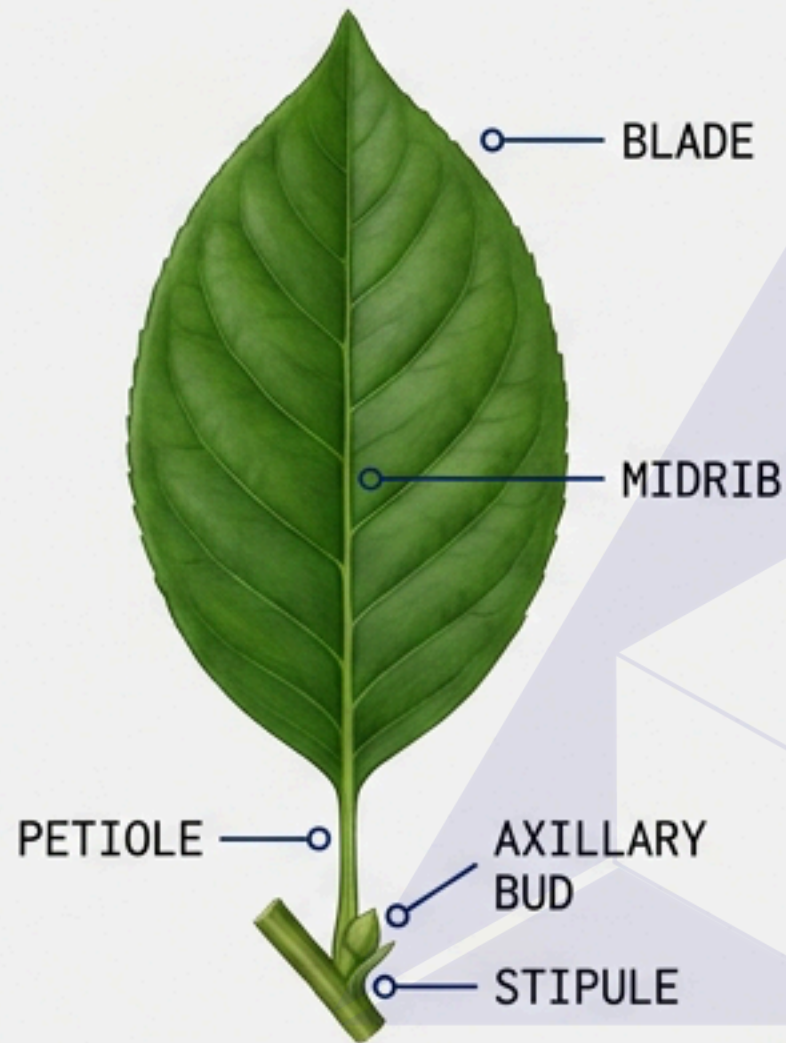


SIMPLE LEAF



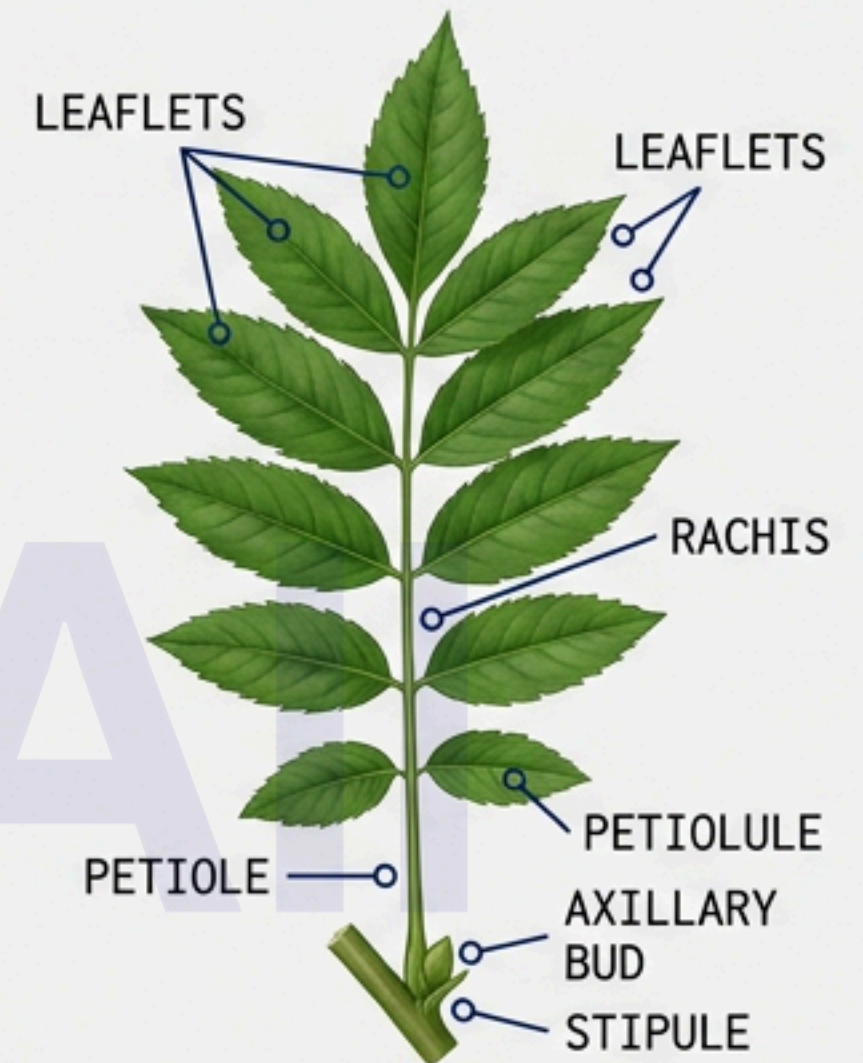
Key Takeaway: Undivided blade with a single axillary bud at the base.

Warning: Do not confuse the blade for a leaflet; the bud location is critical.

