



# THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY

Nov. 2020

NEWSLETTER

## Save the Species by Andy Hurwitz

The International Palm Society, a not-for-profit organization, struggles mightily to limit the ubiquitous worldwide destruction of palm habitat. Obviously, this requires significant financial support and thankfully our membership has always been generous. In observance of giving Tuesday (always the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, hence December 1, 2020) this issue of the IPS newsletter is dedicated toward philanthropy.

I am particularly proud of the recently completed “Save the Species” *Tahina* project. This initiative, co-branded with our beloved internet forum, Palmtalk, generated the donations required to preserve this magnificent, yet threatened, genus from Madagascar. This is critical because in Madagascar, deforestation is swift and unremitting, with vast habitats devastated at alarming rates. Sadly, this was experienced firsthand by the late Dr. Mardy Darian, a pioneer in the discovery and *ex-situ* cultivation of Malagasy palms. Dr. Darian had discovered a spectacularly robust and colorful *Dypsis* species and was anxious to revisit the site where these palms were plentiful. Of course, he hoped to collect seeds. However, upon his return to Madagascar he found that this entire forest “had been completely annihilated” and sadly “there wasn’t even a trace...almost like it had simply never existed.” Thanks to the many donors to the *Tahina* project, *Tahina spectabilis* will be preserved in the wild and will not meet the same fate as Dr. Darian’s *Dypsis*. And, if you have not done so already, please enjoy the fascinating webinar on the species by Dr. John Dransfield. It is available on the IPS site and will soon be on the IPS YouTube channel.

*Tahina spectabilis* in habitat, Madagascar. Photo by Dr. John Dransfield



## Save the Species



Left: Detail of the foliage of *Tahina spectabilis*. Right: Dr. Soejatmi Dransfield admiring a reproductive individual with its massive flower stalk. Photos by Dr. John Dransfield.

## Are We Sustainable? Profiling Our Patrons By Anthony Glomski, Director of Philanthropy & Estate Planning

The International Palm Society's existence and the ability to thrive comes down to two key components – palms and people. Without palms, we have no purpose. And without people who have a passion for palms, we would have no society. As part of an ongoing series, *Profiling Our Patrons*, I will be talking with people who have a deep passion for our society and have stepped up to support us.

Back in August, I was graciously welcomed to the beautiful home of Dr. Tom Jackson and Dr. Kathy Grant. They have created a remarkable environment surrounded by an epic garden that is thriving in Marin County, California. It was the perfect setting to learn about their passion for the IPS.

### ***How did you first get involved with IPS?***

Tom: An elevator. I had a conversation with [my colleague] Herb on an elevator at the hospital. He has a fabulous garden filled with things, and he's been into palms forever. He introduced us to the International Palm Society (IPS). We decided to go with Herb to a Palm Society meeting. Kathy and I love to take passport trips. We learned at the IPS meeting the Society takes very cool trips.

## Are We Sustainable? Profiling Our Patrons

Kathy: We don't want to go and see the usual sites. We want to dig in a little bit.

Tom: With Palm Society, you get to the inside. Local gardeners, local things. You learn something. All places that we've got to travel as guests of the locals, which is fabulous.

### ***When you think of IPS, what are the three most meaningful elements?***

Tom: Travel, plants, and people. And IPS is wonderful for that. That's why we support it. We want the organization to survive, so we can continue to have fun with the people, the plants, and the travel. It's an effort to help make it work.

Kathy: And seeing things in their local habitat, it's a different experience. Even some of the palms that we have here, they're easy to come by. Seeing them in their local habitat and where they come from is different. It's a whole different view overall.



### ***How concerned are you with the potential of IPS not surviving?***

Tom: My concern is about money. People don't join things nowadays. Memberships dropped in everything with Covid, and membership is not how you make money. The Palm Society has a very small endowment. That's nice. It would be nicer if somebody gave some more money to it. It's going to have to be through philanthropy from members or foundation support.

When we need to, other board members and we kick in money for specific causes or grants to provide seed money to get it done. The journal, to us, is very important. It's not something that a cost-cutting measure should involve. It's a core value of the organization because our mission statement is education and preservation, and habitat research, and all of that is expressed in the journal.

*Editor's Note: Tom & Kathy made an incredibly generous pledge to underwrite the journal for IPS to ensure its ongoing publication.*

Drs. Grant and Jackson beneath a massive *Johannesteijsmannia altifrons* in habitat, while hiking with the IPS during the 2016 biennial in Borneo.

## Are We Sustainable? Profiling Our Patrons

### *What would you tell others that are interested in supporting the organization?*

Tom: Well, get to know the organization, participate, go on trips, and if you find something you like, make sure you contribute to support.

Kathy: If you like it, put your money where your mouth is.

Tom: Yes. Just don't throw money away. Make it count. Make it count for things that you believe in.

It's safe to say the world is an uncertain place. For me, palms are grounding and create a sense of peace. I left this experience with a renewed spirit that people like Tom & Kathy can change our world. Their passion for the IPS, love for the people, and willingness to make a significant impact are the bed-rock of what will allow our society to continue for years to come.

