

The Ecotourism Society of Seychelles



*For the Community & by the Community
The Process...*

“Turning Possibilities into Realities”

2011 “WINNING FOR SEYCHELLES”

Tourism - Linking Cultures

Horticulture...Our Culture (part 3)



Rio + 20

An Eye on The Amazon

The Amazon jungle is the most recognizable rain forest, but it is not the only one. Other rain forest locations around the world include Central America, Africa, Southern Asia, Australasia and North America.

The Amazon rain forest is shared by several countries in South America and is home to more than 30 percent of all known animals and plant species found around the world and home to plants and animal species not found anywhere else in the world.

The Amazon rain forest provides 20 percent of the world’s oxygen by continually recycling carbon dioxide.

However deforestation to harvest building materials and allow expansion for an ever-growing demand for cattle ranching is harming its environment, depleting resources and destroying sources of valuable scientific research.

“Farmers are the only indispensable people on the face of the earth”

Li Zhaoxing, Ambassador, China.

Motivation Building Measures

Horticulture – Linking Cultures The Value of Tropical Rain Forests

Conservation note

Rain forests used to cover 14 percent of the Earth; relentless deforestation and other man-made disasters are responsible for the measly 6 percent left. It is estimated that rain forests will dwindle to zero in the next 40 years.

Nearly 70 percent of prescription medicines are derived from plant materials and only 1 percent of all plant in the rain forests have been tested by the scientific community.

Rain Forest Facts report that there are more than 3,000 varieties of fruits in the rainforests. That the western world uses only 200 while indigenous people consume 2,000 varieties.

Preserving the rain forests could provide an endless source of seeds and plantings to rebuild areas devastated by floods, drought, and other natural disasters.

Properly harvested sources of food in the rain forests could provide fish, nuts, grains and spices to feed the entire world.

Tropical rain forests have much to teach people. We now have the pleasure to introduce five species of **only one family** of the millions of plant and animal species that depend on the carefully organised ecosystem of the Amazon and which are now being saved as a result of their newly found economic value on the Global Market Place.

Exotic Tropicals The Learning Curve *A la découverte*

Calathea

Calathea is an herbaceous perennial from Tropical Americas of Brazil, Guyana, Panama, Columbia and Nicaragua. The handsome leaves are the attraction of tropical gardeners and indoor plant lovers as well

Calathea means basket, referring to the form of the inflorescence.

The 150 plus species of **calatheas** belonging to the family Marantaceae, are valued for their bright-viewed variegated, and shapely foliage. Marantaceae is sometimes called the “prayer-plant family” because the way the plant fold their leaves.

Although **Calathea** develops flowers, they are typically very small and insignificant. The ideal soil for **Calathea** should be highly organic and well drained. Use plenty of coarse material in the soil to help water flow through. **Calathea** grows by means of a creeping rhizome. Your plant will expand quickly enough to fill a decorative pot or that shady area in your garden.

As remote areas become more accessible due to the interference of man, more species are discovered in their natural habitat and propagated for their protection and exceptional beauty.



Calathea Crotalifera - Rattlesnake

Coming to us from the rain forest stretching from Mexico to Ecuador and bearing the resemblance to a rattlesnake's tail, this botanical curiosity is closely related to the Ice-Blue Calathea. This beauty will grow about 1.5 to 3 metres. It prefers moist soil and filtered sunlight or partial shade.

The rattlesnake's flower-head, five to six inches long, is plainly two dimensional and thinner than your little finger. Its serpent-like bracts interweave in a regular patterns. Yellow flowers form interrupted lines on its outer edges.

Popular items for years in Latin American Markets, they are now becoming increasingly fashionable both fresh and dried.

Crotalifera means “**rattle bearing**” and the Rattlesnake plant's dried seedpods rattle like it's an annoyed reptilian snake.

Rattlesnake comes in colours of Mexican red, yellow, off-green and off-white.

