



# COLLIER FRUIT GROWERS NEWSLETTER

MAY 2018



The May speaker will be Berto Silva, a native Brazilian who specializes in growing rare and unusual fruit trees. He grew up in the northeast portion of Brazil where he enjoyed the diverse types of fruits available in that region. During the past twenty-three years, he has experimented with growing rare fruit trees from all over the world, particularly those native to the Amazon basin and the Brazilian Atlantic Forest.

Berto is an active member of Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club and the Caloosa Rare Fruit Exchange. His collection includes spectacular jaboticaba varieties, as well as many varieties of annonas, myrciaras, plinias, eugenias, pouterias, mangiferas and campomanesias. Since Berto last spoke to the Collier Fruit Growers in July of 2016, Berto has been able to successfully graft several scions of *Annona salzmanii*, a rare annona native to

northeast Brazil onto pond apple (*Annona glabra*) and onto *Annona montana*. *Annona glabra* is a rootstock that can withstand flooded conditions and *Annona montana* is a rootstock that is a bit cold hardy. So far, the grafted *Annona salzmanii* onto both rootstocks are performing well. After Berto's presentation, club members will have the opportunity of buying some small rare fruit trees.

**Meeting Date: TUESDAY, MAY 15<sup>th</sup>**  
**The tasting table starts at 7:00 pm.**  
**Meeting starts at 7:30 pm.**

**at the Tree of Life Church, Life Center, 2132 Shadowlawn Drive.**

## BURDS' NEST OF INFORMATION THIS and THAT FOR MAY



**MANGOS** Now that the mango season is commencing **LATE Mangos** should be **selectively pruned**. **Yes**, there will be fruit on the tree. **WHY prune now?** It is necessary to have fruit again next year. If late mangos are pruned after the fruit is harvested, – e.g. late September or October, it raises the percent chance of no fruit next year.

**LATE MANGOS - Keitt, Neelum, Palmer, Beverly, Wise, Cryder and Zillate.**

**\*\*\* Even though VALENCIA PRIDE is a mid-season mango, it is very sensitive to late pruning, so it should be added to your pruning list.**

**EARLY MANGOS - Rosigold, Lemon Saigon, Glen, Manilita and Florigon, to name a few:**

When the fruit has been harvested, fertilize the tree with **0-0-22**. **In addition, spray with micro nutrients** just before the new growth has hardened off.

**\*\*\* Watering Mangos:** In the dry season, mango trees should be kept to once a week watering schedule. This will result in larger fruit. Too much water will dilute the flavor of each mango.

**RECIPE OF THE MONTH:**

Although Southwest Florida is not ideal for growing cherries, there are fruits such as Grumichama and Surinam Cherries that can be used as substitutes for cherries in many recipes. Surinam Cherries look like little pumpkins. Pick only those that are deep red in color as the unripe fruit and seeds have an offensive taste. The ripe fruit is very sweet and juicy. Surinam cherries were often planted as hedges and are therefore widely found in our area. Unfortunately, they have escaped into the hammocks and wildlife areas and are considered to be an invasive species.

recipe:

**SURINAM CHERRY PIE**

2-crust pastry

1 ½ cups of seeded ripe Surinam cherries

½ cup seedless raisins

¾ cup dried apples

1 cup sugar

3 Tbsp. flour

1 Tbsp. butter

Line pie plate with pastry. Mix fruit, sugar and flour and pour into pie shell. Dot with small pieces of butter. Cover with top crust. Bake in 450 degree oven for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes.



## Dragon Fruit Culture

**Dragon fruit** is fast growing, climbing cacti and require support to grow. For the homeowner, a fence, a stump, a tree, a post or trellis offer good growing support options.

**Flowering** of *Hylocereus* species is triggered by two days in a row of heavy rains with warm weather (i.e. May through October). Fruit develop quickly and usually ripen approximately 4 weeks after flowering. Thus, fruit are usually available June through November. In general, only stems which are horizontal or hanging down will flower. The fruit can be picked any time after coloring, though are usually best 2-5 days after initial color. Once the tips of the fins on the fruit turn brown, the fruit should be picked if they haven't been already. Plants in general need at least 3 to 4 hours of direct sun in order to flower. They love mulch, fertilizer and water. Hand pollination will increase fruit set and fruit size. I find that they do very well on palm trees, branching, hanging down and fruiting as they climb. They do best on palms which naturally shed their fronds which prevents them from climbing over the crown. Post set 2 feet into the ground with a small wooden frame on top I've found to be the perfect growing site. Plant stems about 1-2" deep. They love any fertilizer and mulch and I like to push them until they get to the top of whatever they are growing on. I then cut back on fertilizer. They are very sensitive to herbicides so avoid or use with caution around them. Being a cactus, they are very drought tolerant and once established require little care.

