

The Drifting Seed

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THE DRIFTING SEED

A triannual newsletter covering seeds and fruits dispersed by tropical currents
and the people who collect and study them.

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The 9th Annual International Sea Bean Symposium will be held at the Cocoa Beach Public Library, October 15th-16th, 2004.

Pages 2-3 Memoirs, C. Nelson

Page 4 Largest Seaheart, J. Sullivan

Page 5 A new Sea-Bean, J. Sullivan

Pages 6 Letter to all Drifters, Emma Longhorn

Pages 6-7 Mango, from Curt Ebbesmeyer

Page 7-8 Mary's Bean, the Vander Veldes

Pages 9-10 Hamburgers in Paradise, C. Boykin

Page 11-12 Egg Fruit, G.C. Cadée

Pages 13-15 News and Notes

Pages 16-17 Symposium Schedule, T-shirt

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Memoirs of a Short-Sighted Irish Sea-Beaner

by Dr. Charles Nelson

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Yes, I'm short-sighted! Without my spectacles (I've three pairs, one for just seeing (long-distance), one for reading, one for working on the computer), I now have a focal distance of about 25 cm, 12 inches – the ophthalmologist I saw recently said that was good! Today, spectacles-less, it amazes me that I ever found a sea-bean, let alone a nickar nut, or, most of all, a sea-pea (more about them later). Even my toes are not in focus, so beach sand is a blur when I am standing up. Change of posture – I recommend beach-combing on all-fours, turtle-like, not least because it gives you an entirely new perspective, and makes sea peas all the easier to spot!

These musings have been prompted on a balmy, sunny, midsummer (English) afternoon when, with roses and foxgloves a-bloom and birds a-twitterring, I sat in the garden and read *Sea-beans from the Tropics: A Collector's Guide to Sea-Beans and Other Tropical Drift on Atlantic Shores*. It brought back pleasant memories of Nantucket, Princess Anne, Dog's Bay and Castlegregory, to name just four places separated by the Atlantic yet, paradoxically, linked by the gyre of ocean currents that allows us to share sea-beans, nickar nuts, sea peas and a whole lot more.

The first memory is of a day when a knock on my office door was followed by the sight of a mature coconut, husk intact, carried by Aidan OhEadhra ("O'Hara") who told me he'd picked it up on a beach in County Kerry, and could I explain it. I remembered that superb book about Ireland (which you all should read), Robert Lloyd Praeger's *The Way That I Went*, and then Nathaniel Colgan's paper on Irish drift-seeds, and I said it could be explained and there were earlier published records. But neither Praeger nor Colgan mentioned coconuts! That was my initiation into northern hemisphere sea-beans. Soon afterwards, pursuing the matter, I contacted Dr. Bob Gunn and John Dennis. Both replied promptly to commence a correspondence that has extended for a quarter of a century, and continues (by e-mail) with Bob.

Not long afterwards, John came to Ireland and we went a-hunting sea-beans. I was hooked, as they say. Next time Mary-Alice came along with John and we went off to Kerry, partly because Mary-Alice wanted to see Tralee whence one of her antecedents had emigrated, none other than the slightly infamous William Mulchinock who penned the immortal verses about falling in love with Mary, 'The Rose of Tralee'. That was when John's sharp eyes found morning-glory seeds, and sea-beans became Lilliputian, ideal for the short-sighted sea-beaners of the world. Then, tempted to cross the Atlantic myself, I visited Mary-Alice and John in Nantucket and, a few years later, in Princess Anne, and we went beach-combing but found nothing. (One thing, however, sticks in my mind: the sign on a beach (near Atlantic City?) addressed to "fisherpersons"!)

For a quarter of a century, until his death in 2002, John was a regular, indeed, prolific correspondent. He had a knack for cajoling. We planned to write a book about sea beans together, and even met a London publisher, but never found a willing one. Some of what we had drafted was reworked for *Sea Beans and Nickar Nuts* and, if I may be so bold, for *Sea-beans from the Tropics*. Perhaps the time was not right, because as *Sea-beans from the Tropics* makes clear, the popularity of sea-beaning has had a very recent, remarkable revival.

John Dennis was an all-round naturalist, in the "old" sense: that is a high compliment.



He took interest in the whole natural world, not just sea-beans. His writing was always succinct. He marshalled his facts, and very rarely made errors. His experiments with sea-beans were in the tradition of Charles Darwin—simple and elegant. I remember vividly the containers of sea-water with their floating seeds in Nantucket and Princess Anne. Knowledge can be advanced by leaps and bounds without electron microscopes or space-shuttles, even without simple microscopes and hand-lens; a few plastic containers and fresh sea-water have provided invaluable data that Darwin would have rejoiced in. Had John lived a century earlier, I am sure he would have been writing regularly to Down House!

Sea-Beans from the Tropics is an excellent book, colourful and enticing. It sets out the history of the subject of dispersal of plants by ocean currents, and provides the impetus for youngsters and the short-sighted to get involved in plain, honest natural history. I like the colour pictures but I do wish that there were visible scales on each one, so that the user sees immediately that a coralbean is not, in reality, the same size as Mary's bean, and that a sea pea is not as thick as a sea purse.

Which brings me back to being short-sighted! The only way now for me to beach-comb is on hands and knees, nose to the sand, turtle-like, and that's why sea peas are so easy (comparatively) to spot. They're the same size as nurdles (which I'm sure you all know), and nurdles are almost infallible indicators of sea peas and morning glories on our (European) Atlantic beaches.

So take John and Ed's book down to the beach, leave it in a safe place (away from sea-water; it won't float, I think) and get down on all fours. There are smaller things in life than coconuts, box fruit, blister pods and brown nickar nuts! And for teaching me to see them, for opening my eyes, for a quarter-century of trans-oceanic friendship, I bless the memory of John Dennis, naturalist *par excellence*.