Simple vs Compound Leaves

A Morphological Guide

COMPOUND LEAF



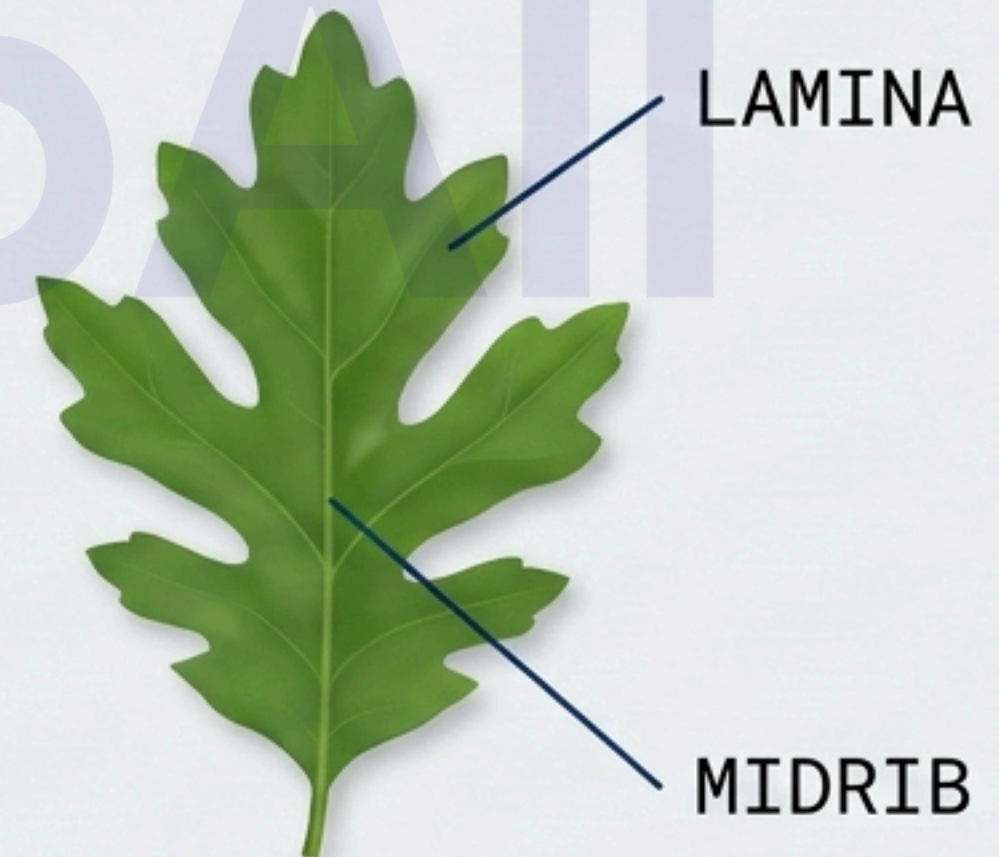
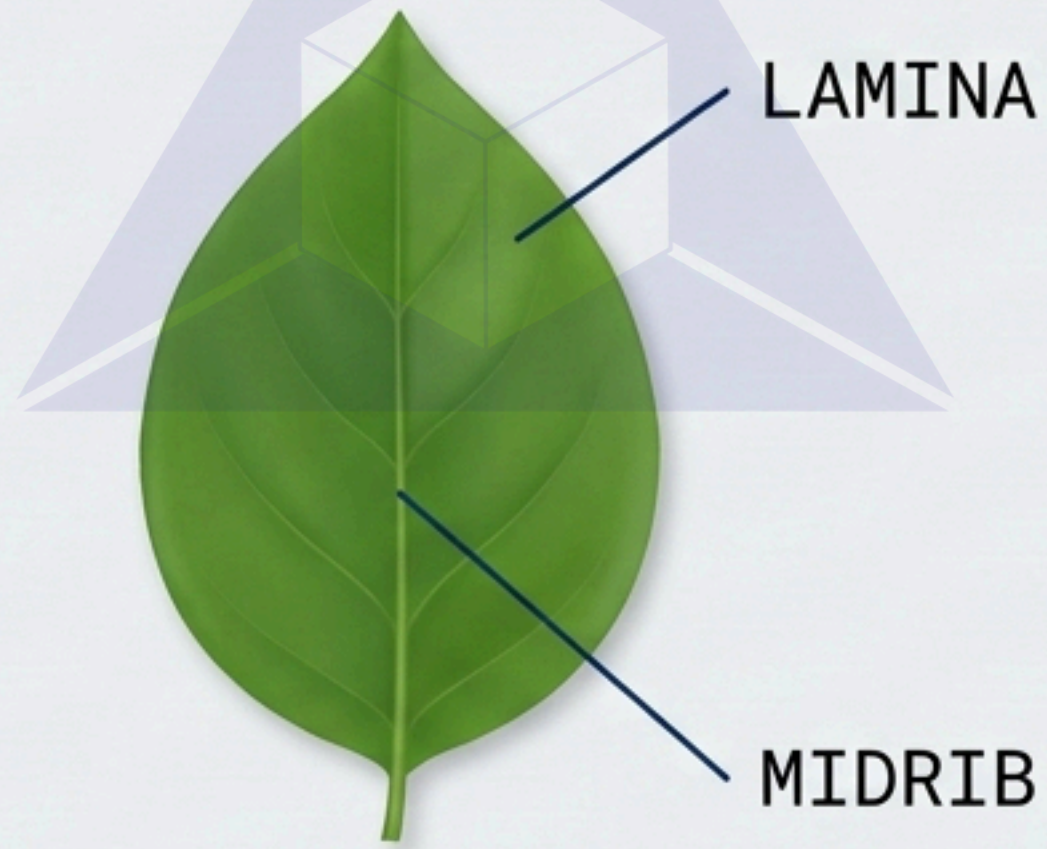
Key Takeaway: Blade is divided into multiple distinct leaflets; single axillary bud at the base of the entire leaf structure.

