A JOURNEY TO AN ORCHID PARADISE
The Shop
AT FAIRCHILD

gardening supplies | unique tropical gifts | tropical gourmet foods
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books on tropical gardening, cuisine and more
FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

E
very gardener loves the spring. At Fairchild it’s a time when the clear blue skies are
accented by the colors of flowering trees, jade vines, vandas and the other beauties of
the tropical world. Springtime always conjures up images of budding plants and new
growth. It is, therefore, rather timely that this spring I have the privilege of introducing
Fairchild’s new Director, Dr. Carl Lewis.

Carl is a Cornell-trained botanist. He is a world expert in palm biology and genetics and is a
co-author of the recently-published Genera Palmarum, the authoritative reference on palms.
Carl also is imbued with the Fairchild ethic having begun his tenure at Fairchild in 2001 as a
research scientist. Since that time he has worked to strengthen Fairchild’s scientific programs
as well as enhancing the value of its plant collections as a horticulturist. Carl is uniquely
qualified to be our new Director as his experience cuts across many areas which are central to
our mission including education, plant exploration, molecular biology, conservation and
horticultural science. He is credited with introducing new plant species to Fairchild, building a
DNA bank of rare plants from throughout the world, developing a guide to growing palms
(www.fairchildgarden.org/palmguide) and collaborating with scientists worldwide to
understand the evolution and taxonomy of palms. His research projects have been honored by
grants from the National Science Foundation, the Institute of Museum and Library Services and
the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He has also published dozens of papers in prestigious
scientific journals and delivered presentations at scientific conferences around the world.
This is quite a list of achievements for such a young man.

Having read Carl’s credentials you can understand why he was the unanimous choice to be
Fairchild’s Director. He got a great head start for this position since he has been preparing for it
for a long time. When Carl was 12 years old, his mother gave him Garden Islands of the Great
East, Dr. David Fairchild’s fascinating recollection of his plant explorations. Upon reading this
book, Carl decided that he, too, would be a plant explorer. As the dream of a young boy grew
and blossomed into the passion of a man, Carl remained committed to exploring some of
the most remote areas of the world and looking for new and exciting tropical plants and palms.
He also fondly recalls the excitement he felt upon reading Dr. Fairchild’s book and wants to
inspire kids to be future scientists and explorers. The breadth of Carl’s passions: his commitment
to the legacy of Dr. Fairchild and his focus on conservation science will help guide Fairchild for
years to come.

At Fairchild we have been fortunate to have had a number of great Directors. Each brought a
unique and varied skill set that helped establish our garden as the leader of tropical horticulture,
conservation and education. Now we have the benefit of promoting one of our own scientists,
who also happens to already be world famous. We know what we have in Carl, and we are
very excited about our future path. It is a path that will take us to new opportunities, new ideas
and new growth, while all the while being mindful of our unique history and legacy. You may
be sure that we will work toward expanding our work in connecting plants with people, helping
conserve habitats, exploring remote ecosystems of the world and inspiring a passion for science
in children.

It truly is a wonderful spring at your garden. All of our dreams are flowering and bearing fruit.

Best regards,

Bruce W. Greer
Spring is a momentous time at Fairchild. As warmth and rain return to our Garden, we find ourselves surrounded by fresh new growth and breathtaking floral displays. We are continually amazed by the beauty and diversity of the tropics. As we watch Fairchild’s collections and activities grow, we are reminded of the growing community of members, trustees, volunteers, and staff who make it all possible.

In this issue you will find news of two exciting ways Fairchild’s activities are expanding. We are proud to announce plans for the Paul and Swanee DiMare Science Village and the Dr. Jane Hsiao Tropical Research Labs. The Science Village and Tropical Labs, slated to open in 2011, will be a showcase for our world-renowned science and conservation work. We are also announcing the Kushlan Bird Conservation Program, established through a gift from ornithologist Dr. James A. Kushlan. Through this program we are using Fairchild’s habitats to conserve birds within our urban environment.

At our third annual International Chocolate Festival, more than 12,500 visitors experienced the magic of one of the world’s most treasured rainforest crops. The seventh annual International Orchid Festival, a blend of art, education, beauty, horticulture, science, and music, was also enjoyed by tens of thousands of visitors. This issue of *The Tropical Garden* has an article on the first Chinese orchid preserve, which was announced at the Orchid Festival by our own Research Ecologist, Dr. Hong Liu. We expanded our lineup of festivals with the Food and Garden Festival, a combination of home gardening, award winning chefs, healthy food, and family fun.

Every day in the Garden you will find scientists studying our plant collections, school-age children learning about the natural world, spectacular plants, peaceful vistas, monumental art, melodic music, and expert horticulturists. I invite you to visit Fairchild to see all the ways in which we are growing. There is no better place to enjoy springtime.

I am honored to serve as Director of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden at such an exciting time. Our conservation work has never been more important, and our education and outreach programs are a uniquely powerful force in our local community. Along with our members, volunteers, trustees, and staff, I hope we can continue to share our passion for plants and the tropical world.

Best regards,

Carl E. Lewis, Ph.D.
JEFF WASIELEWSKI is a marketing and multi-media associate for Fairchild where he works as a writer, webmaster and videographer. He holds a master’s degree in education from the University of Miami, is a certified arborist and loves the plants and natural areas of South Florida. Jeff is also an adjunct professor at Miami Dade College where he teaches horticulture. His greatest joy is exploring the natural world around him with his 8-year-old daughter Samantha.

DR. HONG LIU joined Fairchild’s Center for Tropical Plant Conservation in August 2008, as a research ecologist. She also has a joint appointment as an assistant professor at the Department of Environmental Studies, Florida International University, where she teaches restoration ecology and invasive species ecology. She has a wide range of research experiences and interests in fields that are directly or indirectly related to conservation biology. The conservation ecology of orchids is a new and exciting research area for her.

AMY BUTLER is a writer and editor for Fairchild, and she was also Fairchild’s former marketing manager. Amy is graduate of Drake University with a B.A. in journalism and mass communication. Currently, she lives in the Chicagoland area with her husband, Matt, and son, Liam. Amy adores flowering plants, and she is looking forward to planting a large garden this spring.

DR. JAVIER FRANCISCO-ORTEGA has a joint appointment between Florida International University (FIU) and Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and is the Head of Fairchild’s DNA laboratory. Dr. Francisco-Ortega joined FIU and Fairchild in 1999 as an Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences, and he is currently an Associate Professor. During his tenure with Fairchild, Dr. Francisco-Ortega has supervised nine graduate students and conducted research on biodiversity conservation and systematics of plants from tropical and subtropical islands. He has developed several research and educational projects in the West Indies, Galapagos Islands, Hawaiian Archipelago, Hainan Island, Macaronesia, Socotra and South Florida.
THE CARL CAMPBELL TROPICAL FRUIT LIBRARY

Dr. Carl W. Campbell was known worldwide for his incredible depth of tropical fruit knowledge. He traveled to over 25 countries to impart his wisdom on fruit such as the carambola, the guava, the sapodilla and the mango. Dr. Campbell’s knowledge came from his tremendous experience, his stellar education and his vast collection of books and journals.

After his death in November 2006, his family donated his collection of books and journals to Fairchild’s Tropical Fruit Program to form the basis of the Carl Campbell Tropical Fruit Library. The library, housed at the Fairchild Farm at Williams Grove, contains over 400 volumes of books dedicated to tropical fruit, as well as complete sets of the Journal of the American Society for Horticultural Science, the Florida State Horticultural Society Proceedings and HortScience. The books have been carefully catalogued by Fairchild’s expert librarian Nancy Korber and can be viewed by the public by appointment. The collection contains impossible to find treasures, such as the Manual of Tropical and Subtropical Fruits, by Wilson Popenoe, a true bible of the fruit world, and Jorge Leon’s Botanica de los Cultivos Tropicales, a tropical fruit classic written entirely in Spanish.

Fairchild’s Curator of Tropical Fruit, Noris Ledesma, remembers her dear friend as, “A very honorable man, and he valued the simple things in life: his family, his plants and his books. Carl asked me to promise that I would take care of his books and make them available to others.” One look at the library and you can see that she has fulfilled that promise and more.

To visit the Carl Campbell Tropical Fruit Library or to make a financial donation to strengthen the collection, please contact Bill Shade at 305.663.8051 or e-mail bshade@fairchildgarden.org.

The Carl Campbell Tropical Fruit Library was made possible thanks to generous donations by: Peter and Denise Schnebly, Jeremy and Jennifer Davit, Frank DeLaurier and Nannette Zapata, Anibal and Phyllis Oreamuno, Bob and Patty McNaughton, Angela Whitman, Aleksandra Nozewnik, Susan Lustbader, Martha Kent, Dr. and Mrs. Popenoe and Steve Pearson.

THE LATIN AMERICAN PLANTS INITIATIVE

Fairchild recently attended the Second Annual Latin American Plants Initiative meeting held in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The meeting brought together representatives from over 93 leading botanical institutions from around the world to speak about one of the most scientifically significant and globally important plant conservation initiatives on earth. The goal of the multiple-year initiative is to centralize an enormous amount of high-resolution plant specimen images onto a single Web site so that scholars, researchers, conservationists and students from around the world will be able to conduct critical plant-related research via this online resource.

Today, people who want to conduct such research generally must visit an herbarium (a kind of plant museum) in-person or have the fragile specimens air-mailed to them. Soon, the LAPI project will enable researchers and scholars from around the world to gain access to the plant images and data they need to go about many aspects of their work online. This is a monumental task that entails the cooperation of hundreds of institutions from countries all over the globe, and Fairchild has the honor of acting as coordinator of the Caribbean region within this initiative.

FIU-FAIRCHILD GRAD STUDENT RECEIVES NSF SUPPORT TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH IN CHINA

Our FIU-Fairchild graduate student Brett Jestrow has a broad interest in botany. The topic of his Ph.D. study is the plants endemic to Caribbean Islands; however, with our scientists developing strong ties with Chinese colleagues, Brett has started down a new avenue in China. He was recently awarded a prestigious grant from the National Science Foundation East Asia and Pacific Summer Institutes for Graduate Students to conduct research at the Yachang Orchid Nature Preserve (Guangxi Province) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Beijing).

