



# Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society

*Affiliate of the International Palm Society*

Monthly Update

October 2011

**FEATURED THIS MONTH: *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis***



**FRONT COVER AND ABOVE: Sixteen year-old *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis* growing in the Beck garden.**

*(Photos by Charlie Beck)*

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VISIT US AT [palmbeachpalmcycadsociety.com](http://palmbeachpalmcycadsociety.com)

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**Featured this Month: *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis***  
 by Charlie Beck

*Beccariophoenix madagascariensis* is a large, solitary, monoecious palm native to Madagascar. Its pinnate fronds grow 16 feet long and its stem can reach 40 feet in height. Young leaves display windows in the distal position of the leaf blade. The fronds have very short petioles and the stems display tightly woven brown fiber around the leaf bases. Inflorescences emerge from torpedo shaped peduncular bracts.

*B. madagascariensis* was first described in 1915. In the mid 1980s *B. madagascariensis* was considered extinct. It was rediscovered in the late 1980s. It was found in two distinct areas with less than 20 individuals at each location. Since that time seeds of this palm have been distributed worldwide to palm enthusiasts. Because of its restricted distribution in Madagascar, this

palm's conservation status is listed as critical. The southernmost location in Madagascar where this palm occurs is actually outside the tropics. This area is subtropical and the soil in this area is white sand. This similarity of habitat with Palm Beach County makes *B. madagascariensis* an excellent choice for our gardens.

We have a single large specimen of *B. madagascariensis* planted in our garden. It has grown at a steady pace. I would not consider this a fast growing palm. In 16 years the stem measures 14 feet tall. The stem measures 19 inches in diameter at waist height but flares to 29 inches diameter at ground level. The leaves measure 15 feet long, but its upright growth pattern yields a smaller footprint. Our palm is planted on the fringe of our irrigation system so growth rate would

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**GROWING CONDITIONS IN THE BECK GARDEN  
 FOR *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis***

Location	4 miles from ocean in suburban Lantana
Soil	Sand over a layer of hardpan (pineland flatwood habitat)
Irrigation	¾ inch applied twice a week
Fertilization	4 times a year with Palm special analysis
Light	Full sun (partial shade when young)
Micronutrient Deficiencies	None
Insect Damage	None observed
Cold Hardiness	No damage observed
Hurricane Resistance	Untested

# Palm &

## **ANNUAL FALL SALE at Mounts Botanical Garden**

**Saturday October 8  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

**Sunday October 9  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Over 500 Species of Palms &  
Cycads in all Shapes and Sizes!**

**ALSO - Books, T-shirts  
& Free Knowledgeable Advice**

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**561-386-7812**

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

### **GENERAL MEETING**

**Date:** Wednesday, October 5, 2011  
**Time:** 7:30 p.m.  
**Location:** Mounts Botanical Garden  
**Speaker:** Murray Corman  
**Subject:** Montgomery Botanical Garden/Florida Nursery Growers and Landscape Association (FNGLA) Seedbank

### **EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING**

**Date:** Wednesday, October 26, 2011  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Ruth Sallenbach's Home  
6285 S. Military Trail, Lake Worth  
(561) 965-5430

### **Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society Membership**

Be sure to keep your membership up to date. It will insure that you receive all Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society communications. Annual membership is \$25 per person per year and membership runs from January 1 to December 31. Membership can be renewed by sending payments to the Society at P.O. Box 21-2228, Royal Palm Beach, FL 33421.

Thank you for your support of the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society. We hope to see you at all of our general meetings which take place on the first Wednesday of every month at Mounts Botanical Garden in West Palm Beach. Be sure to watch for information regarding our field trips, special activities, and palm and cycad shows and sales.

If you have questions about membership, you can contact Tom Whisler, our Membership Chairman, at [whisler.tom@synthes.com](mailto:whisler.tom@synthes.com)

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probably be increased if it was planted in the center of the zone. It is also planted in a high area not prone to inundation during times of heavy rainfall.