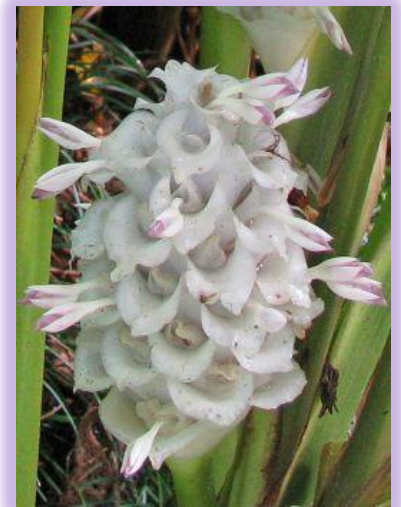
Calathea Burle-Marxii - cv. Ice Blue

Ice Blue calathea or blue ice is a newly described species for the delicate translucency of its glassy blue tissue and mauve-crowned white flowers.

The pinecone-shaped, 5 to 7 inches long bracteate inflorescences are below the leaves at the stem tips. The small, white and pale purple flowers are nestled between the pale blue or white floral bracts on the inflorescences.

The inflorescences are very long-lasting, but each individual flower only lasts for one day. Because of its shade tolerance, ice blue calathea is a good choice for planting under trees.

The consciously - curved network of tiny-veins and the gentle edges of its margins must be experienced first hand to be truly appreciated. This crystalline jewel also comes in green and white ices.



Calathea Wheat cv. Strawflower or Fingers

Fingers are an uncommon, grain-like relative of arrow root.

Before cornstarch became widely available, the rhizomes of many species of Calathea were dried by the Native Indians, powdered and mixed with water to thicken food. Like rattlesnake, its dried flower-heads last indefinitely.

Wheat Calathea has a beautiful wheat colour and an unusual shape that resembles the wheat. Calathea wheat is a shade loving calathea that grows around 1 – 1.5 metres high. Foliage is rough green on top and vibrant purple underneath. The flowers are great for floral arranging and as a texture plant within a garden.



Calathea Lutea - Cuban – Havana Cigar - Food Rapper

The **cigar flower** provides shape and texture in a vase of Tropicals. Its branching fingers are inches long but the foliage is large and banana like. The reddish parts are bracts forming the shape of the flower cluster or inflorescences. Their leaves are very attractive, the surface of which becomes vertical at night (nyctinasty) and then horizontal in the morning. By noon they move in a vertical position again. In botanical language, this movement is called **paraheliotropism**. **Nyctinasty** is activated by the red-sensitive pigment which causes the plant to flower.

The large leaves of the Cigar Flower are traditionally used as food rapper, e.g. the preparation of tortillas in Panama.

Calathea Lutea belongs to the family of Marantaceae, which is named for Bartolommeo Maranti, a 16th century Venetian Botanist.

Calathea Warscewiczii

Rose Calathea is named after Joseph Warscewiczii, the 19th century Polish Orchid Collector in South America before returning home to become inspector of the botanical gardens in Krakow.

The Warscewiczii has velvety dark green leaves with light green veins and a funny structure, radiating a rich cream hue delicately margined in pink. The layered, comical flower heads, match its common scientific name Calathea, a Greek word meaning “vase-shaped basket”. This plant is a native of the Rain Forest of Costa Rica.



Rio + 20

“Doing it with flower”

In 1992, I had the privilege to participate in the first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) as a delegate of the Small Island Developing State of the Republic of Seychelles (SIDS), when all nations of Our World decided to develop ways and means, as how best to manage **our common future in a sustainable and lasting way**.

In June 2012, twenty-years later, we will be taking stock of our achievements, set-backs and set the Global Agenda for the next two decades and more...

During that period while many strides have been achieved, both locally, regionally and globally, the still ongoing destruction of Tropical Rain Forests around the Globe will certainly continue to lead the extinction of more species of plants and animals.

On the eve of Rio + 20, let us therefore recognise that one can no longer admire and appreciate these “god given gifts of life” without recognizing the **biological catastrophe** that threatens **them** and **us**.

And not the least, without calling for the further enhancement of our Collective Action for still more Sustainable Solutions especially now that Climate Change is here with US to stay...

With flowers “yes we can”...