



THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY

May 2023

NEWSLETTER

Aloha Edition – Palm Collectors, pt. 2



Chrysalidocarpus
“orange crush”
with Gloria Batule
providing scale, at
the legacy garden
of Donn Carlsmith.

Aloha from Hawaii and the 32nd International Palm Society Biennial.

Whether it's fine art, automobiles or even palms, the best collectors rely on years of study and travel to advance their connoisseurship. This is the second of a two-part survey of passionately curated private palm collections visited on the Big Island of Hawaii. In this issue we visit the remarkable private palm reserves of two former presidents of the International Palm Society.

Palm Collectors, pt. 2

Carlsmith Garden

Donn Carlsmith (IPS President 1978–1980) created a garden that HIPS President Rick Kelley described as a “showplace palm paradise.” However, two extraordinary events were needed for this to reach fruition.

First, Donn Carlsmith survived an unimaginable aviation disaster when the fuselage of Aloha Airlines flight 243 ripped apart at 24,000 feet on April 28, 1988 (see photo below). The pilots managed to make a miraculous emergency landing on the island of Maui saving 94 lives (and tragically losing one).

Next a sympathetic buyer was mandatory to preserve the palm collection in perpetuity following Mr. Carlsmith’s passing. Thankfully the four-acre section of the original Donn Carlsmith estate containing the core palm collection was purchased by Michelle and Ryan Rutan. The Rutans were entirely unfamiliar with palms at the time of their acquisition. Little did they know that hordes of palm-nuts would be knocking on their door. With tremendous gratitude (and a deep sense of relief) the Rutans have proven to be devoted stewards of this legacy garden. In fact, they have clearly caught the palm bug and now may be just as nuts as the rest of us!

We were fortunate to have the Rutans, Daniel Dayoan (a legacy himself, who has been involved with the garden since the 1980s) and Karen Piercy (principal organizer of the memorable 2004 Hawaii Biennial) volunteering to lead the tours.

HIPS President Rick Kelley summed the day up perfectly: “It was a beautiful day, and there is no other group in the world who could have appreciated the palm collection more. These people (the IPS) were the hardest of the hard core, and they were all appropriately blown away.”



Palm Collectors, pt. 2



Rick Kelley with a second generation eponymous palm, *Chrysalidocarpus carlsmithii*. Behind which is THE actual palm from which the type material was collected and named! This photograph is especially poignant because to Rick's right is a very small indication of incredible hardwork accomplished by HIPS members (including Chris Friesen, Lise Dowd, Steve Forman, Stacy Williams, Allison and JR Miles, and David Longacre) and the Rutan family to prepare the garden for our visit.

Palm Collectors, pt. 2



A massive Joey (*Johannesteijsmannia altifrons*)



Marojejya darianii with Debby Hamann providing scale.

Trachycarpus martianus, note long pendulous dead leaves.



A clustering palm from Central America, *Reinhardtia latisecta* is prized for its dainty windows.



Palm Collectors, pt. 2



We counted approximately 25 individual trees in this grove of *Socratea*.

This *Chrysalidocarpus* “orange crush” is, at present, an undescribed species. It is not *C. pilulifer*.



Licuala peltata var. *sumawongii*. The leaves are larger than those of *L. grandis*.

Loxococcus rupicola, a monotypic genus from Sri Lanka. It's related to the subtribe Dypsidinae



Palm Collectors, pt. 2



Chrysalidocarpus "Mayotte." Mayotte is an island northwest of Madagascar, within the Mozambique Channel, hence this species is one of the very few members of the genus not found on the main island of Madagascar.



A towering *Pigafetta* against the blue Hawaiian sky.

Ringed by a marvelous colonnade of *C. carlsmithii*, this will be the enviable site of the Rutan's eventual homestead.



