I. Overview

A. Systematics
- Cocos nucifera
- One of ~2600 spp. in Palm Family (Arecaceae)
- Only sp. in genus Cocos
- Likely native to Indo-Pacific

B. Morphology
- Unbranched trees
- Terminal rosette of large, pinnate leaves
- Atactostelic stem
- Arborescent due to primary thickening
- Small male flowers
- Larger female flowers
- Inflorescences borne from leaf axils
- Sheathing lvs
- Leaf scars
I. Overview

B. Morphology

• Drupe (pitted fruit) with fibrous outer wall ("husk")

• Pit delimited by the sclereid-rich inner fruit wall (endocarp)

• Pit contains world's 2nd largest seed

• Double coconut of Seychelles

• 1st regular leaf

• 3 coleoptile-like leaves

• 1st root + two adv. roots

• Cotyledon
II. Coconuts & Humans

A. Culture & Literature
1. Etymology
   "Coco" - a boogeyman in Portuguese lore

II. Coconuts & Humans

A. Culture & Literature
2. Iconic of tropical destinations

II. Coconuts & Humans

A. Culture & Literature
3. James A. Michener (1907-1997)
   - Doylestown native, naval veteran, world traveler
   - Author of historical fiction
   - Instrumental in linking the coconut palm & exotic locales to the minds of Americans

Seacrets (Ocean City, MD)
II. Coconuts & Humans

Some Books & Theatrical Adapations:
- Tales of the South Pacific (South Pacific)
- Return to Paradise (Return to Paradise)

II. Coconuts & Humans

Return to Paradise excerpt

And everywhere there were coconut palms. This amazing tree is the life blood of the atoll. Its wood makes furniture, its plaited leaves make fine baskets or hats or carpeting or partitions. The heart of the palm makes the world’s best salad... the husk is perfect insulating material...

As if that were not enough, the liquid within the nut is a delicious substitute for drinking water and is so pure that it can be used medically as a completely sterile saline solution...

[etc, etc.]

II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses

1. Whole Plant
   - Ornamental Landscaping
   - Shade

A resort on Aruba (Caribbean)

C. Uses

A resort on Aruba (Caribbean)

Seacrets (Ocean City, MD)
II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses
1. Whole Plant
   • Ornamental landscaping
   • Shade

II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses
2. Leaf & Stem
   • Logs for construction
   • Thatch roofs
   • Weaving materials (hats, mats, partitions)

II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses
3. Whole Fruit
   • Art
   • Drinking vessels

II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses
4. Fruit outer wall sclerenchyma fibers
   • Cordage
   • Door mats
   • Basket liners

II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses
5. Endocarp sclerenchyma (sclereids)
   • Jewelry
   • Tools
   • Cups/vessels

II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses
5. Endocarp sclerenchyma (sclereids)
   • Jewelry
   • Tools
   • Cups/vessels
II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses

6. Endosperm
   • Meat
   • Milk
   • Copra & Oil
   • Water
II. Coconuts & Humans

C. Uses
   6. Endosperm
      • Meat
      • Cream & Oil
      • Water