

## Palm Trees

### Planting Palms

The best time to transplant palms is in spring and early summer, when soil temperatures are warming. The root ball of the palm must be handled carefully and should not be rolled. We suggest fashioning a sling in which to cradle the root ball during transport to the planting site. Bare-root specimens should be planted as soon as possible; if it is not possible to do so, place the palm out of direct sunlight and keep the root ball and trunk moist. If the root ball is wrapped in black plastic, cut an X through the plastic at the bottom of the root ball, place the root ball in the planting hole, then remove the plastic. If there is a burlap around the root ball, you do not have to remove it because it is biodegradable.

Although some palms are well adapted to wet soils, standing water can have adverse effects on newly planted palms; select and amend your planting site according to the requirements of the palm you are planting. If possible, select a site protected from north winds. If necessary, construct a berm on which to plant the palm to assist in drainage. Amending soil with a coarse grade compost and sand can be useful, but it will not solve long-term problems such as inappropriate site or plant selection.

The depth of the planting hole will be, ideally, twice the width of the root ball; it should only be as deep enough that the top of the root ball is level with the existing soil line. After transplanting, the root ball and backfill soil should remain evenly moist for the first three to five months. It is not recommended to fertilize the palm until it is established; this is most often indicated by the emergence of new leaves. The following is a list of varieties we regularly offer at Barton Springs Nursery.

### *Acoelorrhaphe wrightii*      **Silver Saw Palmetto, Paurotis Palm**

Full sun to part shade; does best in full sun. Slow-growing to 15 ft. Hardy to 20°F. Native to southern Florida, coastal Mexico and Central America. Naturally occurs in moist and swampy areas. Ideal soil consists of one-half granite gravel and on-half light compost.

### *Brahea armata*      **Mexican Blue Palm**

Full sun. Small to medium sized palm, moderately slow grower to 20-50 ft. Probably the "bluest" of all palms. Native to Baja California and Mexico. Hardy/Evergreen to 15F; Zones 8-11. Drought and cold tolerant. Prefers well drained soil, and needs little water when established. Grows well in alkaline soils. Propagate by seed, which show erratic germination from 1-10 months. 3/4" fruits are edible.

### *Butia capitata*      **Pindo Palm**

Full sun to part shade; slow growing to 10-20 ft.; thick, hairy trunk w/ stiff, arching bluish-gray-green foliage; likes moisture, but needs well-drained soil; Cold hardy to at least 10 degrees. Native to Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay.

### *Chamaerops humilis*      **Mediterranean Fan Palm**

Full sun to part shade; can tolerate heavy, clay soil, but more winter hardy on dry, rocky or sandy soil; has survived temperatures as low as 6° F.; grows up to 20 ft. tall and wide; slowly develops clumps by root suckering.

***Chamaerops humilis* var. *cerifera* Silver Mediterranean Fan Palm**

A naturally occurring form of *Chamaerops humilis* with waxy, silvery leaves. Grows more slowly than *C. humilis*, but is as cold-hardy and drought tolerant. Grows up to 20ft. tall and wide. Slowly develops clumps by root suckering.

***Livistona chinensis* Chinese Fan Palm, Chinese Fountain Palm**

Full sun to part shade; slow-growing to 30-40 ft. (15 ft. at 40 yrs. old); hardy to about 22° F. Looks best with regular watering; good for containers.

***Livistona decipiens* Ribbon Fan / Fountain Palm**

Full sun. Hardy/Evergreen to 16° F. moderately growing to 30 ft. Adapts well to many soils except wet/soggy types. Native to Eastern coast of Australia. Costopalmate leaf structure means leaf is a cross between palmate and pinnate which gives it a soft fringy or weeping look.

***Phoenix canariensis* Canary Island Date Palm**

Best in full sun. Tolerates heat and dry conditions. Trunk can reach 40 – 50ft. Large, fast-growing palm. Hardy to 20° F.

***Phoenix roebelenii* Pygmy Date Palm**

Best in shade to part shade, but not suited to dark indoor spaces; slow-growing to about 6 ft.; hardy to zone 9B (about 25-30° F.); good container specimen for atrium-like setting. Not usually in stock.

***Phoenix sylvestris* Silver Date Palm**

One of the most cold-hardy of the Phoenix genus, with no damage to leaves shown at 15 degrees. Leaves are glaucous with sharp spines at the base. Moderate grower to 45' tall and up to 25' wide at the crown. Native to India; drought tolerant though grows faster with more water.

***Rhapidophyllum hystrix* Needle Palm**

Sun or shade; very slow-growing to maybe 8 ft.; native to southeastern U. S.; prefers heavy, wet soils; hardy to as low as -6° F. Not often available.

***Sabal brazoria* Brazoria Palm**

Sun to shade; Slow-growing to about 20'; An ancient hybrid between between *S. texana* (above ground trunk) and *S. minor* (below ground trunk), found in Brazoria County, Tx, it has survived -15 degrees with no damage. Prefers semi-regular waterings.

