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BACK COVER

*Parajubaea sunkha* growing in its native habitat in Bolivia. See article p. 143 by Enssle et al.

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A fruiting specimen of *Latania lontaroides*. See story by N. Ludwig, p. 137.



## NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF PALMS

Plans are well underway for a great biennial later this summer in the Dominican Republic. We look forward to an exciting meeting of old and new friends, fabulous palms in their natural habitat and in cultivation and lectures by distinguished speakers. IPS biennials are an unparalleled opportunity to meet fellow palm enthusiasts from around the world and to learn about new and unusual palms. We hope to see you there!

Many travelers to the Biennial from the USA will pass through Miami, Florida. IPS members with time in Miami before the Biennial can take advantage of a chance to see and learn about one of the world's most famous palm collections (recently named the National Palm Collection by the American Public Gardens Association). Biennial attendees and all members of the IPS affiliated South Florida Palm Society are invited to a reception and tour of Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden on Friday, September 29th, 2006, at 5–7 p.m. at the FTBG Jean Ellen Sheehan Visitors Center ballroom. The reception will begin at 5 pm with refreshments provided by the South Florida Palm Society and a brief welcoming address from FTBG Palm Conservation Program staff, followed by a narrated tram tour from 6 to 7 pm of Fairchild's palm collection. The event is free. RSVP by 20 September 2006 to Tricia Frank at 305-667-1651 ext. 3391 or [pfrank@fairchildgarden.org](mailto:pfrank@fairchildgarden.org).

Aves y Conservación, a bird conservation group in Ecuador, has launched a palm conservation initiative in collaboration with the Botanical Garden of Quito. The partnership is not as strange as it may seem. Large, dead palms are used as nest sites by a

number of cavity-nesting birds, including the Yellow-eared Parrot (*Ognorhynchus icterotis*) and the Golden-plumed Parakeet (*Leptosittaca branickii*). Both bird species have declined in abundance in Ecuador, largely as a result of the decline in the populations of *Ceroxylon* species. The situation is now dire. There have been no recent sightings of the birds in Ecuador, although small populations are still extant in neighboring Colombia. One reason that the palms have declined is that juvenile palms are defoliated by leaf harvesters who annually cut the leaves for the celebration of Palm Sunday. Leaf harvesting is not sustainable, and over time the young palms decline and die. Aves y Conservación is recommending that celebrants use alternatives to *Ceroxylon* leaves, including roses, eucalyptus branches, or leaves from palms cultivated specifically for the religious ceremony. According to the Aves y Conservación website ([www.avesyconservacion.org](http://www.avesyconservacion.org)), the representatives of Catholic church in Ecuador have given their support to the campaign and alternative species, although the church has not taken an official position on the problem of palm destruction and its effect on the environment.

Finally, join us in extending our heartiest congratulations to Dr. Natalie Uhl, who was awarded the Botanical Society of America's Centennial Award for her "outstanding service to the plant sciences and the Society" at the recent BSA meeting in California. Natalie could not attend the meeting, but her name was added to a roster of distinguished botanists. Well done, Natalie!

THE EDITORS