



Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

Affiliate of the International Palm Society

Monthly Update

November 2015

UPCOMING MEETING

November 4, 2015

7:30 p.m. at

Mounts Botanical Garden

Speaker: Michael Calonje, Cycad Biologist at Montgomery Botanical Center
Subject: Recent Exploration in Columbia

Featured Auction Plant:
Dypsis utilis
Neoveitchia storckii

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Charlie Beck, Librarian
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 Brenda Beck, Historian
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OCTOBER "THANK YOU"

Door: Dave Colonna

Food: Don Bittel, Susan Cioci, Ingrid Dewey, Richard Murray, Tom Ramiccio, Sue Peppler, Ruth Sallenbach. Chris Tiner brought food in August and was inadvertently left off our Thank You list. Thanks, Chris.

Plants: None.

VISIT US AT

www.palmbeachpalmcycadsociety.com

All photographs in this issue were provided by Charlie Beck unless otherwise specified.

Opinions expressed and products or recommendations published in this newsletter may not be the opinions or recommendations of the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society or its board of directors.

FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Licuala naumannii*
by Charlie Beck

Licuala naumannii is a small, solitary palm native to Bougainville Island located off the coast of Papua New Guinea. This palm has circular palmate leaves which are divided into wedge shaped segments with the apical segment much wider than the rest. In habitat this palm can grow to a height of 15-30 feet. *L. naumannii* is commonly misspelled with one "n" on the internet. Kew Royal Botanical Garden does recognize *L. naumannii* as a valid name.

L. naumannii grows in coastal rainforest near mangrove habitat. Bougainville Island is in the tropics, located 6 degrees south of the equator. You would think that this palm might be too tender to grow in Palm Beach County's sub-tropical climate, but that is not the case. We planted our specimen in 2008, one year before our record cold winters of 2009 and 2010. The long cold spells experienced in those two seasons had little effect on our recently planted palm. Our garden is located 4 miles from the coast just north of Boynton Beach, so planting in colder areas has not been tested to my knowledge. I did see a beautiful specimen of *L. naumannii* growing in Jeff Searle's garden 16.5 miles from the coast, west of Davie, FL. I'm not sure if that palm was planted out prior to 2009, but I assume it was based on its size.

With recommended fertilization and regular irrigation, our specimen has never developed a nutritional deficiency. Our specimen is planted in a low lying, shady area which occasionally floods after heavy rain. Considering that this palm's native habitat is mangrove swamp, it's not a surprise that it grows well in this situation.

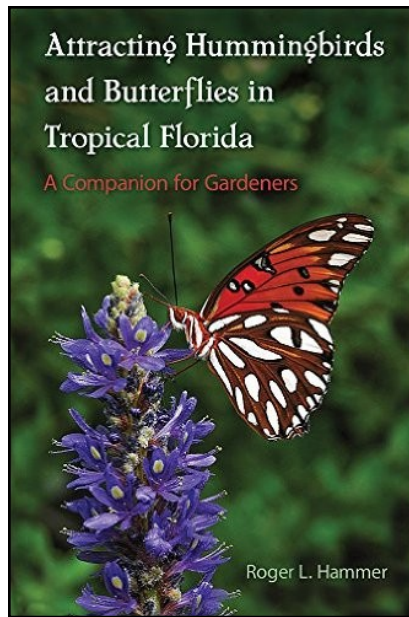
L. naumannii has a footprint 4' across. Our 8 year old specimen holds 12 healthy, stiff, dark green leaves which measure 28" across. Vertical growth is slow. A stem is beginning to form and it measures 3" in diameter.

In our society's October 2009 newsletter, Paul Craft stated "Although *L. naumannii* is untested in South Florida, I believe it shows great promise as a landscape plant." After 8 years of growing this palm, I can highly recommend it. It is a hard palm to find, but you should add this little gem to your list of "must have" palms. There are many *Licuala* species untested in Palm Beach County. Many will not successfully grow here, but *L. naumannii* is a proven winner. Availability of *L. naumannii* is not good, but seed sources are available.

Hummingbirds and Butterflies
by Charlie Beck

Anyone who is an active member of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (FTBG) probably knows Roger Hammer. Roger is a frequent lecturer and tour leader at FTBG. Roger is the retired senior naturalist, Miami-Dade Parks Department (1977-2010) and was granted an Honorary Doctor of Science by Florida International University for his tireless work studying South Florida's natural world. Roger is an expert on native plants and habitats. He has written books on native wildflowers of the Florida Keys, the Everglades, and Central Florida. He also has written books on exploring wild and not so wild Florida.

Well, Roger has topped himself again! He recently authored a book, "Attracting Hummingbirds and Butterflies in Tropical Florida." Anyone who enjoys attracting hummingbirds and butterflies to their garden will love this book. Unlike any other book, it is specifically



written for South Florida gardeners. Roger describes both native and non-native plants which are the best attracters. I assure you that even longtime gardeners will be amazed to find a large variety of plants which were previously unknown. Roger's descriptions of plants are so well written, any gardener will appreciate his passion for this subject. It was a joy to read, cover to cover.

I have attended many of Roger's lectures and have also joined one of his Everglade wildflower tours. He is truly one of the most knowledgeable experts on South Florida's natural world. I was lucky to tour his personal garden in Homestead and can attest he has firsthand experience

growing these plants. If you attend one of his colorful lectures, you will not be disappointed, and you will love his new book.




Licuala naumannii in the Beck garden





Licuala naumannii in Jeff Searle's garden.

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"By appointment only"

A GREAT BIG “THANK YOU”

to **Ruth Sallenbach** for opening up her beautiful garden for our annual picnic and auction. Everyone had a great time!



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Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

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2016 Membership Application

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