

Alms for the Palms Edition

Save the Species 2023

The historic Palm House at the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, a World Heritage Site, is regarded as the most significant surviving glasshouse from the 19th Century. It currently houses and displays several imperilled palm species, including *Ravenea moorei*. This elegant species is dioecious, and the male tree at Kew may be the only plant in cultivation. It originates from the Comoro Islands, where the native forests are highly degraded. *Ravenea moorei* is facing imminent extinction in the wild. Moreover, the palm at Kew faces an uncertain future due to essential structural works on the Palm House.

Given the urgency of the situation, an international team from Kew and the Comoro Islands, headed by Dr. Bill Baker, is planning emergency scientific fieldwork in the Comoro Islands. They aim to survey all Comoro Islands to assess the wild status of all endemic palms, especially *Ravenea moorei*. Based on their findings, they will devise a conservation action plan for Comorean palms and provide the necessary horticultural and scientific training so that the plan can be enacted.

Funding from the IPS Save the Species Campaign will kickstart this essential effort to save Comoro Island palm species from certain extinction. Please give generously!

This program partners the International Palm Society with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.



Ravenea moorei (photo by Will Spoelstra, Palm House Supervisor, RBG Kew)

Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew

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Save the Species 2022 — *Pritchardia woodii*

Our partnered organization, the National Tropical Botanic Garden, provided this update.



NATIONAL TROPICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN

Saving Plants • Saving People

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS 3530 Papalina Road, Kalāheo, Hawai'i 96741 USA
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NTBG's Update for the International Palm Society

Save the Species: Pritchardia woodii

Since our initial report on the 2023 IPS Save the Species project focusing on *Pritchardia woodii*, another collection trip took place in May in Waiho'i Valley. The collecting team included Zach Pezillo, of the Hawaii Plant Extinction Prevention Program, as well as Leroy Krause and Mike Oppenorth of the National Tropical Botanic Garden's Kahanu Garden. The trio was transported into the northeast side of Waiho'i Valley via helicopter.

This trip presented challenges in obtaining high-quality fruits due to observed rat predation and heavy rain conditions affecting the fruit. Thankfully, some fruit were nevertheless successfully collected and have been placed in both the NTBG Kahanu Garden nursery and the Harold H. Lyon Arboretum at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Since the seeds collected from this first trip were not fully ripe but large in size, we transferred more to Lyon arboretum for propagation than initially planned. Encouragingly, at least six plants appear to have germinated and have reached the eophyll stage.

During this expedition, we confirmed the threats posed not only by rat predation of fruit, but also invasive plants such as *Clidemia hirta*, *Cyperus haspan*, *Hedychium coronarium*, *Paspalum conjugatum*, *Rubus rosifolius*, and wild pigs. We did not see any young seedlings, and the shortest palm we encountered was approximately six-feet tall, making fruit collecting a challenging task on all mature palms.

We expected to return to the valley again on August 13, but due to the Maui wildfires helicopter resources were redirected toward fire-fighting efforts. As a result, the next trip to Waiho'i is now scheduled for November 1, 2023. Depending on the success of this trip, it may serve as the final trip for this project, or we may consider scheduling one additional trip in December 2023.

(Story and photos courtesy of Vera Benedek, Grant Writer/Grants Manager at the NTBG)



Leroy Krause labeling *Pritchardia woodii* fruit from Waiho'i Valley in May, 2023.



Above left: Germinated plants at the Lyon Arboretum Micropropagation Laboratory.
Above right: *Pritchardia woodii* seedlings from the May collection, now at Kahanu Garden.

Upcoming Travel with the IPS

Registration is now open for the International Palm Society's 33rd Biennial: New Caledonia

The International Palm Society
33rd Biennial: NEW CALEDONIA
September 22–September 30, 2024
**To register please contact Ynez at IPS head-
quarters: info@palms.org**
Registration ends December 15 or when sold out!



New Caledonia palm photographs on the following pages are courtesy of Gilles Pierson.



