

# Voutmélé Palm

## What are they called?

### Scientific:

*Cyphosperma  
voutmelense/  
voutmelensis*

### Other English:

Voutmele palm

### French:

Voutmélé palm

### Bislama:

Vernacular:

## A little bit about them:

Voutmélé palms  
small palms  
endemic to the  
Cumberland  
Peninsula on Santo.

This species has  
relatively small  
individuals and  
grows in small  
colonies.

It commonly grows  
between 900m -  
1200m elevation  
and in volcanic soils.

## What do they look like?

This short palm has a narrow stem and reaches a maximum of 6m in height.

The leaves measure between 1 and 1.5m long each. Fruits are about 1cm long, olive like and green, turned to red when mature. It has small white groups of flowers. These are smaller and have shorter flower stems compared to similar *Cyphosperma* species in far north Vanuatu, New Caledonia and Fiji.



Flowers and fruits of *Cyphosperma voutmelensis*.  
Source: Lowry, P. *Tropicos*

## Did you know?

- This palm got its name from Voutmélé Peak on Santo, the place it was first seen.

This tree is classified as Endangered (EN) on the IUCN Red List.

### Why are they threatened?

- There are less than 100 known individuals left in the wild.
- Due to its limited distribution, the Voutmélé palm is threatened by further habitat loss.

### What do they do for us?

- They provide habitat and shelter for rainforest species.
- The small fruit are used for their medicinal properties in northwestern Santo, particularly to treat fever.

### What can we do for them?

- ✓ Plant more palms from seeds.
- ✓ Establish Community Conservation Areas that protect the Voutmélé palm's natural habitat on Santo's Cumberland Peninsula.
- ✓ Use alternative tree species that are not threatened for timber and medicine.
- ✓ Raise awareness of the threats to and benefits of this species in local communities.



Source: Lowry, P. *Tropicos*

### Want to know more?

- ❖ Visit: [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)
- ❖ Contact Vanuatu's Department of Forests.
- ❖ Book: *Remarkable plants of Vanuatu* by Ramon L. & Sam C., 2015

