

Sabal Sanctuary

Helping the Rarest of Palms

Among the diverse thousands of palm species, a few stand out as exceedingly rare, threatened and precious. The newest of these is *Sabal lougheediana*, discovered only two years ago – see our Spring/Summer 2020 Newsletter.

A dwindling number of these sentinels watched over a salt lake for many decades. Alarmingly, only twenty-five palms persist on this distant rock terrace. Feral donkeys graze the seedlings so thoroughly that none make it to flowering.

This dire threat prompted immediate action to save these rare treasures – an emergency fence now allows those baby palms to thrive without fear! Providing 35 acres of dedicated palm conservation habitat, the fence will see the next generation of Bonaire Palms flourish.

Montgomery and BonBèrdè partnered with the local government – OPENBAAR LICHAAM BONAIRE – to construct this critical palm infrastructure and launch a conservation horticulture effort to multiply the holdings of Bonaire Palm. We are grateful for a generous grant from SEACOLOGY and funding from CARGILL which made this effort possible, and to Montgomery's PLANT EXPLORATION FUND for supporting detailed study of these unique treasures.