### Dragon Fruit Varieties Grown in South Florida

**American Beauty:** *Hylocereus guatemalensis*. 0.5-1.0-pound fruit without hand pollination, magenta flesh, excellent flavor, good production. [Considered to be self-sterile in CA]

**Dark Star:** *Hylocereus undatus*. 0.75-1.25-pound. Has long skinny bracts or fins which make it especially attractive. The magenta flesh has a mild grape-like flavor most enjoyed when chilled and eaten fresh. Self-fertile. Excellent flavor, good production.

**Haley's Comet:** *Hylocereus undatus* X *polyrhizus*. Hybrid of white and red fleshed varieties. Very large 1.5-2.0 pound fruit. Short fins. Excellent flavor similar to Physical Graffiti and excellent appearance. Good production. Self-fertile. [Considered to be self-sterile in CA]

**Natural Mystic:** *Hylocereus polyrhizus* X *undatus*. Introduced from Thailand. Consistent producer of dark red fleshed fruit which typically weighing 1 pound. Does not require cross or hand pollination. Excellent flavor, very good appearance, very good production.

**Physical Graffiti:** *Hylocereus polyrhizus* X *undatus*. Hybrid of red fleshed and white fleshed varieties. Remarkably delicious variety that is both showy inside and out. Long attractive green fins with bright red fruit. Large 0.75-1.50-pound fruit. Self-fertile, good production and magenta fleshed. [Considered to be self-sterile in CA]

**Purple Haze:** *Hylocereus undatus* x *guatemalensis*. Large sweet fruit with relatively few seeds. Weigh up to 2 pounds. Dark magenta fleshed. Excellent pleasant grape-kiwi-like flavor, self-fertile. Long fins, fair production. Beautiful fruit.

**Vietnamese Jaina:** *Hylocereus undatus*. Large very beautiful glossy red fruit with green fins. 0.5-1.5 pounds. Semi-sweet, snowy white pulp. #1 dragon fruit variety exported by Vietnam. Self-pollinating. Excellent producer; one of the heaviest, most consistent producers.

**Yellow Dragon Fruit:** *Selenicereus megalanthus*. 0.25-0.75-pound fruit. Fruit have thorns. Fruit ripen November through February. Among the sweetest and tastiest of dragon fruit. Self-pollinating, good

**Zamorano:** *Hylocereus polyrhizus*. From the Agricultural University in Honduras. 0.5-1.0-pound fruit. Incredibly dark red flesh with mild sweet flavor. Self-fertile but larger fruit size achieved with hand pollination. Dusky red exterior.

**Rixford:** *Hylocereus guatemalensis* Large Red fruit with magenta flesh. One of sweetest with reported brix of 18. Self-pollinating, good producer. 1 - 1.5-pound fruit.

**Red Jaina:** *Hylocereus polyrhizus* Dark red flesh. One of heaviest producer however requires a pollinator. Plant next to any other variety. Dark purplish-green stems. Fruit 0.50-0.75-lb. Huge 14" flowers.

**Harpua:** *Hylocereus undatus*. Has a bright pink skin with smooth pure white semi-sweet pulp, very fertile it will produce an abundance of 1 pound average sized fruit that has a nice smooth texture. Huge nocturnal blooms over 15 inches across. This variety is self-pollinating.

**Pepino Dulce:** *Hylocereus undatus* hybrid. Has a bright pink skin, pinkish-green big fins and a white colored very juicy and extremely sweet pulp, very fertile and produces an abundance of large round fruits, most fruits average 1.5-pound, but this variety can produce huge 2-pound fruit too. Sweet and juicy with brix up to 18. Huge nocturnal blooms over 15 inches across. This variety is self-pollinating.

**Red Selenicereus:** *Selenicereus megalanthus*. Identical to yellow except red inside and out. A rare new addition. Small-medium sized fruit, 0.25-0.75-lb, very sweet.

