



# Explore Colombia This Summer

By Héctor Méndez Caratini, HSPR Secretary and Assistant Editor

## From our last meeting

Our March meeting was held at the spacious conference room of the Hospital Auxilio Mútuo, in Hato Rey. Jorge L. Matta, our new President, gave us the official welcome to the penthouse facilities of the institution he administers. Over eighty persons attended our spring meeting. There was an abundance of food available (breakfast and lunch included!). Several beautiful flower arrangements adorned the hospital's facilities, courtesy of our dynamic duo, Isabelita Colorado de Wadsworth and Tita Matta (Jorge's wife). We are all very grateful for Jorge L. Matta's generosity and his dedication to HSPR.



Carla Black presenting her interesting conference to the members of HSPR at our last meeting.



Beautiful floral arrangement featuring heliconias, gingers, and ornamental bananas.

Five new members joined our organization and several more paid their memberships dues. We now have 75 active members, and 59 members who have not renewed their membership dues. \$ 571.00 was generated from the sale of the raffle tickets. Treasurer Reiley Rodríguez, gave us a brief summary of the society's funds. After the March meeting, we now have approximately \$3,650.00 deposited in the bank.

Several of our members brought prized specimens from their private collections for the raffle. Among these were: *Heliconia* sp. 'Rojona', *H. colgantea*, *H. carmelae*, *H. necrobracteata* (all black), *H. stricta* 'Yellow Dancer', *H. marginata* (red and yellow forms), *H. stricta* 'Iris', *Heliconia* 'Golden Torch Adrian',

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## Dates to Remember

- HSPR Meeting, 10:00 am, Sunday, June 10, 2012 Farm of Dr. Edgardo Varela, between Caguas and Cidra, P.R.
- Heliconia Society International Conference, July 23 - August 7, 2012. Panama, Costa Rica & Colombia. Pre-Conference Tour to Chiriquí, Panama & Costa Rica. Post-Conference Tour to Colombia.

## Explore Colombia This Summer (continued)



*Heliconia atropurpurea*

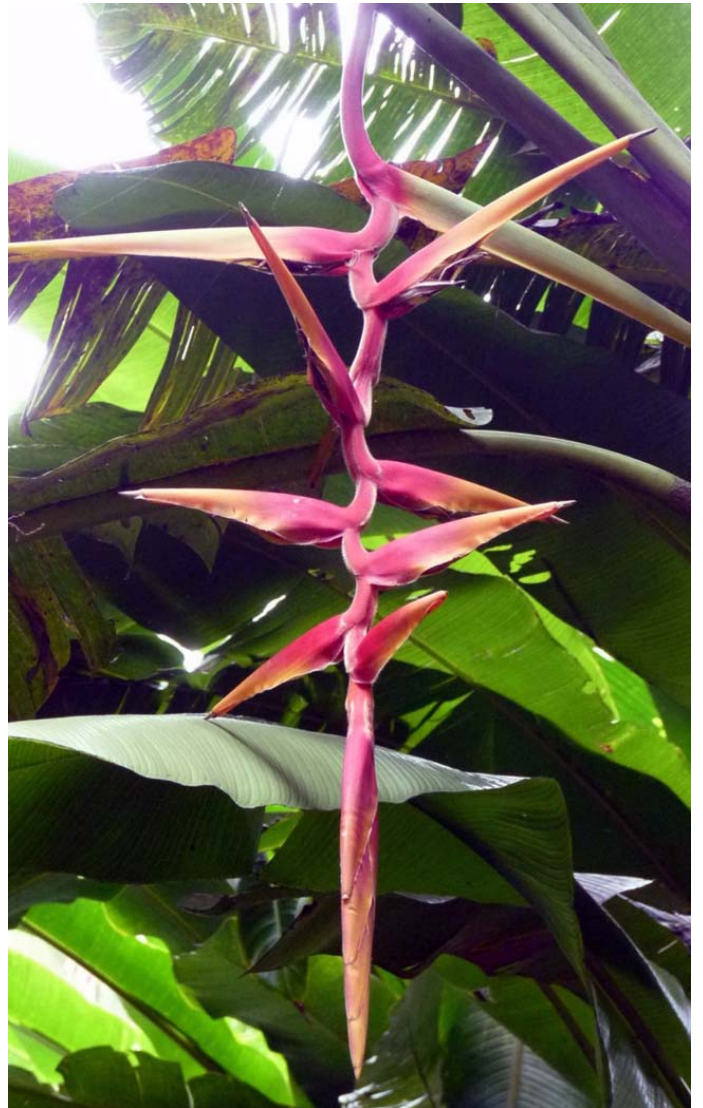
*Calathea burle-marxii* 'Blue Ice', *Musa coccinia*, white *Alpinia purpurata*, and many different kinds of bromeli-



*Heliconia* sp. 'Rojona'

ads, tropical fruit trees and exotic palms.

