



## SPS Winter Meeting

We'll return to Savannah, Georgia's first city, and the Georgia Coastal Botanical Gardens for the SPS winter meeting on Saturday, March 1, 2014. Expect another great get-together with plenty of palm and subtropical plant talk, polar vortex talk, garden tours, palm exploration stories, the annual SPS palm and rare plant auction—all packed into an all-round enjoyable day. We'll gather at the garden's Bethel Burton Conference Center.

### Agenda

- 9.00 am SPS board meeting
- 10.00 am Plant sale
- 10.45 am Welcome and announcements
- 11.00 am "Strategic Palm Hunting in Middle Georgia" by Tom McClendon. Tom's stories will feature lots of photos, maps and the strategy he's refined for finding populations of native palms in the Southeast.
- 12.00 pm Lunch (bring cash—\$1s and \$5s—for pizza)
- 12.45 pm Plant auction. Bring your rare or not-so-rare palms and other plants and help support SPS with the proceeds from your valuable contributions. No plants to bring? Then just join in the bidding!
- Afternoon Tour the Coastal Garden's plant collections, with an eye to the testing temperature of the low of 18°F on January 7.

There is no fee to visit the gardens or to attend the SPS winter meeting. Members and visitors alike are welcome, so bring a friend or two!

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It may take some getting used to, but

*this*

is now

*this.*



## SPS Calendar

### 2014

#### SPS Winter Meeting

Saturday, March 1, 2014  
Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens (at the Historic Bamboo Farm)  
Savannah, Georgia

#### SPS Spring Meeting

Atlanta, Georgia  
May 2014

#### International Palm Society Biennial

May 24-30, 2014  
Miami and Key West, Florida  
Visit [www.palms.org](http://www.palms.org) for details.

#### SPS Summer Meeting

Raleigh, North Carolina  
July 2014

#### SPS Fall Meeting

Southeastern Tennessee  
Early October 2014

#### Southeastern Citrus Exposition

Saturday, November 15, 2014  
Tifton, Georgia  
Visit [www.facebook.com/SoutheasternCitrusExpo](http://www.facebook.com/SoutheasternCitrusExpo) for details.

## Directions

The Georgia Coastal Gardens is located at 2 Canebrake Road, Savannah, Georgia 31419. Visit online at [www.coastalgeorgiabg.org](http://www.coastalgeorgiabg.org).

From Exit 94 on Interstate 95, take Abercorn Expressway (GA 204) toward Savannah. Go about a block and turn right on Gateway Boulevard South. Immediately turn left on Canebrake Road and continue for .7 miles. The gardens are on the left. Once inside the gardens, turn right and continue to the parking lot.

## The Arboretum at Armstrong Atlantic State University

If you have any time during your Savannah visit, devote an hour or two to Armstrong Atlantic State University's campus-wide arboretum. There are fantastic collections of camellias, conifers, ferns, gingers, evergreen magnolias, pittosporums, and international and primitive gardens. Most plants are labeled. AASU is located at 11935 Abercorn Street, Savannah GA 31419, and is about 7 miles from the Georgia Coastal Botanical Garden. Visit online for directions at [www.armstrong.edu/Departments/arboretum/arboretum\\_welcome](http://www.armstrong.edu/Departments/arboretum/arboretum_welcome).

## SPS Members Survey

In October 2013 an online survey was distributed to current SPS members. There was a very good response rate for the survey, with 46 of 154 members completing the survey. Of the respondents, 70% were from the member states of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. The remaining 30% were from states or countries outside of the service area. Following are the survey results and recommendations that SPS has adopted as a result of the survey.

### Meetings

57% of respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that attending meetings is important. This category was likely influenced by whether a member lived in an area where meetings tend to be held, as 66% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to drive 50 to 150 miles for a meeting. A strong majority (61%) indicated that attending meetings is a "very important" benefit of membership.

***Recommendations:** Meetings should continue to be held four times per year at various locations. However, the leadership of SPS should examine geographical clusters of members and attempt to hold meetings within 100 miles of areas of dense membership to make attendance convenient for as many members as possible.*

### Southeastern Palms journal

76% of respondents either "strongly agreed" or "agreed" that receiving a paper copy of the magazine was important, and an overwhelming majority (87%) indicated that the magazine in whatever format is a "very important" benefit of membership.