Palm Hero 2023: David Tanswell

David Tanswell was born in southwest England, in Crewkerne, Somerset which coincidentally was the birthplace of two famous early travelers/adventurers: Thomas Coryat (1577) and Joshua Fry (1699). When David was nine years of age, his family decamped for Australia. At age 16 he returned to England (for five years) to complete secondary school and graduated from the University of Southampton with a degree in civil engineering. Following that, he was off to the West Indies, for many years of work and adventures, including exploring nearly every island and becoming familiar with their endemic fauna.

Eventually he returned to Australia and earned a degree in architecture. He joined an architecture practice, which had been founded in 1902, and retired in 2013. David has been tending his garden in Brisbane since, surrounded by endemic palms including *Calamus muelleri*, *Livistona australis*, *Archontophoenix cunninghamiana*, *A. cunninghamii*, and *Linospadix monostachyus*.

David became a member of the International Palm Society in 1977 and attended his first biennial, actually a post-tour, in Cairns (1984). He organized the memorable 1988 Queensland biennial and, gratefully, many, many more biennials to follow.

David was elected IPS vice president at the midterm meeting in Corpus Christi Texas 1989 and has served on the Board since then. He has remarkably made over 16 trips to Borneo. In affirmation of his hardy Australian attitude, he would never allow minor nuisances such as orthopedic injuries to interfere with his plant explorations. In fact, along with fellow Aussie explorers Phillip Arrowsmith and Rudy Meyer, David visited all four species of *Johannesteijsmannia* in peninsular Malaysia (including a fifth not yet scientifically recognized dainty "species") in the span of three days, essentially by hiking all day, driving all night and eschewing food and water!

David, thank you for everything you've done to enrich our lives and improve our beloved society. Your hard work in creating adventure travel has paved the way for the IPS. And because of individual such as yourself, we are now set to embark on our 33rd biennial.

You are a true palm hero!

President Robert Blenker introducing David Tanswell as the 2023 palm hero awardee.



David enjoying a French creole luncheon during the recent IPS mini biennial in Sainte-Rose, La Réunion.



David Tanswell in His Own Words

I returned to Australia in the mid-70s after spending the few years since completing my university studies living and traveling in the tropics. I had never grown anything, never given a thought to plants except that I felt at home in the lush tropical environment and the jungles of South America. I missed the tropics and yearned to return, so my mother bought me a palm and a packet of palm seeds as a birthday present as a symbol of the tropics. The palm was a Washingtonia which is now a towering sentinel in my front garden. The seed was of several different species, I had not grown anything before, but all of the seeds germinated. Each leaf was fascinatingly different, and all prospered. From then on, I started to notice palms in the suburbs and the bush and, like most not realizing an obsession was developing, started collecting and planting every palm seed I could find. Some species I recognized from my travels, but most were new to me. So, I went to the biggest bookshop in town and ordered Palms of the World and waited impatiently for it to arrive. I was collecting seeds in a public park one day when I was approached by a fellow who asked if I was interested in palms and told me his father was starting up a local palm society, and that was it, I was hooked. Through locals I heard about the Palm Society (IPS) and joined in the late 70s, joined the committee of the Australian Palm & Cycad Society (later PACSOA) in 1983, made my first overseas palm hunting trip to Papua New Guinea in 1983, tagged on to my first Palm Society adventure in 1984 in North Queensland, followed by regular palm hunting trips to Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand, organized my first IPS Biennial in NQ in 1988 (this biennial was instrumental in adding "International" to the Society's name), became Vice President of the IPS, organized my first IPS post-Biennial tour in 1990 to peninsula Malaysia. Work and children limited my ability to attend IPS biennials for a decade, but my periodic "mental health break" escapes to Borneo became an obsession resulting in 21 trips to Malaysia and the pre-Biennial tour and Biennial in Sarawak and Singapore in 2016. I have attended 15+ Biennials and interim board meetings. My interest in palms has allowed me to indulge in a number of passions including running a seek bank, desktop publishing numerous books and the PACSOA journal Palms & Cycads, starting up the PACSOA annual show (now in its 40th year), traveling to many parts of the world in search of palms in habitat and cultivation, socializing with many palm enthusiasts from around the world, and of course the privilege of being a member of the IPS Board of Directors in several roles over the years. Thank you, IPS, for over 45 years of adventure.

Photo of David Tanswell heading upriver in 2003 for a multi-day hike through the upper Baleu river and the mountains along the Kalimantan border retracing the expedition of Redmond O'Hanlon in the 1970s.