Diagnostic Callout: Absence of buds at leaflet bases confirms this is a compound leaf.

The Simple Leaf: Lamina Integrity

A leaf is simple when its lamina is entire. Even if the lamina is incised, the incisions do not touch the midrib.

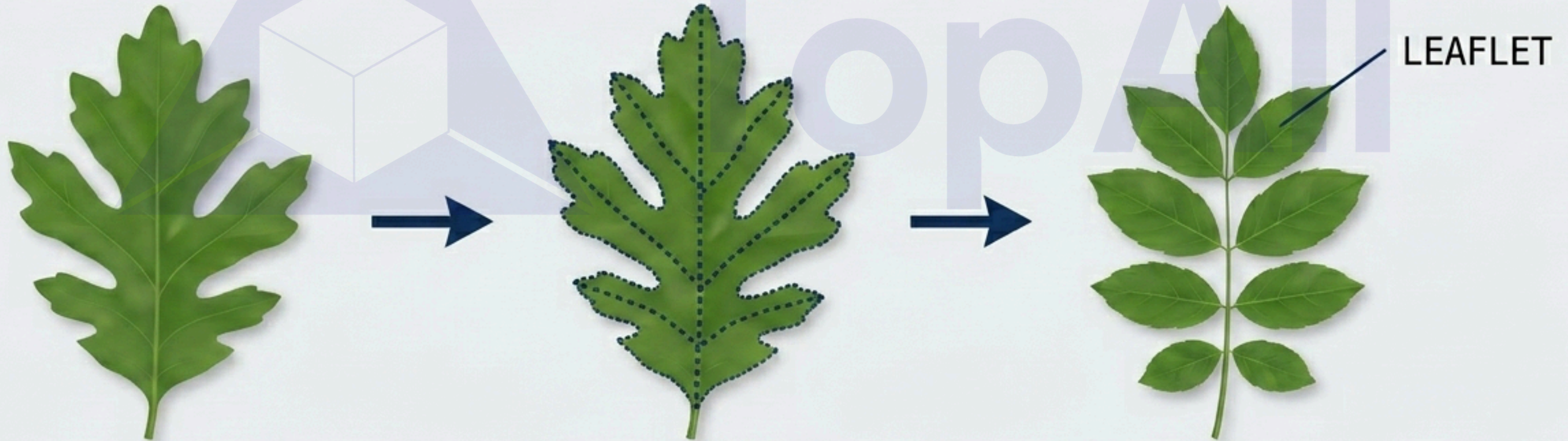
The lamina remains intact.



The Compound Leaf: Structural Division

When the incisions of the lamina reach all the way to the midrib, it breaks the blade into a number of independent leaflets. This structure is now a compound leaf.

The lamina breaks into leaflets.





