**Carpentaria acuminata**: Carpentaria Palm

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson

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**Introduction**

This fast-growing palm tree quickly grows to a height of 40 feet, the smooth grey trunk topped with 10-foot-long, spreading green fronds. The inconspicuous white flowers appear from spring through fall and are followed by the production of bright red fruits that are less than one-inch-long. The juice from these fruits can cause a skin irritation. Once highly recommended as a replacement for the Christmas palm, which is very susceptible to lethal yellowing disease, Carpentaria palm apparently requires a richer soil than many landscapes can provide. It is also susceptible to trunk cracks in cool weather, a condition that opens the trunk to decay organisms.

**Description**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Height</strong></td>
<td>35 to 40 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spread</strong></td>
<td>8 to 10 feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crown uniformity</strong></td>
<td>symmetrical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crown shape</strong></td>
<td>palm, upright/erect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crown density</strong></td>
<td>open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Growth rate</strong></td>
<td>fast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Texture</strong></td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Carpentaria acuminata: Carpentaria Palm

Foliage
Leaf arrangement: spiral
Leaf type: odd-pinnately compound
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: linear
Leaf venation: parallel
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: more than 36 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower
Flower color: white/cream/gray
Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit
Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch
Fruit covering: dry or hard
Fruit color: red
Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; showy; fruit/leaves not a litter problem

Trunk and Branches
Trunk/bark/branches: branches don’t droop; not showy; typically one trunk; thorns
Pruning requirement: little required
Breakage: resistant
Current year twig color: not applicable
Current year twig thickness: 
Wood specific gravity: unknown

Culture
Light requirement: full sun
Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained; occasionally wet
Drought tolerance: moderate
Aerosol salt tolerance: low

Other
Roots: not a problem
Winter interest: no
Outstanding tree: no
Ozone sensitivity: unknown
Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant
Pest resistance: resistant to pests/diseases

Use and Management
Carpentaria palm is probably best suited for an occasional accent or specimen planting where temperatures stay warm in the winter. A number of them grouped together can be attractive. Choose the best soil on your site for planting this palm.

Carpentaria palm should be grown in full sun on rich, moist but well-drained, fertile soil, and it has a low tolerance for salt and drought.

Propagation is by seeds.

Pests
Thrips.

Diseases
No diseases are of major concern.