PLANT FACT SHEET

Bactris major Jacq.

GENUS *Bactris* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Maraja palm, Cubarro palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Fruit

The fruit are eaten. The outer portion of the fruit is eaten but it is sour.
The fruit are used to flavour drinks.
The seeds of unripe fruits are cut open to eat the grey jelly inside.

DESCRIPTION

A palm. It has a cluster of stems. They often form large dense clumps. They are spiny. They grow 1-10 m tall and the stems are 2-6 cm across. There are 3-10 leaves on each stem and they have leaflets along the stalks and are spiny. There are short and long black spines. The long spines can be 11 cm long. There are 24-48 leaflets on each side and they are arranged regularly and spread in the same plane. The flowering stalks have 5-17 thick branches. The fruit are oval and 2.4-4.5 cm long by 1.3-3.5 cm wide. The are purplish-black.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in drier open areas. It is always near groundwater. In Townsville palmetum.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seeds or suckers.

NOTES

There are 239 Bactris species. There are 75 species in tropical America. Most Bactris have fruit that are edible but many are not attractive.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

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