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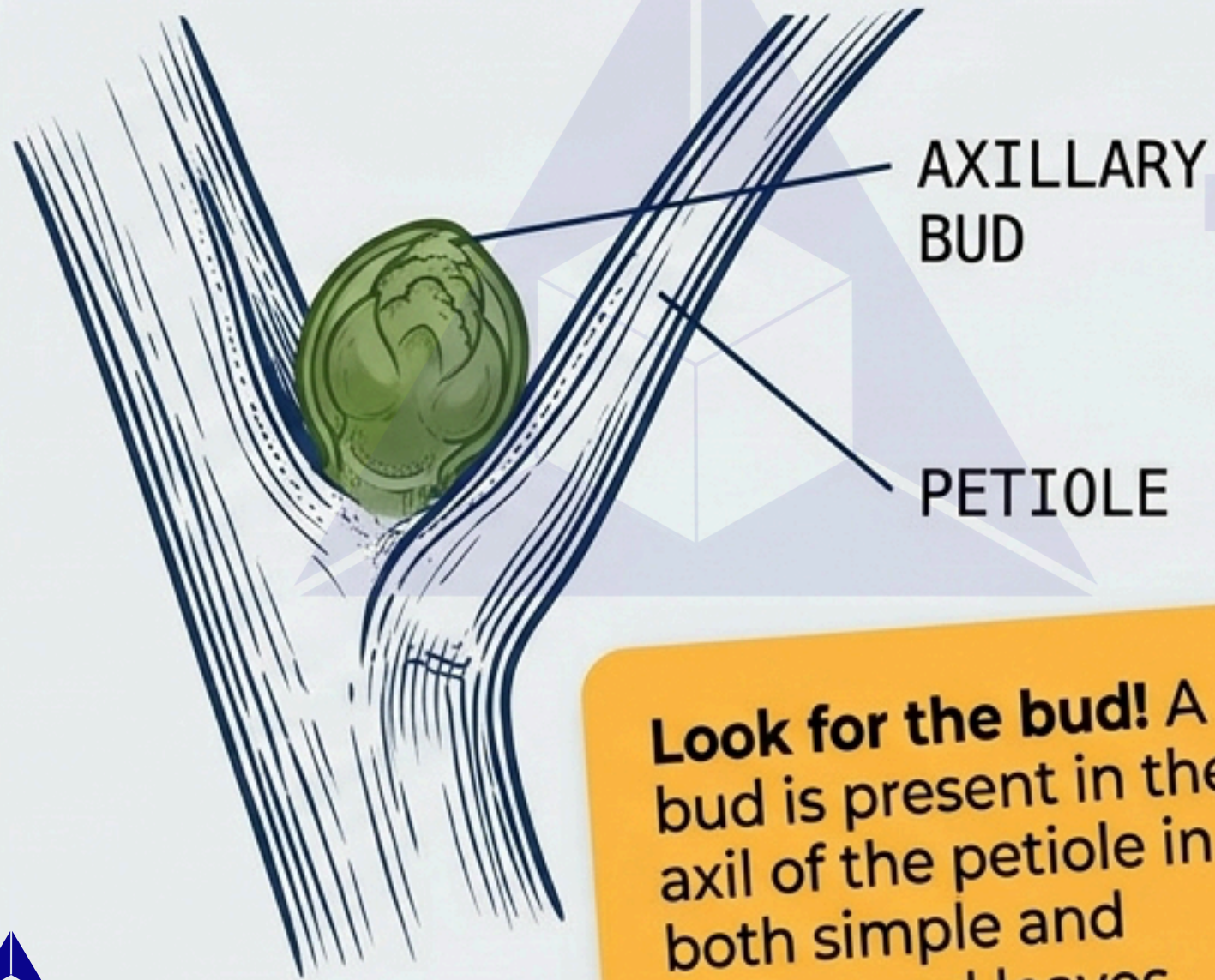
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The Diagnostic Test: Locate the Axillary Bud

