

Palm Selections for Central Florida

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The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of palm leaves. The leaves are long, narrow, and green, with prominent yellowish-green veins. They are arranged in a fan-like pattern, radiating from a central point at the bottom. The lighting is bright, creating a high-contrast image with some areas of deep green and others of lighter green and yellow.

Selecting your Palms

Right Plant, Right Place

- Hardiness Zone
- Spacing
- Soil
- Moisture
- Light
- Salt / wind exposure
- Invasiveness
- Pests/disease/litter

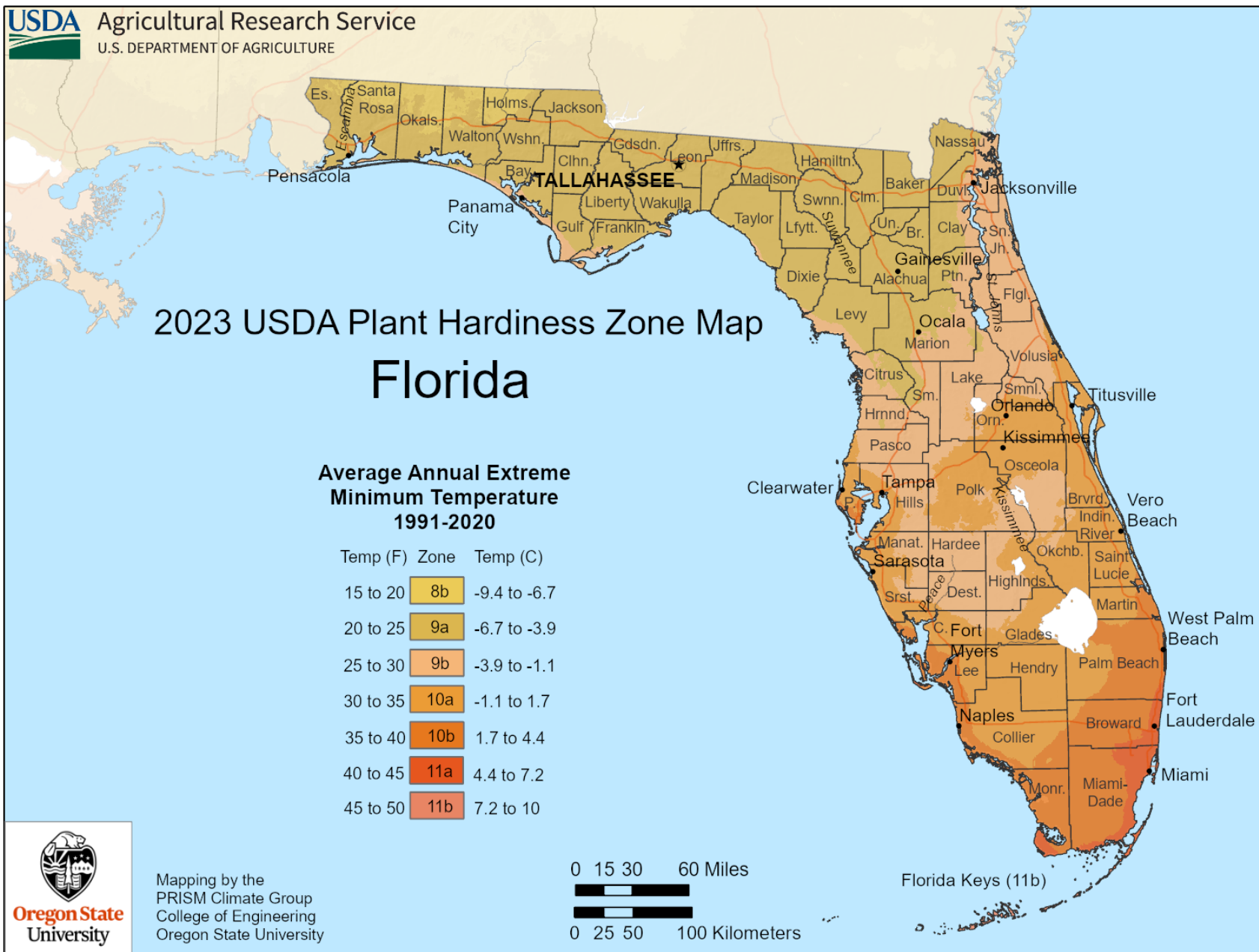


A close-up photograph of palm fronds. The fronds are long, narrow, and green, with prominent yellowish-green veins. They are arranged in a fan-like pattern, radiating from a central point at the bottom. The background is slightly blurred, showing more foliage and a hint of a bright sky.

