

Latania loddigesii: Blue Latan Palm¹

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Introduction

A single-trunked palm, eventually 20 to 35 feet tall with a 15-foot spread, Latan Palms are noted for their distinctive, coarse-textured leaves. The large, very thick and stiff leaves, up to eight feet in diameter, are held aloft on five-foot-long petioles. The surface of each leaf is covered with a whitish, waxy or wooly down, providing a silvery appearance to the palm. The three to six-foot-long flower stalks are present among the leaves in spring and some of the glossy brown,

two-inch-wide fruits are always ripening. The 10-inch-wide trunks have thick, swollen bases. Latan Palm makes a striking specimen planting and is well-suited to seaside locations due to its moderate salt-tolerance. Plant it in an area where you would like to attract attention. People's eyes will always be drawn to this plant, no matter where it is planted.

General Information

Scientific name: *Latania loddigesii*

Pronunciation: lat-AY-nee-uh loe-dih-GEEZ-ee-eye

Common name(s): Blue Latan Palm

Family: *Arecaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Invasive potential: little invasive potential

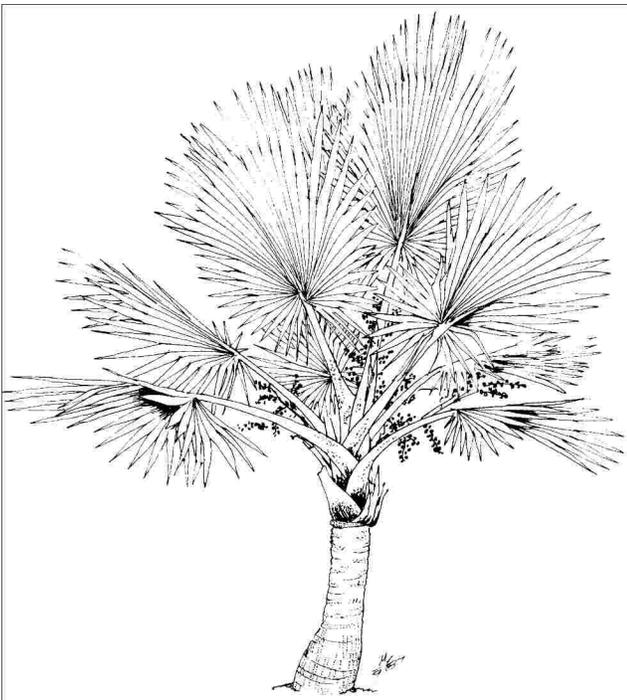


Figure 1. Young *Latania loddigesii*: Blue Latan Palm



Figure 2. Range

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Uses: deck or patio; specimen; container or planter; highway median

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the tree

Description

Height: 20 to 30 feet

Spread: 10 to 12 feet

Crown uniformity: symmetrical

Crown shape: palm, upright/erect

Crown density: open

Growth rate: slow

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: spiral (Fig. 3)

Leaf type: costapalmate

Leaf margin: entire, serrulate

Leaf shape: star-shaped

Leaf venation: palmate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: more than 36 inches

Leaf color: silver, green

Fall color: no color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

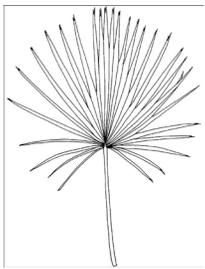


Figure 3. Foliage

Flower

Flower color: yellow, white/cream/gray

Flower characteristics: not showy

Fruit

Fruit shape: oval

Fruit length: 1 to 3 inches

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: green, brown

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; not showy; fruit/leaves a litter problem

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: branches don't droop; 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, partial sun or partial shade

Soil tolerances: clay; sand; loam; slightly alkaline; acidic; well-drained

Drought tolerance: high

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: not a problem

Winter interest: no

Outstanding tree: no

Ozone sensitivity: unknown

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: resistant

Pest resistance: sensitive to pests/diseases

Use and Management

Preferring full sun but tolerant of partial shade, slow-growing Latan Palm should be located on fertile, well-drained soil. Unfortunately, it is susceptible to lethal yellowing disease, and so should be used sparingly in the landscape.

The different species of Latan Palm can only be told apart by leaf color. Only young leaves that have not yet turned silvery should be used for this determination. *Latania loddigesii*, blue Latan Palm, has blue-grey leaves. *Latania lontaroides*, red Latan Palm, has reddish petiole, leaf margins and veins. *Latania verschaffeltii*, yellow Latan Palm, has leaf margins, veins, and petioles which are deep orange-yellow.

Propagation is by seed.

Diseases

Latan Palms are susceptible to lethal yellowing disease.