It is perhaps a more fortunate destiny to have a taste for collecting shells than to be born a millionaire.
Robert Lewis Stevenson

The World's Largest Seaheart (part 3)

by Dr. Gerald Sullivan

Once again – THE KING IS DEAD!

The reign of the Florida King submitted by our own editor, was short lived. It has been dethroned by a seaheart discovered in 2001 on a Jamaican riverbank by a monsieur from the province of Quebec.

This specimen is truly of colossal size:

Height	x	length	x	weight	= size
58mm		69mm		1.9 oz	= 7,603.8

Present, Past and Initial Kings

Our readers might find some of the dialog that accompanied the entry of this specimen somewhat entertaining:

"Greetings fellow beaners. I have just returned from 6 weeks in Jamaica and had moderate to good success finding seahearts. I am very particular about the quality, size and shape of the hearts I bring home that we sell as seaheart jewelry, key chains or as talismans of their own. Sadly, I always must reject more than 50% of what we find because the skin is too damaged to polish nicely. So, many hundreds are left behind. I do, however, like to keep unusual or strangely shaped seahearts and, of course, particularly large and tiny ones. Beware that a fresh seaheart from the pod is very dense and almost 50% larger than one that has a few weeks to dry up."

So when I read this month's article from Jerry Sullivan boasting he is the king of seahearts....I had to reclaim what I already know.....NOBODY on this planet has more seahearts than me. And as far as the smallest, largest, weirdest, shiniest, most beautiful or what ever...you can find it with me at www.seaheart.com headquarters. Our stable of killerbeans are kept under glass and we prefer to send only the largest needed to win the contest and not the largest in our collection. (Author's note: One wonders how large the largest is!)

If my seaheart entry is in fact all measured wrong, and ends up being not all that impressive after all my boasting! (I mean, I have miscalculated things before.) With that said....I still hope to have the world's largest seaheart...it's an honour and a title I would feel proud to own and add to the



Kingly part of my name. So excuse my arrogant antics...they are more an effort to egg on the competition, raise the bar and promote hype and interest in seahearts and your competition....which is all good."

Drifter Richard Buckman of Montreal prefers to be addressed as King Sea Heart, King Seaheart or King Richard and possibly rightfully so, since he appears to have cornered the world's inventory of seahearts. Please surf his site on the web at www.seaheart.com for additional information. LONG LIVE THE KING!

Mescal Bean—A New Sea-Bean

by Dr. Gerald Sullivan

Recently, I was elated when one-half of a Texas ebony seed pod, *Pithecellobium ebano*, was found washed ashore on Mustang Island. The pod was four inches in length and had nine seed compartments, but contained only two immature seeds. This finding lends credence to the proposed possibility that the single, non-buoyant Texas ebony seed discovered months earlier in the wrack, was transported to the beach via a seed pod.

The importance of this observation is that an identical situation may well have occurred with the finding of a non-buoyant mescal bean. Please do not confuse mescal bean with:

1. a colorless alcoholic liquor made from the Mexican pulque which is a ferment of the agave leaves.

2. peyote, a small spineless cactus whose button like tops (mescal buttons) contain the narcotic mescaline. When masticated, the mescal button will elicit a hallucinogenic effect. The Native American Church still employs these buttons in their religious rites.



A single red-colored mescal bean, the seed of *Sophora secundiflora*, was washed ashore in the near vicinity of Horace Caldwell pier in late November, 2003. I happened upon it shortly after the



receding tide deposited it on the very back edge of a light wrack. A buoyancy test with Gulf water resulted in "El Sinko". Reference mescal beans collected in Austin, Texas, the previous year also failed the buoyancy test.

The plant is commonly known as the Texas Mountain Laurel, which grows as a large bush or small branching tree and produces violet colored wisteria-like flower clusters, emitting a sweet grape-like aroma. These develop into clusters of woody, lumpy pods containing one to six seeds. Locally it grows in the Coastal Plains, Hill Country and Trans-Pecos region. Collectively, this constitutes approximately one-half of the state. It is also indigenous to New Mexico and neighboring Mexico. Its abundance is considerable.

Apparently when the Plains Indian, i.e., Mescalero Apache or Kiowa Apache, were unable to obtain sufficient peyote for their religious rites, they would make do with mescal beans. One of the undesirable effects of the mescal bean is that its alkaloid chemical components elicit an emetic effect. Consequently, violent vomiting occurs prior to the desired hallucinogenic response.

This constitutes the first official report of the mescal bean as a sea-bean.

A Letter to All Drifters, Part 2

from Emma Longhorn, UK

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Dear Drifters,

As you can see, since I last wrote, I've had an improvement in yield! The gods of beachcombing have smiled on Kamakura, and sent *Calophyllum*, *Cerbera*, and *Cocos nucifera* – in a single week in sunny May. As if that weren't enough, the day I found the coconut, I also found a wave-shaped wooden stand, ideal for displaying the giant seed. (It seems to be a Shinto mirror-stand - a "gift from the sea" indeed!)

This bonanza was due to several days of southerly wind, which also brought in a dead green turtle, by-the-wind sailors, and two species of violet snails. The coconut, of course, is a prize find for a Kamakura beachcomber. Apparently, it must have traveled at least 2,000 km to get here (assuming it didn't just drop off a nearby ship). It certainly looks well-traveled, having arrived with barnacles, goose barnacles, seaweed, bryozoans, and tiny crustaceans all over it!

I'll be away from Japan for the summer, so I'll miss whatever treasures typhoons might turn up in Kamakura. (After I'd written about my quest for sea-hearts, I heard that a local surfer found three of the things at Shichirigahama, in between his breaks from catching waves!) If you're here, and you don't mind summer crowds, it may be worth a look... Wherever you are: Happy Beachcombing!



