

1907 in Webbia in Italian; he calls it "Sabal princeps Hort." The plant he describes was growing in the Botanic Garden at Palermo, Italy; it is said to have been acquired from Linden in Belgium in 1870.

Through the courtesy of Sig. L. Montemartini I have fruits, part of a spadix and photographs of Beccari's Palermo tree. That tree does not represent palms widely distributed in the western hemisphere under the name *S. princeps*. It is impossible to make horticulturists apply the name *princeps* exclusively to the Beccari palm; such effort would only extend the confusion. The Palermo tree should have a title of its own rather than a floating horticultural designation, as one more step in the elimination of irresponsible garden names. This title I now supply.

† *Sabal Beccariana*, nom. nov. Figs. 246, 247.

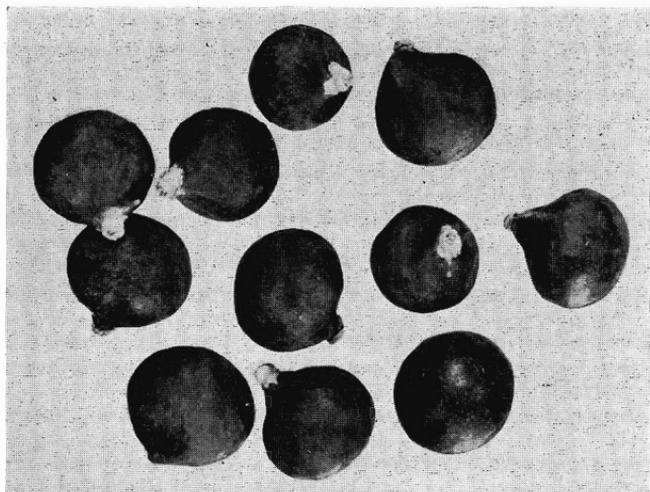
Sabal princeps, Hort. apud Becc. in Webbia, ii, 59 (1907), not auth.; Bailey, Gent. Herb. iii, 328 (1934).

Large tree with thick trunk covered by the persistent criss-cross bases of old petioles: leaves with short palman, the long segments hanging prone, the petioles very long; spadix long, narrow and hanging in fruit and much branched, the ultimate rachillæ 2-4 in. long, all parts glabrous: fruit short-pyriform, about $\frac{1}{2}$ in. broad (14-16 mm.) and of similar length, main part rounded, glabrous, dark gray, the point holding the light colored accrescent floral envelopes; seed free and loose in the ripe pericarp, brown, flattened endwise, $\frac{1}{4}$ in. or a little more crosswise and three-fourths as deep (9-10 mm. \times 5-6 mm.), micropyle lateral.

The pictures are from the Palermo tree. Fig. 246 is drawn from a photograph sent me, and Fig. 247 is a photograph of my own made from fresh fruits as they arrived, and which very well match Beccari's picture in t. 20 of Annals of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Calcutta, 1931.

Fuller description of this palm, translated from Beccari, may be found in the above citation of Gentes Herbarum.

Nativity of *Sabal Beccariana* is unknown, any more than that of several other palmettoes, but the genus is wholly American.



247. FRUITS OF BECCARI PALMETTO. Natural size. *Sabal Beccariana*.

The problem in Sabal

Sabal is still a troublesome genus, difficult to understand. Reasons for the perplexities are mostly two: (1) the fact that seeds have been brought from unrecorded places and the resultant plants (often when only in their juvenile state) have been given names without descriptions or recognizable records, until twenty-five or thirty floating binomials are in the literature; (2) the fact that the palmettoes are themselves critical to distinguish and classify, hindered by the labor and difficulty of making useful museum specimens, the leaves being large and stiff.

Distinguishing of the kinds has rested largely on seeds and fruits. How extensive may be the variation in fruits in any species of palm is yet hardly a subject for scientific conclusion inasmuch as numerous specimens of foliar and floral and carpellary parts are not taken by collectors because of bulk and space required to house them. We do not go to the herbarium to study variations in palms, and observation of them in the field necessarily requires close knowledge of the specific lines. Yet the field is the proper place for the recognition of departures from type.

I have now been able to recognize variations in certain groups of palmettoes, and by this means have united three supposedly different species on the diversified island of Hispaniola (Haiti, Santo Domingo): *Gent. Herb. iv, fasc. vii*. If to observations of this kind we can add the great advantage of eliminating fugitive binomials, we shall have made progress in understanding one of our perplexing genera.

Six years ago I made an attempt to bring together the taxonomic knowledge of the Sabals: *Gent. Herb. iii, fasc. vi*. I recognized twenty-two species, two of the names being new. The publication has been in demand and the stock of it is now so low that its further general distribution is impossible.

In the meantime I have continued my study of the genus and have travelled far for the purpose of observing doubtful species and of collecting herbarium material. Several undescribed species are in my collections, awaiting the experience and the opportunity to publish a complete revision. The palmettoes are so common in cultivation and so abundant in nature that they invite continued attention. They are all native in the western hemisphere.