

PALM NEWS



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The interactions between parrots and palms are of great interest because both palms and parrots are charismatic organisms of conservation concern. An open-access study recently published by M. Carrete et al. (*Frontiers in Ecology & Evolution* <https://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2022.790883>) examined 1,189 interactions between 135 parrots and 107 palm species in more than 50 countries across the six realms where palms are present as natives or introduced. They identified 427 unique parrot-palm interacting pairs. Antagonistic or predatory interactions were far less common (5%) than mutualistic ones (89%). Although commonly thought to be seed predators, parrots are important seed dispersers, even for palms with large, heavy fruits, and some parrots may even play a role in pollination.

Latania 47, magazine of Palmeraie-Union, the palm society of La Réunion, has just been published. In it is an account of the laying of the foundation stone of the extension to Le Parc des Palmiers at La Tampon, La Réunion. Approval for the extension of the park was given by the local government in February 2021, and now work has begun to extend the park by 10 ha. The foundation stone was laid at a ceremony held on 25 February 2022. When the extension is completed, the whole park will represent the most important dedicated palm garden in the whole of Europe (La Réunion is, of course, part of France, despite its location in the western Indian Ocean). Already boasting an extraordinary diversity of palms, the park is destined to become a wonderful place for palm enthusiasts to visit.

Ángela Cano and co-authors have just published a paper in *Global Ecology and Biogeography* (<https://doi.org/10.1111/geb.13521>) entitled “Recent and local diversification of Central American understory palms.” Understory palms are diverse components of Central American rain forests, but little is known about their historical assembly. It is not clear when palms in Central America reached present diversity levels and whether most species arrived from neighboring regions or evolved locally. These questions were addressed using the most species-rich American palm clades indicative of rain forests. The results suggest that **most understory palm species that characterize the Central American rain forests today evolved locally after repeated dispersal events, mostly from South America after the formation of the Panamanian isthmus.**

Béat Arnold has just published a remarkable, beautifully illustrated book about canoes constructed from palm trunks. *Sur la Piste des Pirogues Palmier* is published by Alphil Press, Neuchâtel, Switzerland. The book illustrates 80 different canoes constructed from palm timber from across the world – an extraordinary record. A printed hardcopy is available from the publisher at Swiss Francs 30 or €30, or it can be downloaded as an open-access PDF at https://www.alphil.com/livres/1208-1417-sur-la-piste-des-pirogues-palmier.html#/1-format-livre_papier. An English text translation (minus the illustrations) is also available for downloading.

