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Kyrene, Libya



Silver didrachm, 20 mm, 7.57 gm.
Obverse: Head of Karneios left.
Reverse: Silphium plant, cornucopia to right.

Ca. 294-275 BC.

Silphium is an extinct plant that grew only around the Libyan city of Kyrene. The plant was renowned and valued in ancient times as a food, seasoning, and medicinal panacea especially effective in terminating pregnancy. The overuse of the plant reportedly led to its extinction around the first century AD.

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