PLANT FACT SHEET

Washingtonia filifera (Linden ex Andre) H. Wendl.

GENUS *Washingtonia* **FAMILY** Arecaceae

COMMON NAMES Desert Fan Palm, Washington Fan palm

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Fruit, Seeds, Stem pith, Cabbage, Palm heart, Flowers

The fruit are eaten fresh or dried. They are also ground into a flour and made into a drink.
The terminal bud or cabbage is roasted and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A palm which grows up to 16 m tall. It has a large canopy of several dozen leaves. The trunk is swollen at the base. It is covered with hanging dead leaf stalks. The leaves are like a fan and greyish-green. They are 1m long and 2 m wide. They are divided about half way along into 50-70 segments. These bend and split. The leaves have prickles along the edge. The flowers are white to apricot and occur as many along a branched stalk. This stalk is 3-5 m long and hangs downwards among the leaves. The flowers have both sexes. Pollination is by wind and insects. The fruit are small and berry like. They are brownish black with a thin sweet pulp. Each fruit has a single seed.

HABITAT

They suit areas with a Mediterranean type climate. They can tolerate temperatures down to -7°C. They can withstand wind and do best in a sunny position. They can grow on most types of soil. It can grow in very alkaline soils with a pH of 9.2. They can survive drought but benefit from moisture. They often form colonies in arid regions near water. In Adelaide Botanical Gardens. National Arboretum Canberra. It suits plant hardiness zones 9-11.

PRODUCTION

Cultivation

Plants are grown from seed. Seed germinate in 6-8 weeks.

Harvesting and Seed Production

The fruit are harvested when ripe. The seeds are also edible.

NOTES

There are 2 Washingtonia species.

PICTURES



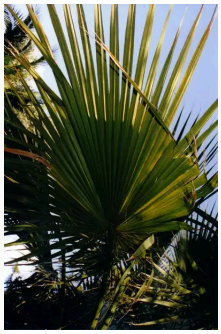
Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)



Credit: Food Plants International (Bruce French)

REFERENCES

Ambasta, S.P. (Ed.), 2000, The Useful Plants of India. CSIR India. p 687

Beckstrom-Sternberg, Stephen M., and James A. Duke. "The Foodplant Database." http://probe.nalusda.gov:8300/cgi-bin/browse/foodplantdb. (ACEDB version 4.0 - data version July 1994)

Balick, M.J. and Beck, H.T., (Ed.), 1990, Useful palms of the World. A Synoptic Bibliography. Colombia p 109, 160, 586,

Blamey, M and Grey-Wilson, C., 2005, Wild flowers of the Mediterranean. A & C Black London. p 502

Blomberry, A. & Rodd, T., 1982, Palms. An informative practical guide. Angus & Robertson. p 179

Bodkin, F., 1991, Encyclopedia Botanica. Cornstalk publishing, p 1024

Bot. Zeitung (Berlin) 37:lxi, 68. 1879

Brickell, C. (Ed.), 1999, The Royal Horticultural Society A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants. Convent Garden Books. p 1058

CORNETT,

Cundall, P., (ed.), 2004, Gardening Australia: flora: the gardener's bible. ABC Books. p 1482

Desert Survivors Online Plant Database

Dharani, N., 2002, Field Guide to common Trees & Shrubs of East Africa. Struik. p 297

Ertug, F, Yenen Bitkiler. Resimli Türkiye Florası -I- Flora of Turkey - Ethnobotany supplement

Estrada-Castillon, E., et al, 2014, Ethnobotany in Rayones, Nuevo Leon, Mexico. Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine, 10:62

Facciola, S., 1998, Cornucopia 2: a Source Book of Edible Plants. Kampong Publications, p 31

Flora of Pakistan. www.eFloras.org

Gibbons, M., 1993, Palms. Compact study Guide and Identifier. Sandstone. p 78

Gibbons, M., 2003, A pocket guide to Palms. Chartwell Books. p 223

Grandtner, M. M., 2008, World Dictionary of Trees. Wood and Forest Science Department. Laval University, Quebec, Qc Canada. (Internet database http://www.wdt.qc.ca)

Haynes, J., & McLaughlin, J., 2000, Edible palms and Their Uses. University of Florida Fact sheet MCDE-00-50-1 p 2

Hedrick, U.P., 1919, (Ed.), Sturtevant's edible plants of the world. p 688

Henderson, A., Galeano, G and Bernal, R., 1995, Field Guide to the Palms of the Americas. Princeton. p 62

Hibbert, M., 2002, The Aussie Plant Finder 2002, Florilegium. p 308

http://www.botanic-gardens-ljubljana.com/en/plants

Hussey, B.M.J., Keighery, G.J., Cousens, R.D., Dodd, J., Lloyd, S.G., 1997, Western Weeds. A guide to the weeds of Western Australia. Plant Protection Society of Western Australia. p 20

Jones, D.L., 1994, Palms throughout the World. Smithtonian Institution, Washington. p 54, 378

Kermath, B. M., et al, 2014, Food Plants in the Americas: A survey of the domesticated, cultivated and wild plants used for Human food in North, Central and South America and the Caribbean. On line draft. p 924

Krishen P., 2006, Trees of Delhi, A Field Guide. DK Books. p 318

Llamas, K.A., 2003, Tropical Flowering Plants. Timber Press. p 122

Lyle, S., 2006, Discovering fruit and nuts. Land Links. p 309

Marinelli, J. (Ed), 2004, Plant. DK. p 380

MINNIS

Moerman, D. F., 2010, Native American Ethnobotany. Timber Press. p 600

Nabhan, G. P., et al, 2022, Reviving the Arid American Diet in the Face of Climate Change: Assessing its Composition, Links to the Mesomerican Diet and Potential to Advance Indigenous Health and Diabetes Prevention. International Journal of Water Resources and Arid Environments 11(2): 81-112

Paczkowska, G. & Chapman, A.R., 2000, The Western Australian Flora. A Descriptive Calatogue. Western Australian Herbarium. p 36

Riffle, R.L. & Craft, P., 2003, An Encyclopedia of Cultivated Palms. Timber Press. p 473

Roa, J. A. G. & Boada, D. S. G., 2018, Fundación para el Fortalecimiento de la Fruticultura y Plantas Alimenticias no Convencionales en Colombia.

Saunders, C.F., 1948, Edible and Useful Wild Plants. Dover. New York. p 112

Schuler, S., (Ed.), 1977, Simon & Schuster's Guide to Trees. Simon & Schuster. No. 68

Staples, G.W. and Herbst, D.R., 2005, A tropical Garden Flora. Bishop Museum Press, Honolulu, Hawaii. p 629

Swaminathan, M.S., and Kochnar, S.L., 2007, An Atlas of major Flowering Trees in India. Macmillan. p 280

Wickens, G.E., 1995, Edible Nuts. FAO Non-wood forest products. FAO, Rome. p171

World Checklist of Useful Plant Species 2020. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Yanovsky, E., 1936, Food Plants of the North American Indians. United States Department of Agriculture Miscellaneous Publication No 237. Washington, D.C.

PROVIDED BY **Food Plants International**

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

LICENCE CC BY-NC-SA 3.0

ONLINE FACT SHEET https://www.echocommunity.org/en/resources/e6e1f94f-1973-4c16-9435-ff68f9c6c0c3