Brett will spend two months this summer in China, and his study aims to investigate the population genetics of the orchid, Cymbidium cyperifolium. The project is being supervised by our FIU-Fairchild faculty Dr. Hong Liu and by Dr. Yi-Bo Luo from the Chinese Academy of Sciences. An article by Dr. Liu on the orchid preserve where Brett will conduct his field studies is found in this issue of The Tropical Garden. Congratulations to Brett and Hong for expanding our international research and educational activities in the Far East.
FOR WHOM... MAKES A SHOWING AT FAIRCHILD

In January, Fairchild installed an exciting new art piece entitled For Whom..., by Belgian artist Kris Martin. Generously on loan to Fairchild from Ms. Adrienne Arsht, the bell was originally installed in 1929 in a Belgian church. During World War II, the bell was stolen from the church and taken to Germany, where it was later rediscovered in the 1950s. The bell was returned to its original location in Belgium, where it was in use until August 2, 1971, when, during a requiem—or mass for the dead—a slight and nearly invisible crack occurred. Martin obtained and removed the bell from the church.

The bell is made out of solid bronze, weighs nearly four tons and hangs from a steel construction at a height of 20 feet. The pendulum-free bell is driven by a soundless magnetic motor.

FERNANDO BOTERO’S BEAUTIFUL BRONZES

Along with other works of art, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden opened Botero at Fairchild last January, featuring eight monumental works by famed Latin American master Fernando Botero. Known for his bronze pieces that portray rotund figures with exaggerated proportions, Botero’s sculptures are on loan from Gary Nader Fine Art, a Miami gallery that specializes in Latin American, modern and contemporary art.

“We are thrilled to share the work of such a celebrated artist,” said Bruce Greer, Fairchild’s President of the Board of Trustees. “South Florida has a particular affection for Latin American art, and Botero is among the best.”

Some of Botero’s bronze sculptures reach more than 14 feet high, and portraying the artist’s signature corpulent human and animal figures. Pieces from this exhibition have been shown in the world’s major art centers, including Paris, Tokyo and Madrid.

Botero at Fairchild is currently on display and will run through May 31, 2009.

STANDING GORILLA

Realistic representation made a comeback in the 1970s, and one result was the estimable career of American modern sculptor Daisy Youngblood. Ms. Youngblood, a North Carolina native who now lives in Costa Rica, won the prestigious John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship “Genius Grant” in 2003 for her exquisitely sensitive, usually small ceramic or bronze sculptures of animals and human spiritual gurus.

As part of Art at Fairchild, Fairchild is exhibiting the bronze, half-life-size sculpture of “Standing Gorilla,” 2002. The gorilla, in a dance-like stance, is a meditation on muscular masculinity.

This magnificent sculpture is a generous gift of David and Renée McKee.
Planting the seeds of quality healthcare

South Florida is a place where beautiful things grow. It’s a place where the roots of the community are deep.

Baptist Health has grown with the community. With a reputation for great care, we score more than twice as high as other hospitals in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties in quality measures compiled by the U.S. government.

We’ve planted the seeds of quality healthcare so that our neighbors can reap the benefits — today, and in the future.

Baptist Health South Florida

Committed to our faith-based charitable mission of medical excellence

For a free referral to a Baptist Health physician, call 786-596-6557, weekdays, 8 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Or, if you prefer, go online 24/7 at www.baptisthealth.net.
Fairchild’s annual giving program provides support for our critical work in tropical plant conservation, tropical science and research, horticulture and education.

Fairchild’s education programs reach more than 45,000 students annually, and with your help, we could reach even more students and help them learn about the importance of science and environmental stewardship, as well as experience Fairchild, one of the few remaining green spaces in Miami. Our scientists are saving native plants right here in South Florida. On an international scale, Fairchild is working with over 20 partners worldwide on conservation studies and wildlife management plans. And, we are your community garden—a place of beauty and connection with nature.

But we need your help! Please take a moment and support the vital work of Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. It’s simple. Please send your gift in the enclosed envelope or you can call 305.667.1651, ext. 3377 or give online at www.fairchildgarden.org.
n the last issue of The Tropical Garden, we took a tour of a small part of our Arboretum, starting at the Visitor Center and walking through the Vine Pergola. This time we’ll back track a bit to the center of the Vine Pergola. Blooming off and on until April, the Strongylodon macrobotrys (jade vine) is not to be missed. The clusters of stunning jade green flowers drape down both the inner and outer supports of the Pergola. Native to the Philippines where it grows in rainforests, our jade vine was planted in 1995 during the restoration of the Vine Pergola after Hurricane Andrew.

Continue south along the Pergola and almost at the end you may see the Tecomanthe dendrophiila (New Guinea trumpet creeper) in flower. Selected as Plant of the Year for 2006 by the horticulture staff, this vigorous vine has an unusual habit of flowering on its old stems. It was planted in 1999, and it has grown to be a mass of twining stems that produce flowers from hardly visible buds along their lengths.

As you emerge from the shade of the Pergola, almost straight ahead you’ll see one of our oldest plants, Holmskioldia sanguinea (Chinese hat plant). This massive shrub has grown into one large plant from four individuals planted in 1939. The small flowers have a distinctive red-orange hue, and each one is comprised of a disk-shaped calyx and a tubular corolla. Hummingbirds can’t resist this flower!

Moving along the tram road toward the giant baobab tree, a large multi-trunked tree will catch your eye to the left. Pseudobombax ellipticum (shaving brush tree) is covered with large pink flowers at this time of year. Each flower has dozens of long stamens bursting from curled back petals. Blooming on the branches before the leaves appear, they open in the evening and by midday are carpeting the ground. Col. Robert Montgomery, one of our founders, gave the larger of the two specimens in Plot 26 to Fairchild in 1942. The other specimen was planted in 1939, when the garden was just starting to be planted.

Tucked back in the Arboretum in Plot 47 is Stemmadenia litoralis (Milky Way tree). This is a tree worth seeking out. It is in the Apocynaceae family along with Plumeria and Adenium (desert rose). The white flowers cover the tree, giving a starry effect, and, as a bonus, emit a delicate fragrance. This small tree native to Mexico and northwestern Colombia can be planted in most South Florida gardens without fear of it becoming too large.

This short tour has brought you close to the tram plaza. From this location, the lowlands area, with the Mark di Suvero sculptures, is easily accessible. Or, just take a stroll through the Arboretum where plants are arranged according to family and also have ornamentals planted between. There is always an interesting plant (or two, or three) waiting to be discovered.
The Fairchild Legacy Society has been established to honor Fairchild’s supporters who have made a planned gift or included a bequest to Fairchild in their wills.

If you or your attorney have any questions about how best to accommodate your estate planning goals with a gift to Fairchild, or for more information about the Legacy Society, please contact Jeremy Davit at jdavit@fairchildgarden.org or 305.663.8077.

Your planned gift ensures Fairchild’s legacy while similarly ensuring yours!
LEAVING A LEGACY

Fairchild is proud to announce that Miami-based biologist, educator and writer, Dr. James A. Kushlan, has endowed a bird conservation program at Fairchild. The James A. Kushlan Bird Conservation Program comes to Fairchild at an important time of conservation program expansion in our garden.

Dr. James A. Kushlan is an expert on colonial waterbird biology and conservation. He is the founding member of the Waterbird Society and founder of Waterbird Conservation of the Americas, and he serves on numerous conservation-based institutional boards. Dr. Kushlan received his doctorate from the University of Miami, and has published numerous scientific articles, as well as co-authored many important books on waterbirds.

Dr. Kushlan, a long-time member of Fairchild, always knew that he wanted to make a lasting gift to Fairchild. He saw Fairchild not only as a world-renowned botanic garden, but also an excellent habitat for birds. Dr. Kushlan said that he wanted to support a local leader who has had demonstrated success in educating the public on conservation topics. Dr. Kushlan also was impressed with Fairchild’s past work and leadership in creating synergistic partnerships with other local conservation institutions.

The James A. Kushlan Bird Conservation Program is a unique biodiversity restoration and education program composed of numerous activities. This program also endows a naturalist to oversee these various activities:

- Interpretation and birding hotspots will educate visitors from the birding novice to experts alike. A brochure that outlines all elements of the Dr. James A. Kushlan Bird Trail will be issued to each Fairchild visitor, and add yet another layer to each guest’s experience at Fairchild. A periodically updated bird checklist will also be included with the brochure.

- Bird boxes and feeders will be placed in strategic locations throughout the garden and James A. Kushlan Bird Trail and will help attract more birds to Fairchild. Plans are also underway to restore certain habitats and lake margin areas in an effort to increase bird diversity and populations at Fairchild.

- In a similar style to Fairchild’s successful Butterfly Days festival, Fairchild will launch a Bird Day Festival to celebrate birds and their conservation. During this festival, visitors will have a chance to join guided tours, participate in children’s activities and attend bird conservation lectures. Conservation-based lectures by well-known and respected conservationists will also be provided throughout the year during the James A. Kushlan Lecture Series.

- All of this ornithological excitement will be available on Fairchild’s Web site. Web pages specifically designed to support our birding programs will be dedicated to increase citizen-science and general bird knowledge. These pages will include information on bird friendly gardening, home gardening and bird conservation. Also, the Web site will allow for visitor interaction in creating bird lists and donating photos of birds taken at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. Here, visitors will also find links to bird conservation organizations and bird citizen-science programs.

- As you can see, the James A. Kushlan Bird Conservation Program is tremendously rich in programs and resources and will add even more importance to Fairchild’s leading conservation work.

Please join us in thanking and congratulating Dr. Kushlan for his generosity and vision for bird conservation in South Florida and beyond for years to come!

GIFT PLANNING AT FAIRCHILD

For more information on gift planning at Fairchild or on the Fairchild Legacy Society, please contact Development Associate Jeremy Davit at 305.667.1651, ext. 3377 or jdavit@fairchildgarden.org.

By Jeremy Davit, Development Associate
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

this spring
AT FAIRCHILD

THROUGH MAY 31, 2009
ART AT FAIRCHILD
A MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE GARDEN
Experience the monumental sculptures of Mark di Suvero,
Fernando Botero, Dale Chihuly,
Kris Martin and Daisy Youngblood.

THURSDAY NIGHTS AT FAIRCHILD
Every Thursday through
May 31, 2009
6:00 – 9:00 p.m. Don’t miss
enjoying Art at Fairchild in its most
romantic setting—the moonlit
garden at night! Live entertainment
is featured weekly.
For a detailed schedule, please visit
www.fairchildgarden.org.