Previous Palm Heroes

2020: Drs. Tom Jackson and Kathleen Grant

2021: Mr. Elvis Cruz

2022: Ms. Glenn Franklin

Keoki's Ho'oulu Award

Congratulations to Mike DeMotta, Curator of Living Collections at the NTBG, recipient of Keoki's Ho'oulu Award. Mike, along with Kahanu Garden Director and lead investigator Mike Opge-north, helmed our successful 2022 Save the Species initiative targeting *Pritchardia woodii* (please see accompanying update above).



Garidini La Mortola — text & photos by Dr. Laz Priegues

This glorious terraced garden (not to be confused with the similarly named La Mortola, the Hanbury Gardens, in Liguria) lies on the Island of Ischia in the Bay of Naples. Its name means "The Place of Myrtles." It is a private garden and in 1991 was first opened up to the public by reservation only. It was created by Susana Walton (1926–2010, born in Argentina) and her British composer husband (William Walton) in the 1950s, where they are presently interred. It has tropical and Mediterranean plantings and is unusual in that a big part of it is on terraces that looks out into the Bay of Naples and seems like a posthumous botanical love letter to her husband who passed away there before she did. It has been awarded the prize of The Most Beautiful Garden in Italy in 2004. There are many palm trees there and the island is a short ferry ride from Naples or the Amalfi Coast. Truly a terraced Garden of Eden. I had the pleasure of visiting there in April, and the weather was sunny and mild. Don't miss it if you are in the area.





Holiday Shopping for Palm Aesthetes

PALMS OF THE WORLD

by Beppe Spadacini

A folio of 15 offset reproductions of color paintings in a case;

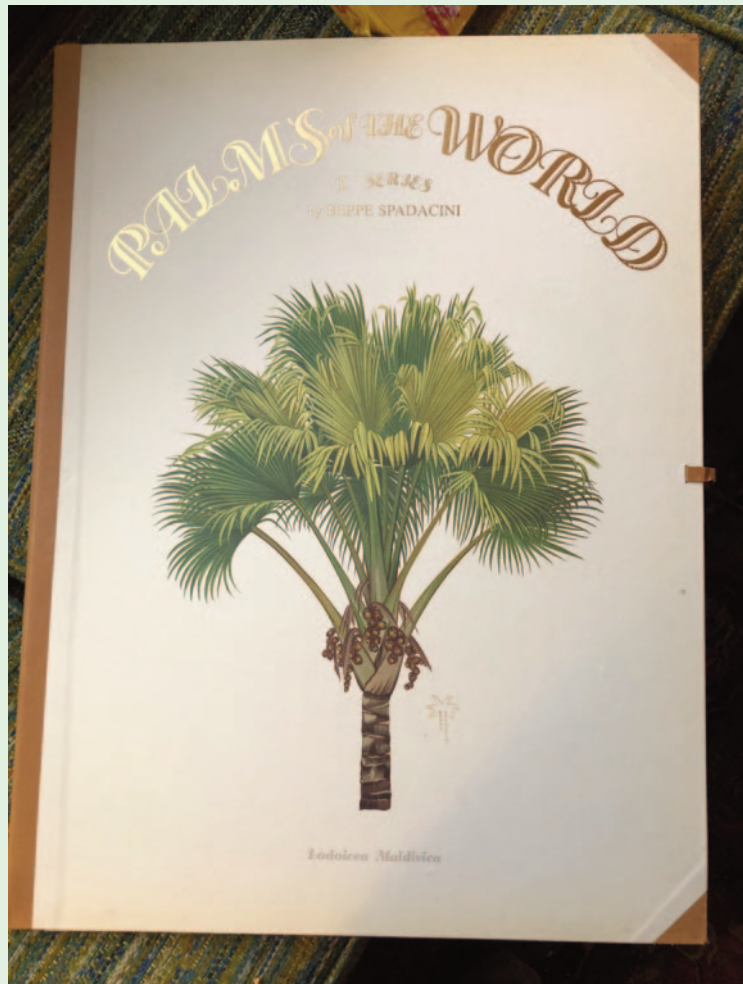
18 $\frac{5}{8}$ by 24 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches

Studio Tucano, Lungo Lario Trieste 54, 22100 Como, Italy. 1991.