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## Contacts SPS

[www.sepalms.org](http://www.sepalms.org)

For full addresses, see your copy of the SPS Membership Directory.

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When asked to prioritize article topics, the top five were:

- Hardy palms
- Subtropical plants
- Back yard reports
- Hardy citrus, and
- Travel/plant exploration.

**Recommendations:** *Publication of Southeastern Palms in a printed format should continue for as long as possible given financial restraints and availability of volunteers to process and mail. Members should be asked to contribute as much material as possible to give it a local flavor. Given the popularity of the magazine, SPS should consider paying someone to handle its production.*

### **Other publications**

A clear majority (65%) saw other publications, such as *Hardy Palms for the Southeast* and *Hardy Citrus for the Southeast*, as a “very important” benefit of membership.

**Recommendations:** *Continue to offer new publications and update existing ones. SPS should actively explore offering publications in e-book format to lower production costs.*

### **Hometown Grant**

Only 17% of respondents indicated that the Hometown Grant was a “very important” benefit of membership, although 48% indicated that it was “somewhat important.”

**Recommendation:** *Discontinue the Hometown Grant and divert existing funding elsewhere.*

### **Website**

41% of respondents indicated that the web site is a “very important” benefit of membership.

**Recommendations:** *Although no clear majority existed on the importance of a web site to existing membership, an Internet presence is absolutely crucial for communication to the public. Efforts should focus on providing information about the SPS, offering samples of journals and publications as teasers, and serving as a tool for new member recruitment. Given the popularity of several existing message boards, SPS should not devote resources to competing with these.*

### **Palm collection at the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens**

A majority of respondents (52%) saw this initiative as a “very important” benefit of membership.

**Recommendations:** *Continue to maintain and develop the relationship between SPS and the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens (the Bamboo Farm). Divert funds formerly devoted to the Hometown Grant, \$500 per year, to the purchase of palms, either by directly purchasing palms or by earmarked donation to the Gardens. SPS should consider the Coastal Georgia Botanical Gardens as its home base and hold at least one meeting per year at that location.*

### **Plant auctions and plant sales**

92% of respondents indicated that plant auctions and plant sales were either a “very important” (46%) or “somewhat important” (46%) benefit of membership. The level of importance likely is related to the frequency that a member attends meetings where these events take place.

**Recommendations:** *Continue to offer plant auctions and plant sales, focusing on palms and plants not readily available elsewhere, if possible. Consider working with local and regional nurseries to develop “Recommended by the Southeastern Palm Society” species and cultivars for the region.*

Thanks to everyone who completed the survey and offered your opinions.

# Fall Meeting Report

A great benefit of being a SPS member is the opportunity to visit gardens we'd never know of otherwise, and to be treated as honored guests when we make a visit.

A beautiful, mild fall day greeted the 35 SPS members and guests who gathered in Glen Saint Mary, Florida, on October 12, 2013 for the SPS fall meeting.

Lin and Magi Taber treated us to a tour of Glen Saint Mary Nurseries, an ornamentals nursery founded in 1882 by Lin's ancestor George Lindley Taber. We visited the nursery's historic homes and gardens, and saw many mature palms, including a planting of the dwarf form of *Sabal minor* whose origins are forgotten.

After lunch we visited North Glen, the home and garden of Kyle and Jeanette Brown, just a few miles north. Though situated in northeastern Florida just west of Jacksonville, Kyle has spent over 40 years amassing a palm collection deserving of botanical garden status. The many palm species show a maturity that few of us are accustomed to seeing so far north, and a number of containerized palms help round out the collection with tender species. Plenty of cycads, subtropical conifers and woody lilies were on display for our enjoyment, too!

Photos, top to bottom:

1. Lin Taber provided transport for SPS members around the expansive estate at Glen Saint Mary Nurseries.
2. Fall meeting hosts Lin Taber and Kyle Brown.
3. An unusual dwarf *Butia* palm at North Glen, the garden on Kyle and Jeanette Brown.

Photos: Jeff Stevens

