

Hyphaena thebaica

(Gingerbread palm, African Doum Palm)

Hyphaene thebaica is a deciduous palm 10-17 m high, Trunk is Y-shaped clearly showing the scars of the fallen leaves. Bark dark grey. A very distinctive fan palm which is one of the few palms which branches. Leaves 120 x 180 cm, fan shaped, petiole more than 1 m long, sheathing at the base with numerous upwardly curving hooks. Male and female flowers on separate trees. The inflorescence is similar in both sexes, up to 1.2 m long, The female palm produces woody fruits that persist on the tree for a long time. Hyphaene is derived from the Greek word ‘hyphaino’ referring to the fibers from the leaves, which are used for weaving. In Egypt, the doum palm has been cultivated since ancient times and has long been considered a sacred tree, symbolizing masculine strength. It was also planted in the belief that it protected and supplied people with shade, water and food after death. Sunny, very well drained position. Can tolerate temperate climates, but prefers it hot. Very drought tolerant.



Plant Image

Landscape Information

Arabic Name: الدوم

Pronunciation: hy-FEN-ay-ee the-BAY-kuh

Plant Type: Palm

Origin: Coastal North-East Africa

Heat Zones: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

Hardiness Zones: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

Uses: Specimen, Wildlife

Size/Shape

Growth Rate: Slow

Tree Shape: oval

Canopy Symmetry: Symmetrical

Canopy Density: Open

Canopy Texture: Coarse

Height at Maturity: 5 to 8 m

Spread at Maturity: 5 to 8 meters

Time to Ultimate Height: 20 to 50 Years

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Bark Image

Botanical Description

Foliage

Leaf Arrangement: Spiral

Leaf Venation: Parallel

Leaf Persistence: Evergreen

Leaf Type: Simple

Leaf Blade: 50 - 80

Leaf Shape: Star

Leaf Margins: Entire

Leaf Textures: Rough

Leaf Scent: No Fragrance

Color(growing season): Green

Color(changing season): Green

Flower

Flower Showiness: False

Flower Size Range: 10 - 20

Flower Type: Raceme

Flower Sexuality: Monoecious (Bisexual)

Flower Scent: No Fragrance

Flower Color: White

Seasons: Spring

Trunk

Trunk Has Crownshaft: False

Trunk Susceptibility to Breakage: Suspected to breakage

Number of Trunks: Single Trunk

Trunk Esthetic Values: Showy

Fruit

Fruit Type: Drupe

Fruit Showiness: True

Fruit Size Range: 3 - 7

Fruit Colors: Brown

Seasons: Spring

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Other Image

Horticulture Management

Tolerance

Frost Tolerant: No

Heat Tolerant: Yes

Drought Tolerant: Yes

Salt Tolerance: Moderate

Requirements

Soil Requirements: Clay, Loam

Soil Ph Requirements: Alkaline

Water Requirements: Moderate, Low

Light Requirements: Full

Management

Toxity: No

Susceptibility to Pests and Diseases: Yes

Pruning Requirement: No pruning at all

Fruit/ Leaves/ Flowers litter: Yes

Surface Rooting: No

Life Span: 25-50 years

Edible Parts: Fruit

Pests: Nematodes

Plant Propagations: Cutting