**Delight:** *Hylocereus polyrhizus* x *H. undatus* hybrid. Is a self-pollinating, very fertile and produces an abundance of 0.75 to 1-pound fruit that has a nice pinkish pulp color with a smooth 'delightful' texture. Huge nocturnal blooms over 14 inches across.

**Yellow Hylocereus:** *Hylocereus undatus*. Bright yellow smooth skin, sweet white flesh. Self-fertile. Average weight of fruit is one pound. Extremely rare and hard to find.

## Fertility Characteristics

**Dragon fruit varieties** demonstrate three distinct fertility types. Fruit production depends upon the understanding these characteristics:

**Self-fertile and self-pollinating** — meaning the flower's own pollen will fertilize it and the

anthers are in direct proximity of the stigma allowing direct contact so that pollination can take place without outside intervention, resulting in a fruit.

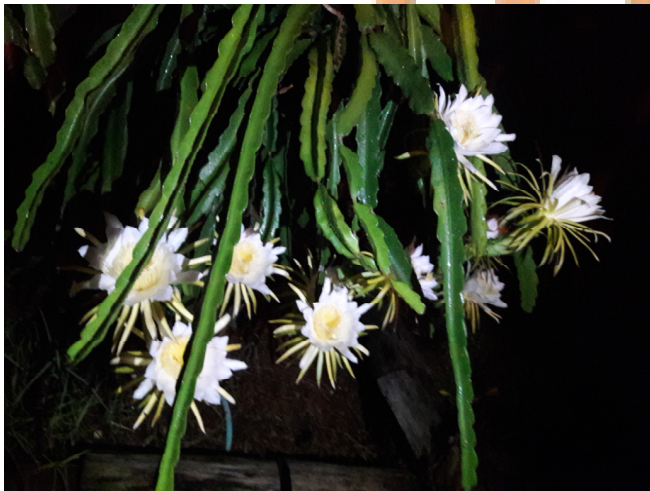
**Self-fertile but not self-pollinating** — meaning the flower's own pollen will fertilize it but must be transferred from the anthers to the stigma mechanically by some kind of pollinator — either an insect, wind or human hand — because the length of the stigma separates the anthers to the point that the pollen does not come in contact with the stigma. To hand pollinate, remove a few anthers by hand (or collect some of the very fine pollen on a small artist's paint brush) and deposit them on the stigma. Insect or wind pollination, even if a plant is self-fertile, is not always reliable.

**Self-sterile** — meaning the flower's own pollen will not pollinate itself. Pollen from a different Dragon Fruit cultivar will need to be mechanically placed on the flower's stigma to accomplish pollination. This can be facilitated if two different cultivars are blooming at the exact same time. Alternatively, pollen of one cultivar can be saved to be used for a flower of a different cultivar that will be ready to bloom a few nights later. Pollen can be refrigerated and stored for up to 7 days as necessary. To collect pollen for storage, carefully clip off the anthers with scissors and shake or brush them into an airtight container and refrigerate.

Note: Pollen from two flowers on the same self-sterile plant will not pollinate the flowers.