Mango in Washington

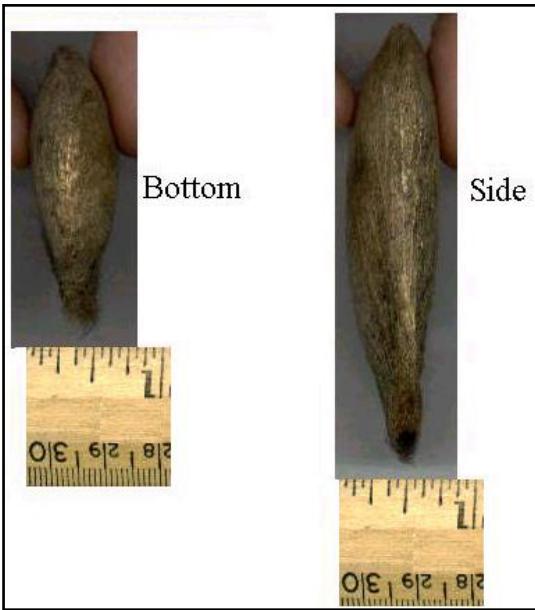
By Dr. Curtis Ebbesmeyer



"Attached is a scanned pix of some kind of seed pod," writes **Suzann Collins**. "I found it during late-Fall 2003 on the Strait of Juan de Fuca near Joyce."

"The mango pit in question seems to fit the size of the wild, or 'turpentine' mango fruits that could have washed from a natural setting somewhere to the south of California," writes **Ed Perry**, coauthor with **John Dennis** of *Sea-Beans from the Tropics* (Krieger Publishing Co.). "The only species it could be is *Mangifera indica*. There is also the possibility it is from a cultivated variety that was consumed by a human somewhere out there, anywhere (beach, boater, camping near a stream, etc.). All of the cultivated varieties are still this same species. I think the smaller seeds are from the wild plants and the larger pits from some of the cultivated varieties. But this is not a good way to determine 'status' as some of the cultivated varieties have small pits too. So, who really knows? John Dennis' flotation tests on them give us only about 3 months to float."

Drift along the coast in winter from California to Alaska often runs at a knot, so 90 days at 24 miles per day indicates a possible drift distance of 2,160 miles. That distance could, as Ed suggests, place the origin in California.



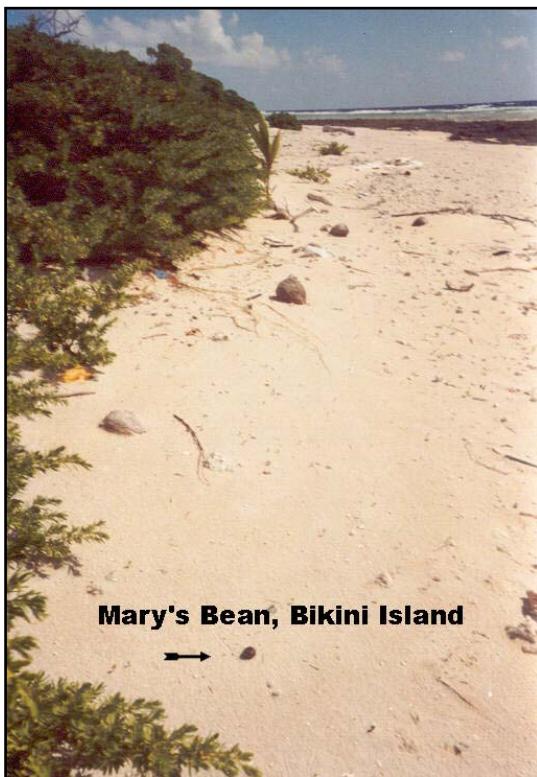
On March 21, 2004, at the *Grayland Driftwood Show*, **Sherry Ulrich** reported a second mango pit found at Dash Point in Puget Sound not far from Tacoma, Washington. To reach Dash Point requires an inland drift of some 200 miles from the Pacific Ocean passing Joyce where Suzann found the first mango pit, a journey two scientific drifters previously made.



A New Record for the Mary's Bean

by Nancy and Brian Vander Velde
Majuro, Marshall Islands

On October 20, 2003 on the windward beach of Bikini Island, Bikini Atoll, Marshall Islands, we found a Mary's bean, *Merremia discoidesperma* (Donn Sm.) O'Donell.

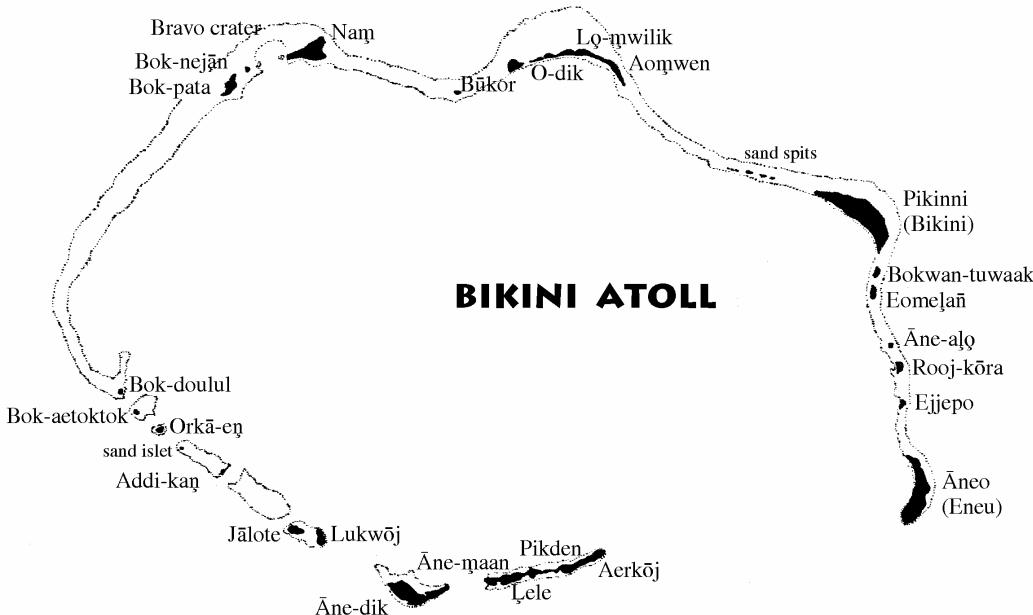


For decades, the standing Pacific record for a Mary's bean has been Wotho Atoll in the Marshall Islands, found by F. Raymond Fosberg on March 22, 1952 (Gunn 1977). Dr. Fosberg evidently collected his Mary's bean during the brief period he was dropped off on Mājruon (Mejruwon) Island while others of his party were out fishing (Fosberg 1955).*