MAY 2009
MEMBERS ONLY DOG DAY
Sunday, May 3, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

MEMBERS’ LECTURE AND WINE
AND CHEESE RECEPTION
Wednesday, May 6
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Jean DuPont Shehan Visitor Center
“Everglades – From the Headwaters
to the Mangroves,” by Clyde
Butcher, Fine Art Photographer

TROPICAL FLOWERING TREE
SOCIETY SALE
Saturday and Sunday
May 9 – 10, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

FAIRCHILD CHALLENGE
AWARDS CEREMONIES
Saturday, May 9
1:00 – 3:00 p.m. (High School)
5:00 – 7:00 p.m. (Middle School)
Tuesday, May 12
5:30 – 6:30 p.m. (Elementary)
Garden House

MOTHER’S DAY BRUNCH
Sunday, May 10
10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Garden House
For reservations please call
305.256.8399.

MOTHER’S DAY TEA
Sunday, May 10, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Jean DuPont Shehan Visitor Center

AMERICAN BOUGAINVILLEA
SOCIETY SALE
Saturday and Sunday
May 16 – 17, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

SOUTH FLORIDA CACTUS &
SUCCULENT SOCIETY SHOW
AND SALE
Friday, Saturday and Sunday
May 22, 23 and 24
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

JUNE 2009
TROPICAL FERN & EXOTIC PLANT
SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE
Saturday and Sunday
June 6 – 7
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

BAMBOO SHOW AND SALE
Saturday and Sunday
June 13 – 14
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

AFTERNOON TEA (TASTE OF ASIA)
Sunday, June 14
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

MEMBERS’ LECTURE AND WINE
AND CHEESE RECEPTION
Wednesday, June 17
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
Jean DuPont Shehan Visitor Center
“Mango Flavors Type: For the Love of Mangos,” by Noris Ledesma,
Curator of Tropical Fruit, Fairchild
Tropical Botanic Garden

FATHER’S DAY BRUNCH
Sunday, June 21
10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Jean DuPont Shehan Visitor Center
For reservations please call
305.256.8399.

JULY 2009
17TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL
MANGO FESTIVAL
Saturday and Sunday
July 11 – 12
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

BUTTERFLY DAYS
Saturday and Sunday
July 25 – 26
9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

AUGUST 2009
FREE admission every Sunday in August.
This schedule of events is subject to change. For more information, please call
305.667.1651. For the latest
schedule and to purchase tickets, visit
www.fairchildgarden.org.
HOMEWORK:

Chocolate pudding fruit conveys a powerful sense of place. Once upon a time, when sugary desserts were rare, a dessert was often ripe fruit served plain. To me, there is no better way to end a meal than with the taste of something fresh, clean and naturally sweet. This happens to be the best way to eat chocolate pudding fruit—eat it fresh or add a few drops of orange juice—it’s just perfect!

Chocolate pudding fruit is sometimes also called black sapote (*Diospyros digyna*). It is a member of the persimmon family and is native to both coasts of Mexico and easily found at Mexican fruit markets. Outside of Mexico, it is cultivated in the Philippines, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Hawaii and Florida. It is a beautiful evergreen tree and can reach a height of 25’ or more at maturity. Because there are both male and female trees when grown from seed, it is preferable to use grafted trees, which can bear fruit within three years.

Chocolate pudding fruit is round and rather flat like a green tomato. The flesh is dark brown or black and has a sweet flavor. It combines perfectly with vanilla flavors. In South Florida, most chocolate pudding fruit ripens from December through March—a time when we have few tropical fruits to enjoy. Chocolate pudding fruit is rich in vitamins A and C, and has a relatively high amount of potassium.

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**VANILLA CHOCOLATE PUDDING FRUIT DESSERT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 cup chocolate pudding fruit, mashed</th>
<th>2 drops of vanilla extract</th>
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The fruit are picked when full size but unripe (olive-green color). Chocolate pudding fruit is soft when fully ripe, after about five days at room temperature. Peel and remove the seeds. Place the pulp in a dessert cup, add the vanilla and serve it chilled by itself. If you prefer something richer, add a few drops of orange juice and whipping cream on top.
Plant Societies

Miami Begonia Society

By Mike Twyford, President, Miami Begonia Society

Diversity is the theme when landscaping or collecting begonias. The Miami Begonia Society offers opportunities to explore and enjoy this diversity through the Society’s monthly meetings and annual Show and Sale held at Fairchild in the Garden House, April 25-26, 2009.

Begoniacs (begonia enthusiasts) have experienced the full spectrum of meeting topics: from making terrariums for delicate species to seeing new, unreleased hybrids for the Miami landscape. We are fortunate to have one of America’s premier begonia hybridizers, Tim Anderson, in our midst. The public is always invited and welcome to join us each month for a program, plant raffle, refreshments and friendly begonia talk. Come and learn more about this intriguing plant group.

Our monthly meetings are held the third Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m., at Tim’s nursery, Palm Hammock Orchid Estate, Inc., 9995 S.W. 66 Street, Miami. For more information, you can also visit our Web site at www.palmhammockorchidestate.net.

CONGRATULATIONS, IKEBANA INTERNATIONAL, MIAMI CHAPTER #131

Fairchild would like to congratulate Ikebana International, Miami Chapter #131, on the occasion of their 40th anniversary. For over 20 of those years, the chapter’s meetings have been held at Fairchild. Ikebana International’s motto is “friendship through flowers,” with its deeper purpose to establish better relationships among all people—a worthy and timeless endeavor. We wish you continued success for many years to come.

The Very Best Landscape Contractor for Your Home or Business.

Signature Landscape Contractors provides design, contracting, installation and maintenance services for upscale residences and savvy businesses.

Owner Keith Lane works closely with landscape architects, landscape designers, homeowners, and business owners. He is also a recognized authority on the care and relocation of specimen tropical trees and palms.

He is available for consultation on projects of all sizes. Keith is known to be a hands-on landscape contractor and grower with broad experience in the specification, installation and maintenance of common and unusual tropical plant materials.

For your next residential or commercial landscaping project why not work with the very best. Call 305-233-3139.

Signature Landscape Contractors and Signature Trees & Palms
15745 SW 232 Street, Miami, Florida 33170. Call (305)233-3139
get numerous calls from homeowners who have a downed staghorn fern in their yard and want to donate it to Fairchild. These folks are anxious for me to realize just how large their donation is. “It’s as big as an elephant’s rump,” someone once told me. Another person gave me an easy visualization by comparing the size of their staghorn to a Volkswagen Beetle. Of course, these ferns have all fallen to the ground after their main support to the tree branch finally gave way. Or perhaps the branch itself gave way owing to the weight of the fern.

In my opinion, these ferns shouldn’t be hanging from a branch. It’s time to attach or mount them directly to the tree. This means separating some, if not all the plantlets that go into making that gigantic mass. It’s really a fairly simple procedure. The end result looks great, not to mention natural and tropical. So, let’s get going.

First, go out and take a good look at the fern, whether it’s on the ground or still hanging from a branch. You will see that the gigantic mass is really made up of a multitude of individual ferns that can be separated. Begin to see each singular plant composed of base fronds, which are green when new, but over time turn mahogany or brown and look like a shield (these are in fact, called shield or base fronds). Then there are the fertile green fronds (foliage or fertile fronds) that project from the base fronds and when mature bear spores. These are the ferns that give the plant its common name, staghorns.

So, the base fronds and fertile fronds compose a plantlet and this is what can be individually separated from the entire mass. Take a knife and insert at the edge of a plantlet, the area around the brown base fronds, and try to work the knife in an inch or two at a slight angle toward the center of the plantlet. Slowly work the knife around the entire plantlet. You should be able to lift some if not all the plantlet away from the mass once you’ve completed the circle. If it doesn’t separate immediately, lift what you can and then continue to cut until you have full separation.

Behind the plant, a fibrous mass of old shield fronds and roots has developed and this is what you probably have to cut through to detach the section from the rest of the plant. It’s good to get an inch or two of this fiber as it acts as a moisture retainer for the plant when you reattach this new section to a tree trunk. A small pad of moist sphagnum moss between the plantlet and the trunk further helps to keep the new plant moist. Hosiery or plastic tape—either will expand and stretch as the tree grows—can be used to secure the new fern section to a tree trunk. The best time to undertake this project is spring or early summer.

Keep recently mounted plants moist. Then step back and enjoy! It’s a beautiful sight. A bottle brush and two palms are hosts for my platyceriums (staghorns).
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A single plant stood out during the Plant of the Year Committee discussions. A tree admirably suited to most South Florida gardens, that doesn’t grow too large or require much care once established, *Stemmadenia litoralis* was chosen as the 2009 Plant of the Year. Fragrant white blooms cover the tree during a long flowering period. The Fairchild specimen is in Plot 47, just northwest of the Tram Plaza. In the Fairchild tradition of making new plants available to the South Florida gardening community, this plant will be offered at our plant sales.

**Stemmadenia litoralis**

**Botanical name:** *Stemmadenia litoralis*

**Family:** Apocynaceae

**Common name:** Milky-way tree, lecheso

**Native to:** Mexico to northwestern Colombia’s coastal plains

**Habit:** Small tree to 20’

**Flower:** White with pale yellow throat, salverform*, fragrant

**Fruit:** Twin yellow, ovoid

**Growing conditions:** Relatively dry, shaded or partially shaded area

**Propagation:** Seed

**Comments:** Requires little irrigation. Salt-tolerant. Flowers in full shade. Milky-way tree is a perfect small tree for Florida landscapes. Not fussy about water or sun, it can be grown in filtered sun or full shade and needs no irrigation once established. Left to branch naturally, it will create a pleasing shape and produce flowers on every branch. The finely textured, light colored bark is an attractive contrast to the deep green leaves. The fragrant flowers begin to appear in late winter or early spring and continue through the summer into the fall. Each linen-white flower has five petals formed in a pinwheel fashion, overlapping in a counter-clockwise direction. The pale yellow throat draws the eye to the heart of this whirl where a star is formed by the joining of the petals. A delicate fragrance surrounds the area near the tree, evoking early-morning freshness.

*Salverform: Of a corolla with a long, slim tube and an abruptly expanded flattened top. From the noun “salver,” meaning “tray.”

