



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Chamaedorea microspadix*¹

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Introduction

This clumping palm has slender, bamboo-like, stems that grow to about 7 feet tall (Fig. 1). New stems continually arise from the base of the palm. These are smooth and pale green with feathery fronds borne 3 to 4 inches apart. The fronds have regularly spaced leaflets that are dull green in color with pointed tips. The outer most two leaflets are 2 to 3 times wider than the others. Small yellow-green flowers of the Microspadix Palm are borne in showy clusters and on female plants are followed by small, bright orange-red fruits.

General Information

Scientific name: *Chamaedorea microspadix*

Pronunciation: kam-ee-DOR-ee-uh mye-kroe-SPAY-dicks

Common name(s): Microspadix Palm, Bamboo Palm

Family: *Palmae*

Plant type: palm

USDA hardiness zones: 8B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Planting month for zone 8: year round

Planting month for zone 9: year round

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: specimen; screen; border; accent; mass planting; suitable for growing indoors

Availability: somewhat available, may have to go out of the region to find the plant



Figure 1. Microspadix Palm.

Spread: 3 to 5 feet

Plant habit: upright; palm

Plant density: moderate

Growth rate: slow

Texture: medium

Foliage

Description

Height: 5 to 8 feet

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Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Leaf arrangement: spiral
Leaf type: even-pinnately compound
Leaf margin: entire
Leaf shape: lanceolate
Leaf venation: parallel
Leaf type and persistence: evergreen
Leaf blade length: 4 to 8 inches
Leaf color: green
Fall color: no fall color change
Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow
Flower characteristic: flowers periodically throughout the year

Fruit

Fruit shape: round
Fruit length: less than .5 inch
Fruit cover: fleshy
Fruit color: red
Fruit characteristic: persists on the plant

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: typically multi-trunked or clumping stems; showy
Current year stem/twig color: green
Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in the shade
Soil tolerances: acidic; slightly alkaline; sand; loam; clay;
Drought tolerance: moderate
Soil salt tolerances: poor
Plant spacing: 36 to 60 inches

Other

Roots: sprouts from roots or lower trunk
Winter interest: no special winter interest
Outstanding plant: not particularly outstanding
Invasive potential: not known to be invasive
Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

The Microspadix Palm makes a great border or specimen plant and is quite striking when planted in mass. It is also a wonderful container plant for outdoor or indoor decoration. It can be grown inside in a bright location. Old fronds turn brown and hang on the plant for a considerable length of time. The plant looks much neater when these are regularly removed.

This excellent garden palm tolerates high shade. Plants can be acclimated to a partially sunny location with gradual exposure. However, plants receiving regular fertilizer applications appear much greener and more attractive than those without fertilizer. Regular irrigation also appears to encourage continued growth. The Microspadix Palm will do well in a partially to fully shaded location in the landscape. It is tolerant of short periods of drought and will be happy in most well-drained soils.

Pests and Diseases

No pests or diseases are of major concern.