



Syagrus romanzoffiana Queen Palm¹

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson²

INTRODUCTION

This stately, single-trunked palm is crowned by a beautiful head of glossy, bright green, soft, pinnate leaves forming a graceful, drooping canopy (Fig. 1). The ornamental, bright orange dates are produced in hanging clusters and ripen during the winter months. The dead fronds are persistent and often require pruning to remove. It is popular in commercial or home landscapes planted in rows on 15-foot centers to line a street or walk, in clusters or occasionally as a specimen. The grey trunk is ringed with old leaf scars.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Scientific name: *Syagrus romanzoffiana*

Pronunciation: sigh-AY-gruss
roe-man-zoff-ee-AY-nuh

Common name(s): Queen Palm

Family: *Arecaceae*

USDA hardiness zones: 9B through 11 (Fig. 2)

Origin: not native to North America

Uses: large parking lot islands (> 200 square feet in size); wide tree lawns (>6 feet wide); medium-sized parking lot islands (100-200 square feet in size); medium-sized tree lawns (4-6 feet wide); recommended for buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway; near a deck or patio; narrow tree lawns (3-4 feet wide); specimen; sidewalk cutout (tree pit)

Availability: generally available in many areas within its hardiness range

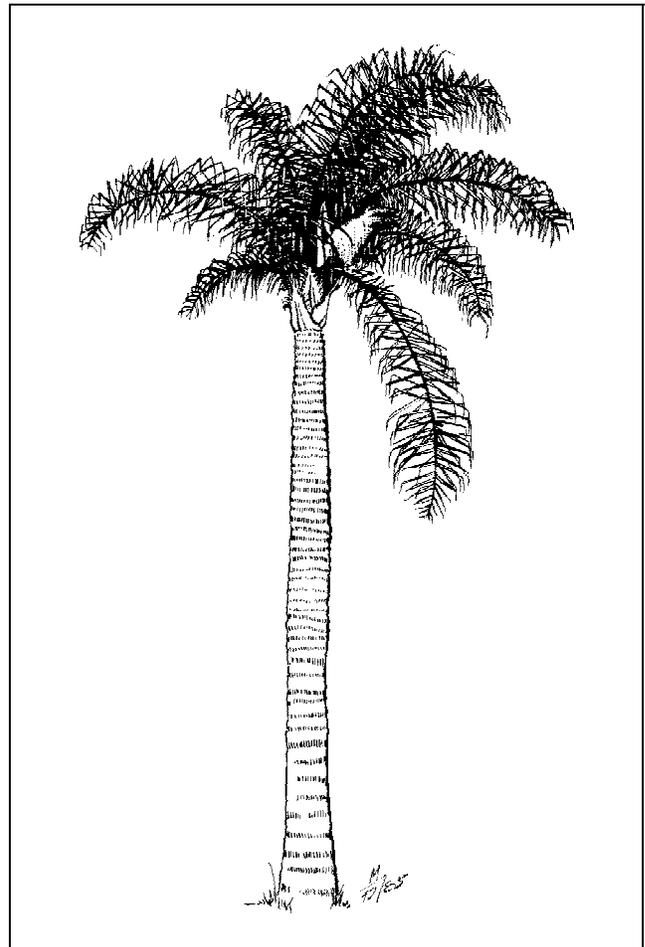


Figure 1. Mature Queen Palm.

DESCRIPTION

Height: 25 to 50 feet

Spread: 15 to 25 feet

Crown uniformity: irregular outline or silhouette

1. This document is adapted from Fact Sheet ST-609, a series of the Environmental Horticulture Department, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Publication date: October 1994.
2. Edward F. Gilman, associate professor, Environmental Horticulture Department; Dennis G. Watson, associate professor, Agricultural Engineering Department, Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville FL 32611.



Figure 2. Shaded area represents potential planting range.

Crown shape: palm; upright

Crown density: open

Growth rate: fast

Texture: fine

Foliage

Leaf arrangement: alternate

Leaf type: odd pinnately compound

Leaflet margin: entire

Leaflet shape: lanceolate

Leaflet venation: parallel

Leaf type and persistence: evergreen

Leaflet blade length: 18 to 36 inches; 12 to 18 inches

Leaf color: green

Fall color: no fall color change

Fall characteristic: not showy

Flower

Flower color: white

Flower characteristics: showy; spring flowering

Fruit

Fruit shape: round

Fruit length: .5 to 1 inch

Fruit covering: fleshy

Fruit color: orange

Fruit characteristics: does not attract wildlife; fruit, twigs, or foliage cause significant litter; persistent on the tree; showy

Trunk and Branches

Trunk/bark/branches: grow mostly upright and will not droop; not particularly showy; should be grown with a single leader; no thorns

Pruning requirement: needs little pruning to develop a strong structure

Breakage: resistant

Crown shaft: no

Culture

Light requirement: tree grows in full sun

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

Drought tolerance: moderate

Aerosol salt tolerance: moderate

Other

Roots: surface roots are usually not a problem

Winter interest: no special winter interest

Outstanding tree: not particularly outstanding

Invasive potential: little, if any, potential at this time

Verticillium wilt susceptibility: not known to be susceptible

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

USE AND MANAGEMENT

Growing best in full sun, Queen Palm is most suited for acidic, well-drained soils and shows severe mineral deficiencies on alkaline soil. This disfigures the palm by stunting the young leaves and can kill it. Unfortunately, Queen Palm is frequently planted in alkaline soil and requires regular preventive applications of manganese and/or iron to help keep the fronds green. Potassium deficiency is also displayed on older fronds in well-drained soils. Quick-growing Queen Palm responds well to ample moisture and fertilizer and is slightly salt-tolerant. After planting Queen Palm in the landscape, growth is rapid. This palm is not affected by lethal yellowing disease.

Pruning off too many fronds at one time can cause the palm to decline. Growth often slows with new foliage aborting to display distorted leaflets. The trunk is also very susceptible to decay. Prevent injury to the trunk by keeping turf well away from the trunk.

Propagation is by seed and volunteers will often appear under fruiting trees.

Pests

Palm leaf skeletonizer and scale are problems for Queen Palm.

Diseases

Ganoderma butt rot can kill Queen Palm. It probably enters the trunk most often through wounds in the lower trunk and roots. There is no control for butt rot, only prevention.