



FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Dictyosperma album*



Figure 1: *Dictyosperma album*
var. rubrum



Figure 2: *Dictyosperma album*



Figures 3 & 4: *Dictyosperma album* *var. furfuracea*
with blue green fronds and joined leaf tips

FRONT COVER: *Dictyosperma album* *var. furfuracea* with emerald green fronds.

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FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Dictyosperma album*

by Charlie Beck

Dictyosperma album is native to the Mascarene Islands. This palm, which can grow from sea level to an altitude of 2,000 feet, is a solitary, pinnate, monoecious (male and female flowers on the same inflorescence) palm that develops a somewhat swollen crownshaft. The crownshafts range from green to grey to brown. The trunks have swollen bases and the inflorescence looks like a horse tail or rooster tail. The most distinguishing feature is that the newly emergent leaves stand as vertical spears. In habitat, palms can grow 40 feet tall but they are reported near extinction in the wild. Common names are Princess and Hurricane Palm.

These palms grow well in South Florida. They are not prone to micro-nutritional deficiencies. They have come through Category 1 hurricanes without damage. Since 1994, I have never observed any cold damage, but in the 1989 freeze palms at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden were 95 percent burned but later recovered. They are only moderately susceptible to lethal yellowing.

There are three varieties commonly available in South Florida. All are salt tolerant and are best planted in full sun.

- *Dictyosperma album* (without variety listed) have crownshafts which tend to be green or grey. This is the largest and fastest growing of the varieties. I have one specimen seven years old which is 10 feet tall with nine foot fronds. The stem is 8.5 inches in diameter at waist height (See Figure 2 on page 2).
- *D. album var. rubrum* has a reddish brown crownshaft with bronze colored emergent leaves. The stem measures eight inches in diameter at waist height and the fronds measure seven feet long. After 15 years of growth, the palm is 25 feet tall (See Figure 1 on page 2).
- *D. album var. furfuracea* (or sometimes labeled *furfuraceum*) is the most sought after variety. It is similar in size to *D. album var. rubrum* but the leaf tips remain joined even in mature fronds. This is a very unique and striking feature. The leaflets are also more of a velvety blue green color (See Figures 3 & 4 on page 2). Some plants offered for sale labeled *furfuracea* may not be true to form – they may have more or less leaf tip joining or leaflet

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HOLTON NURSERY
PALMS and CYCADS
5221 3rd Road
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"By appointment only"

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color variation – but don't let that deter you from buying these plants. I have one with the most striking emerald green leaves (see front cover) and another with bronze emergent leaves. I believe all offspring from this variety are most desirable even though some crossing may alter appearance. This variety is on my top five pinnate palm list for growing in Palm Beach County.

GROWING CONDITIONS IN OUR GARDEN FOR <i>Dictyosperma album</i>	
Location	4 miles from ocean in suburban Lantana
Soil	Sand over a layer of hardpan (pineland flatwood habitat) or alkaline shell rock
Irrigation	¾ inch applied twice a week
Flooding	Periodic inundation in sandy soil acceptable
Fertilization	3 times a year with Palm special analysis
Light	Sun
Micronutrient Deficiencies	None observed
Insect Damage	None observed
Hurricane Resistance	Good
Lethal Yellowing	Moderate Risk



Village Marina

464-4391 **Wes Taylor**

CYCADS IN THE HOME GARDEN

by Dale Holton

In these days of uncertainty regarding watering restrictions of home gardens, one should consider the use of cycads in the landscape. Most cycads are quite tolerant of droughts. Many of the cycads that are in the ground at my home get watered whenever it rains. They may not grow quite as fast as they would if I irrigated them but, just the same, they do well and look good with little care. They are also quite tolerant of infrequent fertilizer applications. Nearly all cycads are very intolerant of flooding. Two to three hours of flooding usually will destroy them.

If you want to grow cycads, you must first decide how much room you can allot for them. Someone with a large yard can choose among a much larger selection. You also must decide how much money you wish to spend on them. Unlike palms and most other plants, cycads are a very ancient group of plants and some can be quite costly.

For the average person with a small yard, the Caribbean *Zamias* would be the most suitable. Most are

small and can tolerate full sun or shade. Some are very salt tolerant. Most grow fairly fast and won't cause you to have to get a second mortgage to purchase them.

*Ceratozamia*s are another good group of cycads to consider. Most prefer some shade and range in size from medium to quite large. Prices are usually higher than the Caribbean *Zamias* and some can be very expensive. *Ceratozamia*s are included in the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Appendix I and protected by international law. They cannot be imported or exported without permits which are almost impossible to get. Some of the more common ones stay relatively small and have very attractive copper colored new leaves. Some of the rarer ones have glaucous new leaves.

Dioons are another very nice group of cycads that I highly recommend. I like them as replacements for *Cycas*, because the Asian Scale usually doesn't bother them. Some of these get large like the *Cycas*. Others are smaller. Most grow very slowly and would not present a size problem for many years. The more common varieties are very reasonably priced but the rarer ones are more expensive. Most will tolerate full sun or shade.

Encephalartos are the

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(561) 798-4562
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Exotic Palms
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UPCOMING MEETINGS

GENERAL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, August 5, 2009
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Mounts Botanical Garden
Speaker: Dr. Scott Zona, Palm Biologist
at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden
Subject: To be announced

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

Date: Wednesday, August 26, 2009
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Ruth Sallenbach's Home
6285 S. Military Trail, Lake Worth
(561) 965-5430

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 5, 2009
Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society Annual Picnic
and most spectacular auction of the year
More details will be provided in the September Update.