Palm Collectors, pt. 2

Moani: Lundkvist Garden

Background

Bo-Göran Lundkvist (IPS President 2008–2012) initially created a palm garden in Poway, suburban San Diego. However, after a frost (and the subsequent loss of many cherished plants), he decamped for the Big Island. He then established what is now Moani: Lundkvist Garden in 1995, and actively tended it until October 2010, or about 15 years. Initially comprised of 4 acres, a 5th acre was eventually added to focus on Malagasy palms. Bo took the tack of planting “geographically” (please see his hand drawn map), which makes for a very enjoyable, if not didactic, stroll through the palm forest.

The Garden Today

Kim Cyr explains: “Moani: Lundkvist Garden, is now in the capable hands of Bob Carrere and Andy Pesce. This 5-acre garden was planted by Bo-Göran Lundkvist beginning in the late 1990s. His goal initially was to plant three palms a day, and you can see how quickly that would add up! The palms were often planted in large groups, sometimes more than 50 of a single species in a grove; sometimes only one or two if they were especially unique and hard to obtain. In 2018 the garden was exposed to toxic volcanic gases from the sudden eruption of Kilauea in the Lower East Rift Zone, where the garden was only hundreds of feet from one of the more than 20 fissures that opened in the Leilani Estates subdivision. There were losses, but looking at the garden today, you would never know how close it came to complete obliteration. Since Bob and Andy acquired the garden, they have devoted their time to reviving the beauty of the palms and grounds, as well as adding their own special touches.”

Bo’s database totaled about 6000 palms, including entries such as:

Neoveitchia storckii 18

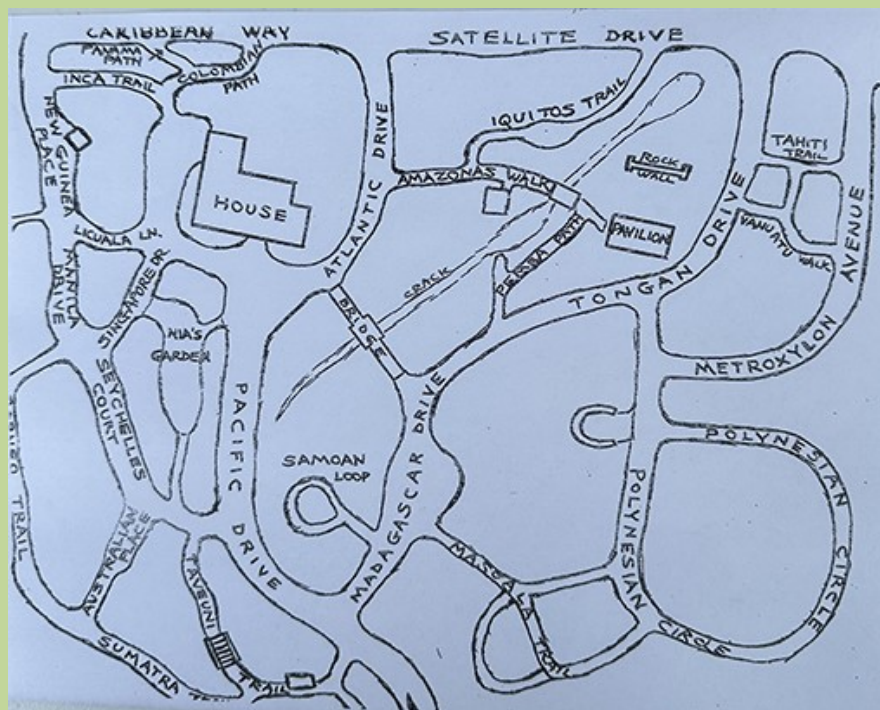
Areca vestiaria 240

Roscheria melanochaetes 20

Lemurophoenix halleuxii 8

Chrysalidocarpus bejofo 24

Bo-Göran Lundkvist and Bob Carrere, provided exceptional curatorial tours for our visit, which included lunch among the palms



Palm Collectors, pt. 2



Left, at the intersection of Tongan Drive and Vanuatu Walk, Bo enveloped by his favorite species, *Clivistigma samoense*. Right, Bob Carrere (Andy Pesce not pictured) surrounded by an assemblage of gorgeous palms.

