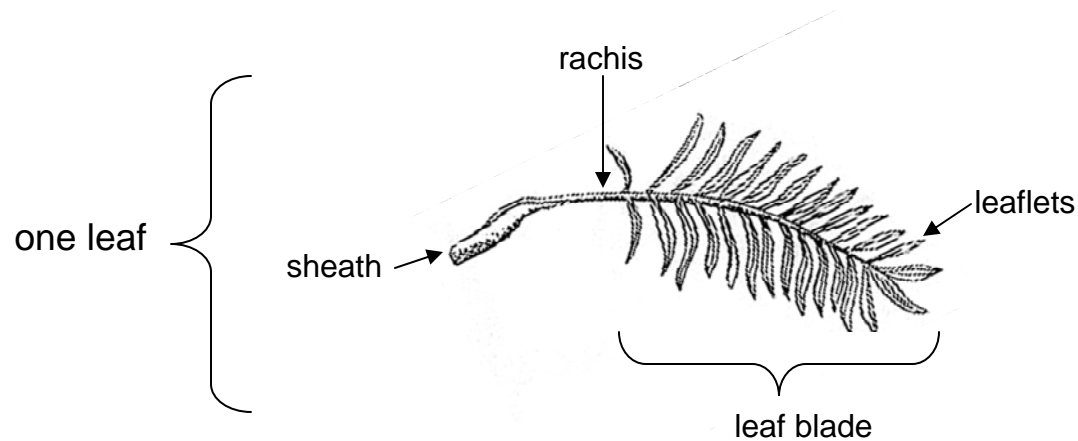


# How are palm leaves different?



The leaf sheath – or the base of the leaf - wraps around the stem. The sheath can be fibrous when old and can look like a burlap bag, especially after the leaf blade dies and breaks off.



*Arenga pinnata* leaf sheath spines and webbing



*Coccothrinax barbadensis* stem with leaf sheaths

Some palms form a very spiny leaf sheath, like the *Zombia* palm.



**Stem of *Zombia* covered with spiny leaf sheaths – don't lean against this palm stem!**

A leaf is attached to the stem or trunk of the palm. Sometimes it falls off when it gets old and a leaf scar remains as a ring around the stem, as in coconut or royal palms.



***Pseudophoenix sargentii* with clear leaf scars (rings)**



***Syagrus* young stem with leaf scars (rings)**

Sometimes, the leaf turns brown but stays attached to the stem. In this case, the leaf sheath cover the young stem. Eventually, the oldest parts of the stem near the ground are free of the leaf sheaths.



***Acoelorrhaphe* stem, finger touching petiole base**



***Hyphaene* stem**



**Petticoat palm - the dead leaves stay attached for many years.**