Pictures from Bonnie Hawkins' Dragon Fruit Crop





## Tales from the Nursery

### The Difference between a Botanist and a Horticulturalist, by Crafton Clift

Dr. Judd, Botanist at the University of Florida, 20-30 years ago, when his kids were still young, his oldest son was eight years old. And as an eight-year-old, he found a rare butterfly on a cycad. Once there was an article in the Fairchild Newsletter that said, "What Do You Do When a Rare Butterfly Eats a Rare Plant?" Anyway, Dr. Judd, a Botanist was very different from a horticulturalist, because a horticulturalist finds a rare plant, he plants a seed, he makes air layer, he grafts, he makes it common. A botanist finds a rare plant, he quickly slaps its only fruit on an herbarium sheet so that nobody will ever be able to find it in the wild again, so he will be famous. So, I was living at the Kampong for the summer. I was staying in the Barbour Cottage and there was a phone call for Dr. Judd from one of his graduate students who was trying to find the Kampong. I told the student, "Call back in five minutes to this number; Dr. Judd is over at the main house, but if I give you that phone number, you will wake up Mrs. Sweeney and she has just come back from France and plopped into bed. So, don't call there, call here." So, I went to get Dr. Judd to come over to the Barbour Cottage to receive this phone call. And while we were waiting for the phone call, I asked him what interesting plants he came across with the expedition that went from University of Florida to the Mountains of Haiti where the native people don't touch anything because that's where the 'jumbies' live. They came back with 35 new species of orchids, they also found a skeleton of a prehistoric sloth the size of a Volkswagen in a cave. He told me, he found an eggfruit relative that was red. I asked him, where are my scions? How come you didn't bring scions so we could grow it at the Kampong? And if it had a red fruit, then you must have had at least one fruit. What happened to the fruit? It's on an herbarium sheet at the University of Florida. We're still waiting for the phone call and he tells me about an herbarium specimen of a Jujube, that someone had brought to the University of Florida 40 years ago, and finally Dr. Judd said to his colleagues, "If this isn't named, we should name it." So, after it was named and described, they went out looking to see if in fact it still existed, because you know, that part of Florida has a habit of having tandem citrus groves and no native plants in between. But once it was named and described, other people went looking, where it had originally been found 40 years ago, and they found it. Undoubtedly the same clone that they had as an herbarium specimen, that had been maintaining itself, they thought, for centuries, by root suckers. So, after it was brought into cultivation, I asked him, "Has anyone ever found a fruit?" Yes, one. Where is it? On an herbarium sheet. Twice, in five minutes, two very rare plants, and the only proof known are on herbarium sheets, because the most important thing is to document that they once existed on the planet.

Bob: What will happen in the future if you're not careful with these plants?

Crafton: They will be extinct.

Good news to last month's Tale on the origin of the Oasis Avocado, Crafton Clift states: I found out that Mr. Mathews of Estero came to the Bonita Springs workshop meeting with a branch of his 'Oasis' Avocado on Tuesday, March 24. I was desperately looking for a local source of 'Oasis' scions, because it is an outstanding Avocado that we have never been able to evaluate well because the squirrels eat all the fruit as it is off-season to other avocados. The commercial season of Florida Avocados finishes in January, and this one goes into July. The 'Oasis' fruit gets black in December, so by law in Florida any avocado that changes color is legal to harvest. The original tree when we first saw it on the fifteen of July it had a few hundred black fruits on the tree and none on the ground; no seeds, no fruit. You know the squirrels. So, when I called Mr. Mathews he said that he got it at a Bonita Spring Tropical Fruit Club meeting in 2016 as a door prize and subsequently he planted it outside his condominium. Mr. Mathews has agreed for me to take scions in the future for grafting of this very important avocado variety.



## NURSERY NEWS



Anyone interested in learning to graft mangos please bring your potted mango seedlings, and come to the Cornerstone Nursery at 8200 Immokalee Road on Thursday morning at the end of May. Grafting for mangos is done when we are still in the 'dry' season and nighttime temperatures remain consistently above 75 F.



The great opportunity remains for members to obtain free hardwood mulch and manure at the Nursery. Come between 10:00 am and 12:00 noon on Thursday. There may be assistance to help load the mulch into the bed of a pick-up truck or small open top trailer.



Recently there has been an effort to expand the variety of edible plants and fruit trees offered at the next CFG tree sale at Freedom Park scheduled for November 17. Earlier this year African Blue Basel and the native Goji 'Christmas' Berry were propagated for the sale. Anamu (*Petiveria alliacea*), used to reduce inflammation and pain, has now been added to list. Anamu is also believed to provide certain benefits to cancer patients.



Weeding at the nursery is always a challenge, especially now at the 'end of season.' Volunteers are always welcomed to come on Thursdays to help and possibly listen to one of Crafton's stories



Scott Kreuger of the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services reports that two new plant scales found in the Miami-Dade area may be harmful pests:

1. found on palms (canary island date) and ornamentals (careful what you bring to Naples)

[https://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/79840/2332158/Pest\\_Alert\\_-\\_Fiorinia\\_phantasma.pdf](https://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/79840/2332158/Pest_Alert_-_Fiorinia_phantasma.pdf)

2. found on sugarcane

[https://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/79768/2331287/PEST\\_ALERT\\_-\\_](https://www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/79768/2331287/PEST_ALERT_-_)

[A Pulvinaria sp. with morphological similarities to P. bambusicola v1 .pdf](#)

# MAY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Reoccurring every Thursday Cornerstone Nursery and Grove – Volunteer and Grafting Workshop, 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM: 8200 Immokalee Road.