Common Palms for Central Florida



Agricultural Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



Oregon State
University

Paurotis Palm

Acoelorrhaphe wrightii



- Sun/Part Shade
- 20' high
- 20' wide
- Poorly adapted to alkaline soils
- Petioles spiny
- Multi-Trunk
- Zones 9a – 11

Mule Palm

X Butiagrus nabonnandii



Photo Credits: Cherrylake

- Sun
- 25' high
- 20ft. wide
- Variable in size and growth
- Resembles queen palm
- Sterile hybrid
- Zones 8 - 10

Pindo Palm

Butia capitata



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Sun/Part Shade
- Silver/gray fronds
- 15' high
- 12' wide
- Edible fruit
- Slow growing
- Zones 8 – 11

Washingtonia / Mexican Fan Palm

Washingtonia robusta



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Sun/Part Shade
- 80' high
- 10' wide
- Armed petioles
- “Self cleaning”
- Fusarium wilt
- Zones 9 – 11



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

Cabbage Palm

Sabal palmetto



Jim Davis

- Sun/Part Shade
- 50' high
- 10' wide
- Cold Tolerant
- Florida's State Tree
- May or may not retain "boots"
- Zones 8 - 11

Cabbage Palm

Sabal palmetto



Broschat

- Swamp Cabbage
- Berries for sickness
- Leaves – thatch houses, mats, arrows, staffs, paddles, stickball
- Seminoles, Choctaw, Houma
- 10-25% raccoons and robins

Dwarf Palmetto

Sabal minor



- Shade/partial shade
- Blue-green fronds
- 8' high
- 8' wide
- Blue-Green Foliage
- Petioles unarmed
- Rarely form a trunk
- Zones 7 - 11

Saw Palmetto

Serenoa repens



- Sun/Part Shade
- Grows up to 10' tall and wide
- Salt tolerant
- Clumping
- Armed petioles
- Green and Silver forms
- Zones 8 – 11

Saw Palmetto

Serenoa repens



- Fruit – aphrodisiac, prostate, food
- Fiber, fish drags, fire/dance fans, baskets, ropes, dolls.
- 2,000 tons harvested
- \$50 million harvested each year

Chinese Fan Palm

Livistona chinensis

- Sun/Part Shade
- 30' high
- 10-15' wide
- Armed petioles
- “Fountain palm” due to drooping leaf tips
- Zones 9 – 11



Photo Courteous: Stephen Brown,
UF/IFAS

Sylvester Palm

Phoenix sylvestris

- Sun/Part Shade
- 40' high
- 25' wide
- Large mean spines near base of petioles
- Blue Gray Foliage
- Very prone to LBD
- Zones 8 – 11



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

Canary Island Date Palm

Phoenix canariensis



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Sun
- 40' high
- 25' wide
- Large mean spines
- Slow Growing
- Very prone to LBD
- Zones 9 - 11

Edible Date Palm 'Medjool'

Phoenix dactylifera



Photo Credits: Amanda Marek

- Sun
- High salt tolerance
- 50' high
- 25' wide
- Spiny petioles
- Prone to LBD
- Zones 9 - 11

European Fan Palm

Chamaerops humilis



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Sun/Part Shade
- Slowly grows up to 15' high x 10' wide
- Clumping
- Very hardy
- Armed petioles
- Zones 8 – 11

Windmill Palm

Trachycarpus fortunei



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Partial to full sun
- Moderately salt tolerant
- Slowly grow up to 25' high x 6-10' wide
- Fibrous, slightly spiny trunk
- Zones 8 - 11

Lady Palm

Rhapis excelsa



- Part to full shade
- Forms spreading dense thickets ~7' high
- Fertile, moist soil
- Great for containers
- Zones 9 - 11