It was publicly announced that the summer meeting, scheduled for Sunday, June 10th, would take place at Dr. Edgardo Varela's very well kept and landscaped farm. It is located between Caguas and Cidra. This farm is one of our precious HSI/HSPR Conservation Centers. There will be many heliconias blooming for all of us to



*Heliconia fernandezii*

see. As well as, a panel discussion between three of our board members on issues related to growing zingiber-ales. Try not to miss it.

Dr. Raymond Jerome introduced Carla Black, who was our invited guest for the Meet the Experts Conference.

## Explore Colombia This Summer (continued)

Our world explorer friend provided us with an amazing photographic tour of the heliconias found in Panamá, Costa Rica and Colombia -sites of the activities related to this year's XVII Heliconia Society International Conference 2012. Ray and Migdalia graciously hosted Carla's visit at their lovely home in Canóvanas and took her on extensive trips around the Island -visiting numerous heliconia farms belonging to our members. We are all grateful for their hospitality.

This is the second time that Carla



*Heliconia chrysocraspeda*



Unidentified *Heliconia* sp.

Black participates as our invited guest speaker for the Meet the Experts Conference series that HSPR sponsors once a year. She has done extensive exploration in the jungles of Central and South America (Ecuador, Perú,

Panamá, Colombia, and others). She has collected many heliconias in the wild, and has made tremendous contributions to the genre by cultivat-



*Heliconia fragilis*

ing and documenting the new heliconias that she has discovered.

Carla is married to Ángel Rodríguez, whom she met in Seattle, Washington. After twenty years of living in Panamá, Carla invited us to visit her home, near a dormant volcano, in Chiriquí. She lives at an altitude of 1,300 meters high (4,500 feet) and has over 123 known heliconia species growing, plus many different color forms, making up (for) over 200 varieties in her private collection. Very impressive!

## Explore Colombia This Summer (continued)



*Heliconia griggsiana*

Carla's contagious enthusiasm thrilled us all. These are some of the highlights, from her visual presentation, the color photographs, that she has so generously lent us for publication in our newsletter.



