

# Propagation and Growing Coonties

By Art Constantino



- Seed collecting
- Seed processing
- Seed planting
- Apex stem division
- Grow them bigger
- Grow them faster

## Selecting Coontie cones

Emerging male cones

Cones are tall slender

**Don't want this one**



Older female cone

Cone is short & squat

**This one we want**



## Processing Coontie seeds

Cones ready from August-November & later

Collect the crumbled female cones

Separate the seeds and debris from cone



picked cone

seeds & debris

picked seeds

## Processing Coontie seeds

Soak your seeds for three days

The outer layer will soften

With gloved hands rub or scrape off sarcotesta

Or make a slice top to bottom on two sides of the seed

Set seed in sun for a few days

Scrape coating off with a knife



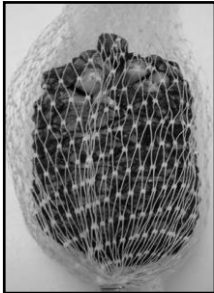
## Storing Coontie seeds

Not planning to use your seeds right away

Store seeds with the outer fleshy layer on

Keep them in a dry container without a cover or in a mesh bag for good air circulation

They should keep 7 - 8 months



Seeds are ready to be processed when they fall off or easily pry off the cone. Shown here they are not ripe and need more time to ripen before processing

## Choosing your medium

You want your medium to be as sterile as possible

Your seeds need to be moist but not wet

Growing area is warm to stimulate germination

You can use builders sand mixed with perlite

I have used 1/3 Lambert peat with 2/3 builders sand

I have used 1/3 Lambert peat mix 1/3 builders sand and 1/3 black dirt

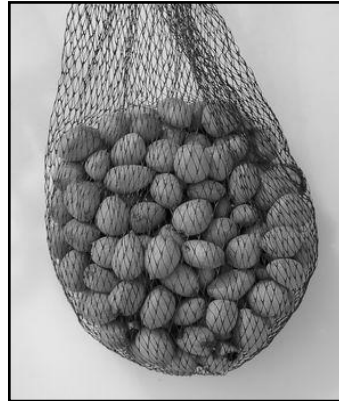
Don't reuse old mixes which can cause fungus

## Storing Coontie seeds

You can plant cleaned seeds and save some

Store cleaned seeds in open weave synthetic bag

Every 14 days soak the seeds for a few minutes



Cleaned seeds will hold for about 2 months.

## Planting the seed

Place seed end where the seed was attached to the cone into your medium & push into medium

As your seedlings grow transfer them to deeper pots

Young Coonties are best grown in mostly shade



## Coontie stem cuttings

Cut Cycads into pieces to make a new plant

Each variety has it's own way to be cut

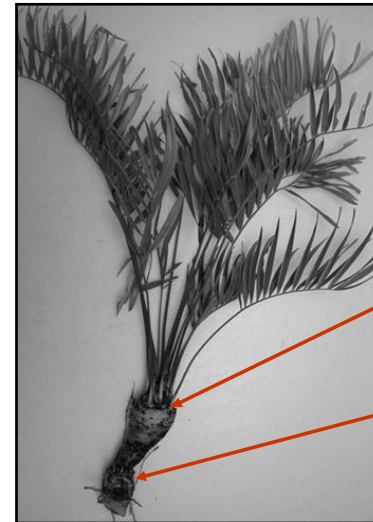
Coonties respond to apex stem cuttings



The victim was my second Coontie cutting experiment. Shown here it's about 2 1/2 years old.

Perhaps you purchased one of it's brothers at a plant sale or raffle.

## Coontie stem cuttings



The young Coontie

Leaves, not fronds

Apex is cut and split

Root can also be cut but not as part of apex

## Coontie stem cuttings

Before you begin sharpen your knife

The knife blade and cutting board are sanitized

Bacteria control is important in this process



the victim cleaned



the root cut off



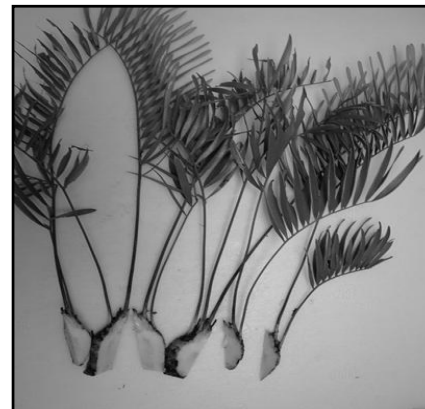
apex cut in two

## Coontie stem cuttings

Your plants size determines the number of cuts

I cut each apex half into three pieces

The pieces full of starch will keep for many years



Before we plant

Pieces dry and calloused

Dry them anywhere but not in sun.

## Coontie stem cuttings

Cut the remaining leaves off

The cut root was split in two and will be planted

Two on left are cut roots

On right are the original six cuts with leaves removed



## Grow Coonties faster & bigger

These are my experimental and control plants

Both were my first seedling stem cuttings

I Use the same techniques you see here



Left plant never cut  
Right plant cut twice  
Same principals used  
on normal plants apply  
to Coontie. Cut from  
the center they grow  
wide cut from the  
edges they grow tall

## Coontie stem cuttings

Cut dried piece ready to  
go into potting medium

Ok to use rootone or not



Piece in medium with tip  
of cut stalk just showing



I use a homemade potting mix for medium due to the hot dry conditions in my nursery. Under ideal conditions I would use sand and perlite or vermiculite as temperature and humidity can be controlled.

## Grow Coonties faster & bigger

I cut off leaves on the outer edges of the plant

When you get offsets cut leaves from offsets

Continue cutting leaves from the main plant too



Cut new leaves before  
they begin to harden

Both control plants cut  
10-9-07

Pile of leaves in front of  
plants are cut leaves  
of each plant 10-9-07

## Grow Coonties faster & bigger

Does it work?



Control plants cut 10-9-07

You bet it does !



Control plants 5-9-08

## Grow Coonties faster & bigger

Fertilizer is needed to encourage growth

Coonties and Palms are not the same

Coonties have different nutrient requirements

A high energy Coontie plant needs a fertilizer with a nitrogen level around 18-25

Miracle Grow liquid has 24% nitrogen I use Miracle grow about every two months.

Over the years I have found Coonties like acid. I save and spread my coffee grounds around the Coonties on alternating months with fertilizing.

## Notes