



RFCI

October 2016

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL,
INC.

<http://www.rarefruit.org>
Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com
<http://www.facebook.com/TampaBayChapterRareFruitCouncilIntlInc>

Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M.
at the Christ the King Church, 821 S. Dale Mabry,
Tampa

⌘ Upcoming Programs and Events ⌘

**October 8th and 9th: USF Plant Sale, no regular meeting.
See you at the Sale!**



We will need club members to help with this event. It is an important fundraiser for the club. Members are invited to attend, help with set up on Friday, to assist in the sale on Saturday and Sunday, to donate or sell fruiting plants, to enjoy the camaraderie and to visit other exhibits.

If you plan to sell plants, please note that members cannot sell citrus, non-fruiting plants or herbs. Members selling plants must submit a manifest listing their plants and prices. Plants must have a label with the name of the plant, the price and the seller's initials.

November 13th: Cold Protection. Learn about the many ways to beat the cold and protect your valuable fruit trees.

December 11th - Holiday Social

⌘ Welcome New Members ⌘

| | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Billiana Austin | Riverview |
| Sandy Huff | Safety Harbor |
| Ron Phillips | Tampa |
| Joyce Cooper | Clearwater |

President: Sandra Kischuk; Program Manager: Tom Schaefer; Secretary: Jim Porter, Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher; Photographs: Fred Engelbrecht

∞ Growing Your Best Fruits ∞

Rich Johnston

Rich Johnston, of GrowScripts, spoke about products now available to homeowners to help grow the healthiest fruits, especially citrus. GrowScripts has been working with citrus growers and others in the agriculture industry in Florida, developing tools and information to help growers. His philosophy on optimal health in fruit trees is wholistic; treating the whole plant from top to bottom. Drenching the soil and utilizing granular fertilizers are ways of treating the bottom, or the roots of the plant. Foliar sprays applied to the leaves of the plant will balance the process by treating the top.



"We all want Green Thumb success, and we are all nurturers to some degree", says Rich. Growing proactively, rather than reactively is an important part of maintaining optimum plant health and preventing problems before they occur. Adapting commercial schedules for fertilization and disease prevention to the needs and capabilities of homeowners allows the average backyard grower to achieve better success.

In the fight against citrus greening, ensuring nutritional health in the citrus trees, especially the micronutrients, will aid in the battle. Treating top and bottom is especially important, and gives new hope in the battle with the citrus psyllid that spreads the pathogen.

Samples of one of the fruit nursery micronutrient products were handed out at the meeting, as well as information sheets on GrowScripts treatment schedules for citrus, tropical fruits, avocados, peaches, blueberries, and mangoes.

For more information GrowScripts website: <http://www.growscripts.com/>

For more information on the Bayer Fruit, Citrus & Vegetable Insect Control product, the one in the blue bottle, readily available at most big box stores:

<https://www.bayeradvanced.com/find-a-product/insects-pests/fruit-citrus-vegetable-insect-control>

🌸 Garden Spotlight 🌸

Text and Photos by Denise Provencher

This is the second in a series of articles that will describe visits to the gardens of members who are opening their gardens for other members to visit and to enjoy a wonderful opportunity to learn more about growing fruits in the Tampa area.



You know you've arrived at Paul Zmoda's garden, named Flatwoods Farms, when you see the giant dragonfruit plant smothering an old tree stump at the entrance to the driveway. This cactus is so big it can be seen on satellite pictures. Also of note in the front yard of this home are the two pindo palms, the ones that produce those ever so delicious golden fruits that Paul brings in. The fruits were just finishing their season when I came to do the

tour, or for sure I would have asked for some. A nice hedge of *camellia sinensis*, the camellia that is used to make tea, also lined the front lawn. If you visit in spring, flowering plums and other shrubs put on a colorful display.

Everything here Paul planted himself over the eighteen years he has gardened here. He considers himself a pioneer, trying new and unusual plants from unexpected locations around the world. As we walked towards the back yard, this is where the action really begins. Here is a mini experimental station. There are trays of starts; from seed, from cuttings, or from graft. There are air layerings on various branches. Much trial and experimentation goes on here. The 1000' square foot vegetable garden was resting for the summer, but there are so very many other plants to look at. Over time, the land has slowly been cleared from its wooded state to allow more room for planting and experimenting.

Grapes are of great interest to Paul, he considers himself a grape fanatic. If you are interested in learning about the culture of grapes, the finer points of many different varieties, or even about the science of making wine, then this is a must see. Paul has been making wine since 1972, and has won medals for his wine, so certainly this is a topic where he can consider himself quite knowledgeable. There are wired rows of many types of grapes, some heavy with fruit. The many varieties were bred here in Florida for use in Florida. Paul pointed out the Il Primo, a grape often mentioned in his "What's Happening" articles in the newsletter. He considers this his best grape. It's all purpose, disease free with no spraying required, and very prolific. The vines were heavy with the tasty fruit. There were many varieties of grapes in fruit, with colors including red, purple or green. A variety with pointy ends to the fruit lines one row, bunches of fruit hanging in abundance all along the vine. There is even a grape from Portugal used for making Madeira wine.



