

## Fascinating facts about palms and Palmers

There are 188 known palm genres and 2,585 species, and every Saturday, I sit under just one in the town square.

When Mummy hands me to Daddy and Daddy hands me back to Mummy, I prick my hands on spikey fronds like a stegosaurus's back, the sting blocking everything out.

Palms with scratchy-beard coconuts come from the Arecaceae family, and every Saturday, Daddy argues with Mummy about our family while I sip soothing jelly water.

Not all plants called palms, like yucca and sago, are palms at all and aren't part of the Arecaceae family. Every Saturday, when Mummy and Daddy fight, I wonder if I'm really part of the Palmer family. I track the endangered yellow-eared parrot, wonder if I'm disappearing, too.

The largest seed of any plant in the world is from a palm and can weigh 60 pounds – that's what I weigh. The heavy seed's a red ball that looks like holly, which is my name.

Daddy says the DNA test shows I'm not a Palmer, not on any Saturday.

I feel lonely like the *Hyophorbe amaricaulis*, the rarest palm. Only one is left in the whole wide world.

Palms aren't made of wood, but of cells that bend easily in storms, and then return to their original position.

I like P words. P is for position and parrot. And for peace.

One Saturday, I follow the parrot to the town square, to sing out our own familial song on the sea-green fronds whispered from the palm.