

## ***Beaucarnea recurvata* the Ponytail Palm**

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The common ponytail palm of houseplant fame makes a striking specimen plant for any landscape situation. It is also a very clean plant with no spines and can be useful around a pool. It is one of the few succulents that can withstand full sun in Phoenix. It also does well with partial shade.

*Beaucarnea* has the potential to become huge—up to six feet in diameter at the base and up to 25 feet tall. Small plants should be protected from frost below 28 degrees F.

There are several species of *Beaucarnea* and, in fact, the most recent issues of the *British Cactus and Succulent Journal* featured all the species of this genus. Flowers occur on mature plants and are spikes of small, creamy-white flowers. These plants are in the *Nolinaceae* family, which has recently been split out from the *Agavaceae* family.

*Beaucarnea recurvata* is native to Mexico. Huge specimens can be viewed at the Huntington Botanical Garden in San Marino, California. Lotusland also has an interesting planting of them. They planted a lot of small plants close together so that as the plants are maturing, their bases are starting to overlap one another. It's a very interesting effect creating a mini-forest of sizeable ponytail palms, some with bases touching or overlapping. If you have the space, I highly recommend this plant. Just remember to give it some room. Although it is not particularly fast growing, you want to think twice about planting close to a building or wall foundation.