PLANT FACT SHEET

Raphia hookeri G. Mann & H. Wendl.

GENUS *Raphia* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Giant raffia palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: seeds, Sap, Nuts, Seed, Fruit, Palm heart, Cabbage, Vegetable

The sap from the flower stalk is collected and used for toddy or wine.
The stems can be used for starch.
The central bud is eaten as a palm cabbage.

DESCRIPTION

A palm. It is often a solitary palm but can also have some suckers. It grows to 10-15 m high. The trunks are 30 cm across. The upper part of the trunk is covered with leaf bases and blackish spiny fibres. The leaves are shiny dark green. They can be 12 m long. The leaves are feather like. The leaflets are rigid. The flowering stalk is 2.5 m long. They hang down. The crown dies after flowering. The flowers are brownish in colour. The fruit are brown and shaped like a top. They are 12 cm long by 5 cm wide. They have a stout beak. They are light brown, hard and shiny. They have overlapping scales.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows naturally in swamps. It occurs in lowland rainforest. It suits humid locations.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The palm flowers then dies after about 15 years.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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