

greatly appreciate the field assistance of Dr. Vladimir Moreno, without whom I would still be wandering around Guantánamo. Lastly, I salute the climbers, José Manuel Leiva and Julio Escalante.

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#### Obituary: T. A. Davis

T. A. Davis was a familiar name within the scientific community for more than four decades, during which he published over two hundred articles in national and international journals on a variety of natural science subjects. Among them were: abnormalities in the coconut and other palms; behavioral studies of the coconut robber crab; the nesting habit of the baya weaver bird; hatching technique of the Australian thermometer birds; a mathematical solution to the structure of the sunflower head; biometric analyses of fruit production in coconut and arecanut palms based on their phyllotaxy; and studies of the manifestation of the Fibonacci numerical sequence in the morphology of plants as well as in animals.

The sudden death of T. A. Davis on 10 November 1989 was a great loss to science. Dr. Davis's approach to studying the plants and animals which he found around him was, to some, unconventional for this day and age because he always tried to

see nature in its totality, but the results he achieved made important contributions.

Trupapur Antony Davis was born on 9 February 1923 to a Christian family in Nagercoil, Tamilnadu, near the southern tip of India. According to family tradition, one son was to become a priest. Since his elder brother had opted for the priesthood, Antony went to study agriculture. After graduation from Madras University in 1944, he pursued graduate study in crop physiology at Madras Agricultural Research Institute in Coimbatore, graduating with the equivalent of a M.Sc. degree. Antony began his professional career in 1947 as a research scientist at the then Sugarcane Research Station, at Karnal, Punjab, in northern India. A man born and raised in a palm-tree environment his interests naturally turned toward the coconut palm. In 1952, Antony left Karnal and moved south to join the newly-established Coconut Research Station at Kyangulum, Kerala, as a coconut physiologist. Some of his outstanding research findings on the physiology and morphology of coconut palms were published while at Kyangulum.

It was during that period that he met J. B. S. Haldane, the famous naturalist, mathematician and philosopher. Impressed with Davis, Haldane later invited him to join the Indian Statistical Institute in Calcutta, as his research collaborator.

In 1960, Antony joined I.S.I. as associate professor in the Crop Science Division. He later was promoted to the rank of Professor in the Natural Science Division. From 1960 to 1977, Davis created within I.S.I. a school of palm studies and encouraged many young botanists to take up research on palms, a subject which had been neglected in India up to that time. In 1972, he completed a Ph.D. in biometry at I.S.I. with a study of the coconut and other crop plants.

I first met Antony Davis in 1963 when I was curator of the Indian Botanic Garden's palm collection. Davis was a frequent visitor, collecting palm specimens and studying in detail the biology of the garden's large living collection of palms.

In mid 1977, Davis left I.S.I. to join FAO as a coconut specialist and spent the major part of the succeeding years at the Coconut Research Institute, Manado, Indonesia (see Davis et al. 1985). Finally in early 1985 he returned to India and put his heart and boundless energies into developing the Haldane Research Centre at Nagercoil, which he had founded in 1982 in honor of his friend and mentor. In early 1985 I had the opportunity to spend a few days at the HRC and there met Dennis Johnson who was collaborating with Antony on a study of the utilization and development of the palmyra palm in southern India (see Davis and Johnson 1987). I recall the great enthusiasm with which Antony showed me his research plots, coconut orchards and rich collection of reference books and journals.

Near the end of 1988, Antony Davis came to Calcutta and expressed the desire to form a palm society in India which would work in collaboration with the International Palm Society. Davis believed that a

national organization would encourage young palm scientists in their studies of palms as well as serve to promote palm growing in India. The Palm Society of India was registered in June 1989 under the presidency of Mr. Shri Dhar, and in August Dr. Davis travelled to Calcutta to attend the first meeting. Davis designed the logo for the society which depicts the native palmyra palm and suggested the name "Palmyra" for the newsletter. Little did we know that that first meeting of the society would be Davis's last.

Among his numerous publications, the last and most important was a book entitled *The Sugar Date Palm* (Phoenix sylvestris), unpublished at this writing. Davis was a member of the Board of Directors of the International Palm Society (1984–1988), and was a regular contributor to *Principes*.

T. A. Davis is survived by three sons: Bernard, a statistician; Basil, a priest and Jerome, an engineer. His widow Eunice Davis is now the guiding force behind the Haldane Research Centre.

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#### Obituary: Ruth Shatz

The International Palm Society has lost another of its Charter Members. Ruth Shatz of Coral Gables, Florida, passed away peacefully in her home on April 21, 1991. She was 86 years old.

Ruth was born in New York City. After her marriage she moved to Carmel, New