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NOT EVALUATED	DATA DEFICIENT	LEAST CONCERN	NEAR THREATENED	VULNERABLE	ENDANGERED	CRITICALLY ENDANGERED	EXTINCT IN THE WILD	EXTINCT
NE	DD	LC	NT	VU	EN	CR	EW	EX



Geographical range

## Species of the Day: Root-spine Palm

The **Root-spine Palm**, *Cryosophila williamsii*, is listed as 'Extinct in the Wild' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Restricted to a small area of west-central Honduras, this solitary palm was formerly found in rainforest on steep, high-rainfall slopes of the Lago Yojoa watershed.

The greatest threat to the Root-spine Palm is deforestation due to increasing agriculture, settlement and logging. The seedlings require moist shade to establish and grow, and are unable to tolerate the exposure that occurs after heavy deforestation. In addition, this species has been exploited for thatch and for its palm hearts.

The Lago Yojoa watershed is a designated forest reserve, but deforestation there continues. Surveys are needed to establish whether the Root-spine Palm is truly extinct in the wild, and if any individuals remain, urgent protection will be needed. The greatest hope for the species is now an *ex-situ* collection at Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden; if seeds can be produced from these cultivated plants, re-introduction efforts should be attempted, and additional *ex-situ* collections should also be established.

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