Bikini Atoll, 90 miles to the northwest of Wotho, is a lovely atoll. But even now it is hard to ignore the aftereffects of the nuclear bomb testings of the 1940s and 50s (and yes, the bathing suit was named after this atoll). We had hoped to be able to visit most, if not all, of the islands of Bikini, in order to get a full feel of the birds, plants and other terrestrial aspects of the atoll. However, due to limitations in sea transportation, we ended up instead walking many of the beaches of Bikini and Eneu Islands. Soon we began to find hamburger beans and box fruit.

On the second to last day of our visit, on the windward side of Bikini Island, we discovered the Mary's bean. It was clearly in view as we turned the corner into a small embayment. (see photos and map)

* Wotho is a beautiful atoll, and we were fortunate enough to visit there in 1997. We had wanted to get to Mājruon Island but were not able to find transportation. That left us more time, however, to explore the extensive windward beach of the main island, Wotho, where we collected some nautilus shells, a nice glass ball and a few seahearts.



BIKINI ATOLL

about 450 miles to the southeast of Bikini and – as of yet – not encountered a Mary's bean, even though we have found most of the other drift we found on Bikini. Granted, though, the currents and winds that come to Majuro are slightly different than those of Bikini and Wotho. We have also had opportunity to view a limited amount the casual drift seed collections others have from other Marshall atolls and have not seen anything except the "standard" hamburger beans, sea hearts, etc. Fosberg may not have publicized his Wotho find, but he did know and collect drift material throughout the Marshalls with no other Mary's bean record.

So while it may only be about a 90-mile (150 kilometer) increase in range, Bikini Atoll should now be considered to be the known Pacific drift limit for the Mary's bean.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the Kili-Bikini-Ejit Local Council for making our visit possible.

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Only a few workers reside on Bikini, but most of them seemed familiar with common drift seeds and drift fruit due to their own beachcombing activities. Nevertheless, none of them recognized the Mary's bean when it was shown to them.

Our find was probably quite serendipitous. We have had much more opportunity to walk the beaches of Majuro Atoll,



Humans who wish to know about the world must learn about it in its particular details.
Heraclitus, Greek philosopher (c.540-c.475 BC)

**The Hamburger Bean (*Mucuna sloanei*), A Native Plant of South Florida:
Hamburgers in Paradise**
by Christopher Boykin
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On Friday October 10th, 2003 I was fortunate enough to befriend George and Annie Trimmer of Homosassa Florida, barely one week into my research position at the Crystal River State Buffer Preserve. George had just undergone the Master Naturalist Training and was kind enough to donate a sea bean exhibit to the visitor center. With the sea bean symposium fast approaching I quickly obtained their contact information from the park and rang them to suggest we carpool across the state to the symposium. They, like myself, were excited to find other beaners in the sea-bean deficient region of Florida's West Coast. They invited me to stop by a little early so I could look through their collection before we made the drive to Cocoa Beach.

What I didn't expect to see in their boxes of treasures was a pod of the hamburger bean (*Mucuna sloanei*) perfectly intact with three beautiful seeds inside. "Where did you get this, Costa Rica?" I asked. "Deerfield Beach," replied George. I had no idea one could find the pods of hamburger beans on Florida's East Coast. Later that night at the home of Ed Perry—Ed confirmed that people do occasionally find fully intact pods. He also stated that true sea beans (not just nicker beans, bay beans and coralbeans) do grow in South Florida and that they are probably more prevalent than we are aware of. This was further confirmed on Saturday at the symposium when Paul Mikkelsen was generous enough to give me four pods from *Mucuna sloanei* that he and Ed collected at Gulf Stream County Park in Palm Beach County. It turns out that the vine(s) were overtaking a very large sea grape (*Coccoloba uvifera*) adjacent to the short boardwalk leading to the beach. Due to the invasive nature of the plant and the irritating hairs (called trichomes), park officials decided to eradicate the plant.



In February of 2004 I moved from St. Petersburg to Miami Florida. The move was instigated in large part for the pursuit of sea beans. I quickly began beaning every day and also began inquiries as to the whereabouts of *Mucuna* species in south Florida. A web search of *Mucuna* revealed a photograph taken by Dr. Roger Hammer of the yellow clustering flowers of *Mucuna sloanei*, it was to have been taken in Everglades National Park. I immediately rang the research department of the park to find out where in the park the vine was growing. The park biologist claimed that it was not on their plant list and referred me to Dr. Hammer.

I tracked down Dr. Hammer and he explained that Dr. Richard Wunderlin from the University of South Florida's Institute for Systemic Botany mis-labeled the photograph on the Internet. The vine was not photographed in the Everglades but rather at the Deering Estate on Biscayne Bay in Dade County.

I then phoned Biscayne National Park to see if they had *Mucuna sloanei* on their plant list. Park biologist Amanda Bork stated that the liana was not on their plant inventory, but referred me to a Dr. Keith Bradley who is another South Florida botanical guru. Dr. Bradley informed me that *Mucuna sloanei* was growing in disturbed uplands and rockland hammock at Tradewinds County Park in Broward County and also at the Deering Estate in Dade County, where his wife was the Resource Manager. He also stated that *Mucuna sloanei* was a native species, which was news to me.

I put in a call to Tradewinds County Park and reached a biologist named Patricia Howell who was very knowledgeable about sea beans and had even been to a symposium before. She directed me to the area where the plants were growing. Once I saw the plants I fully realized how aggressive and successful these mysterious rainforest vines can be. They were growing everywhere—on acres upon

acres. They were hanging from pine trees and cabbage palms and fence posts—they were everywhere. I finally began to understand why the resource management team from Gulfstream County Park wanted to prune and control this prolific vine.

