

Southern California Bamboo

The newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society.
 A California 501 (c) 3 non-profit educational charitable corporation, incorporated July 22, 1991
 Chapter Web site: <http://www.ABSSoCal.org>

Volume 17, No. 1

February, 2007

Scheduled Meetings, Work Parties, and Sales 2007

Feb. 24	2:00 pm	1 st Annual Banquet (details inside)
Mar. 24	10:00 am 3:00 pm	Joint Meeting with Palm Society at LA Arboretum Board Meeting
Apr. 28	9:30 am 3:00 pm	Bamboo Show and Sale at Quail Botanical Gardens Board Meeting
May 19- 20	10:00 am	Two day Bamboo Sale and Bamboo Learning Event at the San Diego Zoo
Jun. 16	10:00 am	Meeting at South Coast Botanic Gardens in Palos Verdes Peninsula
Jul. 21	10:00 am	July Craft Day at Quail Botanical Gardens
Aug. 18	10:00 am	Meeting at Member's House (TBD)
Sep. 15	9:30 am 3:00 pm	Bamboo Show and Sale at Quail Botanical Gardens Board Meeting
Oct. 11-13		International Conference on Modern Bamboo Structures in Chansha, Hunan, China Prof. Yan XIAO (213)740-6130
Nov. 2-4 Nov. 17	10:00 am	ABS National Meeting at Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, PA Invited Lecturer (TBD)
Dec. 17		No meeting scheduled
<i>Meetings are usually held on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Unscheduled days of bamboo collection maintenance are often held at Quail Botanical Gardens, Encinitas, CA, on Saturdays, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. This calendar is subject to change. For the latest calendar it is best to consult the Web version.</i>		

Message from the Editor

We have many exciting events planned for the near future. These include the first annual awards banquet in February, a first ever joint meeting with the Palm Society of Southern

California in March, our Spring bamboo sale at Quail Botanical Gardens in April, and our first ever bamboo sale at the San Diego Zoo in May. Please mark your calendars and plan accordingly. Progress has been made on the bamboo quarantine greenhouse site and design. Carl Rowland has been

issued a federal import permit. Please see below for an article on the guidelines to importing bamboo.

January 2007 Work Party

Seven people showed up to help divide several large boxes of bamboo at the reference collection. The species propagated include *Semiarundinaria* (3 varieties), and 2 varieties of *Phyllostachys*. This work generated 50-60 5 gallon sized plants which will be sold at upcoming bamboo sales. On behalf of ABS-SoCal, Carl Rowland would like to extend a big thank you to those who showed up to help with this arduous task.

Membership Renewals

Please check your address label to see that your ABS-SoCal membership is current for 2007. A form is provided at the end of this newsletter to facilitate membership renewal.

First Annual ABS-SoCal Awards Banquet

The first annual ABS-SoCal awards banquet is to be held in the Quail Botanical Gardens' Ecke Building **Saturday, February 24, 2007** at 2:00 pm. The purpose of this event is to provide long overdue honors and recognition to certain members of ABS-SoCal. These individuals are persons of influence. If you are new to ABS-SoCal, this will be a chance for you to see those who have made a difference in the world of bamboo.

This event is being organized by the capable hands of Jill Marie Thorburn (Mayor of Bonsall, CA) with the help of Suzi Ironmonger (Owner of Cycad Center) and JoAnne Wyman (President of the American Bamboo Society). Carl Rowland (President of ABS-SoCal) and Pierre Domercq (Recording Secretary of ABS-SoCal) in collaboration with Jill Marie Thorburn will be officiating the event.

A silent auction and a live auction will be held to help raise money for ABS-SoCal. Suzi Ironmonger is in charge of the auction arrangements. Suzi is asking for contributions for both auctions. These contributions need not be limited to bamboo but may include other items or services. Please telephone Suzi at (760)723-4710 in order to contribute to these auctions and to receive proper recognition in our written program.