October 10, 2009
South Florida Palm Society Garden Tour
The tour includes visits to Action Theory Nursery, the Tropical Education Research Center, John DeMott's garden, and a tour of RF Orchids. There is no cost to members but non-members must pay \$10. A box lunch will be served. For more information or to make your reservation, call Jeff Chait at (305) 934-2839.

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one group of cycads that seem to be most in demand. Most of them require a large area because they can get quite large. The green varieties are the most easily obtained and, depending on size and species, can be affordable. I cannot stress too much that some of them need lots of room. Some of these can get mature leaves of 18 to 22 feet, with a plant spread of this much. Others have more manageable size in the 4 to 5 foot range. The most sought after are the "blue" ones. They are more difficult to grow in South Florida and do better in California where it is cooler and drier. In our location, I suggest planting these blue plants on berms made of white sand or other good draining material.

*Macrozamia*s all come from Australia. I have not had real good luck with this group of plants, but

have seen some very nice ones growing locally. I continue to try growing these with the hope that I will find out what I am doing wrong.

There are a few other groups which I will not mention because I do not consider most of them landscape plants, but rather collector plants.

Editor's Note: CITES is an international agreement between governments that was adopted in 1973. It lists plants and animals that are or may be at risk for extinction or need protection from illegal exploitation. CITES Appendix I lists species that **are** threatened with extinction and are or may be affected by trade. For more information on CITES, you may go to <http://www.cites.org/eng/app/index.shtml>.

(561) 586-2332



LAKE OSBORNE ANIMAL CLINIC

JOHN T. LYNCH, D.V.M.

1502 Lake Osborne Dr.
Lake Worth, FL 33461

Winner of the July 2nd Name Drawing Prize
was Andreas Daehnick
who was present. He received a *Satakentia lukiensis*.

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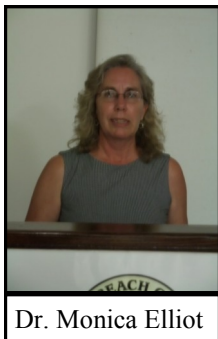
Dr. Monica Elliot Discusses Palm Diseases

by Brenda Beck

Dr. Monica Elliot, Professor of Plant Pathology at the University of Florida IFAS, Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education Center, was our guest speaker at the July 1, 2009, meeting. The topic of her presentation was common palm diseases.

Dr. Elliot's presentation concentrated on Lethal Yellowing and Texas Phoenix Palm Decline (TPPD), two fatal diseases that affect palms. Both of these diseases are caused by phytoplasma which is a bacterium found in the phloem

(the tissue that carries nutrients to all parts of the tree) that is spread by insects. The main culprits associated with the spread of these diseases are planthoppers.



Dr. Monica Elliot

Dr. Elliot reported that Lethal Yellowing seems to appear in cycles. IFAS has observed frequent cases, followed by a diminishing number of cases over time, then a number of years with no reported cases, and then a reappearance of the disease.

In Lethal Yellowing, the first symptoms are fruit drop and flower necrosis. Other symptoms are yellowing of the fronds and, eventually, death of the spear leaf. *Phoenix roebelenii* does not appear to be susceptible to Lethal Yellowing. Other

infected *Phoenix* species display flower necrosis, fruit drop, and spear leaf death. Minimal, if any, leaf chlorosis is present. For a list of the 36 palm species affected by Lethal

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Yellowing, you can go to <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/PP146>.

TPPD first appeared in Florida in a nursery in Hillsborough County. Confirmed cases have been documented from central Sarasota to northern Hillsborough Counties. Isolated cases have been documented in Polk, DeSoto, Highlands, Hardee, Lake Cloud, and Duval Counties. Palms known to be affected by this disease include *Phoenix sylvestris*, *Phoenix dactylifera*, *Phoenix canariensis*, *Syagrus romanzoffiana*, and *Sabal palmetto*. Symptoms for this disease are similar to those present with Lethal Yellowing. However, some affected palms develop root rot.

There is no reliable cure for Lethal Yellowing or TPPD. Use of insecticides to manage these diseases is not recommended. You may kill planthoppers currently in your garden but unless you can spray widespread areas the planthoppers will continue to visit your garden and spread the diseases. While palms may be given trunk injections of the antibiotic OX tetracycline HCl every 3 or 4 months for the life of the palm, this is not a guarantee of cure. Uninfected trees can be given

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

these antibiotic shots as a preventive treatment.

To prevent the spread of these diseases, it is recommended that a suspect palm be removed from the landscape if more than 25 percent of the leaves are discolored or if the spear leaf is dead. Leaves and trunk may be safely used as mulch.

Dr. Elliot stated that the lesson learned is to diversify, plant palms that are less susceptible to these diseases, and add hardwood trees to your landscape.

Editor's Note: Consider removing all leaves from palms suspected of having Lethal Yellowing or TPPD and leave the palm trunk standing for use by woodpeckers.

This Month's "Thank You"

Membership Meeting Refreshments

Larry Davis

Merle Guliano

Marshal & Ingrid Dewey

Patrick Morris

Jim Gallagher & Mary Ann Marino

Tom Ramiccio

Plant Donations

Andreas Daehnick

Dale Holton

Elise Maloney

Please share stories your garden experiences. Submit your stories and photos to beck4212@aol.com

Well-adapted *Zamias* for Palm Beach County

Photographs by Dale Holton



Zamia vazquezii



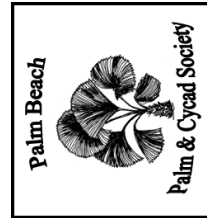
Zamia floridana



Zamia pumila



Zamia furfuracea



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Rusty the chicken admiring the
 rooster tail inflorescence of
Dictyosperma album