PLANT FACT SHEET

Calamus moti Bailey

GENUS *Calamus* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Lawyer vine, Yellow Lawyer Cane, Yellow Wait-a-while

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Shoots, Roots

The base of the plant is roasted, peeled, then pounded before eating.

DESCRIPTION

A tall slender climbing palm or rattan. It forms clumps and can form impenetrable thickets. It can have many stems. The stems are green but turn yellow with age. Stems are 5-20 m long. There are sharp spines on the stems and slender climbing structures on the leaf sheath opposite the leaf, with hooks which curve backwards. These structures can be 3-4 m long. The leaves occur along the stem at fairly wide intervals. The leaves are 2-4 m long with 80-100 narrow leaflets. The leaf stalk curves and has spines. Leaflets are 30-50 cm long by 2-3 cm wide. The edges are constricted and curved downwards near the base of the leaflet. The flowering stalk is long and slender and hangs downwards. The flowers develop on small branches. Several flowering stalks occur on the plant at the same time. The flower are cream or white and 3-5 cm across. Male and female flowers are on separate plants. The fruit is cream when ripe and round. It has a small pointed tip and is 8-13 mm across. It is covered with small overlapping scales. There is a thin fleshy coat over a round seed.

HABITAT

It is a tropical and subtropical plant. It grows in rainforests in high rainfall areas. They need warm, shady sites. They need a rich, well-drained soil. They are sensitive to frost when young. In Northeast Australia they grow from sea level to above 1,000 m altitude.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants can be grown from seed. Seed should be sown fresh. Seed grow within 6-12 months. Seedlings are difficult to transplant.

NOTES

There are 375-400 Calamus species. There are 175 species in tropical Asia.

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