A Mexican Fiesta Buffet will be served. The cost of attending the banquet is \$10 for adults. The cost for children ages 5-12 is \$5. Please, please, R.S.V.P. by February 19, 2007 to Jill Marie Thorburn by phone: (760)535-2998, fax: "Attn Jill" (760)941-9595, or e-mail:

teamthorburn@hotmail.com. Payment may be made to ABS-SoCal, 5387 Topaz St., Alta Loma, CA 91701. The suggested attire is casual. This is a bamboo event you will not want to miss!

March 2007 Meeting with Palm Society of Southern California

Many of our members are plant lovers belonging to multiple plant societies. Here is an opportunity to meet fellow plant lovers of the palm persuasion at a location which has done a lot recently to improve its bamboo status. If you haven't been to the Los Angeles Arboretum recently, we recommend that you visit in March during our joint meeting to see all the recent plantings of novel bamboo species. Of course, this is also an opportunity to make new friends as well. ABS-SoCal members will be admitted free for this event. The LA Arboretum is located at 301 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA 91007. Phone (626)821-3222 for more information. Also see below for rough draft of agenda provided by Timothy Phillips, Superintendent of the LA Arboretum.

April 2007 Spring Bamboo Sale at Quail Botanical Gardens

Due to the recent finding of the new bamboo mealybug pest, **all** plants to be sold at our April sale will have to be inspected by the San Diego county entomologist. This is intended to serve as advance notice that anyone selling bamboo at the sale will have to bring his plant(s) earlier than usual, possibly a full week in advance, to a designated location at

May 2007 Spring Bamboo Sale II at San Diego Zoo

By Carl Rowland

We are getting close to signing an agreement with the San Diego Zoo for our first ever Spring bamboo sale at the Zoo. This is an exciting two day event that will (upon signing the agreement) take place May 19 & 20. We will also have the opportunity to man an information booth that will allow us to spread bamboo knowledge and interest in the community.

This event will require membership participation which we will seek in our next newsletter. We are already getting pledges from some of the larger growers for manpower and assistance. Anyone who is interested will be welcomed...and needed!

Here is a cursory list of some items of interest pertaining to the sale. The next newsletter will be more in depth.

- On approval of the space request we will have about 1600 square feet to display our bamboos inside the main plaza.
- We will have a large area just outside the exit to hold excess bamboo stock and to store plants that have been sold.
- The event will start at 10am and end at 3pm on both the 19th and 20th.
- This event is called "The Treasures of Trees" and is meant to raise awareness of what can be done with wood in all its forms.

Quail Botanical Gardens (yet to be determined). We regret the inconvenience, however, it is imperative that bamboos sold under our permit remain disease and pest-free. We are still working with Quail Botanical Gardens to determine the where and when of the pre-inspection. If you would like to sell bamboo and have any questions contact Carl Rowland at 619.507.0826. More details about the show and sale are to follow in the April 2007 newsletter

- We will have a 10'x10' booth that will need to be decorated and manned during the hours 10-3 both days.
- The booth will be used to communicate bamboo knowledge. We will be allowed to display business cards. I will have more guidance later on how commercial members will operate at this booth.
- All potted bamboo plants will have only grease pencil markings. The Zoo will not allow commercial stickers or the appearance of commercial sales. All plants will have a similar look to represent the fact that we are all ABS SoCal members first.
- It may be possible to sell other items at the info booth but they must not infringe on any item the Zoo sells. Example; the Zoo sells t-shirts - we can not. I will get further guidance on this issue.
- The Zoo will provide all signs from their sign shop.

Rats! Plant grows India's rodent population

Officials worry about future famine, pay farmers to poison or trap vermin

By Wasbir Hussain

The Associated Press

Nov. 17, 2006

Reprinted with the permission of The Associated Press

GAUHATI, India- A rare flowering of wild bamboo plants has caused the rat population to

explode in northeastern India, raising fears of famine as the rodents rampage through rice paddies, officials said Thursday.

An alert has been declared in Mizoram state, with authorities supplying rat poison free to nearly 10,000 farmers and paying them to make bamboo traps, said local Agriculture Minister H. Rammawi.

“The situation in Mizoram state is alarming. Farmers are killing rats in tons after we directed them to do so using poison or locally made traps,” Rammawi told The Associated Press.