***Sabal domingensis* Hispaniola Palmetto**

Full sun. Moderately fast-growing to 60ft Hardy in Zones 8b-10. Native to Hispaniola and eastern Cuba. Adapts well to many conditions. Prefers light, sandy soils, good drainage and bright, sunny or exposed areas. Does well in coastal conditions. Fertilize twice yearly in spring and summer for faster growth.

***Sabal minor* Dwarf Palmetto**

Sun or shade; trunkless, slow-growing, usually under 6 ft. (grown in standing water, may form trunk and grow as high as 20 ft.); prefers heavy, wet soils, tolerates drought somewhat after established; remains evergreen to 0° F., can survive colder temperatures.

***Sabal 'Riverside'* Riverside Sabal Palm**

Another very cold-hardy Sabal palm, this one hails from Riverside, CA though its parents are not known for certain. Large, glaucous leaves keep their blue-ish color best if grown in full sun but part shade is fine. Can reach 30' in height, usually more quickly than *S. texana*. Evergreen to at least 15 degrees.

***Sabal texana (S. mexicana)* Texas or Mexican Palm, Palma de Micharos**

Sun to part shade; slow-growing to maybe 45 ft. in 20-35 yrs.; trunk starts growing when tree about 15 ft. tall and 10 yrs. old; cold-hardy to 15-20° F.

***Sabal uresana* Blue Sabal**

Full sun. Moderately growing to 25-30 ft. Hardy/Evergreen to 25° F; Zone 8. Native to Northern Mexico. Tolerates hot sun and dry wind conditions. Needs good drainage to thrive, though known to adapt well to various soil types. More sun = more blue color.

***Trachycarpus fortunei* Windmill Palm**

Sun or shade; fastest growing of hardy palms, to 20 ft. (sometimes more); adapts to soggy soils well; cold-hardy to below 15° F.

***Trachycarpus takil* Kumaon Palm**

Sun to Part Sun; Native to the Himalayas (Kumaon province, India), this is one of the most cold-hardy palms you can grow. Known to sail through -5 degrees, it prefers a well-drained soil and moderate water. The difference between this and the more common "Windmill Palm" is that *Trachycarpus takil* has no long brown "chest" hair at the crown, and has dramatically more segments than *T. fortunei*. Can reach up to 50' tall in a lifetime.

***Washingtonia filifera* California Fan Palm**

Sun to part shade; fast-growing to 60 ft.; prefers light, sandy soils, but adapts well to heavy clay, too; native to deserts of Southwestern U. S., growing near springs and other moist spots, so prefers moisture but will tolerate aridity; hardy to 18° F. or below.

## Cycads

Cycads are some of the oldest known plants still living on planet Earth. The cycads can have a habit similar to palms, with a turgid trunk and a crown of leaves at the terminus, however, the two are not genetically related. Trunks of cycads can vary in height from several inches to several feet. They generally grow very slowly and possess remarkable longevity, with some specimens living to be as old as 1,000 years.

Cycads are best planted in the late Spring/Early Summer, when the soil temperature is warmer. *Refer to the palm planting instructions above for more specific transplant information.* In general, cycads are quite resistant plants, with many species being adapted to zones of little rainfall; *D. spinulosum*. They need bright light (filtered sun is o.k.) and moderate to low water. The soil should drain well and preferably be neutral to slightly acidic. A rich nitrogen fertilizer with magnesium and manganese (aka Palm Food) will lend a more elegant lustre to their leaves and should be applied in mid- to late Spring as new growth begins to emerge. The following is a list of Cycads that we regularly carry at Barton Springs Nursery.

### ***Cycas revoluta*      Sago Palm**

Full sun to part shade. Slow growing to 10-12 ft tall and 8-10 ft wide. Evergreen to 15° F. Easy to grow; the most common cycad in the trade today. Susceptible to scale insects but easily treatable if caught early. Prefers well-drained soil with regular to moderate water. Native to various parts of Southern Japan.

### ***Dioone edule*      Virgin's Palm**

Sun to part shade. An especially hardy cycad, has been known to withstand 15 degrees without burning. Easy to grow; very drought tolerant. One of the oldest known cycads, predating the dinosaurs. Grows slowly, forming a trunk eventually. Can get up to 8' tall and wide over a decade or two. Native to Mexico.

### ***Dioone spinulosum***

Full Sun to Part Sun. Native to the limestone soils of Oaxaca, Yucatan, and Vera Cruz, Mexico, these cycads are seemingly well-suited for our alkaline substrate. However, this particular species is less cold-hardy than *D. edule*, not likely to survive if it gets much lower than 30 degrees, making this a better option for containers or a well-lit indoor area. *Available seasonally.*

### ***Zamia maritima* (or *Z. furfuracea*)      Cardboard Sago Palm**

Part shade. Relatively fast growing compared to other cycads (which are known to be very slow growing) up to 4 ft tall and 6 ft wide. Evergreen to 28° F; needs protection from frost. Easy to grow. Prefers well-drained soil with moderate water. Native to the Gulf Coast of Mexico and Central America. Makes an okay indoor plant if the light is sufficient. *Available seasonally.*