

THE ROYAL PALM - SYNOPSIS

Royal Palm is the common name for those palms in the genus *Roystonea*. *Roystonea* is a genus of 10 species of large, solitary-trunked, pinnate leaved, monoecious palms in tropical America, principally in and around the Caribbean basin. The species are similar and often difficult to distinguish one from the other. Scientific differentiation is by inflorescence size, flower color and other floral details, as well as height and color of the trunk. Due to the palm's elegant appearance and rapid growth, it is now distributed through the tropics and warm sub-tropics.

pinnate - like a feather

monoecious - the palm produces both male and female flowers; one tree can produce viable seed.

The genus is named for General Roy Stone, US Army, an engineer known for his work in Puerto Rico and later in the U.S. I have seen nothing philatelic directly related to him in 15+ years.

The royal palm is one of the world's premier landscape palms, and that is its main purpose today. The practical uses of the palm are very limited. The palms are rarely harvested for the wood in the trunks. In Cuba, the seed is commonly used for pig feed; and the crownshafts are used for storing and transporting tobacco. Other than these limited uses, the main function of the palm is to sit there and look attractive - which it does exceptionally well. The fronds may be used in Palm Sunday services by heretics, apostates, the apathetic, or the ignorant. Botanically correct Christians would use fronds from date palms (*Phoenix* sp.) which are endemic in the Middle East and which would have been used in the first Palm Sunday. So do not expect to see anything on Palm Sunday.

The royal palm is found on the coats of arms of several countries and other political subdivisions. The coats of arms are shown with the appropriate country instead of being lumped together.

Treatment & Significance: Organization is geographical; development is balanced by theme and philatelically. Subject is clearly defined and is suitable for a OFE; all items are directly related to the theme.

Knowledge & Research: excellent subject matter knowledge has helped in finding a wide variety of philatelic items to illustrate the theme.

The exhibitor has been growing Royal Palms for the past 20 years and assists in the design and maintenance of the local palm arboretum.

Condition: Very fine or better...

Rarity: Die proofs and Zep cover & early maxi card to dirt common modern items...

Presentation: As attractive as the palm itself!