PLANT FACT SHEET

Cycas media R. Br.

GENUS *Cycas* **FAMILY** Cycadaceae

COMMON NAMES Nut Palm, False sago palm, Fern palm, Zamia palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: seeds, Leaves, Nuts

CAUTION: The seeds are very poisonous. They cause liver damage.
They have been processed and eaten by aboriginal people.
The trunks have also been used to extract starch which was eaten.

DESCRIPTION

An evergreen tree like plant. It grows to 3-5 m high and spreads to 2 m across. The stem is erect and stout and has leaf scars. It rarely has branches. The leaves are 0.5-1.5 m long and palm like with side leaflets along the stalk. The leaflets are deep green and stiff and taper towards the tip. The leaflets are 10-13 cm long and 1 cm wide. The flower is like a cone and brown. The male cones are 30-45 cm long while the female cones are 40 cm long. The female cones produce 4-6 broad oval, orange-red fruit. These are 2-4 cm long.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. It prefers light to medium well-drained soil. It needs a protected sunny position. They are drought tender and frost hardy to light frosts. They need a temperature above 13°C. Trunks can resist fire and will regrow new leaves. It cannot tolerate bad drainage or deep shade. In the Cairns Botanical Gardens. It suits hardiness zones 10-12.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed are slow to germinate. They can be transplanted. If large plants are transplanted they take a year or more to re-establish.

Harvesting and Seed Production

Plants grow slowly.

NOTES

There are about 20-40 Cycas species.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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

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