are reddish in color, are tiny (.01 inches long and .007 inches wide) and flat.

The mite establishes colonies on the underside of leaves, usually along the midrib. Infestation can usually be detected by the appearance of yellow speckles and blotches on the leaves but with severe infestation the entire leaflet can turn from a bright green to pale green to yellow, and finally brown.



Control of this mite on tall trees is difficult. At present, it is unclear which chemicals are effective. The search has begun for biological control agents such as predatory mites, predatory beetles, lacewings, and other mite predators. The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences has suggested that oil and sulfur miticides should be tested for effectiveness and that it is likely that endemic fungal pathogens, such as *Hirsutella*, will be effective against this pest, at least during rainy seasons.

Submitted by Brenda Beck

References:

1. North American Plant Protection Organization Phytosanitary Alert System. www.pestalert.org
2. University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences. *Raoiella indica*. http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/orn/palms/red_palm_mite.htm
3. Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry. Pest Alert. <http://www.doacs.state.fl.us/pi/enpp/ento/r.indica.html>

Photograph reprint authorized by the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services. Photographs by F. Hosein, Ministry of Agriculture, Land & Marine Resources, Trinidad & Tobago

COLD CARE OF (HOPEFULLY) LIVING PALMS



David McLean

On February 4, 2009, David McLean of Trinity Churchside Garden in Fort Lauderdale, gave a presentation to Palm Society members on Cold Care of Living Palms. He noted that after a freeze, you have to hope that the palms will remain alive.

You can assist your frost damaged plants by ensuring that they are healthy and well fertilized prior to the freeze. In addition, you can incorporate wind breaks in your garden to assist plants during cold snaps.

BEFORE A FREEZE

If a cold spell is expected, he stressed the importance of making certain that all plants are well watered. Watering assists with locking heat into the ground. If you decide to water your plants while temperatures have already reached freezing, it is important to keep the water on until the ice that forms on plants begins to melt.

Cold protection cloth works well to insulate plants from the cold. However, if strong winds are expected, make certain that the cloth is weighted down so it does not blow

away. If you do not have cold protection cloth, old bed sheets can be used but never use plastic to cover plants.

Mr. McLean did not recommend spraying plant leaves with antitranspirant. He reported that recent studies have shown questionable results with using this method to protect plants. In his own personal experience, he has seen plants sprayed with antitranspirant die while those plants that did not receive this treatment survived.

AFTER POSSIBLE COLD DAMAGE

Mr. McLean recommended that plants be treated with a light dose (approximately 1/3 of the recommended amount) of water soluble fertilizer after a cold snap. Follow up in a week or so by drenching damaged plants with a product called Total. This is a tea made from worm castings that has microriza organisms plus a mixture of minerals that will assist the plant. He noted that this product can be purchased from Hoodridge (954) 340-3300. Then follow up with a dose of a special 4-2-3 fertilizer made from chicken manure also available from Hoodridge. Finally, apply an application of 8-4-12 palm special fertilizer.

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If there is foliage damage, apply liquid copper. However, copper will damage bromeliads and orchids so never place copper on these plants.

He also stated that if you suspect bud damage, drill a hole into the cavity to promote drainage. You can then place a light solution of fertilizer or liquid minor element mix into the bud. If there is bud damage to a palm, tug very gently on the bud and remove it if it is dead. Pour a fungicide, such as copper, Banrot, Subdue, Alouette, mancozeb, or hydrogen peroxide directly into the bud. There is a chance that the palm may survive if this is done.


POTTED PLANTS

All potted plants should also be well watered prior to an expected freeze. If you do not have cold protection cloth or old sheets to cover these plants, he suggested placing your potted plants together in a group to offer some protection. The plants on the outside of the grouping may be lost. He also noted that potted plants that are on concrete will fare worse than plants placed on black plastic weed block.

All in all, Mr. McLean stated that you can never anticipate what type of damage will result from a freeze because many crazy kinds of damage can occur. Just know that you will learn something new after every freeze.


Submitted by Brenda Beck

(561) 586-2332



LAKE OSBORNE ANIMAL CLINIC

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Lake Worth, FL 33461



Village Marina

464-4391 **Wes Taylor**

CLASSIFIED ADS

Are you having a yard sale?
Would you like to sell some used equipment, plants, seeds,
or homemade craft items?
Are you a vendor at an upcoming flea market or sale?

YOUR AD COULD BE HERE—up to 3 lines or 195 characters (including spaces) for only \$5 per month. The deadline for the upcoming month is the 15th of the month.

Send your ad and check payable to the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society to:
Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society
c/o Brenda Beck
4212 Nova Lane
Lantana, FL 33462



NEWS OF NOTE:

If you would like to learn how to
make biochar—an ancient technique
to improve your soil, go to:

<http://motherearthnews.com/search.aspx?search=biochar>

PLACE YOUR BUSINESS CARD AD

\$5 PER MONTH OR \$60 PER YEAR

Send your business card and check payable to the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society to:

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4212 Nova Lane
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This Month's "Thank You"

Membership Meeting Refreshments

Cathy Burger	Ruth Lynch
The Dougherty's	Ruth Sallenbach
Pat Lindsey	Brenda Shaggs

Plant Auction Donations

Betty Ahlborn	Dale Holton
Marshall Dewey	

Welcome New Member

Pete Hut

Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society
P.O. Box 21-2228
Royal Palm Beach, FL 33421