The rat population is growing rapidly as they feast on flowering wild bamboo plants- a phenomenon that usually occurs roughly every 50 years, Rammawi said.

The last time the bamboo flowered in the region, in 1959, a famine ensued, he said.

“Whenever the rare bamboo flowering occurs, the rats multiply in great numbers as they feed on these flowers and then go on rampaging the crops and granaries,” said C. Rokhuma, a community leader.

State authorities have been supplying rat poison free to nearly 10,000 farmers and providing them cash to make bamboo traps, the minister said.

“Rats poisoned to death are buried by the villagers, while those trapped are being eaten by some of them,” said James Lalsiamliana, the head of Mizoram’s Rodent Control Cell.

The state government has invited experts from Australia, Canada and Japan to study the bamboo flowering and to devise methods to control the rat population

Ten Japanese experts are doing research on the rare variety of bamboo to find out why it flowers after a gap of nearly five decades, Lalsiamliana said.

Australian and Canadian experts have helped identify 14 species of rodents found in Mizoram, although up to 30 different species are believed to exist in the state.

Mizoram, a state of less than 2 million people, borders Myanmar and Bangladesh.

Editor’s Note- An earlier article (September 9, 2006) by Jeremy Page about the same flowering phenomenon appeared entitled “Why villagers fear rare burst of pink blossoms” in the *Times Online*.

Federal Rules for Importing Bamboo

9 things that must be done in conjunction with bamboo importation. These conditions if broken are accompanied by \$250,000 Fine.

The below list of nine things that must be done in conjunction with the importation of bamboo was acquired through the new online permitting system created by the federal government. As we move forward and begin to import new species of bamboo, we will endeavor to create a more comprehensive list of operating procedures and requirements and make them available to our membership in future newsletters.

PPQ 588 Permit to Import Plants or Plant Products for Experimental Purposes

- 1.** The plant material should be selected from apparently disease-free and pest-free sources, free of weed seeds (including noxious weed seeds), soil, and other prohibited matter; securely packaged to prevent loss in transit; and sent to the Plant Inspection Station at the port(s) above, using the enclosed green and yellow label(s). Instructions for use are on the reverse of the label which may be used for either mail or air freight shipments. To prevent delay at the

port of entry, the permittee's name and address should be written on a sheet of paper placed inside the package. Alternatively, the materials can be hand-carried into the approved ports by the permittee or his representatives. The bamboo should be declared on the carriers Customs declaration card and presented to a representative of Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) or by a Customs and Border Protection, Agriculture Quarantine Inspector(CBP-AQI) at the time of baggage inspection.

2. Upon arrival in the United States, the plant materials will be inspected by a representative of Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) or by a Customs and Border Protection, Agriculture Quarantine Inspector(CBP-AQI) and if found apparently free from exotic pests, diseases, weed seeds (including noxious weed seeds), soil, and other prohibited matter, will be returned to the permittee, the mails, or to the carrier for delivery to the permittee.
3. Upon arrival of each shipment, the permittee shall notify the San Diego County Agricultural Commissioner's office at (858) 694-2741.
4. The bamboo materials are to be grown under the permittee's direction in a secured greenhouse at the Quail Botanical Gardens in Encinitas, California. The permittee must clearly label each shipment of imported bamboo materials showing the permit number, the plant genus and species, the country of origin, and the date of importation.
5. No domestic bamboo plants may be grown in the same greenhouse with the imported materials or grown within 50' of the quarantine greenhouse. The greenhouse must be posted as Quarantine Plant Material - Authorized Personnel Only- and locked when unoccupied. Authorized personnel allowed access shall be limited to a small number of essential plant caretakers under the direction of the permittee. Before being released from quarantine, no imported bamboo materials may be transferred to any individual without prior approval from PPQ.
6. Seeds and rhizomes must be grown for a period of one year so that there is adequate plant growth available for inspection. The imported bamboo materials and the plants grown from them must be made available for periodic inspection by a plant pathologist designated by the CDFEA. Any plants showing evidence of disease are to be immediately rogued and destroyed by incineration, dry heat (250 OF. for 2 hours), or sterilization in an autoclave. Any dead plant material and other plant debris shall be incinerated or double-bagged and sent for landfill disposal. Run-off water from bamboo containers shall be captured and either evaporated in a secure area or treated with a disinfectant.
7. After the imported plants have been grown in the approved greenhouse(s) for one year, and provided no evidence of exotic pests and diseases have been observed, the bamboo materials will be released by PPQ in writing.
8. The facilities where the work is performed with the imported plant materials are subject to inspection by representatives of PPQ.
9. You must keep your permit valid for the duration that plant materials are in your possession. If the permit holder leaves the institution where the plant material is kept, all plant material must be destroyed unless a new individual who assumes responsibility for continued maintenance submits a PPQ Form 588 and obtains a permit prior to the permittee's departure.