“This lavishly-produced collection consists of individual plates each enclosed in a protective folder. An introductory folder carries the folio title and a photograph of the artist, and contains two folio sheets on which are printed an explanatory essay on palm trees and a botanical note on palms and their uses in Italian and English. The naturally colored palm portraits in this beautiful collection are each reproduced with a handsome multicolored border and the scientific name inscribed below the palm. The folder for each painting has on its cover a sepia silhouette of the enclosed palm painting, the scientific name, and information about its origin and general botanical characteristics, also in Italian and English. The repository for these plates is a stiff, very attractive, white case with in-folding sides bearing a color reproduction of the double coconut palm on its cover. The case is trimmed in soft tan leather and has a leather tie.

The species presented broadly represent the world's palms: *Brahea brandegeei*, *Butia capitata*, *Caryota mitis*, *Caryota no*, *Coccothrinax crinita*, *Brahea edulis*, *Howea forsteriana*, *Hyophorbe lagenicaulis*, *Latania lontaroides*, *Licuala lauterbachii*, *Lodoicea maldivica*, *Phoenix roebelenii*, *Phoenix rupicola*, *Rhapis humilis*, and *Sabal palmetto*.” — Reviewed by Dennis Johnson, *Principes* 37(4): 217. 1993.

Scarce copies remain. To learn more please contact Studio Toscano: info@bepespadacini.com.



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CALAMOIDEAE | PIGAFETTINAE

***Pigafetta* (Blume) Becc.**

Calamopsis *Blume* *Pigafetta* (Blume) Martens, *Egeria* *Blume*

Calamopsis *Blume* *Pigafetta* (Blume) Martens

Blume, single-stemmed tree palm, stem deep green, especially in upper parts, coronate at apex, distichous. Leaf pinnae, erect with green and bristles, strongly arching; sheath splitting to the base opposite the petiole, chiefly white, petiole absent, though narrowing upper portion of sheath towards a petiole. Corolla truncate, with primary ribs, strongly regularly, secondary inflexure between and below the base, branched to 2 orders, branches producing primary bracts similar, not dropping off as inflexure expands; petioles shorter than inflexure nodes; rachilla induplicate distally, petioles. Flower in pairs or solitary throughout the length of the rachilla, not developing in pin. Fruit small, obovate white, slightly, with vertical rows of deep red, stipules remain apart, each thin. Seed 1, enclosed in a fleshy coat (sarcotesta), laterally flattened, endosperm homogeneous.

Blume, stem, two to three, the other in Malacca and western New Guinea.

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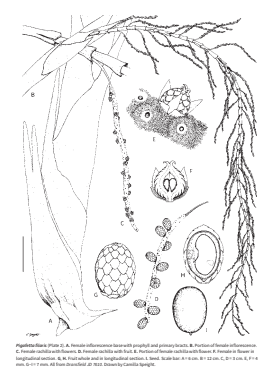
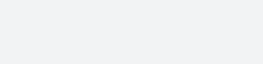
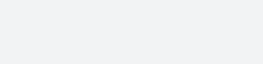
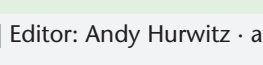
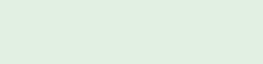
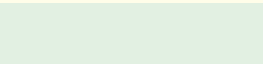
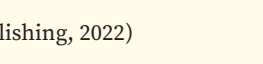
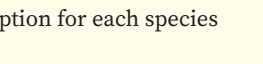
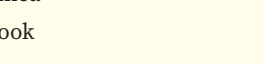
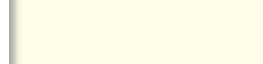
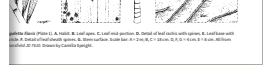
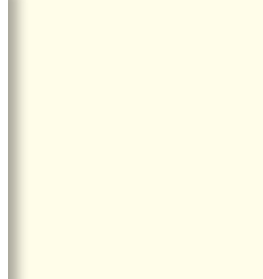
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Parting Shot (and December Issue Preview)

Caribbean Palm Sunset, photo by Dr. Cindy Adair, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico

