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## Strelitzia Nicolai

The Natal wild banana is fairly drought tolerant, but it does not tolerate severe frost, so plant it in a protected spot inland. It withstands salty coastal winds, making it a good feature plant or screen for coastal gardens. *Strelitzia nicolai* is an eye catching evergreen, effective throughout the year and is useful for creating a lush, tropical effect. It can be used to offset hard landscaping, buildings and pools etc. It also looks good contrasted with evergreen lawns and shrubs. The root system is aggressive, however, so don't plant it too close to structures and paths. Surprisingly it will even survive in a large pot for several years, and this may be the best way to grow it if you have a patio or small garden.

The easiest way to propagate this tree is from root suckers, but it will also grow from seed. To grow from seed remove the orange arils and sow seed in a mixture of equal parts river sand and compost. Cover with a thin layer of compost and keep moist. Keep seedlings in a shady spot for the first season. Once planted out this plant is fast growing. It will grow in semi-shade or full sun and requires a moderate amount of water, composted soil and space to spread.

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