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J. J. L.

## A PACIFIC-SLOPE PALMETTO.

BY WILLIAM TRELEASE.

While botanizing in the vicinity of Ures, the former capital of the Mexican State of Sonora, in August, 1900, my attention was attracted by a scattering forest of a graceful palm with most beautifully glaucous foliage, nearly ripe fruit of which shows it to belong to the genus *Sabal*, of which it appears to constitute an undescribed and very distinct species which may be characterized as follows: —

*SABAL URESANA*, n. sp. Trunk 5 or 10 meters high and upwards of 30 cm. in diameter. Leaves glabrous, very glaucous; petiole stout, concavo-convex, unarmed, about 1 m. long, 2 cm. wide and nearly 1 cm. thick; blade about 1 m. long and wide, multifid, with coarse straw-colored fibers from the sinuses, the center arcuately recurved. Fruit of a single developed carpel, depressed globose, 15 to 20 mm. in diameter, edible, green or when dry dingy brown and somewhat glossy, the mesocarp then cottony; endocarp whitish straw-color, glossy within. Seed polished, dark chestnut-brown, labyrinthiform-rugose, much depressed,  $12 \times 7$  mm. — Plates 35-7.

Sonora, Mexico, in the uplands, a few miles to the north of Ures.

From the two arboreal palmettos of the United States, *S. Uresana* differs markedly in its pale very glaucous foliage, and in the size of its fruit, which is of thrice the diameter of that of *S. Palmetto*, and usually a third larger than in *S. Mexicana*, with the former of which species it agrees in having, so far as I know, but one of the three carpels developed and fertile, while in *S. Mexicana* two or even all three are not infrequently developed.

Considering the extent to which this section of Mexico has been visited by collectors of seeds it would be remarkable if this attractive plant should not prove to be already in cultivation in European gardens, and a leaf of a

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very glaucous *Sabal* which Dr. Franceschi sent me in 1893 from Los Angeles, California, where he found and purchased about twenty small cultivated plants, seems to represent *S. Uresana*; but I have been unable to connect it with any garden or published name.

In foliage it is somewhat suggestive of two other "blue palms" of the Sonoran region, *Washingtonia* (or *Pritchardia*) *Sonorae* Watson,\* and *Erythea armata* Watson,† — from both of which it differs conspicuously in having the petioles without teeth, as well as in the size and shape of its fruit, which is usually broader than long and possesses the basal style and sterile carpel-rudiments, and the depressed seed hollowed below and with the embryo at one side near the top, that characterize the genus *Sabal*.

The species of *Sabal* heretofore described are of the Atlantic region, from the Carolina coast to that of Venezuela, and in the adjacent islands. *S. Mexicana* reaches up into Hidalgo county, Texas, in longitude 98° west. *S. Uresana*, however, occurs twelve degrees further west, and is separated from all of its known congeners by the backbone of the continent, which, in the Sierra Madre range to the east of Sonora, becomes an imposing barrier to the movements of animals, as it appears to be to the dispersal of most plants.

In later geological time, the genus *Sabal*, like *Liriodendron* and other genera now of restricted North American distribution, occurred over much of this continent as well as in Europe, and the probability is that this westernmost of the species now known to exist, is the descendant of species which occurred in the Rocky mountain region in Tertiary time, rather than an offshoot from existing Atlantic species or their immediate ancestors. In fruit characters it shows a closer approach to *S. Mexicana* than to any other species of which I have been able to see the fruit.

\* Proc. Amer. Acad. **24**: 79 (1889). **25**: 136.