A few weeks later I found myself up at Gulfstream County Park, Palm Beach County. I just wanted to check and see if the vine had truly been eradicated. There were beans everywhere. The vines were alive and well and new ones were growing everywhere despite extensive efforts to rid the park of this beautiful and rare tropical liana. *Viva Mucuna!*



The vine at the Deering estate was also flourishing. According to staff members the vine had been significantly cut back but was still growing over a large area of fence and tree-line adjacent a hardwood hammock. After sharing the news of three existing *Mucunas* in South Florida Ed directed me to a fourth plant. He was contacted by biologist Liz Golden of Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park on Key Biscayne, Dade County several years earlier in regards to a potential *Mucuna* vine. I phoned Liz and made arrangements to check out the site where the vine was previously growing. Cape Florida, like many parks are working to restore native plants and eradicate the invasive exotics such as Australian pines (*Casuarina equisetifolia*) and Brazilian pepper (*Schinus terebinthifolius*). On the way to the site Liz warned me that some plant crews had been in the area and she wasn't sure the vine would still be there.

We looked in the sea grape tree where it previously was and found only remnants of large vines that had been cut. As we walked, somewhat discouraged, across the field she exclaimed, "There it is." It was growing as groundcover in the field. Liz was grateful that the vine was able to persist and plans to put flagging around it to prevent ground crews from pruning and cutting back their rare liana. The vine at Cape Florida has never produced flowers or pods, though the other three at Gulf Stream and Tradewinds County Parks as well as the Deering Estate have all produced flowers and pods.



For more information on *Mucuna sloanei* as a native plant in South Florida please visit the following website: <http://www.plantatlas.usf.edu/main.asp?plantID=898> and <http://www.regionalconservation.org/ircs/database/plants/PlantPage.cfm?TXCODE=Mucusloa>. You may also find additional information on native plants of interest at www.regionalconservation.org or check virtual herbariums worldwide for more information on specific sea-beans at www.virtualherbarium.org/. A search for *Mucuna sloanei* at this site turned up museum specimens (with some photos and descriptions) from Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, and Venezuela as well as Trinidad and Tobago. All of these dried specimens are housed at the New York and Missouri Botanical Gardens and were collected between the altitudes of 120-1200 meters.

New questions arise now that we have confirmed at least four locations where *Mucuna sloanei* is growing wild in Florida. Why haven't other common drift seeds such as *Mucuna urens*, *Dioclea reflexa* or *Entada gigas* become naturalized? How many parks have full and complete inventories of their plants? How many other *Mucuna sloanei* are growing in the state? If you think there is a *Mucuna sloanei* growing in your county or know of the whereabouts of others please contact Ed Perry or Christopher Boykin. If you're in South Florida and want a glimpse of one of these rainforest delights—give me a ring and I'll point you in the right direction.

Drift seeds of the egg fruit, *Pouteria* sp. (Sapotaceae) rediscovered on the European coast

by Gerhard C. Cadée* & Ivo Mol. *Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research
PO Box 59, 1790 AB Texel. NL (Cadee@nioz.nl)

In 2004 two specimens of a drift seed were found on the North Sea beach of the Frisian Island of Texel (The Netherlands), which we identified, with the help of Ed Perry, as seeds of one of the many species of *Pouteria* (also *Calocarpum* and *Lucuma* in drift seed literature). They are egg-shaped, slightly longer (2.7 and 2.3 cm) than broad (diameter 2.1 and 1.9 cm), with a glossy brown surface and a large dull-brown, broad-elliptic hilum, almost over the entire length of the seed. They certainly are not seeds of *P. mammosa* figured in Gunn & Dennis (1976: fig 90 a,b), which are more elongate and considerably larger (4 – 10 cm long), but have a comparable glossy brown outer surface and large dull hilum with a slightly roughened surface.

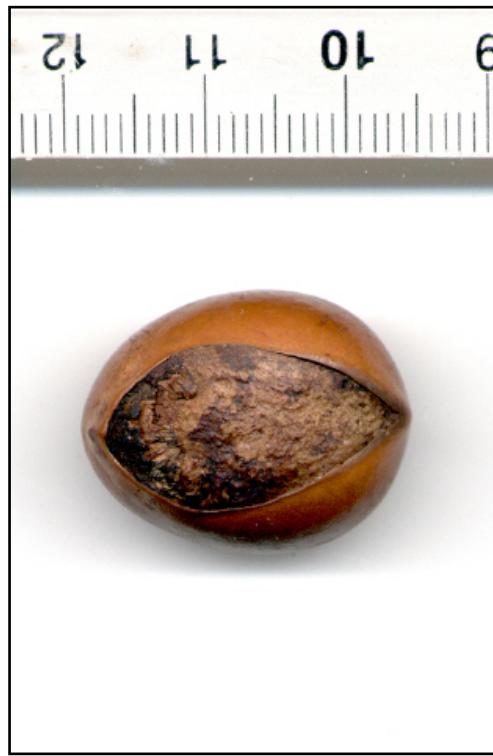
Two tourists found the first specimen on Texel on the 27th of May 2004. They showed it at EcoMare (Wadden and North Sea Centre, Texel) to Sytske Dijksen (who recognised the seed as something special) and the second author, who was allowed to scan it. We lost track of the tourists and the seed; they didn't give their address. The second specimen (see fig.)—slightly smaller—was found by Ivo Mol himself the 4th of June 2004, also on Texel's North Sea beach, but some 10 km south of the first.

