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BACK COVER

The fruits of *Pritchardia viscosa* shine with a sticky natural varnish. Hawaii is the center of diversity for the genus *Pritchardia* and will be the site for the 2004 IPS Biennial and Post Tour. (Photo: J. Dransfield)



NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF PALMS

The Board of Directors of the International Palm Society met in Houston, Texas on 11 Oct 2003. In addition to the usual business of receiving a fully approved financial audit and setting budgetary priorities for the coming year, the Board agreed to redesign the IPS website. The Board hopes to provide visitors to the website with a user-friendly, content-rich site with an enhanced photo gallery and archives of articles from *Principes/PALMS*. A task force will begin assembling specifications for the new website, which the Board hopes will be on-line in the coming year.

Additionally, the Board convened a meeting of the Endowment Committee, which every year receives and reviews grant proposals. The Endowment Fund of the IPS regularly supports educational projects, exhibits, laboratory and field research, and taxonomic studies. This year the Committee funded six projects:

Dr. Larry Noblick of the Montgomery Botanical Center, Miami, Florida, received \$7500 in support of field work in Paraguay and Argentina toward a taxonomic study of *Butia* and *Syagrus*. Dr. Noblick will investigate field variation in two taxonomically confused species of *Butia* and examine a possible new species of *Butia* believed to occur in eastern Paraguay. He also hopes to sort out the identity of a poorly known *Syagrus* in southern Paraguay.

Dr. Mark Brunel, University of the Pacific, Stockton, California, was granted \$2000 toward a molecular study of a population of putative hybrid *Sabal* in Brazoria County, Texas. The palms, long suspected of being hybrids between *S. mexicana* and *S. minor*, have been the subject of scrutiny and debate for many years. Dr. Brunel will use DNA technology to address the question.

Judy duPloy of the Belize Botanic Garden will receive \$2600 for an educational program for school children focusing on Belize's native palms. The Belize Botanic Garden has designed an exciting hands-on exhibit on the uses of palms along with a field trip to the Garden for school children. The IPS is proud to be involved with the program.

Dr. Mónica Moraes, Herbario Nacional de Bolivia, La Paz, is an authority on the palm flora of that South American country. She has been granted \$4500 toward the publication of a taxonomic account of the 78 indigenous palms of Bolivia. The IPS hopes to have copies of this publication available through the IPS Bookstore next year.

Finally, Arlington James, Roseau, Dominica, received \$1924 for field study and monitoring of native palms of Dominica. Just this year, Mr. James wrote an account of his work with *Pseudophoenix sargentii* in Dominica (PALMS 47: 57-61). His new project will produce data on *Coccothrinax babadensis*, two morphs of *Aiphanes minima*, and *Acrocomia aculeata*.

Readers of PALMS also benefit from the Endowment program: Each grant recipient is asked to write an article for PALMS relating to the project funded by the IPS. While we all eagerly await news of the latest palm discoveries from Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Dominica, Texas, and Belize, we can turn to two articles in this issue of PALMS by Endowment grant recipients. Donald Hodel's work with leaf removal and crown tie-up (p. 177) and Ross Bayton's work on the taxonomy of *Borassus* (p. 206) are both the result, in part, of IPS support.

The Editors