



## March 2017 – Tamarind



## Who we are and what we do:

The Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club, Inc., is an educational not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to inform, educate and advise members and the public in the selection of tropical and subtropical fruiting plants and trees, to encourage their cultivation, and to provide a social forum where members can freely exchange plant material and information. The club cooperates with many organizations, and provides a basis for producing new cultivars. We function in any legal manner to further the above stated aims.

**Meetings:** Regular membership meetings that include an educational program are held the **second** Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin with a tasting table at 6:45 PM followed by a program at 7:15 PM, at the First United Methodist Church, 27690 Shriver Avenue, Bonita Springs. The meetings are held in the "Fellowship Hall" meeting room.

**Workshops:** Workshops (monthly discussions) are held on the **fourth** Tuesday of each month. This open format encourages discussion and sharing of fruits and information. Bring in your fruits, plants, seeds, leaves, insects, photos, recipes, etc. This is a great chance to get answers to specific questions, and there always seems to be a local expert on hand! The workshops begin at 7pm and are also held at the First United Methodist Church, 27690 Shriver Avenue, Bonita Springs, in the "Fellowship Hall" meeting room.

## Directions:

From the intersection of Old 41 Road and Bonita Beach Road SE, proceed north to Dean Street. Turn right on Dean St. and go two blocks to Shriver, then turn left on Shriver and go two blocks to the Methodist Church. Free parking on both sides of the street. Shriver is parallel to Old 41, two blocks East.

**Tree sale:** An annual spring tree sale at Riverside Park in downtown Bonita Springs raises revenue for educational programs for club members and other related purposes of the club.

**Trips:** The club occasionally organizes trips and tours of other organizations that share our interests. The IFAS Experimental Station, the Fruit and Spice Park, and the Fairchild Nursery Farm are examples of our recent excursions.

## Membership:

Dues are \$20 per person for new members, and \$15 per person for renewals. Send checks to: PO Box 367791, Bonita Springs, FL 34136, or bring to any regularly scheduled meeting.

**Newsletter:** This newsletter is available to anyone via website and email, and to paid members via post office mail upon request.

## Officers and Board of Directors:

President: Suzy Valentine

Vice President: Kathy Pflugrad

Secretary: Don McBride

Treasurer: Victoria Strickland

Asst Treasurer: Melrose John

Director: Berto Silva

Director: Crafton Clift

Director: Rickford John

Email us at [Info@BonitaSpringsTropicalFruitClub.com](mailto:Info@BonitaSpringsTropicalFruitClub.com).

## Message from the President

Tropical fruits come in many sizes, and not all of us have the acres needed for lots of different trees. But, we are sharing the knowledge and specific requirements of many possible plants so that all of us can have the pleasure of watching a flower become a fruit, and then savoring the delight of tasting the results. It is not 'magic', but does require understanding of various factors. That's what we do for each other with our Newsletters and Programs and Workshops. If you have a question, bring it to our attention. Our website is full of great information, and an 'expert' is always at the other end of your computer or phone.

We share our fruits at meetings, and we share our knowledge with anyone, anytime. As the club evolves, we may grow in numbers and adapt our shared learning experiences to fit our members' needs. But, we will remain faithful to our Mission of "introducing, informing, advising and educating...tropical and sub-tropical fruits...and freely exchange information and plant material".

Welcome to Victoria Strickland, our new Treasurer! Victoria has been part of our club for many years, as was her father before her. She and husband Tom Klausing recently moved here full time, and have joined us at the Holiday Party, Workshops and General Meetings. A business ownership background makes Victoria super qualified to handle our club finances, and their smiling, willing presence has been a delightful addition to our club activities.

We went to our club's bank today to formalize the signatures and other procedures. First Citizens Bank is a good friend to our club, and they know us well! The names on their records over the past many years include Tom Betts, Joe Busa, Gerda Gyori---and more recently, Melrose Johns and Suzy Valentine. Now we have Victoria Strickland! I thank all of you for the time and efforts you have contributed, and hope some of you newer members might be inspired to tell us what talents/experience/interests you may have that will help this wonderful club continue to grow and expand our mission. Suggestions are always welcome. Call me: [239-992-0113](tel:239-992-0113)

The Tree Sale will be 'old news' by the time you read this---and we expect great results and thank everyone in advance for their help. Clubs only function when everyone does something for the overall good.

Eat More Fruit! Grow It! Share it!

*Suzy Valentine*

## Guest Speaker for March:



Our speaker on March 14 will be **Richard Campbell, PhD**. Richard was born and raised in South Florida and has been involved in fruit tree horticulture his entire life. After many years as Senior Curator of Tropical Fruit at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Miami, Richard is now Chief Science Officer at Ciruli Brothers, LLC. In addition to editing *A Guide to Mangos in Florida*, he has done extensive writing, teaching, and research on tropical fruits around the globe.