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**WISH LIST**

For the Center for Tropical Plant Conservation

- New Pentax Optio W30 camera with standard accessories: $300
- HP Designjet 500 42-inch roll printer (C7770B), including accessories: $3,820
- Seed germination chamber: $8,500
- Canon Digital Rebel 10.1 megapixel SLR camera, lenses and memory cards: $1,000
- Techniques for the Study of Mycorrhiza, Volume 23 (Methods in Microbiology) by J. R. Norris: $230
- Lightweight notebook computer with minimum of 80GB hard drive, 1GB RAM and a DVD read/write drive: $2,000
- Mild-size pick-up truck with king cab and 2-3” gasolene-powered pump: $26,400
- Ultra-cold freezer for the Tropical Plant DNA Bank: $6,000

For the First Virtual Herbarium

- One or more new computers with at least 1 GB memory, 250 GB hard drive, DVD-RW/CD-RW, for scanning and data entry: $400 each

For the Research Library

- Books from Kew, including the Flora of Somalia (4 vol.), the World Checklist & Bibliography of Euphorbiaceae (and Pandaceae), and other monographs on tropical plant families: $1,000

For the Fairchild Tribute Program

- Digital SLR camera with memory card, spare battery pack: $1,500

For the Development Department

- Notebook computer, new, small, lightweight and wireless: $2,000
- Portable LCD projector: $2,000

For the Special Events & Marketing Departments

- Four-passenger golf cart: $4,000
- Permanently installed audio visual system for Visitor Center Ballroom: $3,000
- Fully equipped commercial kitchen for Visitor Center, including stove, dishwasher, refrigerator, freezer, sinks, garbage disposals, cabinets and countertops, flexible work areas and professional installation: priceless

For the Membership Department

- Adobe Creative Suite 4 software, two copies: $2,500
- 1 digital SLR camera, with memory card, battery pack and case: $1,800

For the Education Department

- Panasonic AG-DVC7 camcorder with case: $1,000
- To fully fund a wish, donate a portion of the cost or donate the actual item, please contact Jeremy Davit at 305.667.1651, ext. 3377 or jdavit@fairchildgarden.org.

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**WISH LIST**

**WISH LIST**

For Living Collections and Garden Landscapes

- Cargo van: $23,000
- Walk-behind aerator: $1,500
- Soil mixer for nursery: $6,000
- Notebook and portable LCD projector: $5,000
- Antique coontie grinder: priceless

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Fairchild volunteers are a special group of people. They come from all walks of life and from many different parts of the world. They are united in their love for Fairchild and their desire to help support its mission through hands-on participation in garden programs and activities. From guiding children to growing plants, volunteers play a vital role in everything that takes place in the garden. Fairchild staff recognizes and thanks our fantastic volunteers for the 66,000 hours of time they generously gave in 2008!

Thank you, Fairchild volunteers!
We couldn’t—and wouldn’t want to—do it without you!
On a chilly January morning, a group of Fairchild’s dedicated Conservatory volunteers were happily at work amidst the tropical beauty of spectacular Cattleyas and amaryllis in full bloom and the chocolatey fragrance of a ‘Sharry Baby’ orchid. For these volunteers, every day in the Conservatory brings a different experience as they discover new orchid blooms, watch plants grow from cuttings they have potted or enjoy the delighted reactions of visitors to the frequently changing Conservatory displays.

Under the expert supervision of Conservatory Manager Ken Nugent, Conservatory volunteers have a variety of jobs. Yonna Levine, Susan Lustbader, Stephanie Thorman and Ellen Roth are the “Orchid Ladies” who help to care for Fairchild’s extensive collection of these much-loved plants. Volunteer Shirley Berckmans concentrates on the care of the Conservatory bromeliads. Wally Edelson and Gwen Kujawa search out mealy bug, scale and other bug infestations which threaten the Conservatory plants, while volunteer Juan Valls helps with Conservatory maintenance and other projects.

The Conservatory, originally called the Rare Plant House, was dedicated over 40 years ago in January 1968. From the beginning, the Conservatory’s purpose was both educational and botanical as Fairchild’s leaders sought to introduce visitors to the tremendous diversity of plant life in the tropics. Conservatory volunteers have always been an important part of this history. They are, in fact, one of the longest-running groups of volunteers at Fairchild. Volunteers helped with initial Conservatory plantings, maintained displays and participated in the building of the tree which dominates the epiphyte room. Today’s volunteers enjoy telling visitors that this tree which looks so real is made out of PVC pipe and cork and is used to display plants that normally reside high in the rainforest canopy.

In many other ways, Conservatory volunteers engage visitors in the science behind the beauty or uniqueness of a particular plant. Volunteer Susan Lustbader loved introducing hundreds of curious visitors, many of them children, to the Amorphophallus titanum, or “Mr. Stinky,” which is an enormous crowd-pleaser each time it blooms.

Volunteer Shirley Berckmans had a smelly encounter of another kind when, while working by the waterfall, she came face to face with a recently deceased opossum. Having grown up in the English countryside, she unceremoniously removed it without complaint. Conservatory volunteer work is full of surprises!
On this January morning, volunteers were busy with a variety of chores. The Orchid Ladies cleaned and repotted plants. Stephanie Thorman and Yonna Levine marveled over a large group of rare Catasetum orchids, normally dormant this time of year, getting ready instead to sport a profusion of blooms. Ironically, Yonna, now known for her orchid wisdom, knew nothing about orchids before moving to South Florida and joining the ranks of the Conservatory volunteers in 1995.

Meanwhile, Juan Valls, on a tall ladder, tended to orchids attached to the epiphyte tree, and Wally Edelson, using a finely developed sixth sense to determine which plants needed attention, turned over individual leaves looking for evidence of mealy bug infestation. Wally, a longtime gardener, and Gwen Kujawa, a native of Holland who is just learning about tropical plants, are partners in a battle against these unwelcome visitors. Last summer was particularly challenging with many plants showing signs of bug infestation, but as Wally said, “It’s amazing what a little liquid detergent and water can do to restore lush leaves back to wellness.”

In short, Conservatory volunteers are gardeners and detectives, teachers and caretakers. As volunteer Ellen Roth put it, “People ask how to grow orchids, thinking it’s very difficult. It’s not hard as long as one has patience, a bit of time regularly to care for them and a little love to give them. They respond to the amount of care they receive.”

Fairchild’s Conservatory is a compelling mix of art and science as visitors are introduced to the importance of conservation and research through the beauty and fragrance of diverse tropical plants. Fairchild staff and Conservatory volunteers are partners in this mission. We are truly grateful for the dedication and hard work of our Conservatory keepers!
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Celebrating nature | Cultivating minds | Inspiring action

Learning is at the heart of virtually every program at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. Educational opportunities are available for all ages, including general and specialized audiences, locally and around the world.

For information about our programs, please visit www.fairchildgarden.org.
The Fairchild Challenge is a school program that promotes, provokes and celebrates teenagers’ engagement in environmental issues. Through point-earning competitions in research, art, writing, performance, debate, design, technology, gardening and advocacy, the Fairchild Challenge is clearly leading a green movement in schools everywhere.

The program, developed at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, is currently in its seventh year locally, and engages more than 45,000 students and 2,200 teachers from 141 middle and high schools. Interest in offering the Fairchild Challenge at sites nationally and internationally is also growing rapidly. Thus far, educators from 46 gardens, zoos and museums have been trained to replicate the program in their respective cities. To date, Fairchild Challenge Satellite programs have been launched in north Florida, Illinois, Arizona, Washington, D.C., Utah, Pennsylvania, Costa Rica and Venezuela.

In early February, our most recent trainees visited the garden for our annual Fairchild Challenge Satellite Partners training workshop. This new group included educators from Pasadena (CA), Vail (CO), Sao Paolo (Brazil) and Orlando (FL). Held over two and a half days, the comprehensive workshop provided participants with a thorough understanding of how to initiate and run the Fairchild Challenge at their sites.

The momentum is building for a coordinated Fairchild Challenge movement. Folks from diverse organizations such as the American Horticultural Society, National Environmental Education Foundation, Discovery Education and American Public Garden Association, among others, have indicated they want to play a part in the program’s growth and success. Additionally, others in the field of nature deficit, environmental education and innovative education are self-identifying as ready to help serve on a national and international Task Force for the Fairchild Challenge.

For more information about the Fairchild Challenge, please visit our Web site at www.fairchildgarden.org.

YOUTHCAN MIAMI CONFERENCE

On Tuesday, March 31, environmentally-minded elementary students gathered at Miami Country Day School for the 2009 YouthCaN Miami Conference. Hosted by the Abess Center for Environmental Studies, YouthCaN brought together participants in the Fairchild Challenge Pilot Program for Elementary Schools with students from Miami Country Day School and other local elementary schools.

YouthCaN, a youth run organization, unites environmentally active youth to exchange ideas about the environment and empower others to make a difference in their own communities. Fairchild Challenge schools presented interactive workshops with topics ranging from energy efficiency to the history of pizza gardens. Each school received palm tree seedlings, made herbal vinegars and salad and pizza container gardens. At the end of the inspirational day, all students left with the realization that students do have the power to make a difference.
thursday nights

The Thursday Nights program which began with Fairchild’s first art exhibition, Chihuly at Fairchild, in 2005-2006, not only allows guests the opportunity to explore the garden at night, but also to view the Art at Fairchild sculpture exhibition, featuring the stunning artwork of several internationally acclaimed artists including Mark di Suvero, Kris Martin, Dale Chihuly and Daisy Youngblood.

Thousands of people have turned out to enjoy Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden’s extended evening hours for the hugely popular Thursday Nights at Fairchild program.

The Thursday Nights series offers guests the opportunity to experience the garden during perhaps its most enchanting and bewitching hours. The Thursday Nights program which began with Fairchild’s first art exhibition, Chihuly at Fairchild, in 2005-2006, not only allows guests the opportunity to explore the garden at night, but also to view the Art at Fairchild sculpture exhibition, featuring the stunning artwork of several internationally acclaimed artists including Mark di Suvero, Kris Martin, Dale Chihuly and Daisy Youngblood.

Guests can enjoy exploring the garden on their own, or they can hop on an expertly narrated Starlight Tram Tour at either 7:00 or 8:00 p.m. The program runs every Thursday night through the end of May, and this year Fairchild is featuring various themes for each month. So far visitors have enjoyed some truly decadent chocolate events in January, in conjunction with the annual International Chocolate Festival, and in February, the Starry, Starry Night Month, guests enjoyed outdoor movies such as Moonstruck as well as the chance to gaze at the heavens through the telescopes provided by Miami’s Southern Cross Astronomical Society.

In March, guests enjoyed a delicious and beautiful month of food and flowers at the garden. Highlights included a special preview of the International Orchid Festival.

During the month of April, guests enjoyed a month dedicated to Nature Nights, including a special showing of Hoot, adapted from the award-winning book by local author Carl Hiaasen, on the Shehan Visitor Center Lawn, as well as some guided nocturnal nature walks.

Throughout the month of May enjoy those extra daylight hours and marvel at Fairchild’s spectacular sunsets. Kids will enjoy the sights and sounds of Dr. Murphy’s Dutch street organ, The Waterpoorter, on May 7.

