

GROWING *Pinanga disticha* IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

Submitted by Charlie Beck

Pinanga disticha is a charming little palm native to peninsular Thailand and Malaysia and also found in Singapore and Sumatra. Henderson describes it as a loose clumper but our specimen grows as a tight clumper. In nature, this palm grows from sea level up to an elevation of 4,000 feet. The stems measure .25 inches in diameter and are reported to grow four feet tall. The leaves are mottled and have widely divided segments or are bifid. The stems are dark brown.



Pinanga disticha growing in the Beck garden.
(Photo by Charlie Beck)

Our specimen was purchased in a four inch pot. It grew steadily into a two gallon container. We planted it in the garden last summer and it continued to grow without any transplant shock. It seems well adapted to our sandy soil but I did mulch heavily around this palm. I was surprised to see this *Pinanga* was unfazed by our record cold winter. No leaf burn was evident. Since this palm grows in habitat from steamy sea level to cool, high altitudes, this palm handles our hot humid summers and our occasional cold winters.

I am fond of this palm for its widely segmented, mottled leaves and its tight clumping habit. I compare it to *Chamaedorea brachypoda* or *C. stolonifera* (see photos on page 12). *P. disticha* stems seem more rigid than *C. brachypoda* and so far have not shown a tendency to spread over large areas like *C. brachypoda* and *C. stolonifera*. From all indications, *P. disticha* would also be a good candidate for outdoor pot culture.

GROWING CONDITIONS IN OUR GARDEN FOR <i>Pinanga disticha</i>	
Location	4 miles from ocean in suburban Lantana
Soil	Sand over a layer of hardpan (pineland flatwood habitat)
Irrigation	¾ inch applied twice a week
Fertilization	3 times a year with Palm special analysis
Light	Deep shade
Micronutrient Deficiencies	None observed
Insect Damage	None observed
Hurricane Resistance	Excellent (Assumed)



ABOVE: *Pinanga disticha* growing in the Beck garden.

BELOW: *Pinanga disticha* growing in Flecker Botanical Garden in Cairns in Tropical North Queensland, Australia

(Photos by Charlie Beck)