Boy Scout Plant Science Merit Badge and Eagle Scout Honors

One of our members, Matt Johnston, suggested recently that ABS-SoCal devise a program to enable a boy scout to earn his Eagle Scout status using a bamboo themed project. We are calling for any ideas along the guidelines established by the plant science merit badge (not reprinted here) you may have in developing such a project.

Board Meeting Agenda for March 2007 Meeting

Agenda items will be posted to the Calendar page of the Web site at least 2 weeks before the Board meeting.

Joint Meeting Agenda March 2007

The rough agenda for the joint meeting at the La County Arboretum and Botanical Gardens on Saturday, March 24 is as follows1) 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. self guided tours of Palms and Bamboos. Maps with lists of species will be provided for both plant groups2) Scheduled guided tours of Palms and Bamboos to be arranged (we know more in a few weeks)3) 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.- Lunch (on your own) The Arboretum has a very nice Café and there are other options nearby.4) Presentations in Ayres Halla. 1: 00 p.m. - Welcome and intro to Arboretum by Timothy Phillip5. 1:15 p.m. - Relocation of Large Palms- Presented by Valley Crestc. 2: 00 p.m. - Updates and news from the Bamboo Society- "The New Beginning" 5) 2:45 plant raffle and sales6) Arboretum closes at 5:00 p.m.

Tissue-Culture the ABS SoCal and the San Diego Zoo.

By Carl Rowland

Last summer many ABS SoCal members attended a guided tour of the planted areas at the Zoo. This event was hosted by the Horticultural Department of the Zoo and was the beginning of our new relationship with the Zoo which has lead to the new and exciting events covered in this newsletter.

It was during the tour that we met Christy Powell who is a propagator for the Zoo. As we talked with Christy during the tour we discovered that she had been busy doing tissue culture for the Zoo as part of her job.

As fate would have it, not long after our meeting it became known to the board that one of three known *Dendrocalamus sikkimensis* plants in the country had begun to gregariously flower. It further appeared that the rare *Dendro* might die before the seeds could mature which is how we came to contact Christy with the idea of attempting to save this rare plant through *in vitro* propagation.

After creating an agreement with the Zoo that the plants created from *in vitro* would be used solely for conservation and not for mass production, we acquired and deposited a handful of immature seeds to Christy at the Zoo.

We are happy to report that there has been some success in saving this rare bamboo. Enough success that the plant's owner and the Zoo will both be able maintain living specimens.

Although the program at the Zoo is not yet at a point where side buds or explants other than seed embryo could be used to propagate, we hope to continue this relationship in the future. We would also like to thank the Horticulture Department and Christy Powell for their efforts to help conserve bamboo.

Bamboo Tissue-Culture at the San Diego Zoo

Christy Powell who is a propagator for the S.D. Zoo wrote the following article:

Miniature Marvels

Micropropagation at the San Diego Zoo

What is micropropagation?

Micropropagation is the *in vitro* (literally, "in glass") regeneration of seeds, embryos, shoots, leaves, stems, roots, flowers, or single cells using a sterile environment. Tissue culture, plantlet culture, or aseptic culture are other aliases for this form of propagation. The plant material is grown on a special agar Jell-O like substance that provides all the nutrients and hormones the plant needs to grow.

Through micropropagation, thousands of new plants can be regenerated from a tiny piece of a plant.

