

Hyophorbe lagenicaulis

(Bottle palm)



Hyophorbe lagenicaulis, the bottle palm or palmist gargoulette, is a species of flowering plant in the family Aceraceae. It is native to Round Island, Mauritius.

Description

Hyophorbe lagenicaulis showing enlarged trunk and roots

Bottle palm has a large swollen (sometimes bizarrely so) trunk. It is a myth that the trunk is a means by which the palm stores water. Bottle palms have only four to six leaves open at any time. The leaves of young palms have a red or orange tint, but a deep green is assumed at maturity. The flowers of the palm arise from under the crown shaft.

This species is often confused with its relative, the Spindle Palm, which also has a swollen trunk. But the Spindle palm's trunk swells in the middle (resembling the shape of a spindle), whereas the trunk of the Bottle palm swells from near the base and tapers further up. Its inflorescence branches in 4 orders, and its 2.5 cm fruits can be orange or black. The trunk of both species becomes more and more slender as the palm ages.

In Mauritius, the only other extant Hyophorbe species is the common Hyophorbe vaughanii. The Bottle palm can be distinguished from this species by its swollen trunk when young; by its much smaller (2.5 cm) orange or black fruits; and by its inflorescence, which branches in four orders rather than three.

Distribution and habitat-

The bottle palm is naturally endemic to Round Island, off the coast of Mauritius. While habitat destruction may destroy the last remaining palms in the wild, the survival of the species is assured due to its ubiquitous planting throughout the tropics and subtropics as a specimen plant. It is one

of three Hyophorbe species which naturally occur in Mauritius, and one of only two that are still extant.

The Beaucarnea (ponytail palms et al.) are sometimes called bottle palms.

Bottle palms from

Mascarene Islands

Bottle palm is a true palm that is native to the Mascarene Islands where warm, balmy temperatures and loose, sandy soil form the plant's habitat.

References –

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyophorbe_lagenicaulis