Tuesday 1 Monthly Meeting: Caloosa Rare Fruit Exchange, 7:00 pm, Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council Bldg., 2166 Virginia Ave., Fort Myers.

Tuesday 8 Monthly Meeting: Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club, 6:45 PM Tasting Table, 7:15 PM Program: First United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall, 27690 Shriver Ave., Bonita Springs.

Tuesday 15 Monthly Meeting: Collier Fruit Growers, 7:00 PM Social, 7:30 PM Program: Tree of Life Church, Life Center, 2132 Shadowlawn Drive, Naples.

Tuesday 22 Monthly Workshop: Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club, 6:45 PM: First United Methodist Church, Fellowship Hall, 27690 Shriver Ave., Bonita Springs.

Sunday through Tuesday, June 10 - 12 **The Florida State Horticultural Society** will hold its 131st Annual Meeting at the Renaissance, Ft. Lauderdale, Cruise Port Hotel located at 1617 SE 17th Street in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.

There will be over 100 technical presentations and special sessions with invited speakers, there will also be a welcome reception, extension luncheon, horticultural crops breakfast, and more to network with friends and colleagues. Both members and nonmembers of FSHS may attend. Industry members, growers and students are especially welcome. Scholarships for students to attend are also available. The Annual Meeting features seminars in applied research on citrus, horticultural and agronomic crops and products. New developments and practices by growers, processors, allied industries and others in Florida will be highlighted. Programs from the sections will include presentations about:

Citrus Section: Recommendations to combat citrus HLB, Black Spot, Canker, and other diseases; new varieties; improved cultural practices and technologies to manage insects, plant fertility, irrigation and water quality; and more, and more;

Handling and Processing Section: Packaging, storage, quality and sensory evaluations, evaluation of new cultivars, treatments to extend fresh produce shelf life, new processing techniques, new technologies, and more;

Garden and Landscape Section: Home horticultural practices, development and use of best management practices, characteristics of different plants, landscapes, pests and more;

Krome Section: Avocados, mangoes, ground covers, papayas, edible garden programs, and more;

Vegetable Section: Plasticulture, new varieties, and other improved cultural practices and technologies to manage insects, diseases, plant fertility, irrigation and water quality, and more;

Natural Resources Section: Environmental education, farm to school programs, invasive species, water quality, extension outreach, and more.

Information about the Florida State Horticultural Society, including meeting details, on-line registration and FSHS Membership, is at [fshs.org](http://fshs.org)

Check out the website to get more details and costs for the events, times and special accommodations. <https://fshs.org/meetings> or Contact: [fshs@fshs.org](mailto:fshs@fshs.org)

**Note:** The **UF-IFAC Collier County, Citrus Lecture, given by Dr. Mongi Zekri was cancelled for April 7 and will be rescheduled in the coming months. We will keep CFG members posted as to the future date of this lecture, covering old and new citrus varieties, planting, fertilizing, and management of citrus greening, diseases and insects.**

**Note:** The Lifelong Learning Program at the Naples Botanical Garden has been suspended for the 'off-season' it is due to resume in the fall. Therefore, no lectures have been scheduled in May.





There's a **NEW** Collier Fruit Growers Facebook page:  
[https://www.facebook.com/CollierFruitGrowers/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/CollierFruitGrowers/?ref=br_rs)

CFG Members are encouraged to submit fruit related articles on the page. Your comments are also encouraged. Please LIKE and share our page with your friends. Be sure to LIKE our new page!

**Upcoming Meeting Dates: TUESDAYS,  
June 19<sup>th</sup>, July 17<sup>th</sup>, and NO MEETING IN AUGUST**

The Collier Fruit Growers Inc. (CFG) is an active organization dedicated to inform, educate and advise its members as well as the public, as to the propagation of the many varieties of fruits that can be grown in Collier County. The CFG is also actively engaged in the distribution of the many commonly grown fruits, as well as the rare tropical and subtropical fruits grown throughout the world. CFG encourages its members to extend their cultivation by providing a basis for researching and producing new cultivars and hybrids, whenever possible. CFG functions without regard to race, color or national origin.

**REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!**

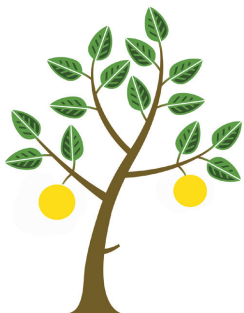
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