When did it start?

Many scientific discoveries served as building blocks to modern micropropagation. One of the most significant discoveries was the theory of totipotency in the late 1800s. This theory explained that plant cells are totipotent, meaning that every cell has the ability to grow into a new plant. At the turn of the 20th century, scientists and botanists proved this theory to be true by growing cells in culture that produced roots and shoots. A whole new method of propagation emerged along with endless possibilities and years of research. The orchid industry was the first to embrace micropropagation on a commercial scale. In the 1920s micropropagation was used to mass produce orchids via seed, leading to the wide availability of orchids today. Micropropagation procedures were applied to woody plants in the mid 1930s. In the 1940s, it was discovered that viruses could be removed from plants via micropropagation. The role of hormones in root and shoot growth was discovered in the 1950s along with the formulation of media by Murashige and Skoog still widely used today. In the 1960s and 1970s many commercial laboratories were set up spanning the globe. Today, micropropagation continues to expand and has grown to include several thousand species of plants.

Why is micropropagation used?

Micropropagation provides an avenue to grow plants in culture that are normally difficult to grow from seeds and/or cuttings. It is an essential tool in plant conservation, supplying large quantities of plants for reintroduction projects and *ex situ* or off site conservation. Habitats are saved when rare species are readily available in the industry and illegal collection in the wild becomes less desirable. Micropropagation also facilitates trade between institutions. The sterile nature of *in vitro* propagation allows for plants to be traded without

the concern of spreading diseases and pests between states and countries.

What are the steps in micropropagation?

Since micropropagation requires a sterile environment and specialized growing conditions it takes place in a laboratory rather than a nursery or greenhouse. Attention is placed on the cleanliness of the area to avoid introducing contaminants to the cultures. Media is prepared by combining various powders and liquids together, forming the ideal substance to grow the plant. After the media is mixed, it is placed in jars or tubes and sterilized in an autoclave, a giant pressure cooker that heats the media to above the boiling point of water. The plant material is washed and sterilized using bleach or alcohol. The explants are then moved to the media using sterile tools and working in a laminar flow hood, a cabinet that releases HEPA-filtered air toward the user eliminating microbes on the work area. The culture jars are sealed with Saran Wrap type material and placed under supplemental lighting. When the seeds germinate or the explants callus, that is when they produce a mass of undifferentiated cells, they are replated or transferred to another culture jar with new sterile media. After the plantlets are large enough they can be taken out or deflasked and acclimated in a greenhouse.

What micropropagation is being done at the Zoo?

Micropropagation at the Zoo began in 2005 by a grant awarded through the Association of Zoological Horticulture (AZH). The first species micropropagated in the lab was orchids followed by bamboo, cycads, and coral trees (*Erythrina* sp.).

Orchids

In vitro propagation is utilized in orchids because of the nature of orchid seeds. Orchid seeds are naked; they do not have an endosperm or food supply in which to draw nutrients during germination. In addition, in nature they require a symbiotic fungus

association, called mycorrhiza that aids in the germination process. Micropropagation is employed to bypass this difficulty. Orchids grown in culture need to be hand pollinated to set seed capsules. After pollination, seed capsules take any where from one to thirteen months to ripen. Seeds can be harvested when they are two-thirds ripe and still in the green capsule or once the capsules have darkened and split open, releasing the ripe seeds. Green capsules are generally the preferred method in orchid micropropagation because they are easier to sterilize than individual dried seeds, resulting in less contamination. The Zoo hand pollinates orchids in the Zoo's diverse collection for micropropagation and also receives rare and endangered orchid seeds and protocorms from other institutions. A protocorm is the first stage of germination and refers to the mass of cells that are produced when a seed germinates. The Zoo has micropropagated 30 species of orchids thus far in the lab.

