



## April 2016 – Jaboticaba



## 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, except July and August. 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.

**Tree sale:** Semi-annual tree sales in spring and fall at Riverside Park in downtown Bonita Springs raise 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 year, plus \$5 additional for each new name badge required. 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: Kathy Pflugrad

Vice President: Suzy Valentine

Secretary: Denise Houghtaling & Adrienne Diaz

Treasurer: Melrose John

Director: Berto Silva

Director: Crafton Clift

Director: Rickford John

Past President: Madeline Bohannon

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

## Guest Speaker for April:



### Guest Speaker for April

Steve Cucura will speak on “Best Tropical Fruit Cultivars for SWFL.” His presentation will be especially helpful to those who will be assisting customers at our upcoming tree sale, as well as for members looking to add to their own collections.

Steve is co-owner of Fruitscapes Nursery on Pine Island and has a long history of cultivating tropical fruits here in SWFL. As a member of the Rare Fruit Council, Fruitscapes embraces diversity, manifested by dozens of varieties of mangos and a collection of rare tropical fruits found nowhere else in our area. In addition, an onsite fruit stand provides the opportunity to experience rare fruits firsthand.

## Announcements:

**Tree Sale**—Saturday, April 23 at Riverside Park, 9AM-3PM. Volunteers needed; contact Tom Betts at [tibetts@comcast.net](mailto:tibetts@comcast.net) or 239-498-0003.

**Fruit Club Library**—A reference library is being created for our club. If you have books on tropical fruit you are willing to either donate or loan for this purpose, please hand them to Suzy Valentine at an upcoming meeting.

**Librarian Needed**—If you are willing to volunteer to oversee or help with the new reference library, please contact Suzy Valentine ([suzy.valentine@att.net](mailto:suzy.valentine@att.net)).

**Fruit Photos Needed** - If you have quality photos of tropical fruits and/or fruit trees they are needed for a presentation to be presented at the library this month by Kathy Pflugrad. Please email them as soon as possible: [kspflugrad@gmail.com](mailto:kspflugrad@gmail.com) or call 239-822-7151 with questions. Thank you!

**Get Acquainted**—It’s been suggested that we briefly introduce one or two club members each month in this newsletter, similar to last month’s “Meet the Board” feature. If you’re willing to be introduced, or wish to nominate someone for inclusion, please contact Kathy Pflugrad at [kspflugrad@gmail.com](mailto:kspflugrad@gmail.com) or 239-822-7151.

## Upcoming Tree Sale

Tree sale coordinator, Tom Betts, says, **“I hope you have saved Saturday, April 23, 2016, on your calendar! That’s Bonita Springs Arbor Day and our club is participating with a tropical fruit tree sale at Riverside Park.** It is a BIG day for our club to show participation and promote the spirit of the City of Bonita Springs with a message of the importance of trees to our community.

**“Our Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club happens to specialize in ‘tropical fruit trees’ and is recognized by the city for our efforts and the expertise we contribute to this event.** We have **printed flyers** promoting this Arbor Day Tree Sale and we hope every one of you is using these to promote the event in advance. We also **need your help** on April 23, starting from 7:00 AM to set up trees and post signs, followed by selling trees from 9 AM to 3 PM, then for clean up afterward. Lunch and drinks will be provided for club member volunteers. Come on out and help, have fun and bring a friend. If you cannot help, still stop by and say hello. We’d love to see your smiling face and have your moral support. **See you at Riverside Park on Saturday, April 23rd!**

## Message from the President

There have been a multitude of fruit-related agritourism opportunities here lately. If you’ve participated you’ve undoubtedly gained a deeper appreciation for the diversity of crops and agricultural enterprises in our region.

On March 16 I went on the Pine Island Farm and Grove Tour organized by the Lee County Extension office. Stops at Pine Island Botanicals, Fruitscapes, Randell Research Center, and Promised Land Mangoes each yielded surprises. Among other things, I learned that a Pine Island business was a Martha Stewart American Made award winner in 2015, that a Pine Island archeological dig proved that papayas were growing in Florida 1800 years ago, and that a local mango grower is the first ever woman on the National Mango Board.

Many of you went on the BSTFC sponsored bus trip to Homestead on March 5 and gave it rave reviews; thank you, Madeline, for organizing such a great outing. I hope some of you attended ECHO’s Global Food and Farm Festival on March 19, too. This wonderful annual event in North Fort Myers is always inspiring, educational, and enjoyable.

Watch for future events in our newsletter, google “Lee (or *Collier*) County Extension Tour,” or check out [echonet.org](http://echonet.org), and enjoy the wealth of opportunities available.

## **Chores Outdoors this Month** from David & Jenny Burd

**Mangos**--finally, the trees are a glorious sight heavy with flowers. Don't forget to hang the bait bottles to attract the flies to pollinate. We are noticing that most of the trees are blooming at the same time, so, early, mid and late mangos may (??) come ripe closer together! Hey, we will cope with whatever the trees give us.

