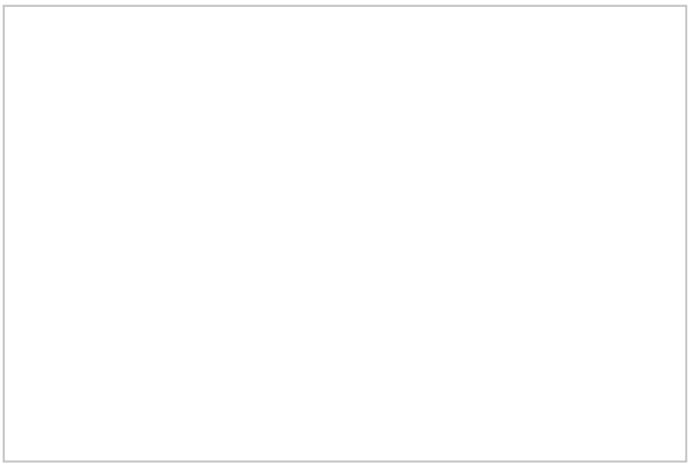
The giant white bird of paradise



Strelitzia nicolai, commonly known as theï giant white bird of paradiseï orï wild banana, is a species ofï banana-like plants with erect woody stems reaching a height of 6ï m (20ï ft) and the clumps formed can spread as far as 3.5ï m (11ï ft).
The 1.8ï m (5ï ft 11ï in) long leaves are grey-green and arranged like a fan at the top of the stems, similar toï Ravenala madagascariensis. Theï inflorescenceï is composed of a dark blueï bract, whiteï sepalsï and a bluish-purple "tongue". The entire flower can be as much as 18ï cm (7.1ï in) high by 45ï cm (18ï in) long and is typically held just above the point where the leaf fan emerges from the stem. Flowers are followed by triangular seedï capsules.
Strelitzia nicolaiï is among the few plants which have been verified to contain the pigmentï bilirubin, which is usually found in animals.
Strelitzia nicolaiï is one of three largerï Strelitziaï species, the other two being tree-likeï S. caudataï andï S. alba.ï S. nicolaiï is restricted to evergreen coastal forest and thicket of easternï South Africaï from theï Great Fish Riverï northwards toï Richards Bay. It is also considered native toï Mozambique,ï Botswanaï andï Zimbabwe.
Strelitzia nicolaiï prefers rich, moist soils with good drainage in full sun to part shade. The plant tolerates light frost. Propagation is via division of clumps, offsets and from seed. Plants require many years of growth before they begin blooming.ï In favourable conditions they self-seed freely, and their invasive root systems are best kept away from buildings.

Category: The Strelitziaceae
Families: Strelitziaceae
Genus: Strelitzia
Species: nicolai
Geographical Area of Origin: South Africa
Climatic Zones: Sub-tropical, USDA 10 b (Southern Italy and islands)
Habit: Giant perennial
Leaves: Palmate leaf

Colore Foglie: Verde 
Flowering Period: Aprile / Maggio / Giugno / Luglio
Flower: Spadix
Colore Fiori: Azzurro  ï Bianco 
Favorite soil: Sub-acid / medium acid / Light sandy / Middle-Dough / Medium soil
Water needs: Medium
Light Exposure: Medium shade / Half shade / Full light / Full sun
Form: Touffe
Colore Frutti: Marrone 