Bamboo

The earliest records of bamboo micropropagation were by Alexander and Rao in 1968. Since then, many bamboo species have been successfully propagated via micropropagation. There are over 1,000 species of bamboo worldwide and significant research still needs to be done in this field. The Zoo became involved in bamboo micropropagation through collaboration with the Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society. A rare bamboo from India flowered and set limited amounts of seed at a private collector's residence in Southern California. The Zoo was able to collect seeds for micropropagation. After research of different media and methods of sowing the seeds, 35 seedlings germinated and are growing in vitro at the Zoo. Through research it was found that splitting the seed open and only placing the embryo on the media produced the best results. This method of micropropagation is referred to as embryo culture. In general the smaller the explant material used the less likely the chance for contamination. Whole seeds became contaminated in culture before they

could germinate, but embryo cultures readily produced roots and shoots.

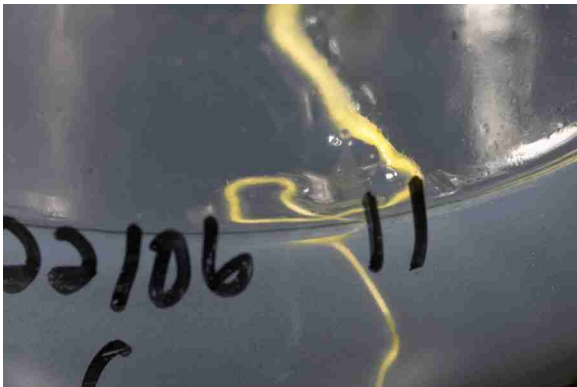
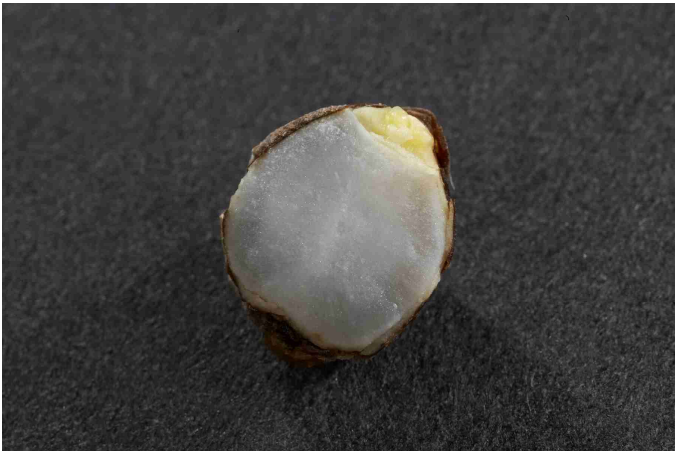
Cycads

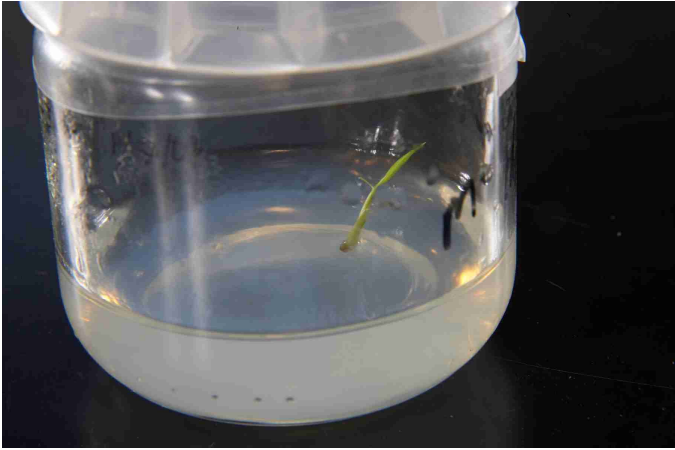
Cycads are a primitive plant species that predate the Jurassic Era. They are classified as gymnosperms and are dioecious meaning they have separate male and female plants. There are an estimated 132 species of cycads belonging to eleven different genera, most of which are either threatened or endangered. This is due to native habitat destruction, illegal poaching, and slow propagation and growth of cycads. Micropropagation of cycads is promising because hundreds cycads could be produced with minimal amount of parent material. The limited research on cycad micropropagation has shown that tiny explants of new cycad leaves and embryos callus and produce roots and shoots *in vitro*. Portions of cycad seeds were sown on media in the Zoo's lab and callus has formed. This is a promising step to producing entire cycad plants *in vitro*.

