PLANT FACT SHEET

Cycas rumphii Miquel

GENUS *Cycas* **FAMILY** Cycadaceae

COMMON NAMES Ceylon sago, False sago

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Seeds, Leaves, stem - starch

The pith is processed to extract the starch during times of food shortage.
The seeds are sometimes eaten after treatment by slicing, fermenting for 2 weeks and then cooking. They can be used for flour.
The very young unfolded leaves are cooked and eaten in Malaysia.
CAUTION The young leaves are poisonous to cattle. The seeds are poisonous unless treated. They contain a toxic glucoside. They contain Hydrocyanic acid.

DESCRIPTION

A palm like plant. The plant can be 3-10 m high. The trunk is not swollen at the base. The trunk is covered with the bases of the old leaves. The leaves have leathery leaflets with a distinct midrib. The leaves are something like feathers. They are 1-2 m long and have leaflets along the stalk. These leaflets are 28 cm long by 2 cm wide. A cone of thick leaves with large seeds is produced at the top. They are separately male and female plants. The seeds are 3-4 cm across with a thin fleshy covering and a starchy centre.

HABITAT

A tropical plant. They occur in tropical lowland areas in grassland and forest. They grow from sea level to 700 m altitude. They are more common in places with a dry seasonal climate. It suits hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

They can be grown from seeds. Plants, especially damaged ones produce suckers.

Harvesting and Seed Production

It is a slow growing plant. Plants for sago need to be 7 years old and not to have flowered.

NOTES

There are about 20-40 Cycas species.
In Slovenia possibly in hot house.

PICTURES



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



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