One challenge in growing grapes is the occurrence of Crown Gall disease. This causes gnarly growths along the vine, killing sections of it. These sections must be pruned out.

A variety of other fruits can be used to make wine other than grapes, and Paul points out that any fruit used for wine can be used for making vinegar as well. He can explain the chemistry involved in creating a

wine or vinegar. The number of fruits that can be used is rather surprising.



There is also a plethora of persimmons, including a very lush, healthy one from Russia. Another hails from New Hampshire. Paul loves zone bending, and is finding there are some plants from cold areas that actually can adapt to hotter zones. He also has a "cocktail" persimmon with 6 varieties grafted onto one tree. The Texas black persimmon that has been a topic in the newsletter is now a large shrub. Because the shrub was a male, female scions had to be grafted onto it to get fruit. This was a long project. Another interesting persimmon project involves grafting a scion of the Texas black, which has tiny leaves, onto a variety of persimmon with larger

leaves, creating a bit of an oddity. See the picture.

Many good size olive trees adorn the yard. Arbequina is the best performer. Others are proving their place. There is a pomegranate section. An absolutely enormous pink fruited lilly pilly tree shaded one area of the garden with its very dense canopy. An ice cream bean tree nearby is just showing beans. A kumquat from Israel has fruits the size of chicken eggs.

Part of the rear yard is quite moist at times, and jaborcaba thrives here, along with wild Dewberry, bramble berries, mulberry, and pond apple. Mayhaw, another moisture lover native to the South is growing very well.

Many other fruits adorn the yard, a GAC vine, a curry tree, starfruit, longans, guavas, sugar apple, white sapote, and atemoya. There are paw-paws from seed obtained at a pawpaw conference several years ago. A jackfruit tree was loaded with fruit. Even a vanilla vine creeps up a protected west wall.

A self-fertile pecan and a chestnut needing a pollinator are some of the nut trees. There is also an air-layered macadamia.

There are still citrus in this yard. The Meyer lemon and Mineola are still looking good as they are showing some resistance to greening. Others may be facing removal.

A mango grows in the backyard. There is a wooden frame around it that a protective covering can be placed over in the danger of freeze. A tender soursop in a large container comes inside in the event of cold.

There are many special trees about the property, each with its own story. Each arrived in this garden as a gift or trade from another member, some of who are no longer with us. Their memory lives on here.



Contact Paul to set up a time for visiting his garden and living laboratory. Spend some time learning the important skills of grafting and air layering. Learn about raising grapes in Florida and making wine. Paul does give classes on wine-making. Contact him for more information on when and where he holds these classes.

Paul Zmoda flatwoodsfarm@aol.com, or 813-677-5985.

☞ What's Happening ☞

by Paul Zmoda

In August, I took up Tom Schaefer's invitation to tour the property of the late RFCI member, Ed Musgrave. I hadn't been there in years. The area was very overgrown, but some fruit trees were still there as I remembered them. Other trees were somewhat a surprise to see, like a mountain soursop, *Annona montana*, which is more cold hardy and not to be confused with the 'true' soursop - *Annona muricata*.

I collected some budwood from a large black sapote tree, with the goal of grafting them onto some American persimmon seedlings. Since they are both in the Diospyros genus, I wondered if the rootstock might A) Impart a few degrees of cold hardiness and B) allow the grafted tree to be planted in our wet orchard, (if successful). After five weeks, the scions are sprouting and looking good.

A colleague, Craig Hopworth, encouraged me to do this after his successful approach with grafts using the same species.

I harvested our very first Jackfruits. One, 19.8 pounds, another 9.2 pounds.

Some of our grape trellis wires failed. They just snapped and gave way during some moderate wind. This green plastic coated wire is worthless. Don't buy it. I re-strung most of our vineyard with #16 gauge galvanized wire.

One lonely Ilama fruit matured and we got to taste it. Sweet and somewhat drier than a sugar apple, it was nevertheless appreciated.

Our seedling longan tree gave up more than 50 pounds of fruit. Last year we got 27 pounds. Most were sold to area markets.

New plantings: fig, bananas, tea, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, shallots.

