

Family Palmae

Nypa fruticans (Thunb.) Wurmb.

Local names: *nipa*, *sapsap*, *sasa* (Tagalog)



The only palm among true mangrove species, *Nypa fruticans* forms extensive belts along muddy edges of brackish to almost freshwater creeks and rivers. Individual plants are also found in mixed mangrove communities. It has creeping stems called rhizomes from which tall (up to 8 m high) compound leaves arise. Commercially important, its products include the local drink *tuba*, vinegar and alcohol from the sap of the inflorescence (see opposite, bottom left photo); roofing material, native hats (*salakot*), raincoats, baskets, bags, mats, and wrappers from leaflets; and brooms from midribs. The fruit endosperm is eaten fresh or cooked, and the trunk pith is prepared as salad. The Sanskrit name *Nypatithau* was that of a generous man who gave everything of himself. Coincidentally, *Nypa* was first applied in Indonesia to this palm species, which gives of its every useful part so to speak (M. Vannucci, personal communication).



General

Substrate: soft to hard mud
Tidal level: middle, high
Found with: various species

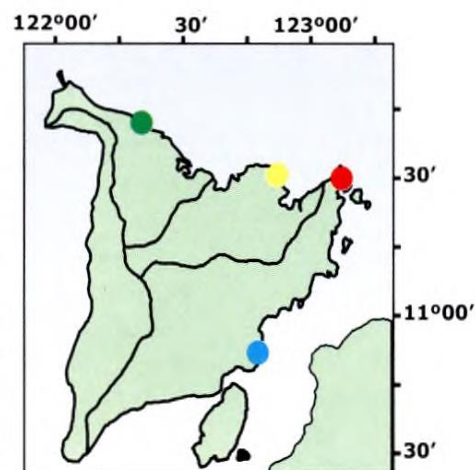
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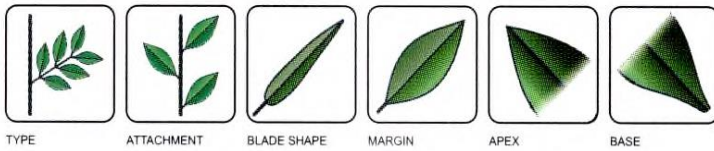
Shape: palm
Height: 2-8 m
Roots: creeping rhizomes

Sampling sites: ● Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo
● Carles, Iloilo
● Panay, Capiz
● Ibajay, Aklan

FLOWERING J F M A M J J A S O N D

FRUITING J F M A M J J A S O N D





Leaves

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Arrangement: | compound, odd pinnate |
| Blade shape: | lanceolate leaflet |
| Margin: | entire - smooth |
| Apex: | acute |
| Base: | sessile leaflet |
| Upper surface: | smooth, green |
| Undersurface: | powdery, light green |
| Size (leaflet): | 40-120 cm long, 4-9 cm wide |
| Others: | 80-120 leaflets per leaf 10-20 leaves per cluster |

Flowers

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Inflorescence: | catkin, axillary |
| Petals: | yellow to orange |
| Sepals: | orange |
| Stamens: | yellow |
| Others: | dimorphic |

Fruits

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| Shape: | ball-shaped cluster of fruits |
| Color: | light to dark brown |
| Texture: | individual fruit smooth, shiny |
| Size: | 20-40 cm diameter (cluster) |
| Others: | meat (endosperm) edible |

