Hybrid Wood's Cycad

Encephalartos natalensis x woodii



Hybrid Wood's Cycad
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 15 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 9

Other Names: Hybrid Giant Cycad

Description:

A fast growing hybrid cycad with elegant green leaves that emerge upright but then relax outward over time; develops a tall trunk over a long period; an attractive accent for a large garden area; must be well drained; tolerant of light frost

Ornamental Features

Hybrid Wood's Cycad is primarily grown for its highly ornamental fruit. The buttery yellow fruits with orange overtones and which fade to brown over time are held in abundance in spectacular cones from late winter to early summer. It has attractive green evergreen foliage. The large spiny narrow pinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain green throughout the winter. The rough bark and dark brown branches add an interesting dimension to the landscape.

Landscape Attributes

Hybrid Wood's Cycad 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 relatively fine texture sets it apart from other landscape plants with less refined foliage.



Hybrid Wood's Cycad foliage
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

This is a relatively low maintenance tree, and should never be pruned except to remove any dieback, as it tends not to take pruning well. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny

Hybrid Wood's Cycad is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- General Garden Use
- Container Planting

Planting & Growing

Hybrid Wood's Cycad will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 15 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 fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live to a ripe old age of 300 years or more; think of this as a heritage tree for future generations! 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 tree does best in full sun to partial shade. It prefers dry to average moisture levels with very well-drained soil, and will often die in standing water. 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 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 particular variety is an interspecific hybrid. It can be propagated by division; however, as a cultivated variety, be aware that it may be subject to certain restrictions or prohibitions on propagation.

Hybrid Wood's Cycad 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.