



June 2016 – Barbados Cherry



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.

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 \$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: 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.

Guest Speaker for June:



Arlo Simonds will speak at our June 14 meeting.

He was instrumental in establishing FGCU's food forest which contains many tropical fruit species.

He now serves as Garden Coordinator and Permaculture Designer at Pine Manor Community Gardens.

Arlo's topic is "Fruit Trees in Permaculture."

He will address both the place of fruit trees in permaculture layouts and their impact on local food deserts.

Announcements:

Refreshments—A big thank you to the many who brought refreshments for our May meeting. It's a big help when you bring them in a bowl (or basket or platter) ready to serve. If you can help in the kitchen for our June or July meeting, please let Mary Allen know at 239-649-9000.

BSTFC Promo at Rural King—We have permission to promote BSTFC at Rural King in Bonita Springs with a tasting table at the front of the store. Date is yet to be determined. Are you able to donate ripe fruit or a couple hours of your time? If so, please call Mary Allen at 239-649-9000.

Fruit Club Library—A reference library has been created for our club. If you have books on tropical fruit you can donate or loan to BSTFC, or you are willing to volunteer as a librarian, please contact Suzy Valentine (suzy.valentine@att.net).

Message from the President

Your Board of Directors recently voted to begin offering General Meetings year round. So mark your calendars—we will have presentations on July 12 and August 9. Summer is peak fruit harvest in southwest Florida, so it only makes sense to get together and enjoy a bountiful tasting table, fellowship with likeminded people, and an opportunity to learn from an expert.

Our July 12 meeting will be a real treat. Mike Winterstein from the USDA in Miami will speak about mangoes and helpful USDA resources. He will bring along mangoes from the USDA grove for us to sample. Plan now to be there!

Progress & Expenditures

Website: Our website hosting contract was set to expire in May. Webmaster Rachel Stone was able to save the club money by setting us up for a three year renewal. The club will spend \$497.00 for a three year contract rather than \$243.51 for a one year contract. Renewing yearly would have cost \$730.53 over three years (or more due to annual increases). Thank you, Rachel, for saving the club over \$230.

Meetup.com: Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club now has a meetup listing. Already, about 50 new people have signed up to receive notices of club events, and as a result many new people visited our last meeting. Check it out and sign up at [Meetup.com > Bonita Springs Tropical Fruit Club](https://www.meetup.com/Bonita-Springs-Tropical-Fruit-Club/).

Everglades Wonder Gardens Project: Our club has been invited to plant a fruit plot at Everglades Wonder Gardens. The committee overseeing this is Crafton Clift, Suzy Valentine, and Madeline Bohannon, chairperson. In return for our investment of effort and expense, the public will be provided a broader exposure to tropical fruits and to our club.

Any dirt, trees, etc. will need to come through the gate at the front and be carted in. We need a club member with a pickup truck to bring the first 15 to 20 bags from MW Horticulture to Wonder Gardens and need helpers to dig holes and plant trees, likely within the next three weeks.

To get involved in this great community outreach project, please call Madeline, Suzy or Crafton and let them know when you're able to help—(239) 851-4448, 992-0113, or 455-8831.

Chores Outdoors: June Edition

By David & Jenny Burd

It's time to apply cottonseed meal to your jaboticaba (and other acid loving plants) if you have not done so recently. Cottonseed meal has many minor elements in addition to its natural acid. I am amazed at how much fruit my jaboticaba tree has been producing as a result of adding this!

I had already been using mulch (not cypress), 6-6-6 or 10-10-10 and a little 0-0-22 or 0-0-18, and watering three times a week. After following Dr. Steve Brady's recommendation for cottonseed meal, applied lightly about three times a year, the tree began producing abundantly.

Take note—cottonseed meal does have the aroma of manure when wet. It is not harmful to dogs who love to roll in and eat it. It is used for animal feed and can be purchased at feed stores such as Southland General Store on 951 just north of Golden Gate Parkway.

Other jaboticaba problems and solutions:

1. Tip burn caused by either not enough water, or from salt in the fertilizer. If the fertilizer has more than 4% muriate of potash, look for a better formula. If you have a well check salt levels in the water. Jaboticabas hate salt. If there is a big windstorm from the gulf, it's good to hose the tree immediately afterward to wash off the salt spray.
2. Worms on the fruit—gently hose off the dead flower petals.
3. Our fine feathered friends love these beautiful round fruits. The usual deterrents *might* work—e.g. shiny tape hanging in the branches, etc. Your fruit also may be dessert for a family of raccoons, who will clean the tree in one moonlight sitting!

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 – Barbados Cherry

Scientific Name: *Malpighia emarginata* Family: Malpighiaceae



Barbados Cherry is worth growing despite its identity crisis. Formerly known as *Malpighia puniceifolia*, recent authorities have renamed it *M. emarginata*. You may also find this fruit referred to as *M. glabra*; authorities disagree as to whether there are two species or one. Multiple common names only add to the confusion: West Indian Cherry, Wild Crepe Myrtle, Acerola Cherry.

Acerola, a common form of Vitamin C, is derived from Barbados Cherries. According to the USDA, this fruit exceeds all other foods as a source of Vitamin C, though the vitamin content varies somewhat based upon growing conditions and ripeness. In general, one cherry supplies more than the adult daily requirement, and ounce for ounce they provide about 30 times the Vitamin C in oranges. In addition, Barbados Cherries are consumed as a natural remedy for a broad spectrum of ailments in Central & South America.

Malpighia emarginata is attractive, productive, adaptable and easy to grow. It adapts to a variety of soils and requires little maintenance. It can be kept as a tree reaching fifteen feet tall, trained as a large multi-trunked shrub, or pruned as a hedge. The tree begins to produce within about two years of planting, and can bear three to five crops spread over much of the year. The shiny green foliage, abundant pink blossoms, and bright red cherry-like fruit make Barbados Cherry a valuable addition to the landscape. An established tree is hardy to 27° or 28°.

These fruits are best consumed immediately after picking, as they can begin to deteriorate quickly. To retain the highest levels of Vitamin C avoid heating them. In their raw state, Barbados Cherries can be eaten out of hand, or processed for juice or sauce. They can also be frozen, but will not retain their shape when thawed. Jams, syrups and pies can be made from the fruit as well. Usually, it's necessary to add a sweetener, though some cultivars have a higher than average sugar content.

Whatever you call it, this tree should be considered for your dooryard collection.



Fruit photos throughout newsletter courtesy of Wikipedia, IFAS, and Fruitscapes.

Calendar of Events

6/14 Tue. – Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM. Speaker: Arlo Simmonds;
Topic: Fruit Trees in Permaculture

6/28 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7 PM

7/12 Tue. – Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM. Speaker: Mike Winterstein;
Topic: Mangoes & USDA Resources

7/26 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7 PM

8/9 Tue. – Regular Meeting, 6:45 PM. Speaker: Har Mahdeem;
Topic: Fruits of the Central Amazon

8/23 Tue. –Workshop Meeting, 7 PM

Recipes

John Elia brought delicious guacamole to our April workshop meeting. Here's the recipe:

JOHN ELIA'S GUACAMOLE

Combine:

4 Hass Avocados, smashed

5 teaspoons Lime Juice, preferably fresh

½ teaspoon Cumin

Salt & Pepper to taste.

Optional Additions:

Garlic, chopped very fine

Onion, chopped very fine

Tomato, chopped very fine

Dash of Hot Sauce