Slender Lady Palm

Rhapis humilis



- Shade to partial shade
- Grows taller than Lady Palm over 10' tall
- Less common
- Clumping
- Fan shaped leaf
- Zones 9 - 11

Hardy Bamboo Palm

Chamaedorea microspadix



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Shade loving
- 8-10' tall x 4-5' w
- Rare
- Clumping Palm
- Feather leaves
- Zones 8 - 11

Needle Palm

Rhapidophyllum hystrix



- Shade loving
- Native
- Slowly grows up to 8' x 8'
- Clumping
- Very cold hardy: zones 6-10
- Large needle-like spines

Ribbon Palm

Livistona decipiens



- Sun/Part Shade
- 30'-50' high
- 10-15' wide
- Zones 9 – 11
- Armed petioles

A close-up photograph of palm fronds, showing the intricate pattern of the leaflets radiating from a central point. The fronds are a vibrant green color, with some showing signs of aging or damage. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the palm tree and some distant foliage.

Less Cold-Hardy Palms for Central Florida

Queen Palm

Syagrus romanzoffiana



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Sun/Part Shade
- 25'- 50' high
- 15' - 25' wide
- Produces excessive fruit
- Invasive potential
- Zones 9b - 11

Roebelenii / Pygmy Date Palm

Phoenix roebelenii



Photo Credits: Jim E. Davis

- Sun/Part Shade
- Grows up to 12' tall x 8' wide
- Spined petioles
- Single trunked but often sold in clumps
- Zones 9b - 11

Dwarf Sugar Palm

Arenga engleri



- Sun/Light shade
- 10' high
- 15' wide
- Clumping Palm
- Feather leaves
- Individual stems die after fruiting
- Zones 9b - 11

Bismarck Palm

Bismarckia nobilis



Photo credit: Verdego Landscape

- Sun
- 30 – 60' tall x 12 – 16' wide
- Wide single trunk
- Large, silvery-green leaves
- Not as wind-resistant
- Zones 10a/9b – 11

Senegal Date palm

Phoenix reclinata



- Sun
- 35' high x 20' wide
- Clumping
- Feathery leaves
- Potentially invasive
- Zones 9b - 11

A close-up photograph of a cycad fan leaf, showing a central rachis with numerous long, narrow, linear leaflets radiating outwards. The leaflets are a vibrant green color with prominent, lighter green veins running parallel to the leaflet edges. The background is slightly blurred, showing other foliage and a bright sky.

Cycads (not palms)

King Sago Palm

Cycas revoluta



- Full sun – part shade
- Seeds poisonous
- Slowly up to 15' tall x 10' wide
- Dioecious
- Cycad scale major pest
- Zones 9 – 11

Coontie

Zamia integrifolia



- Full sun - Shade
- Florida's only native cycad
- Slowly grows up to 3' tall x 5' wide
- Females produce toxic orange fruit
- Atala butterfly host plant
- Zones 8 - 11

Chestnut Dioon

Dioon edule



- Full sun – part shade
- Thick spiny leaves
- Slowly grows 6 to 8' tall and wide
- Clumping
- Full sun – light shade
- High salt tolerance
- Zones 8 – 11

Cardboard Plant

Zamia furfuracea



Jim Davis

- Full sun - part shade
- Stiff fuzzy leaves
- Up to 5' tall x 8' wide
- Dioecious
- Susceptible to freeze
- Zones 9 - 11

Planting and Establishment

Planting and Establishment



Planting and Establishment

- Avoid planting palms in winter
- Water regularly and frequently until established (about a year)
- No need to root prune root-bound container palms
- Plant root-initiation zone 1" below the ground or mound soil over it
- Don't transplant palms too young (w/o a trunk)



Photo: Timothy Broschat. Palm root-initiation zone

Planting and Establishment

- Field-grown palms should be planted at same depth
- Some, like Sabals, should have most fronds pruned off
- Dig holes 2x as wide
- Keep soil moist 4-6 months after planting (longer if no rainfall)
- Brace tall palms



Photo: Timothy Broschat. Depending on the species, pruning off majority or all of fronds before transplanting can increase survival rate.

Thank you!

Resources:

Ornamental Palms for Central Florida

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ep020>

Transplanting Palms in the Landscape

<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/EP001>