

# *Coccothrinax argentata*: Silverpalm<sup>1</sup>

Edward F. Gilman, Dennis G. Watson, Ryan W. Klein, and Deborah R. Hilbert<sup>2</sup>

## Introduction

This slow-growing, small, native Florida palm can reach 20 feet in height but is usually seen at 6 to 10 feet with a spread of 6 feet. The slender silverpalm has distinctive dark blue-green, drooping, delicate, deeply divided palmate leaves which have a beautiful silver color beneath, providing a bright glint in the landscape when the leaves sway in the wind. The 6-inch-wide trunk is either smooth and grey or is sometimes covered with woven, burlap-like fiber. The small, white flowers are borne in profusion on 2-foot-long stalks, hidden among the leaves during the summer. The small, round, purple fruits ripen in late summer and fall.

## General Information

**Scientific name:** *Coccothrinax argentata*

**Pronunciation:** koe-koe-THRY-nacks ar-jen-TAY-tuh

**Common name(s):** Silverpalm, thatchpalm

**Family:** *Arecaceae*

**USDA hardiness zones:** 10B through 11 (Figure 2)

**Origin:** native to North America

**Invasive potential:** native

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



Figure 1. Young *Coccothrinax argentata*: Silverpalm.  
Credits: Stephen Brown, UF/IFAS

1. This document is ENH335, one of a series of the Department of Environmental Horticulture, UF/IFAS Extension. Original publication date November 1993. Revised December 2023. Visit the EDIS website at <https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>.
2. Edward F. Gilman, professor emeritus; Dennis G. Watson, former associate professor, Department of Agricultural and Biological Engineering; Ryan W. Klein, assistant professor, arboriculture; and Deborah R. Hilbert, UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center; Department of Environmental Horticulture; UF/IFAS Extension, Gainesville, FL 32611.

The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) is an Equal Opportunity Institution authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function with non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations. For more information on obtaining other UF/IFAS Extension publications, contact your county's UF/IFAS Extension office. U.S. Department of Agriculture, UF/IFAS Extension Service, University of Florida, IFAS, Florida A & M University Cooperative Extension Program, and Boards of County Commissioners Cooperating. Andra Johnson, dean for UF/IFAS Extension.

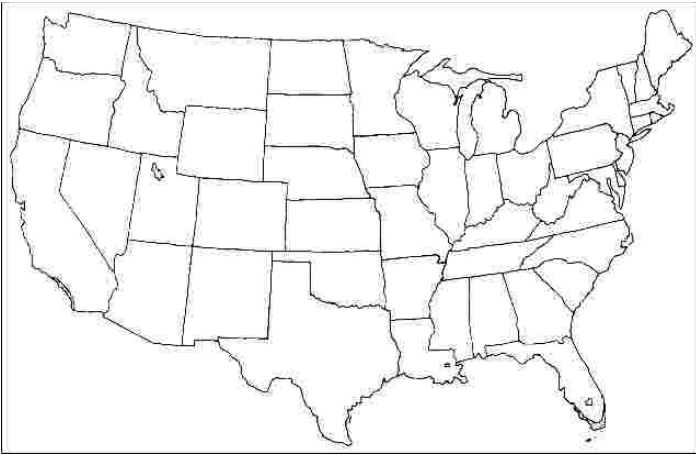


Figure 2. Range

## Description

**Height:** 6 to 15 feet

**Spread:** 6 to 7 feet

**Crown uniformity:** symmetrical

**Crown shape:** palm, upright/erect

**Crown density:** open

**Growth rate:** slow

**Texture:** coarse

## Foliage

**Leaf arrangement:** spiral (Figure 3)

**Leaf type:** simple

**Leaf margin:** entire

**Leaf shape:** star-shaped

**Leaf venation:** palmate

**Leaf type and persistence:** broadleaf evergreen, evergreen

**Leaf blade length:** 18 to 36 inches

**Leaf color:** green, blue or blue-green, silver

**Fall color:** no color change

**Fall characteristic:** not showy



Figure 3. Foliage and fruit of *Coccothrinax argentata*: Silverpalm.

Credits: Stephen Brown, UF/IFAS

## Flower

**Flower color:** white/cream/gray

**Flower characteristics:** not showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** round

**Fruit length:** less than .5 inch

**Fruit covering:** fleshy

**Fruit color:** purple

**Fruit characteristics:** does not attract wildlife; not 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, partial sun, or partial shade, shade tolerant

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

**Drought tolerance:** high

**Aerosol salt tolerance:** high

## Other

**Roots:** not a problem

**Winter interest:** no

**Outstanding tree:** no

**Ozone sensitivity:** unknown

**Verticillium wilt susceptibility:** resistant

**Pest resistance:** free of serious pests and diseases

## Use and Management

This palm is most suited for residential and commercial landscapes where the unusual blue foliage can be appreciated. It makes a nice accent in a shrub border, and can be massed together to create a dramatic colorful impact. Place it in a low-growing groundcover to provide an exclamation point in the landscape.

Growing in full sun or partial shade, silverpalm will tolerate any well-drained soil. The palm will grow straight up and provide a beautiful blue accent, even in areas receiving only two or three hours of sun. It is highly salt-tolerant and is especially useful for coastal locations and for soils with a high pH.

Propagation is by seed.

## Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.