New this year is the Piazza di Stella—an enchanting spot under the stars with a superb vista—where guests can enjoy tapas, a glass of wine and live entertainment. This delightful al fresco Piazza is located in the Shehan Visitor Center, and is open during Thursday Nights at Fairchild, as well as some holidays and events. For reservations, please call 305.256.8399. Reservations are encouraged, but not required. Thursday Nights hours are from 6:00 - 9:00 p.m., and the last seating is at 8:30 p.m.

Admission prices for these fun-filled nights are as follows: $10 member, $5 member children ages 6-17, $15 non-member, $8 non-member children ages 6-17, and free for children 5 and under. To purchase tickets in advance or to view a complete schedule of events, please visit www.fairchildgarden.org.
Research and Conservation Opportunities in the First Orchid Nature Preserve of China

By Dr. Hong Liu, Research Ecologist
MY JOURNEY TO AN ORCHID PARADISE

Following an invitation from Nanjing University, I decided that I would take a two-month leave in the summer of 2008, and head to China to strengthen my on-going research with colleagues as well as to discover new research opportunities. My husband, Dr. Javier Francisco-Ortega, like myself, who happens to be a botanist at both Florida International University (FIU) and Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, was also invited by Nanjing University, and so we started out together on our journey to Nanjing.

After our arrival in Nanjing and a quick tour of the university, we immediately embarked for Hainan Island with our Nanjing colleagues to visit their field sites. Hainan is a large island off the coast of Southern China which happens to be the topic of the article by Javier in this very issue of The Tropical Garden. Unfortunately, Javier broke his leg during the field trip on the island and had to be operated on and hospitalized.

By mid-July, when Javier’s condition improved, I went to Beijing to meet with Dr. Yi-Bo Luo, a leading Chinese scientist in orchid research and conservation in the Institute of Botany of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, to discuss the possibility of a collaboration. I wanted to ask Yi-Bo about visiting Huanglong National Park in Sichuan, an orchid hotspot where Yi-Bo had been doing orchid pollination studies with his students. However, since the park suffered the effects of the recent Sichuan earthquake which caused extensive road and other infrastructural damages, it quickly became apparent from my conversation with Yi-Bo that visiting Huanglong was simply not possible.

Looking at my disappointed face, Yi-Bo asked, “Are you interested in Guangxi?” After briefly thinking to myself, “Guangxi? The sub-tropical province where I received my high school education?” I quickly answered Yi-Bo, “Of course I’m interested.” Yi-Bo replied, “Well, Yachang Orchid Nature Preserve in Leye County was recently established.” Then he handed me a book of photos and continued, “The first Nature Preserve in China that is defined for the orchid family. If you want to visit, I will connect you with the Preserve.” As I leafed through the book, an internal publication of the Guangxi Forestry Bureau, with great color photos of the orchids of Yachang Orchid Preserve, my heart began to pound faster as I knew that I had found something exciting.

I flew to Nanning (not to be confused with Nanjing) as soon as I could after the conversation with Yi-Bo, the capital of Guangxi Province and the closest airport to Yachang Orchid Nature Preserve. Guangxi, formally named Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, is a remote province (relative to Beijing) in southwestern China on the border with Vietnam. Guangxi, together with the adjacent Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan provinces, forms one of the world’s nine orchid-diversity hotspots. The province is famous not only for its biological diversity, but also its cultural diversity, with 12 ethnic groups native to the region each with their own languages and traditions.

I received a warm welcome by the Yachang staff who came to the airport to pick me up. After a six-hour scenic drive, half of which was on winding mountain roads, we arrived in the town of Huaping, the headquarters of the Yachang Orchid Preserve. To give you a sense of the remoteness of the area, the drive from Nanning to Huaping used to take a minimum of three days by car as recently as the 1990s. Over the next three days, I was taken by the Vice Director of the preserve, Mr. Dun Luo, and his staff to various sites within this 220 m² preserve. What I saw and heard during the visit were beyond my imagination.
Yachang, located northwest of Guangxi, close to borders with both Guizhou and Yunnan Provinces, used to be a state forestry station. It was not until 2004 that several Chinese botanists discovered orchids—very large numbers of them (more than 130 species)—in this state forestry reserve. I quickly realized that the most extraordinary feature about Yachang was the extremely large size of the populations of many different species of terrestrial and lithophytic orchids. While selective logging had been the main source of disturbance in the Yachang forests, clearly this form of disturbance was not very harmful to the understory plants, such as orchids. Many of the lithophytic species at Yachang are epiphytic elsewhere placing them too high up in the canopy to be amenable to scientific studies, but at Yachang these same species can often be easily accessed. In this natural orchid garden, one commonly finds orchids forming large, monotypic or mixed species stands dominating the forest understory. These include orchids of great horticultural importance that have been collected to near extinction elsewhere, such as species of *Paphiopedilum* and *Cymbidium*. For example, an estimated 100,000 individual plants of the beautiful *P. hirsutissimum* can be found in Yachang. In addition, a total of 14 *Cymbidium* species occur at Yachang, many of which are the dominant components of the forest's herbaceous layer. An estimated 12,000 individuals of *C. cyperinolium* covering a 6,000 m² area in Yachang is the largest known population of this species. Among the exciting discoveries in Yachang are at least one species new to science, as well as the rediscovery of *Geodorum eulophioide*, a showy terrestrial species that was thought to have been extinct as it hasn't been seen for more than 80 years. Yachang also has very high biodiversity including at least 2,400 vascular plants.

However, the conservation of Yachang, both of the orchid species and their habitats, is facing several serious challenges. As is the case in many other species-rich areas in the developing world, poverty is a prominent issue in the Yachang area. Underground orchid markets of poached orchids are active around Yachang. Because the reserve properties are interspersed among villages, guarding the reserve to prevent poaching and illegal farming is difficult. A case in point, during my visit to the *Geodorum eulophioide* site, I found that half of the site, which hosts the largest population of this narrowly endemic orchid, had just been illegally cleared for eucalyptus planting by a local farmer.

While I was extremely excited by the great opportunities of Yachang to address many basic research questions about ecology, genetics and evolution of orchids, I felt a strong sense of urgency to help to conserve the most vulnerable species in Yachang. I got a unique opportunity to do so when I was introduced to Dr. Chen Zhang-Liang, the Vice Governor of Guangxi, who happened to pass through Yachang the last day I was there. Dr. Chen is a botanist who obtained his Ph.D. from Washington University and was formerly the dean of the school of life sciences at Beijing University, and the president of the China Agricultural University. I presented him with my thoughts on the opportunities and challenges facing Yachang Orchid Preserve, including the situation facing *Geodorum eulophioide*

A biologist-turned-politician, Dr. Chen turned out to be not only a good listener in conservation issues, he was also in a great position to do something about it; and he did. Vice Governor Chen promised to appropriate significant amount of funds from the provincial government to assist conservation and research efforts in Yachang. He invited my involvement by asking me to submit...
international collaborative conservation research proposals to two branches of the government that were under his direct leadership, the Guangxi Forestry Bureau and the Guangxi Science & Technology Bureau. So I did.

At the invitation of Vice Governor Chen, I returned to Yachang for my second time last October. Joining me on this trip were my long-term collaborator in the United States, Dr. Robert Pemberton, a senior research associate at Fairchild, and Dr. Yi-Bo Luo, my main collaborator in China, with all the expenses covered by the Guangxi Government. We stayed in Yachang for 12 days, surveying multiple sites and setting up long-term population monitoring plots for selected orchid species and initiated a study of the relationship between floral characteristics, population density and fruit set.

During the visit, we met with Vice Governor Chen three times to discuss our research and conservation plans. To facilitate science based conservation of the orchids at Yachang and other orchid-rich areas in Guangxi, Vice Governor Chen, Dr. Yi-Bo Luo and I proposed the establishment of Guangxi Orchid Research Institute to promote basic research on the ecology of orchids and their habitats. In order to reduce the human pressure on wild orchids, applied research will also be used to encourage the development and promotion of sustainable orchid cultivation and viable orchid markets to improve the local residents' livelihood.

To obtain the most up-to-date information on current international orchid research and conservation, Vice Governor Chen has asked the Provincial Government of Guangxi to sponsor the First Guangxi International Orchid Conservation Workshop, which will be held in May 2009 in Leye County, one hour away from the Yachang Orchid Nature Preserve. We have invited more than a dozen of the leading orchid conservation biologists from around the world to participate in the workshop. I have played an important role in shaping both the orchid research institute proposal and organization of the orchid conservation workshop. In fact, Fairchild and FIU are listed as co-sponsors of the Guangxi International Orchid Conservation Workshop because of my involvement.

The existence of such an abundance of orchids in Yachang is surprising, given the decimation of orchids and their habitats in China. The rapid establishment of Yachang Orchid Nature Reserve to protect these diverse and abundant orchid species was a fine achievement. The proposed Guangxi International Orchid Research Institute, focused to develop science based conservation of the orchids in Guangxi, will help ensure the long-term survival of these unique habitats. The complex problems of poverty and resource exploitation remain to be solved, but I believe we can solve them.

By the way, in case you are wondering what happened to the newly disturbed *G. eulophioides* site, Vice Governor Chen ordered the officials in his Forest Bureau to eliminate the eucalyptus saplings at the site to allow the recovery of the orchid population and its habitat. Understanding the hardship facing the farmer, he asked the Forestry Bureau to reimburse the farmer on the tree losses. I am very proud that I am a part of these conservation efforts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
I would like to thank Dr. Robert Pemberton for getting me interested in orchids and Dr. Yi-Bo Luo for introduced me to Yachang Orchid Nature Preserve. Dun Luo, Shi-Yong Liu, Xin-Lian Wei, Yu-Tian Lan, Lan Huang provided field assistance. Grants 502033xm08n006 and 502033xm08n007 from Guangxi covered my second trip to Yachang, in October 2008, as well as the trip by Drs. Robert Pemberton and Yi-Bo Luo.
A Tribute at Fairchild

Remember someone or honor a special occasion through the Tribute and Honor Program at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. These acknowledgments are meaningful gifts for birthdays, weddings and graduations, holiday gifts or as an expression of sympathy.

Please call at 305.667.1651, ext. 3351 for more information.
No matter how you say potato, one thing is sure; you don’t have quite the spuds vocabulary of the ancient Incas. Their official language of Quechua has a whopping one thousand different ways to say potato. From their humble beginnings in Peru, potatoes have grown to become the fourth largest food crop in the world behind the stalwart staples of rice, wheat and corn.
The starchy goodness of potatoes comes from below the soil line in the form of a tuber or swollen rhizome. In the United States, we mash, dice, bake and fry our potatoes to the tune of about 20 million tons of product a year. That figure is about one-third of the world’s biggest producer, China. Europe consumes the most potatoes per capita, well above the worldwide average of 73 pounds per person.

