

Hyophorbe lagenicaulis

Common name: Bottle palm

Family: Arecaceae

Habit: Tree

Location: Science Block

Distribution: Bottle Palm is native to Mauritius. It is a tree and grows primarily in the wet tropical biome.

Description:

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. Leaf fronds are compound, mildly recurving, ascending to spreading, upwardly arching, 4 to 6; leaflets stiff, narrow, up to 140, each about 60 cm long. The flowers of the palm arise from under the crown shaft, borne in branched inflorescences, cream, horn-like, about 75 cm long. Fruits are oblong, ripening from green to orange to black, about 3 cm long. The genus name *Hyophorbe* comes from the Greek hys, 'a pig', phorbe, in reference to the fruit being eaten by pigs. Its species name *lagenicaulis* means 'with a flask-shaped stem' in Latin, in reference to its stem.

Uses: Bottle palm is an ornamental plant. It is good for air purification. All parts- fruits, leaves and tree trunks, are beneficial. It used to treat anemia, chronic fatigue, cyanide poisoning, digestion problems, emollient, fights depression, high cholesterol, indigestion and skin disorders. Other uses include basketry, biomass for fuel, for making oil, jelly, sometimes used for making wine and traditionally considered as lucky plant.

