

Canary Island Date Palm



Phoenix (FEE-niks): ancient Greek name for the date palm.
canariensis (can-air-ee-EN-sis): "of the Canary Islands."

Family: Arecaceae.

Relatives: The palm trees.

Type of Plant: Palm tree.

Height: 60'.

Zones: N,C,S

How to Identify: Stocky, single trunk marked with a diamond pattern from the sloughed boots, pinnate leaves with murderous thorns on the petioles, and small, orange, decorative dates borne by pistillate individuals.

Habit of Growth: Straight, single trunk with a heavy head of pinnate leaves.

Foliage: Evergreen, feather-leaved with stiffish pinnae, murderous thorns at the bases of the leafstalks. The foliage is fine textured and yellow-green.

Flowers: Unisexual, inconspicuous, in short spadices among the leaves.

Fruits: Ovoid, about 1" in length, bright orange-yellow.

Season of Maximum Color: Early summer, when fruits are fully colored.

Landscape Uses: As an avenue tree, spaced 50' apart, when there is a sufficiently broad planting strip, Canary Island date palm is unsurpassed. It is also majestic as a single specimen on lawns of public buildings. Its huge bulk makes this palm unsuitable for small residences.

Habitat: Canary Islands; in Florida it is planted in every community.

Light Requirement: Full sun for best development.

Soil Requirement: Any well-drained soil will suffice.

Salt Tolerance: Tolerant of salt back from the frontline dunes.

Availability: Most nurseries offer these date palms in containers or balled and burlapped.

Culture: Plant in reasonably fertile sites; water moderately; mulch the root zone; keep lawn grasses back; protect the leaves from leaf-spotting diseases while young and from palm leaf skeletonizer when mature.

Propagation: Seed.

Pests: Leaf spot, palm leaf skeletonizer, and palm weevil.

Note: Hybridization within the genus *Phoenix* has been recognized in Florida for many years. Many garden palms may be crossbred.

Pygmy Date Palm



Phoenix (FEE-niks): ancient Greek name for the date palm.
roebelenii (roe-beh-LEE-nee-eye): for a Mr. Robeleni.

Family: Arecaceae.

Relatives: The palm trees.

Type of Plant: Dwarf palm tree.

Height: 8'.

Zones: C,S

How to Identify: A dwarf palm of fine proportions with delicate, pinnate leaves and murderous thorns at the bases of the leafstalks.

Habit of Growth: A graceful, fine-scale crown above a single, straight or curving trunk.

Foliage: Evergreen, pinnate, fine textured, with spines on the petiole.

Flowers: Unisexual, inconspicuous, in short spadices among the leaves.

Fruits: Cylindrical, little jet-black dates about 1" long.

Season of Maximum Color: No variation, except when the fruits mature.

Landscape Uses: Unquestionably one of Florida's leading dwarf palms, pygmy date is used as a freestanding specimen, planter subject, or urn plant for patio, terrace, or Florida room. Thousands are propagated here and sold for landscape use and for shipping to northern markets, where it is grown as a container plant.

Habitat: Myanmar; in Florida, protected spots on the peninsula.

Light Requirement: Partial shade or full sun.

Soil Requirement: Well-drained, fertile soil with moderate moisture.

Salt Tolerance: Not tolerant.

Availability: Most nurseries and garden centers on the peninsula offer this excellent little palm for sale.

Culture: Plant in fertile soil; water moderately; fertilize three times each year; protect from frost.

Propagation: Seed.

Pests: Leaf-spotting disease, scales, and caterpillars.

Note: Pygmy date palms hybridize with other members of their genus.

Date and Wild Date Palms



Phoenix (FEE-niks): ancient Greek name for the date palm.
 spp.: several species grow in Florida.

Family: Arecaceae.

Relatives: The palm trees.

Type of Plant: Palm tree.

Height: 100'.

Zones: N,C,S

How to Identify: Two very stately feather palms with gray-green foliage. Leaflets usually 2-ranked, becoming 4-ranked before becoming spinelike at the base. *Phoenix dactylifera*, the date palm, has gray-green foliage covered with a bloom. Shoots develop at the base; it will be clump-forming if shoots are not removed. *Phoenix sylvestris*, the wild date palm, has foliage not covered with bloom and a single trunk; on mature specimens, roots may appear on the sides of the trunk as high as 6' above ground.

Habit of Growth: Clump-forming or single-stemmed.

Foliage: Pinnate leaves to 10' long, gray-green, coarse textured.

Flowers: Small; up to 10,000 per cluster. The sexes are on different trees (such as *P. dactylifera*).

Fruits: Dates, yellow-orange when mature.

Season of Maximum Color: In summer, when fruit matures.

Landscape Uses: As an avenue tree, space them 40'–50' apart. Excellent as freestanding specimens for parks and areas around large buildings.

Habitat: North Africa or India, depending on species.

Light Requirement: Full sun.

Soil Requirement: Thrives on well-drained, dry, sandy soils; even grows in brackish soils.

Salt Tolerance: Tolerant if kept back from the frontline dunes.

Availability: Carried by nurseries specializing in palms.

Culture: Plant in well-drained soil; water moderately until established; fertilize once or twice a year. Keep lawn grasses back for a few years.

Propagation: Seed. Commercially, date palms are increased by division of offsets.

Pests: Leaf spot and palm leaf skeletonizer.

Note: To have dates, you need both a male and a female tree. Dates do not always mature in Florida. The fruit of the wild date is of no value, but the inflorescences can be tapped and will yield up to 8 pounds of sugar annually.