

CARDBOARD PALM

Zamia Furfurcea



Characteristics

- House Plant
- Zone: 9b-11
- Height: 2-5'
- Spread: 5-8'
- Sun: Partial Shade
- Water: Low
- Leaf: Stiff, leathery, dark green
- Humidity: Low

Culture

Cardboard plant, known scientifically as *Zamia furfuracea*, has been around since the time of the dinosaurs and remains a great plant southern landscapes. It provides a year-round display of striking foliage and, once established, requires little water or maintenance, although many people refer to cardboard plant as "cardboard palm," it isn't a true palm. Instead, it's what is botanically known as a cycad. Cycads and palms share similar leaf structures, but are actually two unique types of plants.

Noteworthy Characteristics

The fronds of cardboard plant can grow to 3 feet long with up to twelve pairs of stiff, leathery, dark green leaflets. The foliage is evergreen and provides a great backdrop for colorful flowers in landscape beds. If you want to use cardboard plant in your landscape, be sure to select a site that will leave the plant ample room to grow. Cardboard plants are slow growing, but can reach up to 6 feet in diameter. The leaves grow out of a thick, fleshy trunk that serves as a reservoir in times of drought. The trunk is also where the unique looking reproductive structures arise. Male plants and female plants each produce their own cones. After the female cones are fertilized, they ripen and break open to reveal a number of tightly packed, bright red seeds. Once established, the *Zamia* Cardboard Palm is drought tolerant with low to moderate water needs. Caring for one is easy too. They require minimal maintenance, and palm fertilizer is beneficial to its development.

Problems

The plant is prone to some pests, such as spider mites, but its biggest problem is rot.

Garden Uses

Some people love to grow these Cardboard Palms in a pot, and since these cycads grow in full sun or partial shade, they are an excellent choice for balconies, patios, and decks.