The U.S. is best known for using potatoes in the unhealthiest of ways, namely potato chips and French fries. Legend has it that potato chips were born in an upscale Saratoga Springs, New York, restaurant in 1853. A haughty customer sent back his potatoes because they were too soggy. The infuriated chef then sliced the potatoes exceedingly thin and fried them with salt to get back at the customer. The customer loved the new creation (much to the chef’s chagrin) and potato chips were born.

Both Belgium and France claim credit for being the first to create the ubiquitous French fry. Whatever the case, fried potatoes were all the rage in both Belgium and France almost one hundred years before they found their way to fast food stardom in the U.S. McDonald’s is credited for streamlining the fast food industry at all levels including that of its most famous side order. When McDonald’s first began, fries were made from fresh hand-cut potatoes. This system was expensive and not uniform. The massive chain began experimenting with frozen French fries which allowed them to cook fries that tasted the same no matter which state you were in or who prepared them.

Fries became very cheap to produce. The advent of frozen fries allowed French fries to suddenly become more profitable than hamburgers. There are now high-tech processing plants dedicated to making fries that operate 24 hours a day, 310 days out of the year and pump out over a
million pounds of French fries a day. In 1960, the typical American ate 81 pounds of fresh potatoes a year and 4 pounds of French fries. Today, the average Joe eats 49 pounds of fresh potatoes compared with 30 pounds of French fries. Fries are the most widely sold food item in the United States. Do you want fries with that?

Like its cousin the deadly nightshade, the fruits of the potato are toxic and may have led to the early trepidation of eating the potato when it was introduced to Europe in the 1500s. The plant was initially used for medicinal purposes before it became a staple crop. It became so popular in Europe that at one point, one-third of Ireland’s population was dependent on the potato to survive. This mass dependence along with a disease known as Late Blight led to the Great Irish Famine. The Late Blight was extremely successful in wiping out huge tracts of potatoes since the potatoes then grown in Ireland were genetically identical.

Nature has a built-in system of protection called genetic diversity. Through sexual reproduction, genes are shared and mixed so the offspring is not identical to the parent. This leads to new and better traits, but it also helps protect a species from mass extinction by a single pathogen. Different genes mean different responses to pathogens, some good some bad.

Potatoes are usually grown by slicing the potato into portions that contain one or more buds, commonly called eyes. Each of these cuttings can produce a new plant. This is a type of vegetative propagation that creates genetically identical clones of the parent plant. That’s a good thing when your goal is to make more of a genetically superior plant, but a bad thing when a major disease comes along. That disease, in the form of the Late Blight, ravaged the potatoes of Western Ireland and was responsible for reducing the Irish population by 25%.

Potatoes are a worldwide food crop that is so important that the United Nations officially proclaimed 2008 the year of the potato. As the world’s population continues to grow, durable, consistent, nutritious food crops such as the potato will be in high demand. No matter how you say potato, the potato’s value and importance around the world is clear.
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NEW SCIENCE VILLAGE PLANNED AT FAIRCHILD

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden has had an important research program housed approximately one mile from Fairchild, just off of Red Road and 120th Street. This arrangement worked for many years. As Fairchild’s research program gained prominence, there was ample space for laboratories, offices, visiting scientists, lectures, the library, herbarium and archives.

But, while Fairchild’s scientific reputation became known around the globe, our guests and members were relatively unaware of its significance because it was out of sight.

Bruce Greer, Fairchild’s President of the Board of Trustees, understood the need to bring awareness to Fairchild’s science programs and he set out to build a Science Village on the grounds of the garden. The goal of the Science Village is to bring science to the forefront, and to put on display one of the most important aspects of Fairchild’s mission: science and conservation.

“Our dream is to have our scientists and graduate students work side-by side with our horticulturists, educators and volunteers so that there is an integrated and seamless program focus,” said Mr. Greer. “The effect of this integration will undoubtedly be understood by our guests as they walk by and meet our scientists. And, ultimately, our goal is that this interaction will get our students and younger guests to dream of becoming scientists.”

Mr. Greer approached his long-time friends Paul and Swanee DiMare with the idea of supporting a science building at Fairchild. The three discussed the idea of a Science Village, and Mr. and Mrs. DiMare generously offered to give Fairchild a $3 million gift to make the dream of a Science Village a reality.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

Mr. Greer gave a tour of Fairchild to world-famous scientist and long-time friend, Dr. Jane Hsiao. While on the tour, he shared with Dr. Hsiao and her colleagues the idea of the Science Village. Dr. Hsiao was very impressed with Fairchild’s science programs and suggested some new ideas about research that could engage both students and general visitors. Fairchild happily incorporated Dr. Hsiao’s innovative suggestions into the Science Village’s plans. A few months later, in her characteristically unassuming manner, she phoned to thank Mr. Greer for the tour and informed him that she had made a one million dollar gift to Fairchild for new laboratories to implement the program.

Plans for the Science Village are well underway, with an anticipated completion date in 2011. Fairchild staff will lead the effort together with very able professionals. Max Strang, an environmental architect, has designed a sensitive and thoughtful science village complex. Alberto Cordoves, a leading Florida architect, has provided exceptional design input as well as technical virtuosity to the entire project. Arturo Xiques, a structural engineer with more than 30 years of experience, is value-engineering all construction to make sure the buildings are both cost-efficient and well-built. Both Mr. Cordoves and Mr. Xiques are generously donating their services to this project.

The site, on the southern boundary of the garden just east of the Garden Café, features keystone, wood shutters and a gabled roof. The project demonstrates environmental leadership and should qualify to be LEED Certified (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). In addition to a new conservation center, classrooms and laboratories, there will also be a new 12,000 square foot shade house that will contain an expanded tropical plant collection which will allow Fairchild to increase its orchid, palm and aroid collections, increase its butterfly species and provide genetic materials for study by our scientists.

www.fairchildgarden.org  SPRING 2009  | 37
Conservation at Fairchild has focused on some areas of extraordinary diversity. In recent years, our work has included studies on centers of plant diversity in Africa, the Caribbean, South Florida and the Pacific islands. The objective is to use the collective resources of Fairchild, Florida International University (FIU) and our partners to save some of the world’s most extraordinary habitats.

Last summer new work was initiated in China, one of the world’s great biodiversity storehouses. Ever since the Scottish plant-hunter James Cuninghame collected in China, between 1698 and 1709, Western gardeners and botanists have been fascinated by Chinese plants. China has been the source of important ornamentals such as camellias, magnolias, rhododendrons, peonies and chrysanthemums—species that were introduced in the West during the 17th–19th centuries. Important fruits such as the kiwi vine and lychee trees have also come from China. In addition, Chinese plants have some unique disjunctive distribution patterns between the eastern United States and eastern China that have attracted the attention of researchers since the 19th century. More recently, plants from China have had a different focus, mostly because of the many environmental challenges associated with China’s extraordinarily rapid and transformative economic development.

China’s ecology encompasses northern pine forests, Mongolian grasslands, Himalayan peaks and a tropical monsoon belt in the south. Hainan, the second largest island of China, is located on the South China Sea at only 19 miles from the mainland and has a rich endemic flora within six major ecosystems. The island is part of the Indo-Burma Biodiversity Hotspot and is therefore a major priority for international conservation. The island is famous since it is one of the few sites in China hosting the highly endangered and very secretive clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*) and the most endangered species of gibbon of the world, the endemic Hainan black crested gibbon (*Nomascus hainanus*). Hainan also has an endemic subspecies of the Asian brown-antlered deer (*Cervus eldi* subsp. *hainanus*) and an endemic pheasant, the Hainan peacock pheasant (*Polypelectron katsumatae*), and they are both regarded as endangered.
Flowering individual of Ardisia virens Kurz. (Myrsinaceae) growing in Jianfengling National Forest. This is one of the largest and best preserved tropical forests in China.

With an unknown number of endangered plant species and an intense tourism and urban development, Hainan provides a clear example of the environmental challenges that Chinese conservation biologists face. For instance, it is estimated that the natural tropical forest of this island has diminished from almost 17,000 km² in 1943, to just 3,000 km² in 1994. Aware of an immediate urgency for plant conservation on this island, in the summer of 2008, botanists from Nanjing University, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and FIU established a joint program on the conservation of plant biodiversity on Hainan. Researchers from Nanjing University will bring 15 years of research experience to the project. The team from Fairchild and FIU will provide their research expertise on tropical island biodiversity studies, the use of molecular data for conservation biogeography and population viability analysis techniques.

Within this framework, the researchers identified two specific projects. The most immediate one aims to produce the first species checklist for the seed-plants of the island. This project is being conducted in partnership with plant biologists from Harvard University (Dr. David Boufford), the Chinese Academy of Sciences (Professor Yi-Bo Luo), the South China Botanical Garden (Professor Fuwu Xing and Dr. Faguo Wang) and the Chinese Academy of Forestry (Dr. Xu Han). Results of this project will provide a framework for future biodiversity studies, and the most urgent one will be to determine the conservation status of these endemic species, as a Red-List for the Hainan flora has not been produced yet.

Researchers also aim to determine the distribution patterns of these endemic species in order to identify geographical areas of high plant endemicity. The island has a mountainous topography with a rich soil diversity including those derived from volcanic, igneous, metamorphic and limestone rocks. However, it is not certain to what extent there is a relationship between areas of endemism, soil types and geography. Such a relationship is known to occur in other islands of the world such as Madagascar, New Caledonia, New Zealand and the Greater Antilles.

The second project focuses on the Critically Endangered endemic mint genus Wenchengia and aims to use molecular biology techniques to determine its placement in the tree of life of mints and to document the levels of genetic diversity occurring in the few populations of this genus. This project is being carried out in partnership with Professor Richard Olmstead (University of Washington) and Professor Ruth Kiew (Singapore Botanic Gardens). The taxonomy of this genus is a scientific enigma, and some authors have even proposed that it represents an ancient mint lineage that should be recognized as its own endemic subfamily within the Lamiaceae.

Our initial estimates suggest that Hainan has over 400 endemic species. The coffee family, Rubiaceae, has the highest number of endemic species (ca. 33), and they are followed by grasses (24 species), orchids, laurel and oak trees (ca. 23 species each). The island has only six endemic genera and they have one species each. Five of the bamboo genera have a total of approximately 18 endemic species and clearly are an important component of the endemic flora. Indeed, the bamboo genus Bambusa has the highest number of endemic species (12).

