

palm being photographed to make a plain background.

While the tips on palm photography mentioned here are perhaps basic, there are many more that can help make your

palm photos exciting. The most important thing to remember is to "see" the photo first before snapping the shutter and then proceed to apply the technique necessary to do a good job.

## COLLECTOR'S CHOICE

# Reflections on a Favorite Palm

It is impossible—the more I try to think about it, the more I know it is impossible—to write about my favorite palm. How could there be a favorite palm? One better than the others? Because of its beauty? By what rule do you measure beauty? Because it will grow well in my garden here in California? Because it is rare and few have it? Because it is difficult to grow (except for me)? Or because a dear friend gave it to me for a present? Or a favorite because it sells better and provides my livelihood?

I have seen many, many palms from the distance, from close up—many beautiful landscapes of palms, singles, groups and mixtures with ornamentals of other families. But can one truly say: "There is my favorite"?

We stand in amazement before the masterpieces of *Reinhardtia*, *Microcoelum Weddellianum*, *Linospadix*, *Phoenix Roebelenii*, *Licuala*, *Coccothrinax*—they are so beautiful. Who can pass by a *Bismarckia*, a *Roystonea*, a *Jubaea*, a grove of *Rhopalostylis* without admiration, or by a single clump of *Chamaerops humilis*, venerable and 100 years old?

And also let us think of that group of palms which ekes out a living in misery, the row of *Trachycarpus Fortunei*, the plebian on the narrow divider strip of the busiest boulevard, kissed and hissed at minute after minute by deadly fumes of the exhausts, still doing its best in all its glory to rest the eye of the passing driver; or *Nannorrhops* at 9,000 feet elevation under snow, crawling along, still holding up the banner of *Principes*; and *Rhapidophyllum* which we are told will stand up, be it ever so humbly, at 9° below zero F. Or *Serenoa repens*, Florida's commoner, not pretty, but no less admirable because of its stamina, its will to survive, its perseverance.

One palm my favorite? How could I tell? Still to me, born in the Nordic country where frigid winter storms howl across the Baltic from Siberia's tundras to meet the murderous gales of the North Sea, the nostalgic longing for palms swaying in tropical breezes is ever present. It's where palms come down to the sea, silhouettes against the sky, it's there that our longing gets stilled. *Cocos* palms—*Cocos nucifera*! Standing in a magnificent grove planted one hundred years ago by Hawaiian



Coconuts line a canal in southern Florida.  
Photo by G. H. M. Lawrence.

princes by the lagoons on the island of Kauai, at night, the full moon shining through graceful leaves, the surf breaking in ceaseless effort on the beach—this is the pulse of life, the quiet life. Then, later, at the open window, in the stillness of night, a coconut falling from high up the tree with a thud to the earth.

*Cocos* palms are majestic. In Waikiki I stayed in a hotel six stories high and out from the balcony across the street grew *Cocos* palms, their magnificent crowns still higher than we were. We were *almost* that high, and felt like kings. Have you ever seen the sun set on the ocean behind a stately row of graceful *Cocos* palms? If you have not, go—if for no other reason—to Florida, to Hawaii to see it. You have not lived until you do.

*Cocos nucifera* my favorite? Not quite. Only one of the many, one of all, but a grandiose personification of what we call and what we love under the name of palms. No, all are favorites, they all are the ‘first ones.’ Don’t you remember, it was Linnaeus who wrote: “*Palmae sunt principes!*”

OTTO MARTENS

## WHAT’S IN A NAME?

*Acanthococos* (a can tho có cos), *Acanthophoenix* (a can tho fée nix), *Acanthorrhiza* (a can tho rýe za), *Acanthosabal* (a can tho sáy bahl) are all names derived from the Greek *akantha* (thorn, prickle) combined with the generic names *Cocos*, *Phoenix*, *Sabal*, or with the Greek *rhiza* (root). All are armed palms and in *Acanthorrhiza* (= *Cryosophila*) the stem is covered with root-spines.

*Malortiea* (mal or téé a; mal ór tee a) commemorates Ernst von Malortie, Oberhofmarschall to the King of Hannover during the time of Wendland.

*Manicaria* (man i cáre ee a) comes from the Latin *manicarius* which means “of sleeves or gloves” in reference to the fibrous bracts of the inflorescence.

*Ranevea* (ra née vee a) was an anagram of the name *Ravenea* used by L. H. Bailey.

*Ravenea* (rah ven áy a; rah vée nee a) was named by Bouché for Louis Ravéné, an official in Berlin in the nineteenth century and should not be confused with the different *Ravenia* Vellozo honoring J. F. Ravin, a French professor.

*Roystonea* (roy stóne ee a) honors General Roy Stone, an American engineer officer “who secured the admi-