The True Leaf



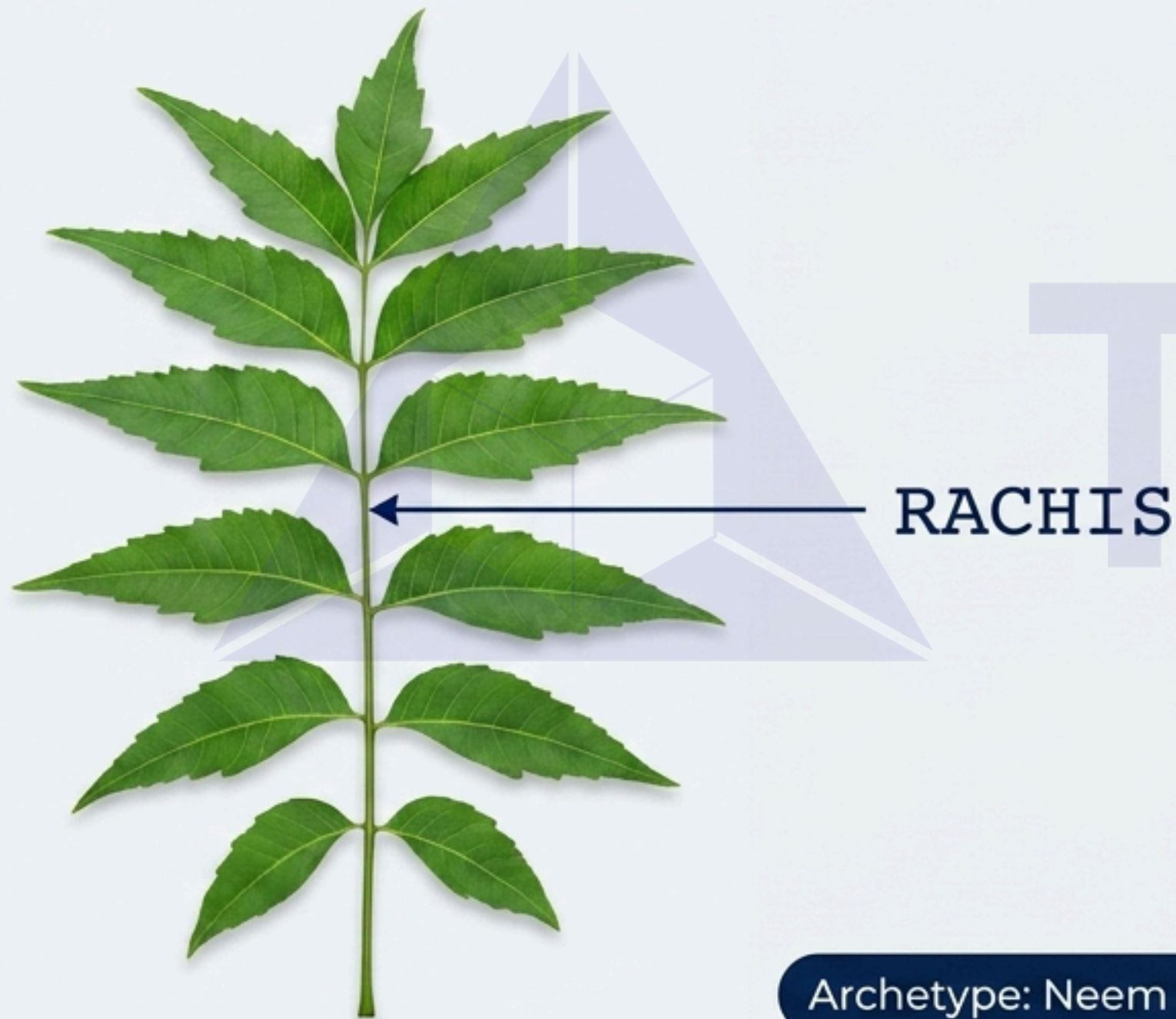
Look for the bud! A bud is present in the axil of the petiole in both simple and compound leaves.

The Leaflet



NOT in the axil of leaflets. Never confuse a leaflet with a full leaf.