Seven of the endemic species are palms, belonging to Calamus (three species), Licuala (one species) and Chuniophoenix (two species). The latter is a small genus with only three species, and its two Hainan endemics (C. hainanensis and C. humilis) are present in the living collections of Fairchild. The cycad genus Cycas has three endemic species and all of them are Endangered. Although a comprehensive conservation assessment for the island endemics has not been undertaken, we know that some of the endemic species are critically endangered. We are certain that Wenchengia is not the only one that is on the verge of extinction; the list of species falling in this category includes one aralia (Dendropanax oligodontont), one milkweed (Pentastelma auritum) and one orchid (Gastrodia longitubularis). In addition, at least one species, the legume Osmosia howii, has not been found since its original description in 1943.

Hainan has 24 protected areas representing approximately only 9% of the whole island territory. Most of these preserves are restricted to montane forests, and there is an urgency to conserve the lowlands. These areas provide the most important avenue for plant conservation and we are certain that a great proportion of the endemics are confined to them.

Biodiversity inventories coupled with molecular biology techniques are one of the main priorities of our research team and they provide tools for conservation and sound management strategies. Our program fulfills the international vision of our different institutes and strengthens the values of transoceanic cooperation for research, education and multicultural enhancement.
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In addition to supporting a global habitat recovery efforts, Fairchild members receive free admission everyday during regular hours; free admission to more than 500 other U.S. gardens, arboreta and museums; a free subscription to the award-winning The Tropical Garden magazine; 10% discount at The Shop at Fairchild; priority registration and discounts for educational courses and free use of the research and member libraries. Members also receive special invitations to members’ only events such as moonlight tours, spring and fall plant sales, lectures and trips.

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For more information, please call the Membership Department at 305.667.1651, ext. 3362 or visit www.fairchildgarden.org.
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Fairchild adds a new bee display adjacent to the Whitman Tropical Fruit Pavilion

Fairchild’s bees are housed in a handmade viewing box designed to show the bee’s activity within the hive and serve as a visual reminder of the importance that honeybees play in everyday life. Our bees also help to pollinate many of the fruit trees found near or inside the pavilion, such as the carambola, the guava, the mango, the sapodilla and the rambutan.

Insects are often viewed in a negative light when they disturb humans or plants, but it is important to realize that without them, many of the foods we eat and the products we use could not exist. Bees are essential for the production of over $14 billion worth of over 100 different species of food crops in the United States alone. To put it simply, bees help to pollinate approximately one third of the food that you eat each day.

A typical honey bee colony like ours consists of a queen bee, male bees called drones and a large population of sterile female worker bees. The drones may not stay with the hive and their only role is to mate with receptive queens. The worker bees feed the queen and larvae, guard the hive entrance and maintain the proper hive temperature by fanning their wings. Worker bees also collect pollen which is used to make honey. Nectar and honey are consumed by the bees as their primary energy source. While collecting pollen, the worker bees pollinate countless species of plants.

In many states, bees are leaving the hive in large numbers never to return. This leads to their death and the eventual collapse of the hive. Scientists have no clear explanation for the bees’ mass disappearing act, but ideas range from the bees getting lost and disoriented due to cell phone towers to a possible virus or species of mite doing damage within the hive. Whatever the reason, the bee keeping industry is devastated as the bees vanish and the cost of maintaining bees rockets skyward. So many species of plants depend on pollination by bees to survive that this problem known as “colony collapse disorder” is garnering attention worldwide.

In addition to the bee display near the Whitman Tropical Fruit Pavilion, there are also a large number of working hives located in the lowlands near the Keys Coastal Habitat, as well as an additional 60 hives that pollinate the avocados and mangos found at the Fairchild Farm at Williams Grove located in Homestead. Delicious, all natural honey from these hives can be purchased for $8 from the Tropical Fruit Market.
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Top Orchid Books

By Erin Fitts, Director of Retail and Visitor Services

**AN INTRODUCTION TO ORCHIDS: A GUIDE TO ORCHID GROWING IN THE SUBTROPICS**
Presented by: The South Florida Orchid Society
$18.00. This updated and revised edition includes tips from some of the world’s finest orchid growers. The book covers how to grow and care for orchids, as well as information about potting, pests, diseases and Florida natives. Softcover.

**100 ORCHIDS FOR FLORIDA**
Author: Jack Kramer
$16.95. Jack Kramer, an orchid expert who has been growing and writing about orchids for more than 50 years, lends his personal experience with each plant to this book. Kramer includes full-color photographs of the orchids to help you choose the best ones for your Florida garden. Softcover.

**ORCHID GROWING FOR WIMPS**
Author: Ellen Zachos
$17.95. This is the definitive guide for those who are afraid to grow orchids. Every part of growing orchids is broken down in easy-to-follow steps for the novice gardener. Softcover.

**ROBERT’S ROAD: CHRONICLE OF AN ORCHID TRADITION,**
Author: Flora Murphy
$24.95. This is the history of the Fuchs family and the founding of R.F. Orchids. Robert Fuchs and Michael Coronado also provide tips on growing orchids and how to include their beauty in your landscaping. Hardcover.

**1001 GARDENS YOU MUST SEE BEFORE YOU DIE**
Edited by: Rae Spencer-Jones
$34.99. Fairchild has recently been featured as a must-see garden in the book, “1001 Gardens You Must See Before You Die.” Fairchild is aptly described as “the ultimate example of a modern botanical garden...[that] combines displays, horticulture, and extensive plant collections with research, conservation, and education.” The book provides a brief history of the garden and a summary of Fairchild’s collections.

For these and other wonderful books, stop by The Shop at Fairchild or shop online at [www.fairchildonline.com](http://www.fairchildonline.com).
Fairchild’s Gala in the Garden Guests Enjoy a Splendid Evening

By Paula Fernandez de los Muros

Photos by Sergio Alsina, Jesus Cabrera, Alex Gort

Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden held its 16th annual Gala in the Garden on Saturday, February 7, 2009. Co-chairs for this year’s black-tie fundraiser were Brenda Nestor Castellano and Swanee DiMare. Jean Ellen Shehan served as Honorary Chairman, with Paula Brockaway, Joyce Burns, Lin Lougheed, Frances Aldrich Sevilla-Sacasa and Penny Stamps as Philanthropic Chairmen and Barbara Tria as Silent Auction Chairman.

This year’s Gala in the Garden welcomed over 400 guests and began with cocktails and a highlight of the evening, a silent auction, in the Northern Trust Ballroom of the Jean duPont Shehan Visitor Center.

Guests proceeded to the lakeside marquis for dining and dancing to the music of The Peter Duchin Orchestra, who returned after last year’s much talked about performance. Along with catering, Le Basque created the innovative décor for the evening, which included a feeling of European charm and elegance. The marquis was filled with an abundance of pastel-colored flowers arranged in lovely baskets and orchids cascading throughout the interior of the tent. Gala guests not only enjoyed a spectacular evening in a stunning tropical landscape, but they also supported Fairchild’s vital conservation work.

1- Nannette M. Zapata, Chief Operating Officer and Lin Lougheed, Member, Board of Trustees and Gala Philanthropic Chairman
2- Bruce W. Greer, President, Board of Trustees and Adrienne Arsht
3- Guests proceeding to the beautifully decorated Gala Marquis
4- Swanee DiMare, Gala Co-Chair, Lin Lougheed, Brenda Nestor Castellano, Gala Co-Chair, Joyce Burns and Frances Aldrich Sevilla-Sacasa Philanthropic Chairmen and Bruce W. Greer
5- Dr. Carl E. Lewis, Director and wife Dr. Susanne Lewis
Museum directors, gallery owners, collectors and other art community leaders kicked off Art Basel Miami Beach 2008 at an exclusive preview of Mark di Suvero at Fairchild, an outdoor exhibition of the renowned artist’s monumental steel sculptures. Art collectors Lin Lougheed and Aaron Fleishman hosted this special event on Tuesday, December 2, 2008 at Fairchild.

The preview was attended by a “who’s who” of the international art community, including: Tiqui Atencio Demirdjian, Janna Bullock, Paula Cooper, Irma Braman, Trudy Cejas, Lisa Dennison and Ella Fontanals-Cisneros. Upon arrival, guests were greeted with champagne flutes before making their way down the lush, oak-lined Allée to the Overlook, where Mr. di Suvero’s brightly colored Rust Angel sits. After taking in the panoramic views of Fairchild’s landscapes and enjoying delicious hors d’oeuvres, guests set off for a special preview of the outdoor exhibition. Guests were then treated to an Asian-themed lunch inspired by Mr. di Suvero’s birthplace, Shanghai, alongside Fairchild’s Pandanus Lake.
The following gifts were donated between September 1, 2008 and January 31, 2009. Please notify the Development Office at 305-667-1651, ext. 3310 if your information is not correct. We apologize in advance for any errors or omissions.

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As a not-for-profit organization, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden depends on private funding from individuals and corporate supporters. Such generosity enables Fairchild to meet the significant costs of running a world-renowned botanic garden that welcomes hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Your contribution helps maintain Fairchild’s position as a global leader in tropical plant conservation, as well as provide special exhibitions such as *Mark di Suvero at Fairchild*, dynamic educational programs and critically needed conservation programs in South Florida and around the world.

We welcome your partnership and look forward to discussing with you the many benefits of your involvement. For more information, please contact Mari Novo at 305.667.1651, ext. 3357 or by e-mail at mnovo@fairchildgarden.org.
GARDEN VIEWS

FAIRCHILD CONCERTS: A SMASHING SUCCESS!

Romance was really in the air on a beautiful Valentine’s Day evening, Saturday, February 14. This smashing event had a record-breaking attendance of over 2,000 guests who enjoyed Arturo Sandoval’s sizzling trumpet sounds along with Wendy Petersen’s sultry voice. Under the stars on the lovely Garden House Lawn, guests feasted on either their own gourmet provisions or the delectable picnic baskets from Creative Tastes. Our March concert was the Best of Bossa Nova, with legendary composer Roberto Menescal and the vibrant Cris Delanno playing. Bossa Nova classics with a few contemporary twists. Many thanks to our sponsors White & Case LLP, Jeanne and Rudy Aragon, The Mailman Foundation, Suzanne and Alan Steinberg, Terry Buoniconti, Caroline Gaynor and Miami Medical Consultants.

MOMMY & ME TEA

Special memories were made on Friday, January 16, when grandmothers, mothers and children of all ages came together to share a lovely afternoon tea on the Veranda and in the Northern Trust Ballroom of the Jean duPont Shehan Visitor Center. Local guitarist Rob Friedman entertained the young and young-at-heart audience by taking requests for old-time favorites, including the song “I’m a Little Tea Pot.”

