



# Cocos or Queen palm

## *Syagrus romanzoffiana*



### The problem

The Cocos or Queen palm is native to Brazil, and is a fast growing, long lived and resilient palm traditionally grown in Queensland gardens. Cocos Palms are not declared weeds, however, their many orange-yellow fruits are spread by flying foxes, and germinate easily in riparian areas and dry eucalypt forests. They are also known to germinate from commercially available mulch. For these reasons, the planting of Cocos palms is not recommended. There are a number of native palms including the Alexander palm which are good alternatives for the Cocos palm, as well as being more visually appealing and not as messy. Existing Cocos palms should be removed. If they cannot be removed,

they should be managed so that their fruits are cut down when they are green, before they ripen.

### Description

Cocos palms are single-stemmed palms that grow to an average height of 12 m. Tall fronds up to 5 m long bear leaves with a green upper surface and greyish undersides. The Cocos palm is known for its bunches of orange yellow fruits (each fruit 2.5 cm in diameter), and often has an untidy appearance due to hanging dead fronds and fermenting dropped fruits.

## Management

Individual palms can be killed by cutting the crown off below the lowest frond. There is no need to treat the stump with herbicide, as it will not reshoot. In gardens and urban areas it is more visually appealing to remove the palm at ground level rather than leave a stump, however, in bushland situations, there is only a need to cut the crown off below the lowest frond.

It is important to hand pull or chip any seedlings that come up around the base of the palm, and pick up any dropped fruits. When fruits are removed, ensure they are disposed of in sealed plastic bags.

## Declaration details

Cocos or Queen palm is not a declared plant under the *Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002*, however, plants that are not declared under state legislation may have control requirements imposed by local governments.

## Further information

Further information is available from the vegetation management/weed control/environmental staff at your local government.

