



# Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc. Newsletter

Volume 13, Issue 1

Editor: Reggie Whitehead January 2011



## Happy New Year!!!

### November in Review

Speaker Peter Kouchalakos

Topic –**Neoregelia** culture

Treasurer’s report balance —  
\$12,801.51, without credit card  
receipts tallied yet from Ramble

Vice President Marie Nock called  
the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.,  
President Mike Twyford was ab-  
sent

Hospitality– Emaryl Israel, Martha  
Bogaard,

Raffle provided by—  
Peter Kouchalakos

Meeting ended at— 9:10

*Peter Kouchalakos* speaks of-  
ten on orchid and bromeliad grow-  
ing, considered an authority in  
both. He is a well known grower of  
both, and practices as a lawyer as a  
hobby (we’re not sure about which  
came first). He also owns a com-  
pany called PCK Orchids, tending  
to orchid and bromeliad care for  
many dozens of clients. He is also a  
fixture at many plant sales, always  
with new and interesting plants in  
his sales booth. Tonight’s program

was about culture of the genus **Neo-  
regelia**, a popular genus of bromeli-  
ads well know for their surreal and  
day-glow colors in the foliage.  
“**Neos**”, which is much easier to say  
than the full genus name, are really  
quite easy to grow, and in some  
cases the plants literally grow on a  
sunny rock.

Peter illuminated us to the # 1  
factor in growing **Neos** success-  
fully: proper light levels. While  
many **Neos** can withstand a wide  
range of light levels, bright filtered  
light all day, with direct morning  
sunlight, is the best scenario. Peter

also cautioned the crowd about the  
difference in summer light strength  
versus winter light strength. A plant  
located in the shade in the afternoon  
in summer might be in blazing after-  
noon sun in the winter.

There are hundreds of **Neo** spe-  
cies and hybrids, most of which  
grow as epiphytes or terrestrials,  
rarely as pure rock-dwelling litho-  
phytes. A great many of the modern  
hybrids can grow in trees, provided  
they are given adequate water and  
proper sunlight. Unfortunately, there  
is no good monograph for this ge-  
nus, detailing every known species  
and hybrid. (*Secretary’s note*: there  
is a registry for hybrids of this ge-  
nus, but it is hard to define the line-  
age of many hybrids, and the book is  
wildly out of date.) One of the fa-  
vored parents in the high-light group  
of the genus is **Neo. carcharodon** ,  
meaning ‘shark tooth’. It will grow  
well in all-day sunlight, but looks its  
best in a little afternoon shade. It has  
produced some excellent hybrids,  
including ‘*Red Tiger*’, ‘*High Volt-  
age*’, and several color variants like  
‘*Rainbow*’ and ‘*Tiger II*’. The spe-  
cies’ jet black teeth, set against a  
tiger-bar leaf pattern, make this a  
desirable species.

In the landscape, **Neos** can make  
a bold statement, but should be  
mixed in groups, i.e. not a giant

*(Review continued on page 2)*

### Next Meeting Monday, January 24

The Tropical Fern & Exotic  
Plant Society presents **John Cris-  
wick**. His talk for the evening will  
be **My Life in the Caribbean**.

John will speak on his life op-  
erating a tropical and exotic plant  
nursery on the island of Grenada.  
His talk will include a PowerPoint  
presentation touching on how he  
arrived in Grenada and running a  
nursery on a small island. This  
should be an interesting talk.

This month’s Raffle table is spon-  
sored by **Sid Gardino**.

See you at 7:30 p.m.

***The Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society, Inc.***  
**Officers for 2010**

<b>President</b>	Mike Twyford	(305) 444-6332
<b>Vice President</b>	Marie Nock	(305) 232-2257
<b>Secretary</b>	Craig Morell	(305) 667-1173
<b>Treasurer</b>	Tom Moore	(305) 666-0219
<b>Hospitality</b>	Martha Bogaards	(305) 661-2305
	Emalyl Israel	(305) 235-0886
<b>Special Sales</b>	Marie Nock	(305) 232-2257
<b>Librarian</b>	Juan Espinosa-Almodovar	(305) 444-3103
<b>Raffle Table</b>	Skye Palmer	(305) 595-9291
<b>Webmaster</b>	Bob Benaim	(305) 793-9755

Board of Directors will consist of the above officers and chairs;  
and the following individuals.