You can be part of helping IPS be sustainable by going to <https://palms.org/fundraisers/>. For larger gifts, there are a variety of different structures that can help you save substantial amounts of income tax, avoid inheritance tax, and create a legacy for the IPS and your family. If you would like to learn more about these benefits and the different ways you can give to IPS, please contact me directly at [aglomski@agassetadvisory.com](mailto:aglomski@agassetadvisory.com).



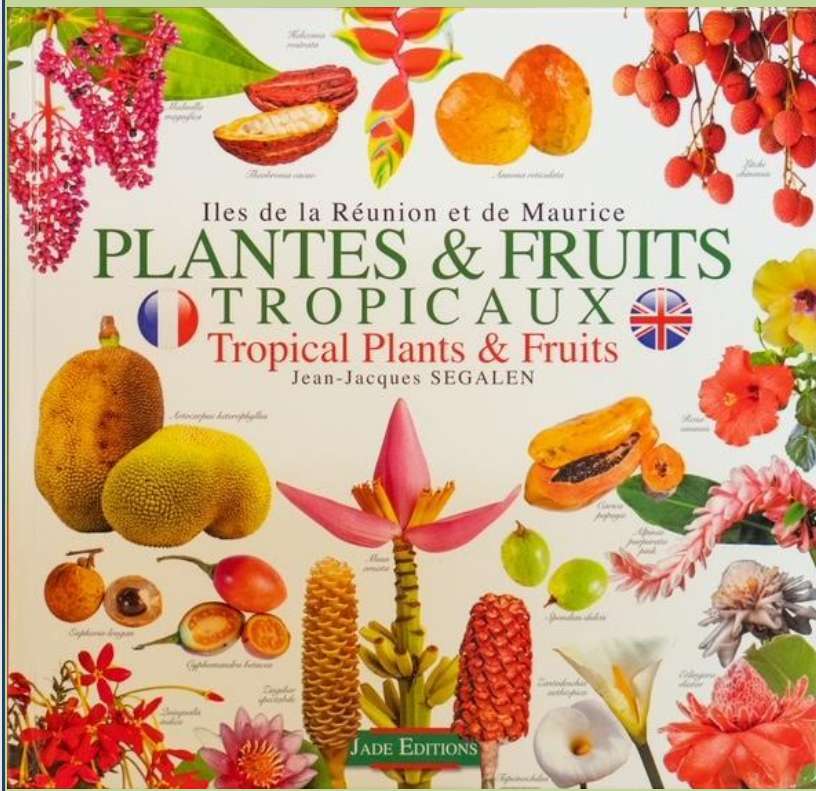
In 1996, the Canary Islands launched a magnificent palmetum in Tenerife. Perhaps many have read the article by its director, Carlo Morici (pictured at right with *Hemithrinax ekmaniana*), in the IPS journal *PALMS* describing the progress made from 2010 through 2018. I was touched by his conclusion which I will quote:

“I wish to acknowledge the International Palm Society as a whole, because the society by itself was the ultimate source of inspiration for dreaming up the Palmetum. A flyer about the incoming project (was sent) from the City Hall Santa Cruz to all the IPS members in the roster. Since then, more than 300 IPS members have somehow actively helped the Palmetum to get to this point and many still do so.”



Clearly our society is devoted toward palm research, education, and conservation. Sometimes we forget the IPS also provides **inspiration!** Please help us continue to make a difference by considering increasing your level of membership or donating to our endowment.

## Parting Thoughts



For those of you, who like me, continue to mourn for the Covid-canceled Reunion biennial, this book by Jean-Jacques Segalen may be of interest. Recently re-published, now in both French and English, this is to my knowledge the only horticultural tome focused solely on the Mascarene Islands. With over 500 gorgeous color photographs illustrating over 200 species (alas, no palms), the book would serve as an excellent field-guide for visiting the islands or for the arm-chair traveler restricted by the pandemic.

This lovely photograph (at right) appeared in the 1985 edition of *Principes* (now *PALMS*). The caption of this "Palm Portrait" read: "A perfect corona formed by a tall *Livistona australis* in... Bogor, Java" (photo courtesy of IPS member Arnold Newman). That was back when "corona" had a very pleasant connotation!

Next month: PIMBY (Palms In My Backyard).  
Photo by Dr. Boyd Marts.



## New Lifetime Members

On behalf of our 100% volunteer Board of Directors, I would like to recognize and thank our newest lifetime members of the IPS:

**D G Sigler**  
**Thomas Herfort**

Our mission to preserve palms in habitat requires like-minded plant conservationists like you! Please consider supporting our society by encouraging new memberships with fellow palm and tropical plant enthusiasts.



## New Tiered Membership Options

The **International Palm Society** proudly introduces a new tiered membership program. Please help us meet our mission of conservation, research and education, and enjoy the many benefits of being an IPS member.



**Free Membership\*** includes:

Access to Palmtalk.

An invitation to participate in free webinars and access to the free webinar library.

The monthly IPS newsletter sent via email.



**Electronic Membership** (\$40 per year or \$100 for three years) includes all the above plus:

Our journal, *Palms*, in digital format, sent via email and access to all *Palms* back issues.

An invitation to participate in premium content webinars and access to the premium content webinar library.

Biennial travel with the IPS.



**Print Membership** (\$60 per year or \$150 for three years) includes all the above plus:

A printed copy of *Palms* delivered by mail

Lifetime and benefactor level supporters may, at their discretion, choose to receive the digital format or the print edition of *Palms*.

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