



3. Seedlings of *Euterpe* abound but few reach maturity.

vicinity both on foot and in low-flying aircraft revealed only three other mature specimens.

Many *Euterpe* species as well as other edible palms in which the bud is utilized as heart of palm salad are collectively referred to colloquially as palmitos. This could account for the palm's scarcity, although I saw no stumps to indicate a severe harvest.

One of the few specimens of this palm is visible (for future collectors) by looking into the forest on the left side of the road from Iguassu Airport towards the falls on the Brazilian side in the forest through a gap in a thick wall of a very tenacious variety of climbing thorned bamboo and lianes which typically overgrows because of surplus light created by road clearing on rivers etc. It gives a false impression that the forest is this thick uniformly.

I had already collected only a handful of seeds from the few specimens I could locate. I felt the need to collect more, which leads me to a colorful memory. In a bus full of passengers, I could not convince the driver to stop for ten minutes to facilitate my collecting of more seeds. We arrived at the airport and our

flight was due to depart in 30 minutes for Uruguay. In some sort of compulsive frenzy I told my wife, Arlene, that if I missed the flight, I would see her one week later (the next flight out) in Uruguay. Much to her dismay I paid a driver all the Brazilian currency left in my pocket (which wasn't enough, but my pleading was) and raced top speed past a government check point. In a record ten minutes we reached the palm where I did a rather movie stunt head-first dive through the bulk of climbing bamboo, which would have taken too long to wriggle through without my machete, and entered the slightly more spacious interior of the forest. It took ten minutes to reach the palm and collect windfall seed, shake the trunk and collect more and get back to the waiting car, whose driver thought I was a *loco americano*. In another ten minutes I was back at the airport with 20 seconds to spare for the flight.

A rather disturbing footnote to this story is that apparently no seeds of the *Euterpe* sp. germinated. Anyone visiting this area should be on the lookout for the seeds of this fantastically graceful palm.

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NOTES ON CULTURE

Sealing Wax Palms in South Florida

Cyrtostachys lakka or *C. renda* can be grown successfully and beautifully in South Florida . . . with special care.

These palms like full sun, warm and wet growing conditions and acid soil. A protected southern exposure will give daytime warmth even in the cooler parts of the winter season; a strategically placed floodlight—close enough to give much heat, but not too close to singe—will give nighttime warmth and in the

event of extra cool days may be left on to heat during the day. Daily or every-other-day flooding with warm, and I mean very warm, water seems to promote faster growth. When planting this palm, choose a depression or create one where the water will tend to collect about the palm and not run off. . .it likes to be wet. If a severe cold night threatens, the lights should of course be left burning and a cover should be placed over the palm for protection. Be careful that the cover and light combination is not too close to burn. Actually the palm will not be killed by some cold but this is a relatively slow grower and cooling seems to slow growth completely.

An acid fertilizer applied frequently seems to keep the sealing wax palm in a happy and healthy condition. . .this in combination with the acid soil which can be accomplished by the use of peat moss and muck and acid sand in the Miami area. One more thing. . .frequent sprays or soakings with a nutritional spray and also with an iron compound keep the colors bright and growth moving along.

This may sound complicated but once it becomes routine it is simple. . .the results are spectacular and very rewarding. Main points seem to be **FULL SUN, WARM LOCATION, CONSTANT WATER, ACID CONDITIONS,** and *tender loving care.*

John Turner of Miami, probably the best palm grower in this area, developed most of the above culture. His sealing wax palms are red and green and beautiful.

Obtaining *Cyrtostachys* is another matter. They are native to the Eastern tropics (Sumatra, etc.) and the nearest sources to Florida are Morgan's Nursery in the Panama Canal Zone and the famous Summit Gardens of Panama. Seeds are very tiny and take about two months to germinate. They are not the easiest to raise beyond the seedling stage but with the proper guard against damp-off they should make it. The requirements for the seedlings seem to be about the same as for the adult palms.

Holders of plant import permits may apply and obtain a special permission to bring this palm in bare-rooted from Panama. Persons who are making a trip to Panama have a fine opportunity to obtain these rare beauties. The above-mentioned nurseries in the Canal Zone will probably cooperate with you in preparing the plants. They must be thoroughly cleaned and free of all contamination in order to avoid the deadly dipping at Plant Inspection upon arrival in the U. S. A. The bare roots should of course be wrapped in wet Spagnum and then in a plastic bag to prevent drying. **GOOD LUCK!**

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A Roystonea in the Desert of California

The 30-foot royal palm pictured opposite has been growing out of doors in the Coachella Valley of southern California for 17 years. The palm was brought from Florida and in 1953 planted in the landscape surrounding the salesroom of Sniff's Date Gardens in Indio. Winter protection of an adjacent collection of tender citrus varieties has no doubt aided its survival. The desert heat and ample flood irrigation has promoted vigorous growth which should be the envy of the palm fanciers in the coastal belt of California who dream of growing large royal palms.

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