



CARL FRIEDRICH PHILIPP VON MARTIUS

# THE BOOK OF PALMS

*Das Buch der Palmen  
Le livre des palmiers*

*The complete plates*

Text by / Text von / Texte de  
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TASCHEN

# The world of palms – Carl Friedrich Philipp von Martius and his *Historia naturalis palmarum*

## THE EMBODIMENT OF EXOTICISM

In temperate parts of the world, palm trees are considered the embodiment of all that is exotic; they are associated with faraway places, wanderlust and tropical climes. Such notions are rooted in fact: in the northern hemisphere, their most northerly natural localities lie at 44° N, in southern France, while in the southern hemisphere, their most southerly natural localities are found at 44° S, on the Chatham Islands, which belong to New Zealand. It is in the tropics and subtropics, however, that the vast majority of palms are found. Some 2,400 species of palm belonging to 183 genera are currently known to botanical science. The greatest diversity of species is thereby to be found in the biogeographical region of Malesia (bounded by the Malay Peninsula to the west and New Guinea to the east, and by the Philippines to the north and Java to the south) and in the American tropics, followed by Southeast Asia and the islands of the West Indian Ocean. Even tiny, isolated islands in the Pacific, such as Lord Howe Island with its surface area of barely 12 square km, are home to four species of palm belonging to three different genera.

Whereas, in the temperate zones, palms are cultivated with loving care and at great expense – albeit almost always as undersized versions of their true selves – in their own glasshouses, in the

ILL. 1 (p. 6) and ILL. 2 (p. 7)

Palm distribution in the New World / Verbreitung der Palmen in der Neuen Welt /  
Distribution des palmiers dans le Nouveau Monde

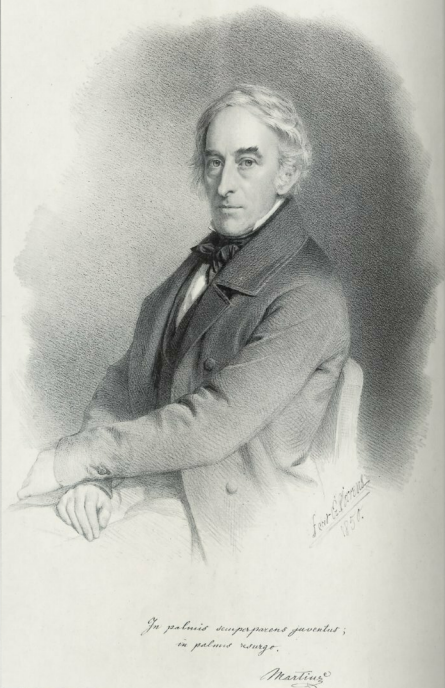
Palm distribution in the Old World / Verbreitung der Palmen in der Alten Welt /  
Distribution des palmiers dans le Vieux Monde

in: C. F. P. von Martius, *Historia naturalis palmarum*, vol. 3, Tab. geograph. 1 & 2, Munich 1853

ILL. 3 (p. 8)

Portrait of C. F. P. von Martius, 1850

in: C. F. P. von Martius, *Historia naturalis palmarum*, vol. 3, frontispiece, Munich 1853



**CORYPHOIDEAE**

(Fan palm subfamily / Schopfpalmenähnliche /  
Sous-famille incluant le palmier éventail)

Fig. 1-9 *Latania lontaroides* (Gaertn.) H.E. Moore - Fig. 10-11 *Phoenix pusilla* Gaertn.





*GEONOMA multiflora.*



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