<b>Steve Forman</b>	(305) 662-2368
<b>Debbie Lamb</b>	(305) 251-8675
<b>Reggie Whitehead</b>	(305) 613-5944

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block of all one type, nor the one-at-a-time pattern so commonly seen in rookie landscapes. There are types for every light level, so a good long term design can be made without difficulty. Plants can be potted and set into the ground, using a well-drained soil mix. Many growers use perlite mixed with cypress mulch, or lava rocks mixed with mulch. Plants can also be affixed with locking cable tie-wraps to tree trunks. **Neos** have very few pest problems, although some growers report that the plants harbor snails. The snails don't do much damage to the bromeliads, but can devastate other nearby plants. There are several snail bait products on the market, but read the labels carefully. One of the most popular types is a blue pellet called *Deadline*, but it's toxic to pets, wildlife, and children. There are organic snail killers on the market, of varying effectiveness. Peter has reported, unofficially of course, "that late at night, snails fly out of his bromeliads, and onto the road nearby." He denies all personal involvement with this action, but several members agreed that they have seen the same phenomenon in their collections. In any scenario, physical removal of snails is an excellent long term tactic to strategic control.

Peter concluded his high-voltage talk with some hefty examples of the genus, including a large plant of *Neo. Tiger*. Peter's programs are always informative and highly entertaining, injected with tales of lawyers and lawmakers gone amok, good plants gone bad, and the blood letting he incurs when working with certain plants.

Other announcements included the invitation to the Christmas party at Sallye Jude's wonderful estate on the bay, December 19 at 4:30. It will undoubtedly be a grand dinner with a king's table of food and des-

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serts. Legendary Granada nurseryman John Criswick will be the speaker in January. John has been a grower and promoter of plants for decades.

Respectfully submitted,

*Craig Morell, CPA, esq.*  
Certified Plant Addict

**Notes on Holiday Party —**

Dr. Jim and Sallye Jude hosted a beautiful, and well-attended Holiday Party on Sunday, December 19. The Party was late in the afternoon, affording our society members a chance to wander around and see the beautiful house and gardens. Once again our members threw a lavish and fun party. Many thanks to Emaly Israel, Martha Bogaards and all of the members who brought in tasty dishes for our Holiday Party. A very heartfelt thank you to the Sally and Jim Jude, for once again hosting our Holiday Party.

**2011 Dues are due!**

Membership dues for the Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society are currently being collected.

Dues are: \$15.00 - single

\$17.00 - for two members at the same address

Lifetime Memberships are available at: \$125 per individual, \$150 for two members at the same address. This one-time rate is valid for the life of the Society. Please make check payable to: **TFEPS**, and mail to:

**Thomas G. Moore**

c/o TFEPS

6880 S. W. 75 Terrace

South Miami, FL 33143

Dues may also be paid at the next meeting Monday, **January 24.**

**Leigh Elliott — Died December 19**

It is with deep sadness that we report that one of our longtime members passed away in December. After suffering a long bout with cancer, Leigh Elliott passed away on December 19. Leigh was a vice president of our society, and an avid grower of very beautiful specimens of orchids and a dedicated plantsman who will sorely be missed. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his grieving family

**Raffle Tables for — 2011**

January 24, 2011 ..... **Sid Gardino**  
February 28, 2011 ..... Tim Anderson/Redland Nursery  
March 28, 2011 ..... Steve Nock/Philip Iloo  
April 25, 2011 ..... David McLean/Craig Reid  
May 23, 2011 ..... John Lucas/Rebecca & Duane Tannenbaum

**Tropical Fern & Exotic Plant Society**

6880 S. W. 75 Terrace

South Miami, FL 33143

\_\_\_ Individual Member \$15. \_\_\_ Household Membership \$17.

\_\_\_ Life Membership \$125. \_\_\_ Life Household Membership \$150.

Member's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of additional member: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip + 4: \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## *Origins*

by John Banta

Plant collectors are always on the look-out for a new plant to add to the collection. Jungle collected plants such as from **Ecuagenera** are a prime source but various forces are at work to diminish this availability. Where will new and novel plants come from? If the past is any indication; from the growers of plant collections. Many of the choice plants in our collections originated from growers like us. We owe them a debt of gratitude. Many thanks to Bob McColley and Ralph Davis for their efforts to produce neat, new and novel plants for us. Too often these breeders are forgotten as time passes.

Let us refresh our memories. In the 1960's Bamboo Nurseries, in Apopka, was the epicenter for neat, new

aroids, especially **Philodendrons**, thanks to the efforts of Bob McColley. Until Bob started his breeding efforts only 2 Philodendron hybrids were known. *P. corsianum* made in Italy in 1887 and *P. hastatum X erubescens* made in New Jersey in 1936 by Manda. It was in 1951 when Bob made his first hybrid, *P. squamiferum X laciniatum*. That was the beginning of a stream of colorful **Philodendrons** that are found in nurseries and collections even now. 'McColley's yellow' is still a widely grown **Philodendron**. The widely grown *Aglaonema* "*Silver Queen*" was also one of Bob's introductions.

*Origins to be continued.*

*Next Meeting, John Criswick, My Life in the Caribbean , Monday, January 24, 7:30 p.m.*

This Newsletter is also available through PDF and our [www.tfeps.org](http://www.tfeps.org) website.

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