Coral trees

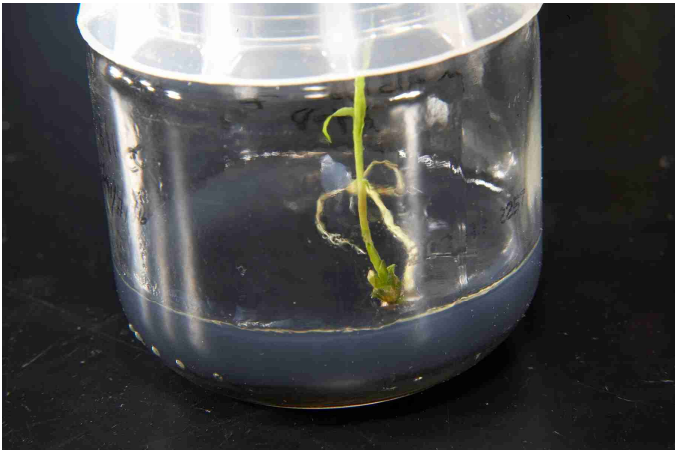
There are roughly 113 species of coral trees or *Erythrina* sp. worldwide; 70 neotropical, 31 African, and 12 Asian species. Fifteen *Erythrina* species are on the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. Currently, the Zoo provides safe havens for 51 different species of coral trees. Within the last two years, a new insect, the Erythrina Gall Wasp has spread throughout the world devastating *Erythrina* populations. The wasp continually defoliates the tree, resulting in decline and even death. Erythrina Gall Wasp was first described in 2004 as a new species in Asia. In 2005, it was found in Hawaii and in October 2006 it showed up in Florida. The Zoo and the National Tropical Botanic Garden in Hawaii are currently researching growing Erythras *in vitro* to preserve and propagate species that are threatened in the wild including Hawaii's native *Erythrina tahitensis*. *In vitro* propagation of this species will facilitate the exchange of material without further spreading the Erythrina Gall Wasp.

Since the micropropagation efforts began in 2005, insightful observations and surprising results have shed new light on the micropropagation of orchids, bamboo, cycads, and Erythrinas. However, significant research still needs to be conducted and roadblocks addressed to perfect the practices and procedures with specific species. Once precise methods are defined, the research can be expanded to encompass other threatened and endangered species. These guidelines will be shared with other institutions to successfully micropropagate rare species *ex situ* thus safeguarding plants from extinction in the event of wild population elimination and reducing collection pressure in the wild.





Above are many pictures provided by Christy Powell of the San Diego Zoo showing various stages of bamboo micropropagation from seed embryos *in vitro*.



From left to right: Mike Bostwick of the San Diego Zoo, Gib Cooper of BOTA, and Carl Rowland-President of ABS-SoCal. The bamboo featured is *Yushania alpina* (formerly *Arundinaria alpina*)- the type that grows with the gorillas.(November, 2006).

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The Southern California Chapter of the
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Note: This newsletter is available in PDF format at the ABS-SoCal Web site: www.abssocal.org – In Color!

**Application for membership in: The American Bamboo Society
and The Southern California Chapter of the American Bamboo Society**

Renewal New

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _(____)_____ Fax: _(____)_____ e-mail: _____

Membership for 2006 is (check one)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual: \$40 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter | <input type="checkbox"/> Annual: \$15 - ABS SoCal ONLY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime: \$600 - ABS Membership only | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting: \$60 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime: \$300 - ABS SoCal Chapter only | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron: \$120 - ABS and ABS SoCal Chapter |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15/year for each additional Chapter checked below: |

- Florida Caribbean; Hawaii; Louisiana-Gulf Coast; Mid-States; Northeast; Northern California;
 Oregon Bamboo Assoc.; Pacific Northwest; Southeast; Texas Bamboo Society; Tierra Seca

Make check to ABS-SoCal: Mail to: ABS SoCal Membership, **315 South Coast Highway 101, Suite U, PMB 212, Encinitas, CA. 92024** Check here only if you do **NOT** want your phone number and e-mail address listed in directories.