Voi Cycad

Encephalartos kisambo



Voi Cycad
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 15 feet

Spread: 20 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Green Central African Cycad

Description:

A large sized cycad with long, pinnate leaves of bright green to yellow-green; tends to be solitary, but rarely produces basal suckers; an attractive accent or container plant; water tolerant, but must be well drained

Ornamental Features

Voi Cycad is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. The gold fruits with buttery yellow overtones and which fade to tan over time are held in abundance in spectacular cones from late winter to early spring. Its attractive large glossy narrow pinnately compound leaves remain light green in color with curious grayish green undersides and tinges of chartreuse throughout the year. The brown stems can be quite attractive.

Landscape Attributes

Voi Cycad is a spreading evergreen perennial with a shapely form and gracefully arching foliage. Its relatively fine texture sets it apart from other garden plants with less refined foliage.

This is a relatively low maintenance plant, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. It has no significant negative characteristics.

Voi Cycad is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Mass Planting
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Voi Cycad will grow to be about 15 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 20 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 2 feet from the ground. It grows at a slow rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live to a ripe old age of 200 years or more; think of this as a heritage perennial for future generations! As an evegreen perennial, this plant will typically keep its form and foliage year-round. This is a dioecious species, meaning that individual plants are either male or female. Only the females will produce fruit, and a male variety of the same species is required nearby as a pollinator.

This plant does best in full sun to partial shade. 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 pH, but grows best in rich soils. It is quite intolerant of urban pollution, therefore inner city or urban streetside plantings are best avoided. 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..

Voi Cycad is a fine choice for the garden, 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 growing plants in outdoor containers and baskets, they may require more frequent waterings than they would in the yard or garden.