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## Phytelephas aequatorialis - Spruce

<b>Common Name</b>	Vegetable ivory, Corozo, Ivory palm
<b>Family</b>	Areaceae
<b>USDA hardiness</b>	10-12
<b>Known Hazards</b>	None known
<b>Habitats</b>	An understory palm of the rain forest, growing on wet lowlands, often near rivers, on the coastal plain; ascending to 1,500 metres[768 ]. It is often left in pastures when the forest is cleared[768 ].
<b>Range</b>	S. America - western Ecuador.
<b>Edibility Rating</b>	 (2 of 5)
<b>Other Uses</b>	 (4 of 5)
<b>Weed Potential</b>	No
<b>Medicinal Rating</b>	 (0 of 5)
<b>Care</b> <a href="#">(info)</a>	   



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**Translate this page:**

## Summary

*Phytelephas aequatorialis* or also known as Vegetable Ivory or Corozo is a tropical, dioecious palm found in Australia, Brazil, Central America, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and other parts of South America. It is a solitary palm growing about 16 m tall, with trunk diameter of up to 30 cm. It has a large and round leaf crown, with each leaf measuring about 5-6 m long. It is the main source of a botanical alternative to ivory known as Ecuadorean vegetable ivory or tagua. The seed is edible. Liquid endosperm is consumed as a drink. The leaves are cooked and the apical buds are eaten as a vegetable. The endocarp is very hard and used for making buttons, chess pieces, etc. The leaves are used as a thatch.

## Physical Characteristics



*Phytelephas aequatorialis* is an evergreen Tree growing to 12 m (39ft) by 5 m (16ft) at a

medium rate.

See above for USDA hardiness. It is hardy to UK zone 10. The flowers are pollinated by Beetles, Flies, Bees. The plant is not self-fertile.

Suitable for: light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and prefers well-drained soil.

Suitable pH: mildly acid, neutral and basic (mildly alkaline) soils. It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade. It prefers moist soil.

[UK Hardiness Map](#)

[US Hardiness Map](#)

## Synonyms

Palandra aequatorialis (Spruce) O.F.Cook

## Habitats

## Edible Uses

Edible Parts:

Apical bud

Fruit

Leaves

Seed

Edible Uses:

Drink

The seed is eaten in various ways. When immature, the liquid endosperm is used as a refreshing drink[768]. As it becomes harder and more jelly-like, it is eaten as a food[768]. The orange, fleshy fruit is eaten as a delicacy[768]. Leaves - cooked[763]. The apical bud, often known as a 'palm heart', is eaten as a vegetable[763]. Eating this bud leads to the death of the tree because it is unable to make side shoots[K].

[References](#) [More on Edible Uses](#)

## Medicinal Uses

*Plants For A Future can not take any responsibility for any adverse effects from the use of plants. Always seek advice from a professional before using a plant medicinally.*

None known

[References](#) [More on Medicinal Uses](#)

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# Propagation

Seed -

## Other Names

If available other names are mentioned here

Vegetable ivory, Corozo, Ivory palm, tagua - Spanish, Coroso, Tagua, Trapa, Cade,

## Found In

Countries where the plant has been found are listed here if the information is available

Ecuador, Australia, Brazil, Central America, Panama, Peru, South America,

## Weed Potential

Right plant wrong place. We are currently updating this section. Please note that a plant may be invasive in one area but may not in your area so it's worth checking.

## Conservation Status

IUCN Red List of Threatened Plants Status : Status: Near Threatened



## Expert comment

## Author

Spruce

## Botanical References

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## Links / References

For a list of references used on this page please [go here](#)

A special thanks to [Ken Fern](#) for some of the information used on this page.

## Readers comment

