

PALMS FOR THE STREETS OF ADELAIDE

Heinz Froehlingsdorf - Transport SA

Palms, what are they?

- Ancient group of flowering plants.
- Family Arecaceae or alternatively Palmae.
- Woody, monocots.
- Approx 2,500 – 3,000 species in approx 200 genera.
- Distributed mainly throughout the tropical areas of the world, with a few hardy species found in more temperate areas.
- Numerous uses, including some of the more important crop plants.

Why use palms as street trees?

- Looks, palms are regarded by many as noble features of the landscape.
- Once a species is chosen the landscaper usually has a good idea of what they will ultimately end up with.
- High variety in the group, that is there is a species suitable for a variety of situations
- Generally if planted with sufficient room they are infrastructure friendly.
- Palms are often available in large sizes, that can be readily moved.
- Require relatively little maintenance.

What species are currently used as street trees?

- *Livistona australis* (Cabbage Palm)
- *Livistona chinensis* (Chinese Fan Palm)
- *Phoenix canariensis* (Canary Island Date Palm)
- *Phoenix dactylifera* (Date Palm)
- *Phoenix roebelenii* (Dwarf Date palm)
- *Syagrus romanzoffiana* (Queen Palm)
- *Trachycarpus fortunei* (Chinese Windmill Palm)
- *Washingtonia filifera* (American Cotton Palm)
- *Washingtonia robusta* (Mexican Fan Palm)

Species with potential.

- *Archontophoenix spp.* (King Palms)
- *Bismarkia nobilis* (Bismarck Palm)
- *Brahea spp.* (Hesper Palms)
- *Butia spp.* (Wine Palms)
- *Chamaerops humilis* (European Fan Palm)
- *Jubaea chilensis* (Chilean Wine Palm)
- *Dypsis decaryi* (Triangle Palm)
- *Livistona spp.* (Cabbage Palms)
- *Phoenix spp.* (Date Palms)
- *Parajubaea spp.* (Mountain Coconut Palms)
- *Ravenea rivularis* (Majestic Palm)
- *Rhopalostylis spp.* (Feather Duster Palms)
- *Sabal spp.* (Palmetto Palms)
- *Trithrinax brasiliensis* (Spiny Fibre Palm)

Drawbacks to the use of palms in our streets.

- Palms generally come from high rainfall areas and therefore require additional watering in areas that receive less rain, lower humidity and have higher evaporation rates. Growth rates can be slow in temperate areas and any damage to foliage may take considerable time to grow out. Less hardy species may be damaged by cold or hot dry conditions. Tall species can be difficult to prune and may require costly specialist equipment. Some species may be difficult to obtain and if available often costly, particularly large specimens.