



RONNIE'S PICKS

THE COONTIE PALM

IF THERE EVER WAS AN UNKNOWN PLANT THAT DESERVES A PLACE IN THE SAN ANTONIO AREA, IT'S THE COONTIE PALM. LIKE IT'S COUSIN THE SAGO PALM, THE COONTIE IS ACTUALLY A CYAD, NOT A TRUE PALM. DESCRIBED IN ONE WORD, I'D SAY THIS PLANT IS "ELEGANT".

I LOVE THIS PLANT BECAUSE OF ITS COMPACT, 3 FEET TALL X WIDE, SIZE AT MATURITY. I PREFER THE COONTIE PALM OVER THE SAGO PALM BECAUSE IT STAYS SMALL. TOO MANY CUSTOMERS PLANT SAGOS, ONLY TO FIND IT WAY TOO BIG FOR THE PLANTING SPOT YEARS LATER.

THE COONTIE PALM WILL GROW IN SUN OR SHADE WITH ITS PREFERENCE BEING SOME AFTERNOON SHADE IN OUR TEXAS HEAT. IT MAKES A FINE ALTERNATIVE TO MOST FERNS AND A PERFECT ALTERNATIVE TO A HOLLY FERN, WITH ITS SEMI-EVERGREEN NATURE AND DIMINUTIVE SIZE.

LASTLY, THERE IS THE COLD TOLERANCE OF THE COONTIE PALM. DURING THE SNOVID EVENT OF 2021, IN THE GUADALUPE RIVER VALLEY AREA (WHERE IT GOT COLDER FOR A LONGER DURATION THAN IN THE CITY), BOTH COONTIE AND SAGO PALMS FROZE TO THE GROUND. BY JUNE, THE COONTIES WERE FULL, BEAUTIFUL, AND LOOKED EXACTLY THE SAME AS THEY DID BEFORE THE FREEZE HIT. IN CONTRAST, THE SAGOS WERE DEAD OR BARELY SPROUTING OUT OF THE BASE. THE COONTIES DID WELL WHETHER THEY HAD BEEN PLANTED IN THE GROUND 10 YEARS AGO OR IF PLANTED THE PREVIOUS FALL.

COONTIES ARE EASY TO GROW:

YOU CAN USE QUALITY POTTING SOIL TO PLANT YOUR COONTIE (EVEN FOR INGROUND PLANTING (I LIKE HAPPY FROG).

MULCH REGULARLY.

DEEP WATER EVERY 5 DAYS OR SO FOR 1ST YEAR TO GET THEM ESTABLISHED. ONCE ESTABLISHED, COONTIES ARE DROUGHT TOLERANT AND WILL STILL BE THERE WHEN YOU GET BACK FROM YOUR SUMMER VACATIONS! WHEN WE GOT 'EM, YOU SHOULD GET 'EM!