Guests sipped tea from elegant china cups and enjoyed typical tea fare. Little tea-takers liked special peanut butter and jelly tea sandwiches. For information on future Afternoon Teas at Fairchild, please visit www.fairchildgarden.org or contact Marnie Valent at 305.663.8059.

3RD ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL

An amazing 12,500 visitors were in chocolate heaven on January 24 and 25, as they celebrated Fairchild’s Third Annual International Chocolate Festival. For two days, guests were immersed in the wonderful and diverse world of chocolate, from chocolate treats to cacao tree sales, cooking demonstrations, chocolate cake competitions, kids’ activities, a chocolate spa and so much more.

A picture perfect weekend coupled with the garden’s gorgeous views served as the backdrop for this amazing event. Visitors had the opportunity to not only enjoy chocolate in every shape, flavor and form, but also to learn about how chocolate is made and about the chocolate tree itself. There was truly something for everyone.

“It just goes to show the amazing amount of enthusiasm and curiosity the public has for chocolate,” commented Fairchild’s Director Dr. Carl Lewis. This year, the festival was generously sponsored by Whole Foods Market, Bella Serra, Mexico Tourism Board and Johnson & Wales University. Mark your calendar for the Fourth Annual International Chocolate Festival, January 23 and 24, 2010.
HELP THE RAMBLE ANTIQUES TRADITION CONTINUE!

Ramble donations needed! Ramble’s Antiques & Collectibles and Old & Rare Books committees are seeking donations for this year’s Ramble, which will be held on November 21 and 22. If you would like to donate items of age, distinction or beauty, including art, jewelry and linens, please call Dorothy Errera at 305.666.3010. To donate quality books and other media for the Old & Rare Books Committee, please call Stuart Debenham at 305.665.8572, or e-mail him at debenham@msn.com.

PALM LEAF SHEATH BUTTERFLY PAINTINGS

After touring Fairchild’s Lisa D. Anness Butterfly Garden, second graders from Hialeah Elementary discovered a whole new type of art. Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) Museum Educator, Nadia Earl and art teacher, Ray Jui, provide a new art experience of painting on leaf sheaths. This year, Fairchild’s Education Department entered into a new partnership with the MDCPS Museum Education program that allows a new audience of students and teachers the opportunity to participate in museum-based art programming at the garden.

At Fairchild, we are trying to make our garden even greener! This column is a new addition to The Tropical Garden magazine to keep our members and the community up-to-date about our efforts to make Fairchild extra eco-friendly. Here is a short list of what we do to help keep our environment clean: we recycle all paper, plastic bottles and aluminum cans; use 100% recycled napkins; use biodegradable cleaning products; and use plant waste to create mulch used in our plant beds.

We are also pleased to announce that the Food and Garden Festival held the weekend of March 28-29, was our first 100% eco-friendly festival! From the festival program to the delicious organic food to the composted leftover scraps, this festival was green!

Thursday Nights AT FAIRCHILD

Every Thursday through May 31, 2009
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Every Thursday evening the garden will open for Thursday Nights at Fairchild, where you can listen to delightful music, enjoy fantastic food under the stars at the Piazza di Stella, stroll the garden while sipping a cocktail and witness the magic of nature and the art of Mark di Suvero, Kris Martin, Fernando Botero, Dale Chihuly and Daisy Youngblood.

ADMISSION
Members, $10; non-members, $15; member children ages 6-17, $5; non-member children ages 6-17, $8; and children 5 and under free.
To purchase tickets in advance or to see a detailed program, please visit www.fairchildgarden.org or stop by The Shop at Fairchild.

(For the safety of our guests, Starlight Tram Tours may be suspended during busy periods. Limited seating.)
7TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL ORCHID FESTIVAL

More than 12,000 visitors were in orchid paradise the weekend of April 13, 14 and 15, as they walked the flower-filled paths at Fairchild’s Seventh Annual International Orchid Festival. More than 50 vendors displayed orchid species ranging from dendrobiums and oncidiums to vandas and more. “The display of orchids is just spectacular. This is one of my favorite events of the year!” exclaimed one visitor.

One of the highlights of the festival was the orchid display in the Garden House where the world’s finest orchid growers’ plants were awarded ribbons and trophies from the American Orchid Society. Throughout the weekend, visitors also enjoyed walking tours of the garden, lectures, great live music and, of course, the massive sculptures by Mark di Suvero, Fernando Botero and Kris Martin.

“We are so pleased with the community’s wonderful support of this weekend’s event,” said Fairchild’s Director Carl Lewis. “We feel fortunate to be able to host this festival each year and inspire people to learn more about orchids and maybe even take a few home with them.” All proceeds from the Orchid Festival help support Fairchild’s tropical plant programs for research, conservation, horticulture and education.

LECTURES ENGAGE MEMBERS

Since November 2008, 294 members have participated in Fairchild’s Members’ Lecture Series with a primary focus on Everglades National Park—the largest subtropical wilderness in the United States—as well as art, education and horticulture.

Dan Kimball, Superintendent of Everglades National Park, began the series on November 12, with 130 members. His lecture captivated the audience with an overview of the Everglades, explaining topics such as resource protection, flora and fauna diversity, visitor activities and future development of the Everglades. During the evening, members received a unique opportunity to participate in a Moonlight Tour, gaining a new perspective of the beauty of Fairchild beneath the glow of the full moon. They also looked through telescopes provided by Southern Cross Astronomical Society, toured Fairchild on a silent tram and enjoyed refreshments.

During each lecture, Fairchild members indulged in wine and dined on cheese provided by Cabot Creamery of Vermont. For upcoming lectures, please visit www.fairchildgarden.org.

Give a Membership Gift

Consider a gift of membership and share your support of Fairchild. Members enjoy free admission to Fairchild; a subscription to The Tropical Garden; priority registration for Fairchild classes; invitations to members-only events; library privileges; discounts on books, gifts and classes; and free admission to hundreds of gardens, arboreta and science museums throughout the United States.

To give the gift of membership or to renew, please contact the Membership Office at 305.667.1651, ext. 3301 or visit www.fairchildgarden.org.
REMOVE INvasive SPECIES DAY

On February 12, 2009, Fairchild hosted the first ever Everglades Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area volunteer work day. More than 50 volunteers from eight agencies and groups came together to remove invasive species from the garden. Fairchild staff and volunteers worked along with staff from the Miami-Dade County Parks Department, Department of Environmental Resources Management, U. S. National Parks Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Florida Wildlife Service, Nature Conservancy and South Florida Water Management District.

Fairchild has renewed its commitment to insure the prompt removal of overly aggressive and detrimental species to the native landscape. In South Florida’s warm, lush climate, plants that start out as ornamentals can quickly get out of control. The volunteer cleanup group targeted the removal of three main species at Fairchild:

*Lumnitzera racemosa*, also called the black mangrove in Australia, is a fast growing species and competes for space with our native mangroves. Florida has a native black mangrove, *Avicennia germinans*, which is beneficial to the coastal community and should not be removed. *Jacquinia aurantiaca*, native to Latin America, is a plant that has spread all too quickly throughout Fairchild and neighboring Matheson Hammock. *Phoenix reclinata*, a popular ornamental palm known as the Senegal date palm, grows and spreads quickly in wet areas or near lakes.

**STAFF NEWS**

Photos by Gaby Orihuela/FTBG

**STEPHANIE BOTT**

After three years on staff at Fairchild, Stephanie recently joined the Volunteer Department. With a background in human resource development and education, she is looking forward to working with Fairchild’s terrific volunteers. She is originally from Chicago, but spent her childhood in Germany and England. Stephanie earned a B.S. degree from Georgetown University and an M.S. degree in counseling. Stephanie loves working with people of diverse backgrounds and talents and is excited to be a part of a group of people doing so many great things at Fairchild.

**JUAN RIVERA, JR.**

A recent graduate of Florida International University, Juan—more commonly known as Junior—joined the Education Department in July 2008. His interests in tropical vegetation and the environment are what attracted the biology major to the garden. In addition to working at Fairchild, Junior has been a fitness professional for the past four years, and he enjoys teaching others how to make healthy lifestyle changes. Cooking, gardening and playing with his pets consume his spare time.

**VANESSA ALVAREZ**

Like many of her colleagues, Vanessa comes to the garden as a former volunteer. Throughout her elementary and middle school years, she thoroughly enjoyed her position as face painter extraordinaire at The Ramble. After her graduation from the University of Miami in 2007, Vanessa worked for Teach for America as well as various political campaigns. She is thrilled to join the Fairchild team as a marketing assistant.

**BILL SHADE**

Bill joined the development team at Fairchild in December 2008. He is a recent Miami transplant, having come all the way from Naples, Florida, where he owned his own property management company. Bill first came to Fairchild as a volunteer, hoping to meet new people and make some employment contacts. He did both! He is a graduate of Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and holds a B.A. in accounting and economics.
August 18, 1945, was a hot, still day filled with mosquitoes. That did not deter over 300 garden friends from coming to enjoy a magical fruit introduction orchestrated by Dr. David Fairchild. The arrival of mangosteens from Lancetilla, Honduras, was the culmination of many years collaboration, hard work and dreaming.

Dr. Fairchild announced to the crowd that hot August day, “This is a great moment for me. Fifty years ago (in 1895), I tasted a mangosteen in the great garden of Buitenzorg in Java and selected it as, for me at least, the most delicate of all fruits. I made up my mind then that I would introduce it into the United States. Fifty years is a long time. But this is the day.”

Dr. Fairchild’s prized mangosteens were grown by Wilson Popenoe at Lancetilla and flown in that day, arriving in Miami at noon to be served at five o’clock. Early in the days of the development of refrigerated cargo, the arrival of fresh fruit from so far away was a novelty in and of itself. That it was the fabled favorite fruit of Dr. Fairchild made the tasting even more special.

Added to the day’s festivities was the very first Fairchild exhibit of Lee Adams’ watercolors. He brought his newly finished mango portraits to be admired by the crowds of Fairchild Fellows. The combination of Dr. Fairchild’s enthusiasm; the thrill of tasting the exotic mangosteen for the first time; seeing Adams’ artwork and enjoying each other’s fellowship made for a magical day that has been long remembered by those who attended.

If anyone has photos from this momentous day and would like to share them with us, please contact Nancy Korber, Fairchild Librarian, at nkorber@fairchildgarden.org or 305.667.1651, ext. 3424.
17th Annual International Mango Festival

Saturday and Sunday | July 10 - 11, 2009 | 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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