Guppy (1917: p. 29) is the only drift seed collector who found *Pouteria* sp. (named then *Lucuma* sp.) on the European coast (Nelson, 2000). His two specimens collected on May 16, 1911 near Salcombe (S. Devon, UK) were of the same size as *P. mammosa* (length 2 1/8 inch = 5.4 cm), but different from *P. mammosa* seeds in Guppy's private collection. According to Nelson (2000: p. 133) Guppy's original seeds are lost. Guppy argued that his *Lucuma* = *Pouteria* seeds were refuse or lost cargo. This was overlooked by Ridley (1930: 219), who cites Guppy's seeds as true Gulf stream drift seeds. Gunn & Dennis (1976), however, agree with Guppy that they most probably were shipped to Europe and lost.

The two *Pouteria* sp. seeds we report here are also most likely transported by man. The fact that the two seeds were both found on Texel within a period of 8 days, and that similar seeds have never been reported from other European coasts that receive more genuine tropical drift seeds than the Dutch beaches, makes transport by man most probable (Cadée, 1997). However, for what use or other reason they were transported is up to now a mystery to us. Menninger (1977) writes that the genus *Pouteria* consists of some hundred species of fruit trees growing in Malaysia, Australia, the Pacific Islands and South America, a number having been introduced to Florida. Of many *Pouteria* species the large fleshy egg-shaped fruits are edible. From some *Pouteria* species (i.a. *P. sapota*, the Mamey sapota) also the seeds are used. They are edible after thoroughly cooking. After roasting they are mixed with cacao in making chocolate. The seeds are also ground and mixed in sweets (Nowak & Schulz, 1998).

Gunn & Dennis (1976: fig. 90) picture several *Pouteria* species (as *Calocarpum* spp.), including some smaller ones (fig. 90 E and F), which in size are comparable to two specimens from Texel, but they have a differently formed hilum. Ed Perry (E-mail, 20 July 2004) wrote, that egg-fruit seeds are difficult to identify to the species level. There is much variation in size and shape of seeds of these species. He wrote they are also found on Florida coasts, but they did not mention this genus in their guide (Perry & Dennis, 2003), for which they selected the more common drift seeds and fruits. Gunn & Dennis (1976) *World Guide* still gives useful additional information. Roosmalen (1985) pictures seeds of four species of *Pouteria* from Surinam, but none of these resembles what we report here.

This new drift seed from the Dutch (and European) coast comes after the completion of Brochard & Cadée's manuscript on tropical drift seeds from the Dutch coast, which will be published end of this year. We thank Sytske Dijksen who realized the tourists had found something special, Ed Perry for his help with identification and Hans Cadée for reading the manuscript.



Pouteria sp.: hilum side and opposite side of the same seed found 4 June 2004 on the North Sea beach of Texel by Ivo Mol. Scale in cm. (collection G.C. Cadée).

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News and Notes

Exotic drift-seeds in Norway. T. Alm & E. C. Nelson. 2004. Det Kongelige Norske Videnskabers Selskab, Numbr 1. 24 pp. ISBN 82-519-1944-4. Including six distribution maps. Price is unknown. Contact: Dr. E. Charles Nelson at tippitiwitch@zett.net.co.uk.

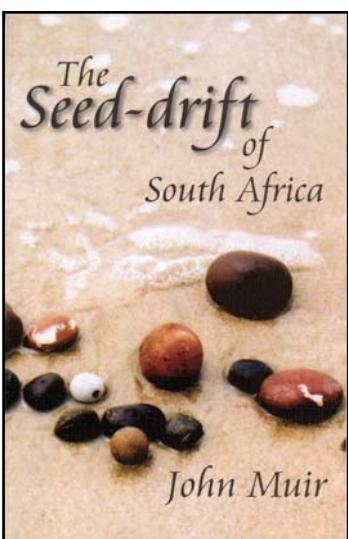
This excellent paper joins the growing list of drift seed publications since Gunn (1968). The Alm & Nelson paper brings up to date the tropical drift seed record in Norway. Some of the most ancient published records are from Norway: Strom (1762) and Gunnerus (1765). Using this rich history the authors have updated and documented the occurrences of stranded tropical drift seed on the coast of Norway. A comprehensive literature cited completes their presentation.

Gunn, C.R. 1968. Stranded seeds and fruits from the southeastern shore of Florida. Garden Journal 8(1): 43-53.

Gunnerus, J.E. 1765. Efferretning om de saa kaklede Losning-Stene, eller Vette-Nyrer, om Orme-Stene og nogle andre underlandske Frugter, som findes hist og her ved Standen i Norge. Det Throndhjemske Selskabs Skiffter 3:15-32.

Strom H. 1762. Physisk og Oeconomisk Beskrivelse over Fogderiet Sondmor, beliggende i Begens Sift i Norge, vol 1. Soro. 572 pp.

All-right summertime beachcombers—no complaining! Look at what **Mike and Sam Burnett** have been scrounging up over their way in Texas! Mike has one of the largest collections I have ever seen, and like me, he has been sea-beaning since he was a kid. Thanks to Mike and Sam for their support over the years, and we look forward to seeing them at this year's Symposium.



We have received our reprint of John Muir's ***The Seed-drift of South Africa*** by the Still Bay Conservation Trust. This classic work, first published in 1937, is a must for all of you that are really into the science of all this. **The Drifters** are mentioned in the book's front matter, as well as the recent publications dealing with sea-beans. Soft-cover editions are still available, while they last, for \$31 or £18 including surface posting. Contact the Still Bay Conservation Trust, PO Box 3030, Stellenbosch 7599, South Africa, with your order.

Request for donations of **thick-banded mucunas** (*Mucuna fawcetti*) for South Florida growing experiments

Christopher Boykin and Gina Reed of Miami are both working to grow many species of the attractive true sea beans. They currently have well-established vines of the following:

Mucuna gigantea, *Mucuna membranacea*, *Mucuna urens*, *Mucuna sloanei*, *Mucuna bennettii*, *Mucuna albertisi*, *Dioclea Reflexa*, *Merremia discoidesperma*, *Oxyrhynchus trinervus*, *Gigasiphon*



News and Notes (cont.)

macrosiphon and several other species with thin hilums which resemble *Dioclea reflexa* but are likely *Mucunas*.