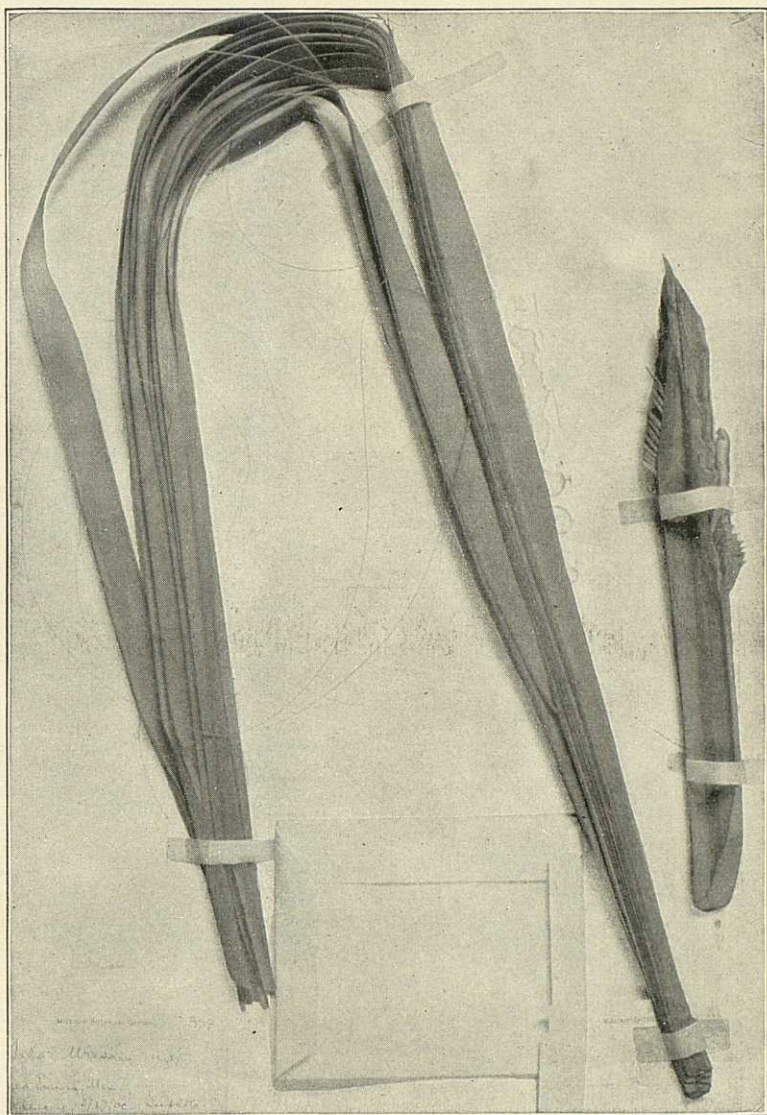
† Bot. Calif. **2**: 212, 485.



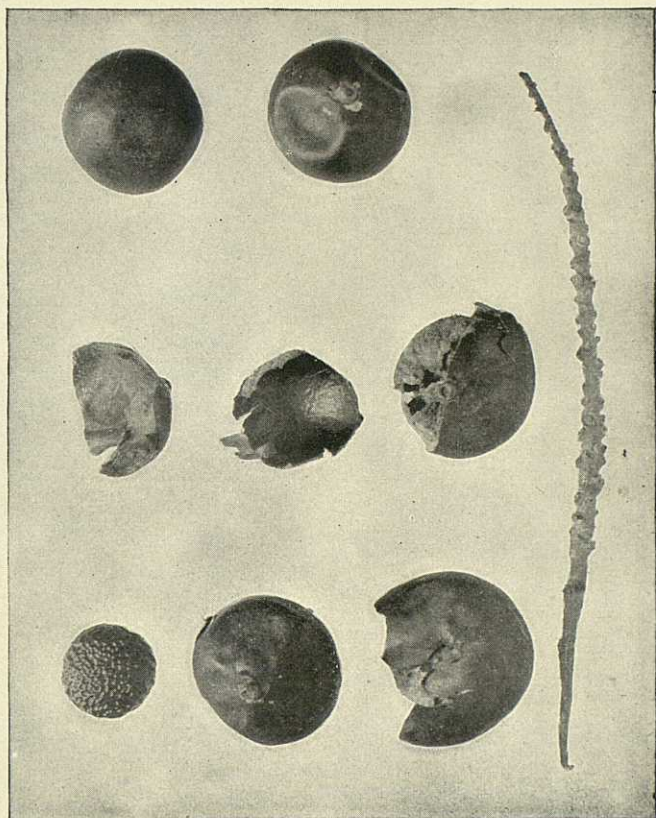


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