

February 2018 – Black Sapote



Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club Newsletter

Message from the President

Hello Everyone,

My name is Andrew Jauquet and I was recently elected president of this great club. I am from South Africa and have missed the taste of mangos since I left roughly 13 years ago. The store bought ones just don't cut it, if you can even classify them as mangos. My love for them is what drew me to join the club about a year ago. I am a resident of Bonita Springs (off Strike Lane) and a local veterinarian in town. I am honored to have the opportunity to help the club grow, and institute new ideas and changes that will benefit everyone. I look forward to working with you all and doing what I can for the benefit of the club. See you at the next meeting! - *Andrew Jauquet*

Here is our 2018 Board of Directors!



WE ARE EXCITED for the new direction our new board will take us!

From left to right: Crafton Clift (Director), Victoria Strickland (Treasurer), Luis Garrido (Director), Andrew Jauquet (President), Jeneé Dampier (Vice President), and Berto Silva (Director). Not pictured: Anna Bailey (Secretary).

With younger members joining the club, we feel they will help usher us into the 21st century.

We have a **new facebook group** that you can join.

Just go to www.facebook.com/groups/bstfc

Guest Speaker for February:



Our speaker on February 13 will be **Will Wright** from the Tropical Fruit Society of Sarasota. His fascination with tropical fruit began on a visit to South America, and has become a passionate pursuit lasting over a quarter century. After acquiring an acre of land near Boca Grande, Will is one step closer to fulfilling his dream of building a fruit tree paradise.

Will's topic is "**Introduction to Tropical and Rare Fruit Gardening.**" He says, "I think perhaps this is the best presentation I have ever prepared." It covers all the basics of getting started in fruit tree gardening and includes recommendations for trees to consider for someone new to the hobby. This is an essential topic for our many new members. Long-timers will benefit, too, as they learn details about Will's environmentally friendly approach to fruit growing.

As a bonus, our speaker will have items for sale before and after the meeting. The items are listed below. Pre-orders are recommended.

Items for sale at the February General Meeting:

Granular Essential Elements, 5 lbs. for \$10 (retail price is \$20)

These minor elements make a huge difference in plant health and harvests.

9 Month Time Release Osmocote Fertilizer, 1# for \$10 (for 1-3 trees)

1/2 Gal. for \$20 (much better value)

Apply once in February or March, and you're all set for a year.

Organic Diatomaceous Earth, 1/2 gal.jar, \$15 (usually available in 25-50 lbs. only)

A "must have" for combatting nematodes, insect larvae, etc.

Plants for sale, 1 gal. for \$10

Dwarf Namwah Banana (*super productive & flavorful*)

Dwarf Iholena Banana (*new hybrid from Hawaii, excellent flavor*)

Goji Berry (*shrubs bearing nutritious small fruits*)

Dwarf Everbearing Mulberry (*manageable size, flavorful berries*)

Special Requests Welcome

PRE-ORDERS RECOMMENDED:

Contact Will Wright, tropicalandrarefruittrees@gmail.com or 941-321-5001

Payments accepted: cash, checks, credit cards, VENMO, PayPal.

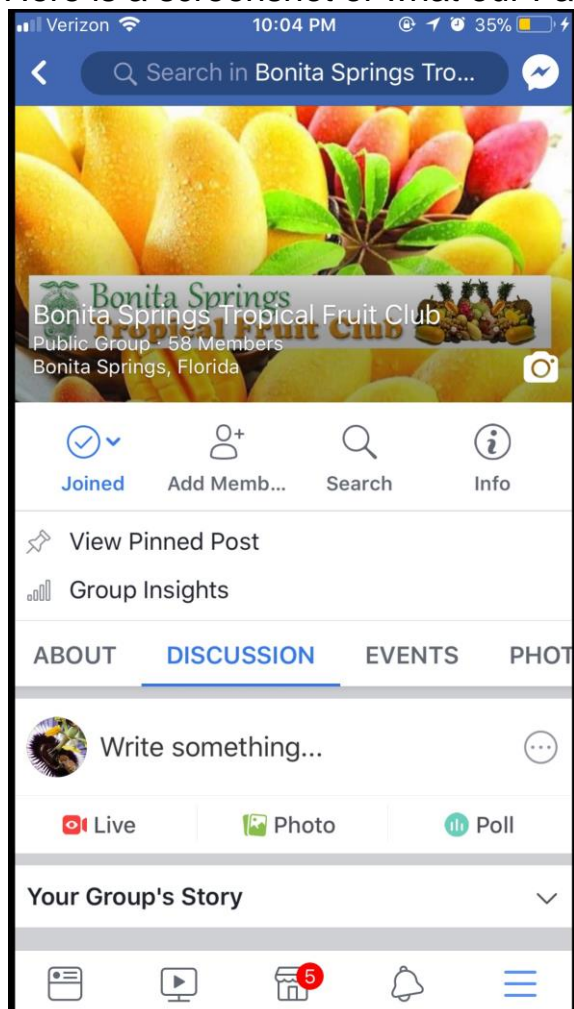
Tech Time

The address for our club's new Facebook group is www.facebook.com/groups/BSTFC/

Here is a screenshot of our new Facebook group, accessed from a computer.



Here is a screenshot of what our Facebook group may look like from your phone.



