

Ptychosperma elegans (R.Br.) Blume

Family:

Areaceae

Blume, C. (1836) *Rumphia* 2: 118.

Common name:

Bangalow, Solitaire Palm; Palm, Solitaire; Elegant Palm; Palm, Elegant

Stem

Grows up to 12 m tall but usually flowers and fruits when much smaller. Stem solitary.

Leaves

Leaves to 3.3 m long, pinnate with 30-60 leaflets on each side of midrib and to 84 cm long.

Flowers

Inflorescence 65-70 cm long bearing flowers in groups of three consisting of two male and one female flower. Male flowers with sepals 3, c. 1.5-2 mm long, light green; petals 3, c. 6 mm long, light green; stamens 12-22 per flower; ovary, style and stigma always well developed but the ovules are absent in the male flowers. Female flowers with sepals 3, 2.5 x 2-.5 mm, green; petals 3, 5 x 2.5 mm, green; c. 6 staminodes present; stigma 1 mm long, recurved.

Fruit

Fruits globose to ellipsoid, 9-15 mm long x 8-10 mm diam.; red when mature. Seed 10-11 mm long, 5-angled.

Seedlings

Seed germination time 79 days. First pair of leaves compound with two broad-based, sessile, longitudinally veined leaflets. Apices praemorse. Leaf blades about 3-6.5 x 1.5-3 cm, petioles about 3.5 cm long. At the tenth leaf stage: leaf compound with two broad-based, sessile, longitudinally veined leaflets. Apices praemorse.

Distribution and Ecology

Endemic to Queensland, occurs in CYP, NEQ, CEQ and southwards to south-eastern Queensland. Altitudinal range from near sea level to 900 m. Grows as an understory plant in lowland and upland rain forest.

Natural History & Notes

Often cultivated in gardens as the Solitaire Palm. Honey eaters eat the flesh off the fruit.

Distinguished by the non-clumping habit, number of pinnae 30-60 on each side of the rachis, and the deeply ruminant endosperm in seed.

Synonyms

Ptychosperma elegans* (R.Br.) Blume var. *elegans, *Annales du Jardin Botanique de Buitenzorg* 2: 88(1885). ***Seaforthia elegans* R.Br.**, *Prodromus Florae Novae Hollandiae* : 267(1810), Type: [given by F.B.Essig, Allertonia 1 (1978) 432 as Robert Browns collection from the Northumberland Islands, Queensland (Brown 5794).Holo: BM. ***Ptychosperma capitis-yorkii* H.Wendl. & Drude**, *Linnaea* 39: 217(1875), Type: In Australasiae septentrionalis silvis umbrosis ad Caput York (Somerset)! leg. Veitch; Herb. Wendland. ***Ptychosperma seaforthia* Miq.**, *Flora Indiae Batavae* 3: 21(1855), Type: Nieuw-Holland, oostkust van het tropisch gedeelte. ***Archontophoenix jardinei* F.M.Bailey**, *Queensland Agric. J.* 2: 129(1898), Type: Queensland, Somerset, Cape York, Jardine; holo: BRI? ***Ptychosperma elegans* var. *sphaerocarpum* Becc.**, *Annales du Jardin Botanique de Buitenzorg* 2: 88(1885), Type: La pianta di Buitenzorg. ***Ptychosperma wendlandiana* Burret**, *Notizblatt des Botanischen Gartens und Museums zu Berlin-Dahlem* 10 : 205(1928), Type: Nordaustralien: Cape York (DAEMEL). Typus speciei!. ***Ptychosperma wendlandiana* Burret var. *wendlandiana***, *Notizblatt des Botanischen Gartens und Museums zu Berlin-Dahlem* 10 : 206(1928). ***Ptychosperma wendlandiana* var. *sphaerocarpum* (Becc.) Burret**, *Notizblatt des Botanischen Gartens und Museums zu Berlin-Dahlem* 10 : 206(1928). ***Ptychosperma wendlandiana* var. *sphaerocarpum* (Becc.) Burret**, *Notizblatt des Botanischen Gartens und Museums zu Berlin-Dahlem* 10 : 206(1928). ***Ptychosperma jardinei* (Bailey) F.M.Bailey**, *Queensland Agricultural Journal* 23(1): 35(1909). ***Actinophloeus capitis-yorkii* Burret**, *Repertorium Specierum Novarum Regni Vegetabilis* 24 : 266(1927).

RFK Code



Male flowers. © CSIRO



Female flowers [not vouchered]. © J.L. Dowe



Inflorescence and fruit. © CSIRO



Fruit, whole and with epicarp removed to show furrows, and seed in cross-section [not vouchered]. © J.L. Dowe



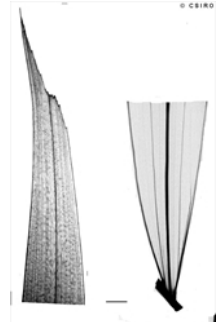
Fruit, side view, cross section and



Inflorescence and flowers. © CSIRO



In lowland rainforest [not vouchered]. © J.L. Dowe



Scale bar 10mm. © CSIRO



Cotyledon stage, hypogeal germination. © CSIRO



Leaf of 10th leaf stage. © CSIRO



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