Roscheria melanochaetes. Bo planted 20 in total!

“Licuala lane” has been on your editor’s bucket list for years.



Palm Collectors, pt. 2



Chambeyronia piersoniorum. This ravishing palm honors the Pierson family, who are organizing the New Caledonia biennial for 2024.

The fifth acre, devoted to Malagasy palms



Merlin enjoying a brief respite from the tour, with *Marojejya darianii* providing shade.

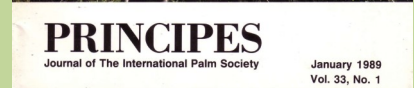
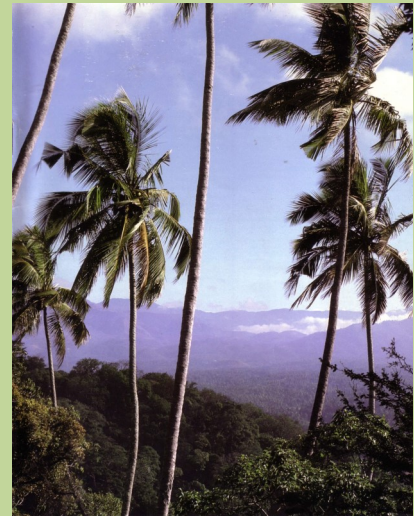
Example of volcanic acid rain on *Kerriodoxa elegans*. New leaves will replace damaged ones.



Principes

The International Palm Society's most valuable scientific contribution is our peer-reviewed journal, Palms (formerly Principes). We are fortunate to have gifted palm botanists serving as editors. After 66 continuous volumes (and over 1000 articles) we have inarguably had a dramatic impact upon palm research and education.

So how did the name Principes come about? Let's review the progenitor bulletins from 1956, authored (and likely typed) by our founder Dent Smith. These papers essentially serve as our constitution. And here is the entry explaining Mr. Smith's naming decision: "We have ready at hand the perfect name: PRINCIPES, THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE PALM SOCIETY" (Bulletin of The Palm Society, July 1956). He continued by referencing respected mid-twentieth century botanist Dr. Miriam L. Bomhard*, who opined, "Palms are probably the most remarkable plants in the world." The Smithsonian Institution had previously published Dr. Bomhard's commentary on the plant kingdom: "As a monarchy in which but a single family of plants had the hereditary right to rule, the palms would unquestionably hold this honored position. The great naturalist, Linnaeus, in a rather whimsical 'social' ranking of the plants of the world, placed the palms first, further distinguishing them as Principes, the princes or rulers, whereas certain other groups were merely plebeians, patricians, and so forth. It is interesting to note that this term, Principes, continues to appear from time to time in publications as a synonym for the family name of the palms" (Publication 3429, 1937).



The first color photograph to appear in Principes was the front cover of vol. 33 (1), January 1989. *Cocos nucifera*, Kandy, Sri Lanka, by Dr. John Dransfield.



Dent Smith's widow Doris was known for her "repeated courtesy" of opening the Smith Garden to the (Central Florida Palm) Society, partly in effort to keep Dent's legacy alive. However, one such visitor (and author) Edmund Brown observed, "She still laments the change of the journal name from the original Principes" (Palms 50(1): 28. 2006.).

*It should be noted that the IPS donated two *Phoenix canariensis* in memory of Dr. Bomhard, planted at Newcomb College (Tulane University) in 1996.

Our editors (L to R), Drs. Scott Zona and John Dransfield. Photo by Dr. Jeff Block at Block Botanical Gardens.