The **Lychees** and **Longans** have flowered and set fruit by now. If you desire to have much larger fruit, simply remove half of the flower panicle by cutting the middle out of each one. Of course if the tree is 20 feet tall, then that would be a "no no." Minor elements (micro nutrients) sprayed LIGHTLY at this time would also be helpful. Also, fertilize with 6-4-6 or 8-2-8 or 10-2-10--starting at half the distance from the trunk to just beyond the dripline.

**Citrus** has mostly finished flowering & setting the fruit. If not, wait for the white petals to fall off; then it will be the best time to prune because you can be selective about your pruning. (Citrus can be pruned anytime but if you prune after the fruit has been harvested and before flowering, you are cutting off potential flowers.) Don't forget to clean your pruning tools as you go from tree to tree, either rubbing alcohol or hydrogen peroxide --never use bleach, it will damage your pruning tools.

**Avocados**--remember it's normal for the trees 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.

**How to Make Bait Bottles to Attract Pollinators:** Start with a regular water bottle. Pierce a few holes in the sides, about 1 inch from the bottom. These holes should be very small to prevent flies from getting into the bottle to lay eggs. Inside the bottle, put a little piece of fish and a tiny amount of water, then close the cap. Tie a string around the neck and hang the bottle in your mango tree. **We will have some bait bottles available at the next meeting.**

## Calendar of Events

- 4/12 Tue. – Regular Meeting. 6:45pm Speaker: Steve Cucura of Fruitscapes  
Topic: Cultivars for SWFL
- 4/23 Sat. – BSTFC Spring Tree Sale at Riverside Park, Bonita Springs
- 4/26 Tue. – Board of Directors Meeting, 6 PM (tentative)
- 4/26 Tue. – Workshop Meeting, 7 PM

### **Summary - Board of Directors    BONITA SPRINGS TROPICAL FRUIT CLUB, INC.**

February 23, 2016 6:00PM Site: Fellowship Hall  
First Methodist Church, Bonita Springs, Fl

PRESENT Madeline Bohannon, Denise Houghtaling, Berto Silva, Kathy Pflugrad, Suzy Valentine,  
Crafton Clift, Rickford John, Melrose John.        ABSENT        n/a

#### Summary of meeting as follows:

1. Minutes from January were accepted.
2. Melrose John gave treasurer report.
3. Website & Newsletter – Rachel to continue to do website and newsletter for minimal fee.
4. Book Order - The club is ordering books for resale.
5. Library – The club is interested in starting a library for the membership to utilize.
6. Storage Unit Fees were paid
7. Everglades Wonder Gardens – Madeline to chair the planting at Everglades Wonder Gardens along with Suzy and Crafton's help
8. Tree Sale – Advertising for the tree sale will be implemented by members and officers of the club.
9. Public Relations Chair – Kathy appointed Madeline to be the Public Relations Chair for a 2 month period.
10. Bus Trip – A bus trip is planned for March 5, 2016 and flyers were made up.
11. Membership Increase & Promotion – Meetup will be added to the various ways to promote the clubs' membership and interest.
12. Electronic Voting – The officers will not vote on certain items via email or other electronic means in between BOD meetings.
13. Next Meeting – Tuesday, April 26, 2016 at 6pm.

Submitted by Denise Houghtaling

## **Fruit of the Month – Jaboticaba**

**Scientific Name:** *Myrciaria* spp.

**Family:** Myrtaceae

Jaboticaba is native to central and southern Brazil's subtropical Atlantic forest areas, but has now adapted to the tropical regions of that country, with some even growing in sandy coastal areas. Jaboticaba is well suited to cultivation in southwest Florida, and is popular for its attractive landscaping qualities as well as its grape-like fruit. The small tree has dense lacy foliage, and masses of snowy blossoms emerging from trunk and limbs, which mature quickly into superbly flavored fruit that at times exceeds the size of a ping-pong ball.

The most common cultivar in Florida is the "Sabara" named for its city of origin in Brazil. This variety may take seven to ten years to fruit from seed and produces its main crop in March and April, but will bear year round when well cared for. When ripe, the "Sabara" is sweet and purple to black in color.

Other jaboticaba cultivars produce fruit of various colors—white, yellow, pink, red, blue, purple—ranging from sweet to somewhat acidic, depending on the variety. They grow well and fruit faster in large pots where constant moisture and acidic environment can be maintained, and organic food such as cottonseed meal can be applied. The easiest varieties for container growing are Grimal, Coronato de Restinga, and Red Jaboticaba. Red jaboticaba may fruit in three to five years from seed, while the other two mentioned take five to seven years. All jaboticaba varieties may be grown in the ground as well, but will require regular irrigation. The main Florida supplier of jaboticaba seedlings is [FlyingFoxFruits.com](http://FlyingFoxFruits.com).

### **Jaboticaba Recipes**

Jaboticaba have a short shelf life, and are most delicious eaten out of hand, squeezing the pulp into your mouth and discarding the tough skin. If you have an overabundant crop, you can find recipes online for jaboticaba jam, jelly, drinks and pies. Enjoy!



