Desert Fan Palm

Washingtonia filifera

Height: 40 feet

Spread: 10 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: California Fan Palm, Petticoat Palm, Arizona Palm

Description:

A native southwestern palm suited for dry climates; large fan like leaves emerge from a columnar trunk ; spent leaves form a skirt around the trunk, and are a habitat for birds; largely cultivated as an ornamental palm; great for xeriscaping

Ornamental Features

Desert Fan Palm has attractive grayish green evergreen foliage on a tree with the bulk of the canopy held atop a towering trunk or stem. The palmate leaves are highly ornamental and remain grayish green throughout the winter. The rough tan bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Desert Fan Palm is an evergreen tree with a strong central leader and a towering form, with a high canopy of foliage concentrated at the top of the plant. Its average texture blends into the landscape, but can be balanced by one or two finer or coarser trees or shrubs for an effective composition.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. It is a good choice for attracting birds to your yard. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Desert Fan Palm is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Vertical Accent
- Container Planting



Desert Fan Palm
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Desert Fan Palm bark
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

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Planting & Growing

Desert Fan Palm will grow to be about 40 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 10 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 80 years or more.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist locations, and should do just fine under average home landscape conditions. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is native to parts of North America.

Desert Fan Palm is a fine choice for the yard, but it is also a good selection for planting in outdoor pots and containers. Because of its height, it is often used as a 'thriller' in the 'spiller-thriller-filler' container combination; plant it near the center of the pot, surrounded by smaller plants and those that spill over the edges. It is even sizeable enough that it can be grown alone in a suitable container. Note that when grown in a container, it may not perform exactly as indicated on the tag - this is to be expected. Also note that when growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.



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Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder