

# *Latania loddigesii*: Blue Latan Palm<sup>1</sup>

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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:** 10A through 11 (Figure 2)

**Origin:** not native to North America

**Invasive potential:** not assessed/incomplete assessment

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



Figure 1. Young *Latania loddigesii*: Blue latan palm.  
Credits: Stephen Brown, UF/IFAS

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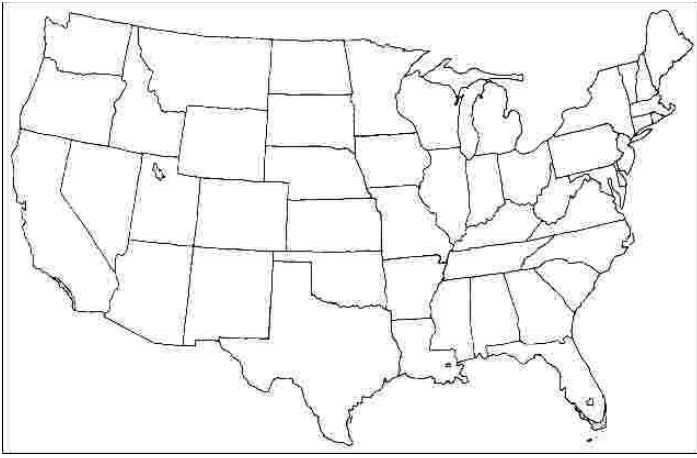


Figure 2. Range.  
Credits: UF/IFAS

## 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 (Figure 3)



Figure 3. Foliage of *Latania loddigesii*: Blue Latan Palm  
Credits: Stephen Brown, UF/IFAS

**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

## Flower

**Flower color:** yellow, white/cream/gray (Figure 4)



Figure 4. Female flower of *Latania loddigesii*: Blue Latan Palm  
Credits: Stephen Brown, UF/IFAS

**Flower characteristics:** not showy

## Fruit

**Fruit shape:** oval (Figure 5)



Figure 5. Fruit of *Latania loddigesii*: Blue Latan Palm  
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**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:** N/A

**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 verschaaffeltii*, 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.