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Pandanus utilis

SCREWPINE is an evergreen shrub or tree. Native to Madagascar it has stilt-like roots above ground and dense screw-like spiral clusters of long strap-shaped prickly green leaves. It is also known as Bacoa, Common screwpine, *Pandano* (Portuguese), *Pandanus* (French), *Schraubenbaum* (German), Screw palm, *Skruepalme* (Danish), *Skruvpalm* (Swedish), *Vacoa*, *Vaquois* (French), and Wild pine.

The roots often emerge several feet above ground (even replacing the trunk) and this raises the shrub on 'stilts'. Like the pineapple (*Ananas comosus*) the small fruit are formed from many small flowers.

Utilis is Latin (useful, serviceable, fit, profitable, beneficial).

In Asia screwpine can be a familiar sight growing on the edges of sugar cane (*Saccharum officinarum*) fields.

The leaf fibres are woven to make the linings of sugar-sacks used for export and these sacks later serve as fish bags. They are also used for local thatching. In Manila in the Philippines these leaves particularly are used for making hats and other items such as matting.

Screwpine is often grown in the Caribbean as a windbreak and on some Islands there the leaves provide material for making brushes.

As a shrub or tree it is often cultivated as an ornamental plant.