☞ September Tasting Table ☞



This is a sampling of the wonderful offerings at the buffet table. Thank you to the following folks for their tasty offerings and to all those who did not sign the sheet. Members who donate food receive a ticket for the plant raffle.



| Name | Item | Name | Item |
|----------|---------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|
| Schaefer | Bananas | Vega | Pollo |
| Premraj | Basmati rice, red beans, coconut milk | Zmoda | Starfruit |
| Zmoda | Longans | Badger | Pineapple fluff |
| Clarke | Turkey enchiladas | Chinnery | Green bean casserole |
| Karl | Wildfire vegi mix | Trongas | Potato salad |
| Hartzler | Carrot pasta salad | Krotz | Grape salad |
| Sweet | Pulled pork/french bread | Sweet | Pecan |
| Payne | Sausage w/veggies | Davies | Meatballs/ziti |
| Frase | Cookies | Lavalette | Fried noodles |
| Kischuk | Blue chips/salsa, avocado dip | Galang | longans |



☞ September Plant Raffle ☞

Here is sampling from the plant raffle table. Thank you to everyone who brought in plants to share at the raffle.



| Plant | Donor | Winner |
|------------------------|------------|-----------|
| Pineapple | Schaefer | Payne |
| Pineapple | Schaefer | Porquini |
| Banana | Coronel | |
| White sapote grafted | Coronel | |
| Red guava | Vega | |
| Culantro | Vega | |
| Hot pepper | Vega | |
| Cuban oregano | Vega | Erwin |
| Sugar cane | Vega | |
| Purple passion fruit | Soylu | |
| Papaya | Drakes | |
| Jackfruit | Provencher | |
| White mallow | Provencher | |
| Kopsia | Provencher | |
| Red sugar apple | Sweet | Highfield |
| Dwarf cavendish banana | Sweet | |
| Red sugar apple | Sweet | Williams |
| Tabebuia | Krotz | |
| Beautyberry | Hartzler | |
| Dutchman's pipe | Hartzler | |
| Hot pepper | Male | Davies |

☞ In the News ☞



In April of 2016, a new and very troublesome whitefly, referred to as a "Q-biotype" (*Bemisia tabaci*) was found in Florida. This whitefly is very resistant to pesticides, and is a serious threat to crops. This fly has been found in Palm Beach, Duval, Broward, Highlands, Hillsborough, Martin, Pinellas, and Seminole counties. There are over 600 plants it will host, and at least 111 different plant viruses is it capable of spreading. It is now being found in homeowners' landscapes.

Many fruits and vegetables are affected: tomatoes, peppers, squash, beans, watermelons, as well as hibiscus, lantana, and crossandra plants.

What to look for: tiny, white, gnat-like insects on plants, usually on the underside of leaves. Shake the plant, and they will fly up around the plant. You may see black mold on the tops of the leaves, created by these sapsucking insects. Wash the plant with a good stream of water.

What can the homeowner do to help stop the spread?

Don't transport infested plants or clippings. Securely bag infested material and dispose in trash. Treat infested plants.

How to manage: Use an insecticidal soap or horticultural oil sprayed once a week for 3 - 4 weeks. Repeat as needed. Direct the spray to the underside of the leaves. When used as directed, these sprays are least-toxic to you, to beneficial insects, and to the environment. For larger trees, systemics can work for a long time, or the services of a professional company may be required.

For more information:

<http://mrec.ifas.ufl.edu/lso/bemisia/bemisia.htm>

PDF]THE Q-BIOTYPE WHITEFLY, a New Whitefly in Florida

stlucie.ifas.ufl.edu/pdfs/Environmental%20Hort/2016/qbiotype.pdf

THE Q-BIOTYPE WHITEFLY, a New Whitefly in Florida. A guide for homeowners.

∞ Local Events ∞

Oct 15th - Annual Plant, Antique and Craft Sale, Palma Sola Gardens,
9800 17th Ave NW, Bradenton, 8am - 5pm, 941-761-2866

Oct. 22nd - Garden Extravaganza at Munn Park, Lakeland, 8 - 3 Free More than 50 vendors, plants, fruit trees, food and fun. 201 East Main. For more information 863-370-4065

Nov. 19th and 20th - Edison and Ford Winter Estates and Public Gardens - Free - Annual garden market with all kinds of plants, food, garden art, honey, and gardening supplies. Many unique tropical heritage plants available. 239-334-7419

∞ Club Notes ∞

Tom Schaefer has recently volunteered his time to tend to the fruit trees and weed the Memorial Garden at USF Botanic Gardens. If you haven't visited yet, make sure you stop by while at the Plant Sale.

We welcome your submissions for the newsletter, pictures, notes of interest, events in your area, tips you've tried or learned that you would like to share with others, or questions about growing fruits - please send them to bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com

Submissions for the next newsletter due by: October 22nd.



The objectives of The Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Council International:

To inform the public about the merits and uses of fruits common to this region and encourages the cultivation, collection, propagation and growth of fruits that are exotic or unusual to west central Florida. The club also encourages the development of new fruit varieties, cooperating with local and foreign agricultural agencies.

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