Richard's topic will be "From the Forest to the Table: Exploring for, Conserving, Creating and Delivering New Fruit." He will share about his life's work—26 years at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and the challenges of his new role at Ciruli Brothers, LLC, where the focus is on delivering these exotic crops to the people of South Florida and the Western Hemisphere.

## Calendar of Events

3/4 Sat. – Bus Trip to Homestead, RSVP to Madeline, 239-851-4448

3/14 Tue. –Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM; Speaker: Richard Campbell; Topic: "From Forest to Table"

3/28 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7:00 PM

4/11 Tue. –Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM

4/25 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7:00 PM

## Announcements:

Free Jackfruit Trees (Gold Nugget seedlings) are available. Contact SandyPrager@gmail.com or call/text 239-313-3712.

Garden Tools for sale. Contact Annick Menard at 239-495-5929.

## Chores Outdoors: March Edition

By David & Jenny Burd

**CITRUS AND AVOCADOS:** It's time to fertilize citrus & avocados. Choose your favorite 6-4-6 or 8-2-8 or 10-2-10. Check the label to make sure the chlorine content is not more than 4%. Chlorine converts to salt; too much (usually in inexpensive fertilizers) is bad for the fruit trees. Sprinkle the fertilizer out by the dripline--the feeder roots are there.

When you see the new growth on the citrus, it's time to spray with either Safer Soap or BioWash, together with minor elements, to kill the psyllids and at the same time FEED the tree through the leaves. Granular fertilizer can take about 4 weeks before it will feed a tree.

Resist pruning citrus until after you see that the fruit has set, this way you prune selectively. Pruning before the flowers have set means less fruit. Remember to spray your pruning tools with rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide as you go from tree to tree; never use bleach as it will damage your pruning tools.

**AVOCADOS:** Use the same fertilizer as for citrus. It's normal for avocados to lose their leaves and just have flowers at this time of year. Also the trees will naturally drop some fruit, if there is a heavy set. Sadly, we are seeing more and more avocado trees dying because of the Redbay Ambrosia Beetle causing Laurel Wilt. Avocados are a redbay relative. One day a dead branch is evident, then another. After four or five weeks it looks as if the tree has been kissed with a blowtorch. The tree should be removed.

**ATEMOYA:** When you see new leaf buds forming, it's time to prune off at least a third of the past year's new growth. More severe pruning is fine to maintain a tree at your desired size.

**WEATHER IMPLICATIONS:** Because of the warm winter, many trees this year will not produce abundantly. Lychees and longans need low temperatures to trigger flowering, Persimmons also need a certain number of chill hours (about 45° F or below). Mangos, too, need cooler temperatures to trigger flowering. Some mango trees have set and then promptly aborted the tiny fruit--but might yet flower again.

On the other hand, warm winters are loved by jackfruit, soursop and guavas to name a few.

We are grateful for the harvest. Being able to share is a pleasure beyond price!

Everyone make sure to give a big thanks to David and Jenny Burd for providing us our *Chores Outdoors this Month tips* for each month. Thanks guys.

## **Fruit of the Month: Tamarind**

Scientific Name: *Tamarindus indica*

Family: Fabaceae (fka Leguminosae)

Tamarind is an adaptable low maintenance tree, valued for its shade and ornamental beauty as well as its abundant edible pods. Originating in eastern Africa, it's now widely grown in warm climates around the globe. Though it is not a fast grower, in its long life it can reach a height of eighty feet, and may bear fruit for a century or more. The tree prefers full sun and good drainage, but is drought resistant, will grow in poor soil, and survives hurricane-force winds. Pests and disease are seldom a problem, but the tree can be injured or killed if temperatures drop much below 30°.

The tree bears pods ranging in length from three to ten inches, often available over much of the year. Mature pods will keep on the tree for weeks, and store at room temperature for months. Inside the tamarind pod, surrounding the seeds, is a pasty brown pulp, similar in texture to a dried date. The outer shell is brittle, and separates easily from the flesh. Tamarind pulp has a distinctive tangy flavor that can range from primarily sour to somewhat sweet.

This fruit is widely used for cooking and medicinal purposes. It's said to benefit diabetics and those with digestive problems. Tamarind is a good source of thiamin, iron, and magnesium, as well as antioxidants. The fruit is a key ingredient in Worcestershire Sauce and is valued in ethnic cooking for use in drinks, chutney, sauces and candies.

This tree is worthy of consideration for homeowners who like to cook and have plenty of space.

## **Using Tamarind**

Asian and Hispanic markets carry tamarind paste year round. Search online for "tamarind recipes." Here are a few suggestions to get you started: Mexican Tamarind Mole, Indonesian Gado Gado, Indian Tamarind Chutney, Dominican Tamarind Balls, Thai Tamarind Satay, Tamarind Poultry Glaze. Cooking with tamarind is like taking a world tour!



Tamarind Fruits



Ground Tamarind



Tamarind Balls - Trinidad



Tamarind Flower



Tamarind Leaves and Pod



Tamarind Tree