We have been unsuccessful in three attempts to grow the thick banded *Mucuna* and are requesting seed donations from Drifters/beaners who have been lucky enough to collect one (or more) in the last four years. We are working to grow them in different soil and light conditions with hopes that our future attempts will be successful. We humbly request this donation for we know what a rare and special seed this is. We are happy to work out trade agreements to compensate anyone willing to donate or provide a portion of the bounty once and if the vine(s) produce pods.

Gina's *Mucuna sloanei* vine which was planted in November of 2003 produced flowers, pods and seeds by April of 2004, just six months later. We are grateful to live in the subtropics of Miami and appreciate anyone who might be willing to donate a thick banded *Mucuna* to this project. Very little is known about the species and according to Ed Perry, the thick banded *Mucuna* may be falsely named *Mucuna fawcettii*. Only growing experiments which produce flowers and pods may prove this. I have searched on-line herbariums in the United States, Latin America, the Caribbean and Europe and found no museum specimens of the thick banded *Mucuna*. Special thanks to anyone who might be able to lend seeds for these growing experiments.



Christopher Boykin 7751 NE Bayshore Court #3B Miami, FL 33138 / pollitzers@bellsouth.net



material for his friend Gerhard Cadée of the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (please see his article, this issue).

May, 2004:

Arthur Oosterbaan, Peter Vandenhurk, and Jaap de Boer, all from the Netherlands, made a pass through Florida back in May of this year. Their visit to Florida took them seabeaning on many beaches, as well as passing by the McLarty State Treasure Museum, where Ed Perry reports for work daily.

After sharing some conversation, the group went straight to identification of the seeds that were so-far found on Florida beaches. Ed also shared some of his collection with Arthur (the seabean fanatic) who was able to bring back quite a bit of

News and Notes (cont.)

Floating Islands: A Global Bibliography with an Edition and Translation of G. C. Munz's *Exercitatio academica de insulis natantibus* (1711) by Chet Van Duzer

This book is a unique treasury of information about one of nature's marvels: floating islands. The bibliography contains more than 1800 citations of books and articles in twenty languages on the subject; the entries are annotated and cross-referenced, and there are both thematic and geographic indices. All aspects of floating islands are addressed, including the formation of floating islands, the causes of their buoyancy, their role in the ecology of lakes and wetlands, their flora and fauna, their role in the dispersal of plants and animals, and methods for controlling and managing them. Works are also cited on artificial floating islands used for agriculture, human habitation, wildlife habitat, and improvement of water quality; and floating islands in literature, myth, and legend. The book includes the text and an English translation, with detailed notes, of G. C. Munz's rare 1711 thesis on floating islands, *Exercitatio academica de insulis natantibus*, as well as photographs of several floating islands.

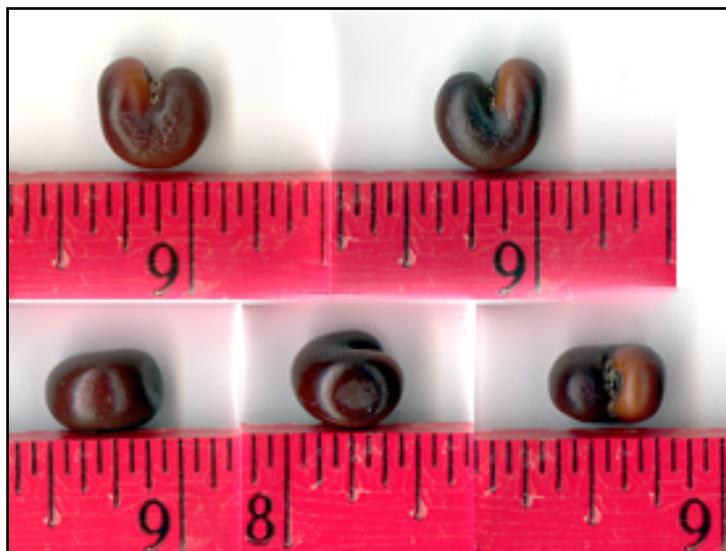
Hardcover, 6 x 9, 427 pages with indices and 24 illustrations. ISBN 0-9755424-0-0, Library of Congress Control Number: 2004093899. Forthcoming from Cantor Press (September 2004) <http://www.cantorpress.com>

Finds by some of our Drifters:



Jatropha sp. found on beaches at Fort Pierce, Florida, by Arthur Oosterbaan.

These are views of a baobab seed, *Adansonia* sp. (probably *digitata*, or *rubrostipa*) found by Ed Perry in February of 2000. It took over 4 years for Ed to identify this seed, as he was not familiar with it until he received the reprint copy of John Muir's *The Seed-drift of South Africa*. A similar seed was pictured in plate XIV (#621) of this invaluable reprint edition, which spurred Ed on to ID this rare drift seed. The seed was planted in hopes of producing a seedling that would positively ID the specimen, but the seed rotted, probably being too old to germinate. Curt Ebbesmeyer will be speculating, later, on the drift possibilities this seed could have made.



Ninth Annual International Sea-Bean Symposium

Cocoa Beach Public Library—550 North Brevard Avenue, Cocoa Beach, Florida 32931

Open Free To The Public, October 15th & 16th, 2004

Schedule of Events*

Through the weekend: Sea-bean collections and displays, experts, sea-bean polishing, the famous Bean-O-Matic, jewelry, T-shirts, slide-shows, speakers, books, authors, international guests, and contests (including the ever popular “ODD-BEAN” contest, and the Saturday morning “BEAN-A-THON” beachcombing bonanza!)

We are pleased to announce Dr. Richard Turner, will be our keynote speaker Saturday evening (7:45pm). Richard will present a slide show about our beach’s fossil ghost crabs, which so many of us find intriguing. As you know, this was one of Cathie’s favorite beach finds; it should be an interesting evening.

