One of the most intriguing palms of Belize is the silver pimento or mountain pimento palm (*Schippia concolor*) which can be found in savannas and forest habitats. Not only is this palm endemic to Belize, it is also the only species in the genus *Schippia*. This species is only found across a small area of the country but can be common where it occurs. Because of its limited range, occurring only in Cayo, Belize, Stann Creek and Toledo districts it is listed as vulnerable in the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

*Schippia* can look similar to palmetto, the common savanna palm, however it has a solitary habit (it grows in single stems rather than dense clumps of stems like palmetto) and floppy leaves with a yellow-ish tinge (palmetto has stiff leaves with curved spines along the leaf stalk).

It can be most easily seen in Mountain Pine Ridge and at Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary as well as from the Western Highway (especially around Mile 30) and from the Coastal Highway. Silver pimento is used as a landscaping palm in Florida.

The genus *Schippia* is named in honour of William Schipp, an Australian ‘botanical explorer’ who made many important early collections of the Belizean flora in the 1920’s & 30’s. William Schipp collected more than 2,000 specimens including the type collections of more than 150 species. There are many other species that are named after William Schipp including *Dalechampia schippii*, another savanna endemic.

**References:**