A distinctive feature of this palm is that the leaflets unfurl as they emerge from the bud so no spear leaf is ever apparent on this palm. The scale of this palm is similar to a coconut palm. It would be a good substitute for a coconut if lethal yellowing and large falling fruit is a concern. The 2004-2005 hurricanes did not affect our specimen but it was not tall enough then to truly be tested.

Many of the palms of Madagascar are difficult to grow in



Palm Beach County. *B. madagascariensis* is one which is well adapted to our growing conditions. It has survived our recent record cold winters with no effect and with regular fertilization and irrigation has never shown any nutritional deficiencies. This striking palm would be a great addition to your garden.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### MEMBERS ONLY HOLIDAY PARTY AND ANNUAL PLANT GIVE-AWAY

Wednesday, December 7, 2011

7:00 P.M.

At Mounts Botanical Garden

Look for a list of the spectacular palms purchased by the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society for give-away in the November newsletter.

## THIS MONTH'S "THANK YOU"

### PLANT DONATIONS

Betty Ahlborn  
Steve Garland  
Mike Harris  
David McLean  
Ted Sheldon

### MEETING REFRESHMENTS

Charlie Beck  
Ed Napoli  
Angie Peacock  
Sue Pepler  
Tom Ramiccio

### SEPTEMBER DOOR PRIZE WINNERS

Kathy Burger won a bag of Nutriccoat fertilizer.

### SPECIAL THANKS

to

**Lew Burger**

for arriving at 5:00 p.m. to keep the Mounts building open for us.

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ed Brown  
Larry Krauss

## MEMBERSHIP SALE FOR NEW MEMBERS

As Membership Chair, it is my pleasure to announce a **MEMBERSHIP SALE** for the Palm Beach Palm and Cycad Society. New members can join now and receive a membership for the remainder of 2011 and 2012 – all for the price of one year’s membership of \$25.00. That’s right, \$25 for the remainder of 2011 and all of 2012! The sale includes 2 summer picnics, 2 end-of-year holiday parties where we have fantastic palm give-aways, the monthly newsletter, monthly palm and cycad auctions and all the great information you receive at our monthly meetings. Don’t delay ... tell all your friends to join now or give them the membership form included in this newsletter.

Tom Whisler



### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member  Renewal

Please send the annual individual membership fee of \$25 payable to the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society, to:

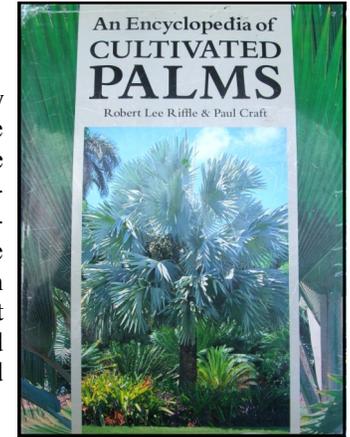
Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society  
 P.O. Box 21-2228  
 Royal Palm Beach, FL 33421  
 Attn: Membership Chairman

Membership runs from January 1 through December 31. Membership includes the monthly newsletter and receipt of free palms and cycads at the annual plant give-away in December.

FOR PALM SOCIETY USE ONLY				
\$	Check No.		Year	

## BOOK SALE

*An Encyclopedia of Cultivated Palms* by Robert E. Riffle and Paul Craft (founder of the Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society) can be purchased for \$50 (42% discount from Amazon’s list price). This is the most comprehensive worldwide palm reference book. The value of this book continues to increase and sells in excess of \$100 on most websites that offer it for sale. You may purchase this book, and many others, at any Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society meeting.



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**Juvenile *Beccariophoenix madagascariensis*  
displaying windows in the distal portion of leaf blade.**

*(Photograph contributed to the Palm & Cycad Societies of Australia website (<http://pacsoa.org>) by Tom Turner and reprinted with permission of PACSOA.)*



Palm Beach Palm & Cycad Society  
P.O. Box 21-2228  
Royal Palm Beach, FL 33421



***Beccariophoenix madagascariensis* stem flare of 16 year - old specimen in the Beck garden. (Photo by Charlie Beck)**