

in Taipei for a magnificent luncheon which had been prepared for us by Mrs. Hu.

Time had run out, and we just made our 5:30 P.M. flight on China Airlines which took us back to Los Angeles; hence with a connecting flight to Miami we returned to Montego Bay.

Seeds and letters continue to arrive in Jamaica, and we are replete with fond memories of the Palm Society members and all the helpful people who made our trip successful. We hope, another day, it will be possible to reciprocate their kindnesses when they venture to the welcoming mat in our hemisphere.

## PALM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. The new leaves appearing on my large royal palm are yellow and gradually turning brown while the old leaves on the plant appear perfectly green. What is wrong with my tree?

A. This past year has seen a heavy infestation of the royal palm bug in the South Florida area. This royal palm bug is known only from Cuba and Florida. It has been collected as far north in Florida as Vero Beach and Bradenton and its range in the state is probably coexistent with the range of the royal palm, which thus far is the only known host of this insect, although other species of royal palms may be affected.

The palm bugs are found primarily on the newly opened leaves of *Roystonea*, doing their greatest damage by feeding on the leaflets that have most recently broken away from the tightly folded emerging leaf. The damage to the leaflet first appears as small yellow spots and as the leaflets become older they gradually turn brown.

The royal palm bug has usually been classified as a minor pest of royal palms, but on occasion high populations can destroy magnificent, mature specimen royals. For some reason high populations developed in 1921, 1957, and 1976. Local park superintendents in the South Florida area have reported that normally the summer rains beginning in May would tend to eliminate the populations

of this insect and thus the need for spraying.

Occasionally it is more economical to replace a specimen than it is to hire the necessary equipment to do the spraying of large specimens. Heavy populations of the insect nevertheless can kill individual mature royal palms.

According to Dr. Don Short, Extension Entomologist, University of Florida, the royal palm bug seriously damaged royal palms in Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Collier, Lee and Hendry counties during 1975 and 1976. Dr. Jim Reinert, Assistant Professor, Entomology, Agricultural Research Center, Ft. Lauderdale, found severe bronzing of nearly 200 trees examined in the Ft. Lauderdale area.

Dr. Reinert conducted experiments and found one application of two pints 25 percent Meta-Systox-R per 100 gallons of water to be an effective control. It was advised that a spreader-sticker should be added to the insecticide and that the entire canopy and especially the bud must be sprayed.

### REFERENCE

- Plant Pathology Circular #46, March 1966,  
Florida Department of Agriculture, Division of Plant Industry.

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