Sub-Type 1: Pinnately Compound

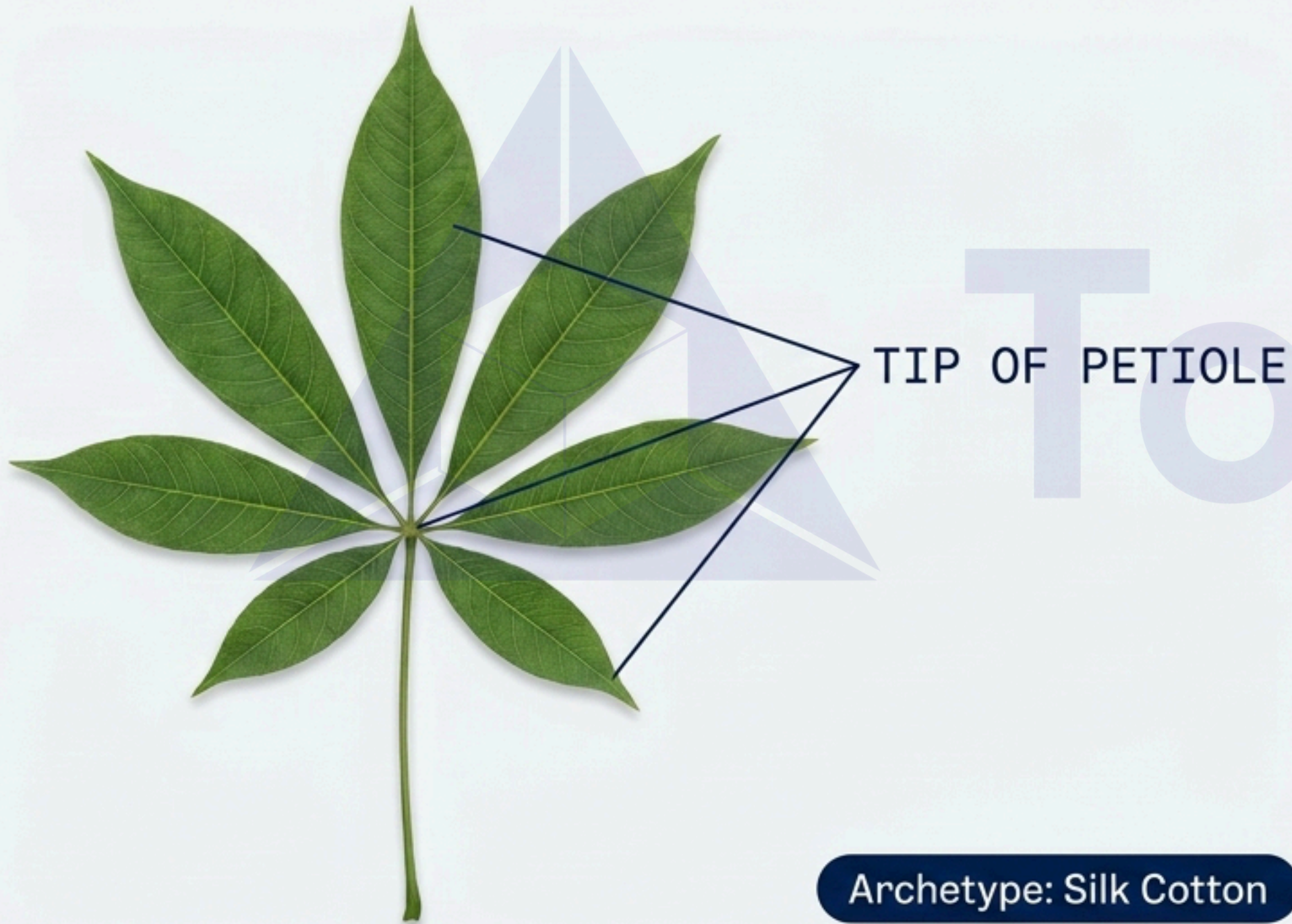


Archetype: Neem Plant

A number of leaflets are present on a common central axis.

The midrib becomes the Rachis.

