



Plants with Superpowers

Banana Yucca *Yucca baccata*



Yes, We Have No Bananas: Banana Yucca

Grand Canyon has many different ecosystems. Plants have adaptations or superpowers to help them survive where they live. On the South Rim, it can be sunny and hot in the summer, cold and snowy in the winter, and rainy during monsoon season. When it is dry, there can be fires. You're exploring one of the many plants at Grand Canyon that have superpowers to survive living on the edge.

The banana yucca plant does not produce bananas, but it does produce fruits that look like green bananas. Animals like to eat the fruits and the creamy yellowish white flowers. Navajo and Apache people have roasted the fruits to make flat cakes that are sweet and have lots of vitamins. Name some fruits that you like to eat.

To survive in the hot summer and the cold winter, the yucca has a thick waxy skin to hold in water. It also has thick roots that store water for when the yucca needs it. Just think, we have to carry our water in a bottle!

Banana yucca has the superpower that if a fire breaks out, even though the top burns shoots will begin again from the fleshy root.

Ancestral Puebloan people have made cord and sandals from the leaves. The roots can be used to make shampoo or soap. So, every part of the banana plant is useful! How are you useful to your family? What special things do you do to help them? Those are your superpowers!

Draw a plant in your house or neighborhood. What is your favorite thing about your plant? Can you guess what its superpowers are?

Thanks for learning about the banana yucca plant. After you color your yucca plant, post it on your Facebook page with a message about all your superpowers that help your family.