\( \times \text{Butyagrus nabonnandii} \) (A. Robertson-Proschowsky) Vorster

Mule Palm

(\( \times \text{Butiagrus nabonnandii}, \times \text{Butiarecastrum nabonnandii, Syagrus \times fairchildiana} \))

- This intergeneric hybrid species is derived from crosses made between Butia capitata and Syagrus romanzoffiana; in habit, the F\(_1\) progeny more closely resemble S. romanzoffiana, while their cold tolerance is closer to that of B. capitata; the result is a taller fan palm than B. capitata that still has sufficient cold tolerance for use in USDA hardiness zone 8; this species would appear to have good potential for Texas landscapes and deserves wider testing.

- Although the cross occurs sometimes in nature where the parental species grow in close proximity, it occurs infrequently and the progeny are thought to be sterile, hence the less than flattering common name of Mule Palm; plants bring a premium in the market, both because of their unique attributes and the fact that hand-made controlled crosses are required to produce the seeds, usually pollen from S. romanzoffiana on B. capitata as it is shorter and easier to emasculate; hybrid variability in physical appearance and environmental tolerances are encountered in the progeny, but trees may eventually reach 30’ to 40’ in height, whoever 20’ to 30’ is more likely in most landscape settings; while the foliage is intermediate in shape between the parents, the color of the foliage is usually a darker green than B. capitata, more reminiscent of S. romanzoffiana; cultural requirements appear to be similar to those of B. capitata.

- The genus name is a combination of the parental genera names Butia and Syagrus, whereas the specific epithet honors the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century French Horticulturist Paul Nabonnand who first made the controlled cross.

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