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

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 its 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 ½ years old.

Perhaps you purchased one of its brothers at a plant sale or raffle.

**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 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

Before we plant

Pieces dry and calloused

Dry them anywhere but not in sun.

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

The victim cleaned

the root cut off

apex cut in two

the root cut off

apex cut in two

the root cut off

apex cut in two
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
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?  You bet it does!

Control plants cut 10-9-07  Control plants 5-9-08

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