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Pseudophoenix sargentii

[Synonyms : *Chamaephoenix sargentii*, *Cyclospathe northropii*, *Pseudophoenix gracilis*, *Pseudophoenix linearis*, *Pseudophoenix navassana*, *Pseudophoenix saonae*, *Pseudophoenix sargentii* var. *navassana*, *Pseudophoenix sargentii* var. *saonae*, *Pseudophoenix vinifera*, *Sargentia ariococca*]

BUCCANEER PALM is a palm. Native to the Caribbean and Florida (south-eastern United States) it has a bottle-shaped, grey trunk crowned with silvery bluish-green fronds.

It is also known as Florida cherry palm, Sargent's cherry palm, and Sargent's palm.

In the United States the palm is protected in the wild as it is considered to be endangered in the State of Florida.

Sargentii commemorates an American horticulturist and dendrologist, Charles Sprague Sargent (1841-1927), who was the first director of the Arnold Arboretum (Harvard University) in Boston from 1873-1927. In 1869/70, after Harvard, then service in the Union Army during the American Civil War, followed by three years travelling Europe, he returned home and began management of Holmlea, the family estate, which provided him with horticultural experience. Then in 1872 he became professor of horticulture at the Bussey Institute, and in 1873 director of the Arnold Arboretum, the first of its kind in the United States and from 1873-1879 director Harvard Botanic Garden. A local farmer, Benjamin Bussey, had bequeathed land to Harvard and Sargent was instrumental in persuading Boston to buy it from Harvard (for part of the City's park system) and then to offer it back to the University on a 1000 year lease at \$1 per year (plus renewal option) and, if the Arboretum grounds are open to the public, also maintain the infrastructure. This was effected in 1882 and Sargent used the proceeds to develop the Arboretum. It had begun with 120 acres but by the time he died it had increased to 250 acres (now at the beginning of the 21st Century 265 acres). Today the Arboretum is known as part of Boston's 'Emerald Necklace' (a seven-mile network of parks and parkways). Authorities note that Sargent's extensive knowledge of trees and his appreciation of the need for their conservation was such that he played a significant role in the maintenance of American forests countrywide, and that he was chairman of the National Forestry Commission. He made several exploratory botanical trips in North America as well as, in 1903-1904, a world tour. He developed his own herbarium and library (eventually over 40,000 books and journals) which he left to the Arboretum and which, since 1954, have been absorbed into the Gray Herbarium. After his death the Massachusetts State House acquired a white spruce when the tree was planted in his memory in the grounds there. Sargent established and edited a weekly journal (1888-1897) *Garden and Forest, A Journal of Horticulture, Landscape Art, and Forestry*, and his published works include *The Silva of North America*, *The Manual of the Trees of North America*, and *Forest Flora of Japan*.

This palm tree (which has grape-sized, orange-red fruit) was first identified and described in the Florida Keys in 1886. At that time apparently there were hundreds of them to be found along the southern Florida coastline but a half century or so later a high proportion had been dug up for ornamental landscaping or to make way for developers – hence the protection now imposed in the region. (It is being said at the beginning of the 21st

Century that the Caribbean is now experiencing similar activity and could pose a severe threat to the species there as well in time to come.)