



INDIGENOUS GARDEN

Archontophoenix cunninghamiana (Cabbage Tree Palm)

Indigenous use

The leaf base of the Cabbage Tree Palm was used by Aboriginal people as a water carrier. The 'cabbage' is the shoot and surrounding young leaves and tissue which is edible.

Description

Archontophoenix cunninghamiana has a solitary stem and reaches a height of up to 30m and a diameter of up to 30cm. It has arching fronds up to 4.5m long which are a dark glossy green on the upper surface and a lighter green underneath and shed and fall off automatically. The inflorescence carries small lilac flowers on creamy branches and the fruit ripens to a bright red with a waxy finish which are attractive to birds. In the warmer parts of its range it flowers and fruits all year round while it flowers in either summer or autumn the further down the East Coast it grows.



Habitat

Archontophoenix cunninghamiana is endemic to Australia and is found naturally occurring from around Mackay, Queensland to the Bateman's Bay area of New South Wales. It grows in colonies in wet areas such as stream banks and gullies in rainforest and other moist forests and in swampy areas. It grows on a variety of soil types and even grows on sand on Fraser Island.