

Cycad, Fern Palm, Sago Palm

GENERAL

Origin	: Mediterranean, sub-tropical, tropical
Vigour	: very slow-growing
Humidity	: semi-humid, very humid, extremely humid
Propagation	: sowing and pricking out
Maintenance	: low

CONDITIONS

Urban climate	: resistant
Dessication	: vulnerable
Stagnant water	: vulnerable
Irrigation	: medium
Salinity/ppm	: moderate (1200 ppm)
Hardiness	: -9°C

SHAPE

Type	: shrub, tree
Height	: 2 m-3 m
Spread	: 1.5 m-3.5 m
Foliage	: evergreen

FLOWER

Colour	: deep yellow
Size	: 30 cm
Period	: June - August

FRUIT

Type of fruit	: drupe (leathery/fibrous)
Fruit size	: 4 cm
Toxicity	: edible when processed, poisonous, fruit, shoot

Fern or Sago Palm is the common name for this plant, which many believe to be a palm tree, because of its fronds. *C. revoluta* belongs to a special plant family called cycads, which produce cones instead of flowers. It is native to southern Japan. There are some excellent specimens at Kasr Tuwaiq in the Diplomatic Quarter. It eventually grows to the proportions of a small tree, reaching a height of 2 to 3 metres. The *Cycas* reaches maturity at the age of 100, but it is very slow-growing and a specimen at this age will have a trunk of 7 metres. The evergreen, leathery, long leaves are in a very symmetrical order at top of the stem. The plant is dioecious: the male plant develops an impressive cone for pollen production, and the female plants bear groups of nut-like seeds that can be used for propagation, which can also be carried out by removing the basal offsets. *Cycas* prefers sandy to clayey soil with some humus content. It does not like salinity and requires adequate irrigation and a minimum of air humidity. The Sago will grow well in the shade of trees and is best planted to receive morning sun. Pruning is not required. *C. revoluta* is a very attractive plant, because of its dark-green leaves and regular and symmetrical growth. It survives the intense, dry heat of Arriyadh, and sometimes direct sun, remarkably well, giving a lush, tropical impression. Attractive planting schemes can be created with *Cycas* as accent or specimen plants or in groups in parks, gardens or pedestrian precincts.