Natural history writers and books will be available through the weekend. Krieger Publishing Company will be pleased to once again present *Sea-Beans from the Tropics: A Collector’s Guide to Sea-Beans and Other Tropical Drift on Atlantic Shores*, by Perry/Dennis (2003). Ed Perry will be on-hand to sign copies. Krieger will also have the reprint edition of the *World Guide to Tropical Drift Seeds and Fruits*. The ever-popular *The Little Book of Sea-Beans* will also be available, and co-author Paul Mikkelsen will be present to sign copies. Cathy Yow, author of *Jewelry from Nature* plans to be with us this year with her wonderful book, and Jim Angy, Marge Bell and Matt McQueen of StillNature Productions will be offering their beautifully illustrated digital books including some new titles. This year we will also make available for sale Cathie Katz’ beautifully written and illustrated *The Nature of Florida’s.....series*, as well as her national title.

Thursday, October 14th (3-5pm)

Everyone is invited to the main conference room at the Cocoa Beach Public Library for an informal get-together and introduction, discussion of symposium plans, and to set up displays for the weekend. We need lots of help setting up tables, chairs, and displays, so please feel free to donate time and suggestions. At 6pm those interested can meet at Roberto’s Little Havana Restaurant (1/2 mile south of the library at 26 N. Orlando Ave.—this place has GREAT Cuban food, and has become a Symposium tradition).

Friday, October 15th (9am-5pm)

Displays and collections open to the public all day, free, from 9am to 5pm. Enter your seeds for the ODD-BEAN contest.

11 to 11:45am: *Beginners’ Beachwalking* (slide show) by Sebastian Inlet State Park Ranger Ed Perry.

3 to 3:45pm: *What’s Floating Our Oceans Now?!* (slide show/lecture) by Oceanographer Dr. Curt Ebbesmeyer.

5pm: The library closes; meet for dinner at Anacapri (This great restaurant is just east of the library in walking distance).

Saturday, October 16th (8am-9pm)

Displays and collections open to the public all day, free, from 9am to 9pm. Enter your seeds for the ODD-BEAN contest.

8 to 10 am: Bean-A-Thon 2003 —You are on your own; don’t come to the library first if you participate. Collect sea-beans and or toys/trash on any beach between Canaveral National Seashore and Sebastian Inlet. You MUST have your beans/toys at the library by 10:30am. Contest is judged/tallied per individual effort in the 2hr. time frame, please.

9am: Library opens.

10:30 to Noon: Judges will tally Bean-A-Thon entries outside in front of the library (awards at 7pm that night).

4:00pm: Special presentation by Paul Mikkelsen; if you knew Cathie you won’t want to miss this!

5:30pm: ODD-BEAN contest judging (for entries submitted all through the weekend). In a baggie with your name, address/phone number place your smallest hamburger, lightest (colored) heart, and “brownest” nickar from an existing sea-bean collection. These entries DO NOT have to be found in the Saturday morning Bean-A-Thon. Please enter!!!!

Dinner Break: 5:30pm to 7pm.

7pm: Prompt! Bean-A-Thon and contest awards and certificates presented. Raffle winners chosen.

7:45 to 8:45pm: Keynote speaker Dr. Richard Turner, “Fascinating Fossil Crabs”

Sunday, October 17th (9-11am)

Take down displays; small business meeting to discuss and schedule dates/help for next year’s symposium.

*October is still HURRICANE SEASON in Florida, so our schedule is at the mercy of the powers beyond our control. Hurricanes are wonderful for beaning, but can be dangerous for beachwalkers. Our beachcombing activities may be cancelled because of severe weather, in which case we’ll follow evacuation procedures to the mainland. Hurricane information will be available at your hotel and at the library.

Travel and Hotel Information for Symposium 2004 in Cocoa Beach

Cocoa Beach is about an hour drive from Orlando International Airport.

La Quinta: <http://laquinta.com/lq/properties/propertyProfile.do?ident=LQ622&propId=622>

Luna Sea: <http://www.lunaseacocoabeach.com/reservations.php>

Pelican Landing: <http://www.angelfire.com/on2/pelicanlandingresort/main.html>

South Beach Inn: <http://www.southbeachinn.com/accommodations.htm>

Anthony's On The Beach - 3499 S. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach. 783-9892

Beach Island Resort - 1125 S. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach. 784-5720

Beach Place - 1445 S. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach. 783-4045

Crawford's Cocoa Cabanas - 1901 S. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach. 799-0307

Sand Dollar - 1465 S. Atlantic Ave., Cocoa Beach. 783-8628

And finally, here's a link to a list of lots of local lodging. <http://cocoabeach.com/lodging.html>

Ninth Annual Sea-Bean Symposium and Beachcombers' Festival



"The more you look, the more you see."

Cocoa Beach Public Library
October 15th and 16th, 2004

9th Annual Sea-Bean Symposium
and
Beachcombers' Festival



Cocoa Beach Public Library
October 15th & 16th, 2004

(left front chest)

Sea-Bean T-Shirt for 2004

100 % cotton shirt

all shirts are a \$20 donation each

T-shirts are available in two colors this year: natural (sand), and stonewash green; printed with dark green ink.

►available at the **9th Annual Sea-Bean Symposium and Beachcombers' Festival**, Cocoa Beach, Florida ◀

(or to order through the mail write to Ed Perry, c/o *The Drifting Seed* newsletter,
P.O. Box 510366 Melbourne Beach, Florida 32951, USA—only while supplies last.)

Add \$3.00 per item to cover mailing costs, \$6.00/overseas, state your size: S, M, L, XL, XXL)

Make checks payable to: The Drifting Seed.

This year's design is by our beloved Cathie Katz and features a mix of her beach artwork illustrating one of my favorite Cathie-quotes and the theme of this year's Symposium—"The more you look, the more you see."

From fossil crabs, messages in bottles, spirula shells, by-the-wind sailors to yellow duckies, blue buttons, seahearts and nickars, our beaches truly are a beachcomber's paradise. We are blessed to live in such a wonderful part of this big world, and Cathie's design emphasizes our local, as well as other, ocean beaches.