

The Palms of Lord Howe Island

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Out in the Tasman Sea is a garden island called Lord Howe Island in honor of Richard Howe. He was a British Admiral who played an important part in the war with the American Colonies. This garden island lies 360 miles east of Australia and 480 miles northeast of Sydney. It is shaped like a boomerang, with its length extending nearly north and south. There is a broad coral reef around Howe Island that is the southern-most coral reef in the world.

The island has plenty of fresh water and very fine soil. Frost never finds this garden island, nor does the heat. You can grow everything that grows in warm temperate and sub-tropical countries, with the exception of those palms which are heat-loving palms.

Howe Island is the home of the *Howea Palm* (*Howea forsteriana*) and the *Howea belmoreana*, both named in honor of Lord Howe. They were first known as the *Kentia Palm*, but botanists say they are different from the true *Kentia* of New Guinea.

The residents that live on this island depend on the palms for their income. The affairs of these people are handled by a local Committee of three chosen by the islanders themselves. The marketing of the Palm seeds, and relations with the Australian Government are directed by the Lord Howe Island Board of Control. This board is composed of three New South Wales officials in Sydney. The island is a political dependency of that State.

The people that collect the palm seeds pay no taxes on the property, as the collecting of the palm seeds is a community affair. The work is apportioned among the participants by the Local Committee. Each one is called on to provide his share of the estimated seed total at such times as the committee directs. It takes about an hour to gather one bushel of seeds. The revenue from the sale of the seeds is placed in a common fund and is divided evenly in accordance with the share system depending on the age, sex, and marital status of the people gathering the seed.

The *Howea* palms grow well along our coast from San Diego to Santa Barbara. They can be grown inland in our area if given the shade of high evergreen trees, and these same trees will protect them from frost.

Other forms of vegetation that grow on the island are *Pandanus* trees and Norfolk Island Pines. This is truly a gardeners paradise.

BOOK REVIEW

J. W. STEPHENSON

Mathias, Mildred E. and Elizabeth McClintock. *A Checklist of Ornamental Woody Plants of California*. Manual 32. 65 pages. Berkeley, California: California Agricultural Experiment Station Extension Service. April 1963. 75¢. (paper). (Available from your Farm Advisor, or Agricultural Publications, 207 University Hall, 2200 University Avenue, Berkeley 4, California.)

For the correct names of our woody garden plants, most nurserymen and amateur gardeners, landscape architects and others, use reference works now more than twenty years out of date. Thanks to the painstaking efforts of Dr. Mathias and Dr. McClintock, order has been brought out of a chaotic situation. Their work is of both academic and great practical value.

The Manual is inexpensive enough for any gardener to own, and is an essential reference for every nurseryman. It is easier to use than most checklists I have seen, since the common names and botanical names are listed alphabetically, AND the improper terminology is clearly indicated. The authority for each botanical name is given, so there can be no confusion as to the species, even though such detail is not required by the revised Nursery Code. It will be useful to every plant-owner, from tyro to botanist.



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