Formosa Palm

Arenga engleri

Height: 10 feet

Spread: 16 feet

Sunlight: ◐ ●

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Dwarf Sugar Palm, Taiwan Arenga Palm

Description:

A dwarf clustering palm that is dense and compact; glossy, dark green fronds with graceful fishtail shaped leaflets; sensitive to poor drainage; best to plant in a protected understory; an impressive landscape accent

Ornamental Features

Formosa Palm features showy spikes of fragrant orange flowers with red overtones held atop the branches from late winter to early spring. It has attractive dark green foliage with silver undersides. The twisted narrow pinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain dark green throughout the winter. The red fruits with deep purple variegation and which fade to brown over time are held in clusters from early to late summer.

Landscape Attributes

Formosa Palm is a multi-stemmed evergreen shrub with a towering form, with a high canopy of foliage concentrated at the top of the plant. Its relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This shrub 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. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;



Formosa Palm
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder



Formosa Palm
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

- Insects
- Disease

Formosa Palm is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- Hedges/Screening

Planting & Growing

Formosa Palm will grow to be about 10 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 16 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a medium rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for 60 years or more. This is a self-pollinating variety, so it doesn't require a second plant nearby to set fruit.



Formosa Palm fruit
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This shrub does best in partial shade to full shade. Keep it well away from hot, dry locations that receive direct afternoon sun or which get reflected sunlight, such as against the south side of a white wall. It does best in average to evenly moist conditions, but will not tolerate standing water. It may require supplemental watering during periods of drought or extended heat. It is not particular as to soil type or pH. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution. This species is not originally from North America, and parts of it are known to be toxic to humans and animals, so care should be exercised in planting it around children and pets.