

# GROWING *Sabal mauritiformis* IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

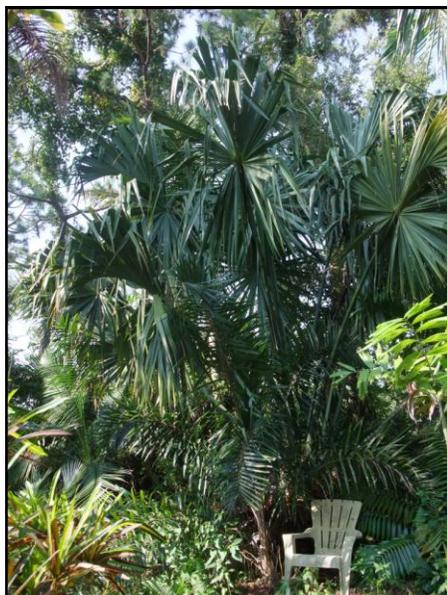
*Submitted by Charlie Beck*

*Sabal mauritiiformis* rates in my top five palmate palms. Like *Corypha umbraculifera*, this palm is most impressive when young. The size of its crown has a tendency to shrink as the stem gains height. This *Sabal* looks its best when planted in the shade but will also grow in full sun.

I planted two specimens 16 years ago. Even though both were planted in similar conditions, they have grown at different rates. The faster growing palm has a 12 inch diameter by 20 foot tall trunk. The 26 foot diameter canopy area of this palm is much smaller than its juvenile stage. The second specimen has a 7 foot tall stem but the crown of fronds is much larger. Leaves measure 10 feet in diameter and are displayed on 13 foot long petioles—an impressive sight (see Figures 1 and 2 on page 2).

If you don't have the room to plant a *Corypha umbraculifera*, impress your neighbors by planting this unique palm. I guarantee it will draw a lot of attention. None of the photos in books capture the beauty of this palm.

<b>GROWING CONDITIONS IN OUR GARDEN FOR <i>Sabal mauritiformis</i></b>	
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
Flooding	Periodic inundation in sandy soil acceptable
Fertilization	3 times a year with Palm special analysis
Light	Sun/partial shade
Micronutrient Deficiencies	None observed
Insect Damage	None observed
Hurricane Resistance	Good



**Left: Figure 1**

*Sabal mauritiiformis* planted in the Beck garden 16 years ago.



**Right: Figure 2**

Brenda Beck and granddaughter Ashley with *Sabal mauritiformis* leaf.

# GROWING *Sabal mauritiformis* IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

*Submitted by Dale Holton*



Dale Holton with a *Sabal mauritiformis* growing in his garden.

This palm can be found from Central Mexico to Venezuela and Trinidad, excluding El Salvador and Nicaragua. I also have seen this palm growing in Panama. They can grow to a height of approximately 60 feet with a one foot diameter trunk. The leaves are a bright green on top and silver underneath. They grow somewhat slowly for the first 10 to 12 years, and then begin growing quite quickly.

When small, the plant should be grown in a somewhat shady and protected area. The leaves are easily broken in windy locations.

When small, *Sabal mauritiformis* looks somewhat like a large Licuala. I believe this is the most attractive of all the *Sabals*.

The Indians in Belize treasure this palm for roofing material. A well done roof will last for 7 to 8 years. When the Indians can't get enough *Sabal* leaves, they substitute with *Attaleya cohune*. On my many trips to Belize, I found that the *Sabals* were either quite small or very tall. Very few . I have been told that the younger Indians cut the palms down to get the leaves rather than climb them. They also most likely eat the cabbage.

I highly recommend this palm. Plant a second one when the first is 6 or 8 years old so that when the first one gets too tall for you, you can cut it down and eat it.



*Sabal mauritiformis* growing in habitat. Photograph was taken by Dale Holton in March 1994 in Darien Panama.

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*Sabal mauritiformis* trunk.