PLANT FACT SHEET

Oncosperma tigillarium (Jack.) Ridl.

GENUS *Oncosperma* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Nibong, Nibung palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Cabbage, Nuts - masticatory, Fruit, Flowers, Palm heart

The bud is eaten raw or cooked.
The nuts are used as a betel nut substitute.
The flowers are used as a flavouring for rice.
The fruit can be made into a preserve.

DESCRIPTION

A tall slender palm. It grows in clumps. They can be 25 m high. Each trunk is 10-15 cm across. There can be 50 trunks in a clump. It has numerous, long, horizontal spreading stiff sharp spines borne on the trunk throughout its length. The leaves are dark green and have leaflets along the stalk. The leaflets droop. The leaf stalks are covered with long black spines. The fruit are small, round and 11 to 12 mm across.

HABITAT

It is a tropical plant. It thrives in hot humid conditions. It grows in coastal swamps. In the Philippines they tend to grow in clumps in valleys or at the back of mangrove swamps often where there is salt or brackish water. In Cairns Botanical Gardens. In Townsville palmetum.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed must be sown fresh. Seed take 2-3 months to germinate.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Removing the bud prevents flowers forming.

NOTES

There are 5 Oncospermum species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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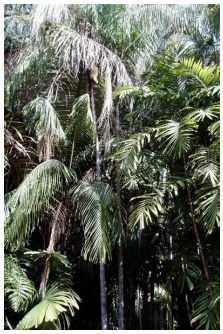

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