

Smooth Agave

***Agave desmettiana*; A. regeliana; A. miradorensis**

Family: Acanthaceae /Agavaceae

Basic Description: Can be small to medium sized. It has urn-shaped growth pattern. Leaves are fleshy, narrow, thicken at base and turn outward at tips. Color range is pale green-yellow to dark blue-green. Most specimens lack teeth on leaf margin or have fine teeth. We have both smooth and toothed varieties in the Gardens. It is fast growing.



Desmettiana urn growth pattern & red terminal spines

See below for bloom photos

Bloom & Fruit Description: 8-10 feet inflorescence with tiny pale white-yellow flowers. Blooms occur around 10 years, but exact timing is unknown. Blooms in early spring.

Cultural information/Uses/Human Interaction: In 1866 it was given the name desmettiana. Folklore: It was described from a plant brought to Europe from El Mirador, Carl Sartorius's garden in Veracruz, which is where the name *A. miradorensis* came from, but it is a name now retired. Sartorius was a German botanist who collected for the Berlin Botanical Gardens in the early 1800s.

Used as an ornamental due to its showy urn-like form.

Distribution/Range/Habitat: No natural populations are known. It's cultivated widely in Mexico, Europe and Western US.

Cultural Requirements: Does best with some shade in low desert heat, and can tolerate nearly total shade. In cooler climates it can handle partial or full sun. Can grow steadily with minimal supplemental watering. Not as cold tolerant with damage occurring below 25°F, although plants with overhead cover have survived lower temperatures.

Propagation: Easy by seed, removal of off-sets or **bulbils**

Wildlife/Plant relationships: Flower suggests main pollinator is insects.

Disease/Pathology/toxins: **agave snout weevil**
Liquid in leaf is acidic and can cause skin irritation

Status:

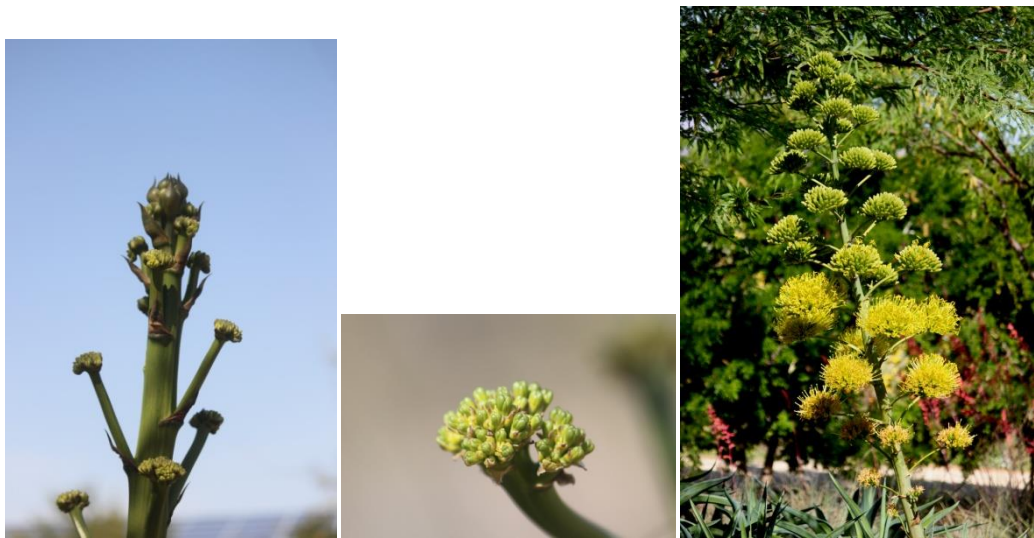
Resources:

Agaves, Yucca and Related Plants, Mary & Gary Irish
Mountain States Wholesale Nursery

On-site Notes: First on-site bloom in February/March 2012. Only one bloomed during the season.



Early inflorescence stalk Stalk base above heart Buds appearing Stalk tip with buds



Flowers bloom along stalk Close up of pre-bloom buds. Stalk with full bloom at lower levels and buds at upper level.



Blooms of desmettiana	Close-up of blooms	
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