Sub-Type 2: Palmately Compound



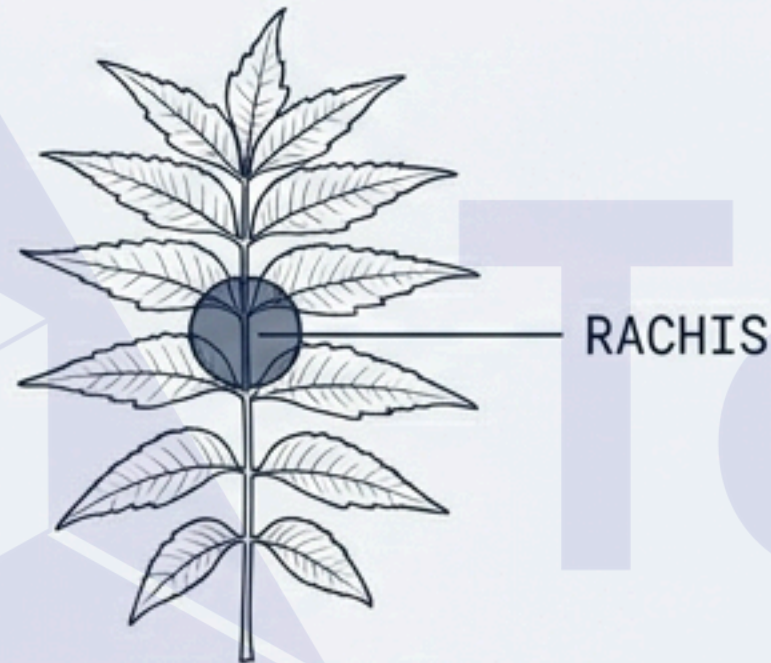
Archetype: Silk Cotton

All leaflets are attached at a common, single point rather than distributed along an axis.

Radial attachment at the petiole tip.

Morphological Synthesis: Compound Variations

Pinnately Compound

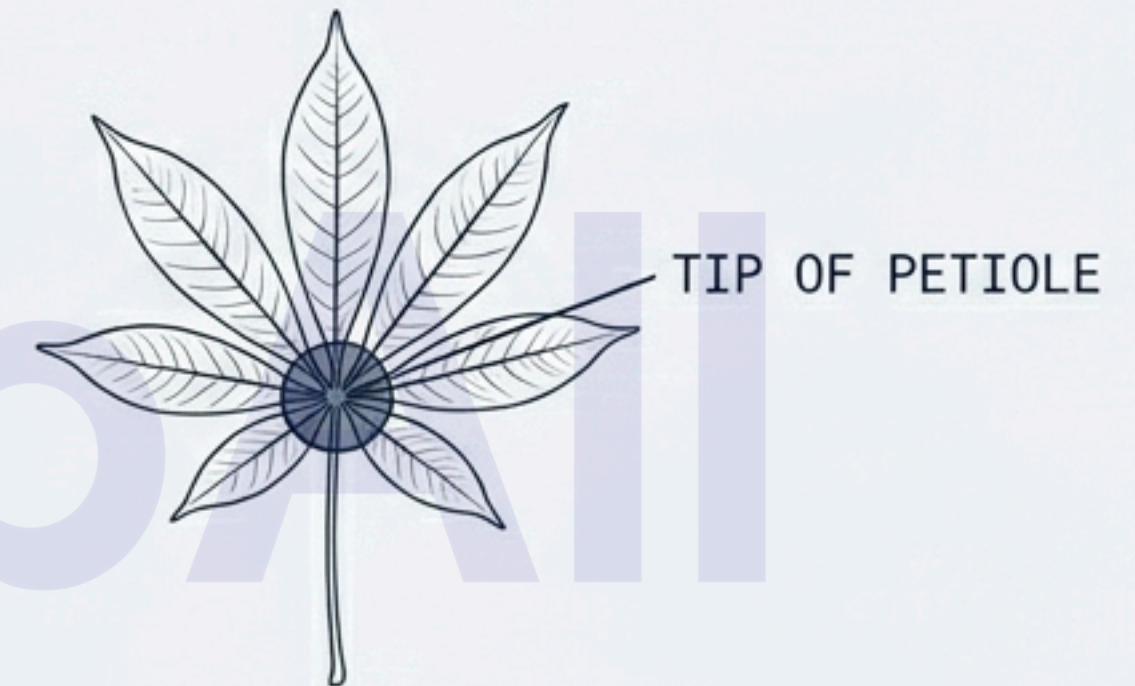


Arrangement Along a common axis

Structural Axis The Rachis

Archetype **Neem**

Palmately Compound



At a common single point

The Petiole Tip

Silk Cotton



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