PLANT FACT SHEET

Copernicia prunifera (Mill.) H. E. Moore

GENUS *Copernicia* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Brazilian wax palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: seeds, Cabbage, Sap, Fruit, Starch, Nuts, Palm heart, Flower

The sap is used to make a starch and also for drinks. The fruit are eaten raw.
The trunk is a source of sago starch.
The seed is oily and edible.
The roots are used as a substitute for sarsaparilla.
The young flower is eaten.
The seeds are used as a coffee substitute.

DESCRIPTION

A fan palm. It grows about 10-15 m high. The trunk is 15-25 cm across. The trunk is hard and patterned with the bases of fallen leaves. It has a large round crown of leaves. The leaves are deeply divided and fan-shaped. They are on long leaf stalks. The flowering stalks are 1.5-2.7 m long. They extend beyond the leaves. The fruit are oval and 27 mm long by 22 mm wide.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It grows in tropical and subtropical regions. It is drought resistant. It can grow in arid places. It can tolerate considerable cold. It grows best with adequate moisture. In Brazil it grows in river valleys from sea level to 500 m altitude. It can tolerate flooding and burning. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed take 4-10 months to germinate. It is best to use fresh seeds. Drier seeds should be soaked in water.

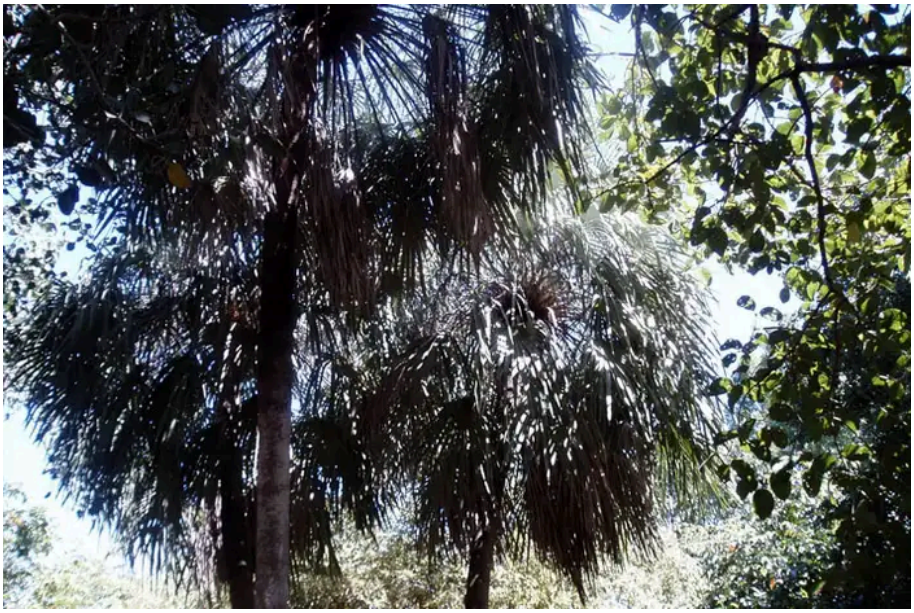
Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow slowly.

NOTES

There are 13 (24-25) Copernicia species and several hybrids. The wax from the underside of leaves is used for coating of medicinal capsules. It has antioxidant properties.

PICTURES



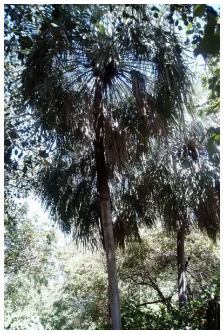
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French, B.R. & Maynard, A.R. Food Plants International Database. Food Plants International

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