Palms & Design



Who doesn't love palm themed tableware? Here are five glazed ceramic works ("Easter Island Plates" 1977) by artist Ken Price. But if you prefer to eat off of actual palms, check out this fascinating video showing the construction of biodegradable *Areca catechu* plates made from the sheathing leaf bases of fallen leaves, sent by Dr. John Dransfield.

https://youtu.be/I_r5Wm5cuJU

Upcoming Travel with the IPS

2023 IPS mid-term Board of Directors meeting, London:

Sunday May 21 through Thursday May 25

Including RBG Kew, RHS Chelsea Flower Show and Wakehurst Place

SOLD OUT. Waiting list: info@palms.org

2023 IPS Premium Travel: Reunion Island (West Indian Ocean)

Hosted by the Palmeraie-Union

Sunday, October 29 through Monday, November 6

Capacity 25.

SOLD OUT. Waiting list: info@palms.org

2024 The International Palm Society's 33rd Biennial: New Caledonia (Southwestern Pacific Ocean)

Sunday, September 22 through Monday, September 30.

Capacity 150. Expected to sell out. Registration opens August, 2023.

2025 IPS mid-term Board of Directors meeting: Peru.

2026 The International Palm Society's 34th Biennial: Thailand. Capacity 300.

Past Presidents of the IPS: 1988–2000

This is the fifth of a six-part series recognizing the 24 former presidents of the International Palm Society. Each entry will include a photo with an accompanying vignette. These will be compiled on the IPS website, www.palms.org, for future reference.

1988–1992 Jules Gervais, Hawaii

Jules J Gervais, Jr. served a four-year term, a first for an IPS president. He operated a busy nursery, Rainbow Tropicals, in Hilo, Hawaii. Jules and his wife Soontaree welcomed the IPS to their gardens at Kuaola Farms during the 1980 and 1990 biennials (Soontaree served a refreshing cocktail of coconut and nipa juice while Jules herded the palm enthusiasts with the aid of a bullhorn). The couple received a standing ovation as distinguished guests during the 2022 Hawaiian Islands biennial closing ceremonies. Born in New Orleans, Mr. Gervais attended Tulane and graduated from the Naval Academy and the Harvard Business School.



1992–1996 Jim Cain, Texas

Jimmy D. Cain worked tirelessly on behalf of the IPS, and in 2014 he (posthumously) received the Dent Smith Award, our highest accolade. Jim spent countless hours compiling the activities of the worldwide IPS affiliate chapters for publication in *Principes*, which remain available for perusal in our journal archives.

Mr. Cain earned degrees in Meteorology and Oceanography from Texas A & M University (where a student scholarship is named in his honor).

Past Presidents of the IPS: 1964–1972

1996–2000 Phil Bergman, M.D. California

In 1977 Phil Bergman founded a 3-acre nursery in San Diego, Jungle Music, specializing in rare palms. Many So. California enthusiasts are indebted to him for their palm collections. He presided over the memorable 2000 New Caledonia biennial where his duties included exchanging gifts with various tribal chiefs. Remarkably, he served 32 consecutive years on the board for the Palm Society of Southern California (PSSC).

Dr. Bergman is a graduate of the University of California (San Francisco) Medical School and practiced emergency room medicine in San Diego.



2000–2004 Horace Hobbs, Texas

Horace Olin Hobbs, Jr. (affectionately referred to as "Le Grand Fromage" during the 2002 French Biennial), regularly traveled to Mexico with his grandfather Horace Hilburn Hobbs, to collect palm seeds. Later he completed an internship at the Smithsonian under the tutelage of famed palm researcher (and early IPS member), Dr. Robert W. Read.

Horace served as President of the Houston affiliate for a decade prior to assuming the presidency of the IPS. Further he established a palmetum in the "Texas Riviera" (featured in the Wall Street Journal).

Mr. Hobbs graduated from the University of Houston with a degree in Chemical Engineering. He retired to Miami, following a distinguished career in energy consulting, ultimately as the Chief Economist for Phillips 66.



Parting Shot

The London Midterm Meeting of the IPS begins later this month at Royal Botanic Garden, Kew. Your editor is especially eager to re-visit the historic Palm House!