Chores Outdoors: February Edition

This month we decided to go back to basics with info for new members and a refresher for longtime members. The goal is to give encouragement for successful growing of fruit trees - tips from our hands-on experience of do's and don'ts. The don'ts are actually more important than the do's!

Whilst we live in a sub-tropical area, we do have some obstacles that occasionally show up to make growing more difficult, BUT - not impossible – eg: freeze, drought, flooding, high winds - yet despite these problems - as we drive around the area we see many healthy fruit trees.

When planning a fruit tree collection or even just one tree, it's best to know it's growing history, when is the fruit ready to harvest? What is the best fertilizer to use? What is the lowest temp it can stand before being damaged?

Points To Ponder Before Planting

- Does the Home Owners association where I live allow me to plant fruit trees? (some do not)!
- Will I be in the area when the fruit ripens, - eg if you are only here from Nov-April what will be fruiting during these months?
- Will the tree prosper where I plant it?
- Is the tree cold tender?
- Does the tree dislike standing water or wind? eg young carambola trees really dislike wind - so will struggle to get established. Papayas and Avocados will die in standing water or even a rainstorm stream of water from a drain pipe will inhibit healthy growth.
- Where should I plant the tree on my property? Not under the power lines - Not near the eaves or roofline of the house - Not to overhang my neighbors yard - Not where sprinkler, phone, cable or electric lines are underground.

When planting a tree Never put fertilizer in the hole, - wait at least one month before a light fertilizer program begins, also sprinkle out by the dripline, never close to the trunk.

Try micro jets to water the trees, this is the best water conservation system and inexpensive to install.

Knowing when Not to fertilize is more important than when to fertilize, eg Persimmons will abort the fruit if fertilized after the new leaves start to push - February or March.

We are still learning - even from our mistakes - So.....

When in doubt ask questions - we want to grow wonderful fruit..

Resist planting young trees until the end of February, check long range forecasts, because in the past there have been frosts at the end of February. There is still time early to mid February to prune back the peaches, nectarines, grapes and plums.

Never use liquid copper to spray mango flowers - Safersoap is - ha ha safer, also the Farm Soap will work. Follow instructions on the container.

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 — Black Sapote

Scientific Name: *Diospyros digyna*

Family: Ebenaceae

The black sapote tree, with glossy thick evergreen leaves, grows into a handsome landscape specimen within a few short years. Eventually, it may reach 80 feet tall. It bears a unique, but homely, green skinned fruit three to five inches in diameter.

Black sapote is a member of the ebony family and a persimmon relative. It originated in lowlands of Central America and Mexico and was distributed by the Spanish to the Caribbean and Asia. The tree does well in a variety of soil types, tolerates brief flooding, and bears an adequate harvest even when fertilizing is neglected. Black sapote may be damaged or killed if the temperature drops much below 30 degrees. With its messy fruit drop, the tree is best planted a distance from walkways and buildings.

Most black sapote trees are grown from seed. Seedlings may be completely male trees that never bear; otherwise, they will bear within four to eight years. Few selected cultivars are available in Florida. When available, 'Excaliber' is recommended for its large superior fruit, pleasant sweet flavor, creamy texture, and seedless tendencies.

The oblate fruit are variable in quality. Typically, black sapote bear December through March, though some trees have off-season tendencies and bear in the summer. Fruit is harvested when skin darkens to olive green, then allowed to ripen at room temperature until mushy and dark. The pulp is seldom eaten fresh, but is used in a variety of recipes.

Using Black Sapote

When fruit is fully ripe and showing signs of deterioration, cut in half and scoop out the pulp. Discard skin and any seeds. The pulp has a chocolate pudding appearance, leading some to call black sapote the "chocolate pudding fruit." Indeed, with the addition of chocolate syrup, sweetener, and optional whipped cream, it makes a passable substitute. The pulp is a superb ingredient in many desserts—mousse, pie filling, ice cream, milk shakes, or sweet breads. To enhance the flavor, add honey, vanilla, orange juice, coconut milk, or flavoring extracts.



Black Sapote Flower



Black Sapote Fruit

Photos compliments of Fruitscapes LLC
Cover photo compliments of daleysfruit.com.au

Calendar of Club Events

2/13 Tue. –Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM

Speaker: Will Wright, Topic: “Intro to Fruit Gardening”

2/27 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7:00 PM

3/13 Tue. –Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM

3/27 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7:00 PM

Announcements:

THE TREE SALE on Saturday, January 27th went well! People from all over SWFL showed up. We look forward to the next one! Pictures may be in the March newsletter.

THANK YOU to all who bring fruit to share at club meetings. Please continue to bring fruit samples and other treats prepared and table ready. A big thank you to Mary Allen for her great service in the kitchen on club nights!

Visit our website: <http://www.bonitaspringtropicalfruitclub.com/>

And our Facebook group page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BSTFC>

Our Facebook page is being updated with new information.

We welcome YOUR input and pictures as well.

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 \$15 per individual, \$25 per household per year. Nametags, if needed, are \$6 each. 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: Andrew Jauquet

Vice President: Jeneé Dampier

Secretary: Anna Bailey

Treasurer: Victoria Strickland

Director: Berto Silva

Director: Crafton Clift

Director: Luis Garrido

Email us at Info@BonitaSpringsTropicalFruitClub.com.