Giant Fishtail Palm

Caryota obtusa



Giant Fishtail Palm
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 60 feet

Spread: 30 feet

Sunlight: ○ ◐

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Thai Giant Caryota

Description:

This beautiful palm forms a single trunk, topped with huge, evenly spaced, bright green bi-pinnate leaves, creating a stunning lacey pattern; flowers and fruits only once, then dies; provide adequate space, as it grows quite large

Ornamental Features

Giant Fishtail Palm has attractive light green evergreen foliage on a tree with the bulk of the canopy held atop a towering trunk or stem. The enormous fan-shaped bipinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain light green throughout the winter. It is draped in stunning clusters of chartreuse flowers hanging below the branches from early to mid summer. The shaggy gray bark is extremely showy and adds significant winter interest.



Giant Fishtail Palm
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Landscape Attributes

Giant Fishtail 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 relatively coarse texture can be used to stand it apart from other landscape plants with finer foliage.

This is a high maintenance tree that will require regular care and upkeep, and should not require much pruning, except when necessary, such as to remove dieback. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Insects

Giant Fishtail Palm is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- Vertical Accent
- Container Planting



Giant Fishtail Palm bark
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Planting & Growing

Giant Fishtail Palm will grow to be about 60 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 feet. It has a high canopy of foliage that sits well above the ground, and should not be planted underneath power lines. As it matures, the lower branches of this tree can be strategically removed to create a high enough canopy to support unobstructed human traffic underneath. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This tree 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 particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for rich, acidic soils. It is somewhat tolerant of urban pollution, and will benefit from being planted in a relatively sheltered location. 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..

Giant Fishtail 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.