



Cooperative Extension Service
Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

*Coccothrinax crinita*¹

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Introduction

This Cuba native is well known for its stiff, beige-colored hairs densely borne along the entire length of the single, thick trunk. Palmately lobed, simple leaves appear compound and are delicately borne on short, thin petioles.

General Information

Scientific name: *Coccothrinax crinita*

Pronunciation: koe-koe-THRYE-nacks krin-NEE-tuh

Common name(s): Old Man Palm

Family: *Arecaceae*

Plant type: palm; tree

USDA hardiness zones: 10B through 11 (Fig. 1)

Planting month for zone 10 and 11: year round

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: specimen; container or above-ground planter; recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway

Availability: grown in small quantities by a small number of nurseries

Description

Height: 10 to 15 feet

Spread: 6 to 10 feet

Plant habit: upright

Plant density: open

Growth rate: slow

Texture: coarse

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: spiral

Leaf type: simple

Leaf margin: entire

Leaf shape: star-shaped

Leaf venation: palmate

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaf blade length: 18 to 36 inches

Leaf color: silver/gray

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: yellow

Flower characteristic: summer flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit cover: fleshy

Fruit color: purple

Fruit characteristic: inconspicuous and not showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: usually with one stem/trunk; no thorns

Current year stem/twig color: not applicable

Current year stem/twig thickness: not applicable

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Figure 1. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Culture

Light requirement: plant grows in part shade/part sun; plant grows in the shade

Soil tolerances: clay; acidic; well-drained; sand; loam

Drought tolerance: moderate

Soil salt tolerances: unknown

Plant spacing: not applicable

Other

Roots: usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding plant: plant has outstanding ornamental features and could be planted more

Invasive potential: not known to be invasive

Pest resistance: long-term health usually not affected by pests

Use and Management

One Old Man Palm may be all that is needed in a small landscape, but they can be planted in mass if room and budget permit. They appear to be standing like soldiers with their stiff, bearded trunks emerging straight from the ground. Good drought and salt tolerance makes them well adapted for planting along the seashore with some protection.

Pests and Diseases

There appears to be no major pest or disease problems.