*Heliconia robertoi*



*Heliconia mutisiana*

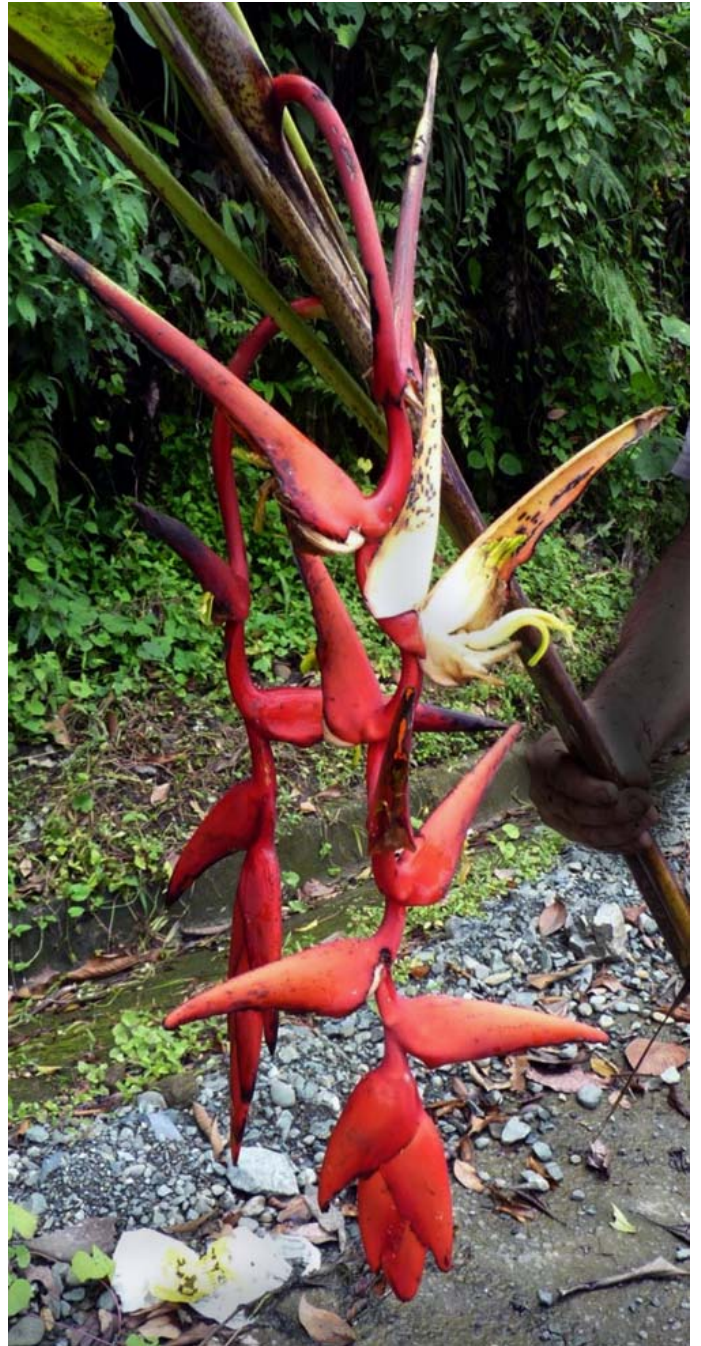
Explore Colombia This Summer  
(continued)



A beautiful green and gold form of *Heliconia griggsiana*.



Unidentified *Heliconia* sp.



*Heliconia obscuroides*



*Heliconia titanum*



*Heliconia stella-maris*



Red form of *Heliconia griggsiana*.



*Heliconia spiralis*



*Heliconia lophocarpa*



*Heliconia spiralis*  
'Anchicayá'



*Heliconia regalis*

**HELICONIA SOCIETY OF  
PUERTO RICO, INC.**

www.heliconiasocietypr.org

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# HSPR

*Promoting Zingiberales in  
Puerto Rico since 1996.*



*The Heliconia Society of Puerto Rico, Inc. was founded in 1996. The objectives of the society are to stimulate and promote the enjoyment and understanding of Heliconia and related plants of the order Zingiberales through education, research and communication, and to interact with the Heliconia Society International and other institutions which share similar interests, purposes or objectives.*

## President's Corner

The grand audience of over 87 guests at our last meeting, which was held at the Auxilio Mutuo Hospital's auditorium in San Juan, was witness to an outstanding presentation offered by Mrs. Carla Black. Mrs. Black discussed not only matters pertinent to the XVII Heliconia Society International Conference, but also entertained us with her fascinating discussion on heliconias in Panama and Colombia. I wish to thank Dr. Raymond Jerome and his wife Mrs. Migdalia Batiz, Mr. Héctor Méndez and Dr. José Abreu for having made possible Mrs. Black's visit to Puerto Rico. I also want to extend my gratitude to Mrs. Isabelita Colorado for arranging the event catering and providing us with an array of heliconias from her farm, with which Mrs. Tita Matta made the beautiful flower arrangements we all enjoyed during the activity.

The next HSPR meeting will take place on Sunday, June 10th, 2012, at the estate of Dr. Edgardo Varela in the Barrio Cañabon, located off the Caguas state road heading towards Cidra. We will kick-start the morning at the "Centro Comunal Hormigas" next to Dr. Varela's farm at 10:00 a.m. with an interesting panel discussion on heliconias mediated by three knowledgeable enthusiasts on the topic. Afterwards, we will have the opportunity to take a guided tour of Dr. Varela's farm, including his zingiberales, bromeliad and exotic tree areas. Both activities will surely be an extraordinary experience. Don't miss out!

As always, we appreciate for our members and guests to bring plants for the raffle or food and refreshments to share.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Jorge L. Matta Serrano  
President, HSPR



**The beautiful Colombian species *Heliconia gigantea*.**