



Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

January 15, 1958

Dr. Jose Cuatrecasas
United States National Herbarium
Smithsonian Institution
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear don Jose:

Your final conclusions on the infamous "Dacryodes epiphytica" are extremely interesting, to say the least, since they provide, for the first time a definite generic basis for further action. It is unfortunate that the above name has appeared in print, but as I may have explained in an earlier letter, was based on the best information available to me at the time, and even the inclusion of a Latin diagnosis would have been done rather indecorously, since it would have meant pirating a species already bearing a herbarium name given by Williams and Standley. There are several other plants in this same category in my opus, as you know, and I can only hope that Louis Williams decides to do something about them eventually.

I have examined the material that we have in our herbarium of both the epiphytic type and "Bursera gimaruba" as so named, in our collection, and find that the epiphyte has MUCH larger leaflets than anything that we have on file in Bursera, and that the fruits of the epiphyte are less than half the size of any Bursera available to me. I must say however that I have long entertained rather grave doubts as to whether all of our material of "Bursera gimaruba" actually represents a single species. Trees grown as living fence posts in our area, for example, have always been considered to represent this species, yet are VERY different in leaf type and particularly inflorescence type and bark character from trees that I knew in Panama and Costa Rica. Our collections are scarcely of monographic scope, nor do I feel qualified to undertake such a project in Bursera, yet I do feel that it is highly likely that Bursera gimaruba, as presently delimited, will in all likelihood be broken up, at least into geographical races, as you have indicated.

As to the final handling of the material now with you, I would like to propose that you undertake the chore of publishing the entity, since I do not write Latin with any facility, and that you be the sole author. Whether this should appear as a full fledged species or variety is up to you. My personal inclination, in view of its unique habit and the imperfect state of our knowledge in regard to the genus generally, would be to call it Bursera epiphytica Cuatrecasas, since in all honesty, you have done the work leading to its correct identity.

As to Sacoglottis excelsa, I can only say that my records show that

seven specimens were collected, but since none of these are presently in our herbarium, I can only assume that they were taken to Washington by Williams when he left here, together with a considerable number of other questionable things. I have no way of knowing what his final plans may be for these things, but I hope that he either publishes on them eventually, or turns them over to someone else who will. I can only say in addition that I personally compared this material with specimens collected by Ducke in the lower Amazon and found them, to my unpracticed eye, to be identical.

In conclusion, the Bursera is yours, with my blessing. We would simply like to know what name you give it to make appropriate changes in our records. Dorothy joins me in warmest regards to you and yours, and in best wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year.

Most sincerely,

Paul H. Allen

Paul H. Allen

August 1, 1957

Dear don Jose:

You may be sure that your charitable remarks concerning the Costa Rican rain forest opus are most deeply appreciated. I should think that your own extensive experience in the Colombian Choco and elsewhere would give you an almost unique appreciation of the difficulties that one must face to undertake such a project.

As you may possibly know, active field work was stopped due to a last minute change of policy by the United Fruit Company, so that keys and many of the descriptions and illustrations had to be completed on our own while in Florida. I fully realized of course that an unavoidable percentage of error must creep in under such circumstances, but felt when National Science Foundation funds were made available that it would be best to go ahead on it, since such an opportunity might not come again.

Of the several species in a state of limbo at the time of publication the most serious in my own mind were those that had borne herbarium names for several years, given by either Louis Williams or Paul Standley, but which had never appeared in print. In spite of constant urging neither seemed to feel prepared to publish these, yet I felt it unethical to pirate species which they had studied. As you doubtless have gathered, I finally decided to use their names, but without Latin diagnosis in the hope that one or the other of them may decide to validate the names at a later time.

Strangely enough, the by now extremely controversial Dacryodes epiphytica did not, at the time, cause me any more concern than a number of other things in the same unpublished category, since I had somehow gathered from earlier conversations with you and subsequent presumed confirmations from Louis and Stanley that the plant was at least placed in the correct genus. Your bombshell indicating that this was not the case reached me when the book was already in the hands of the binders, so that nothing could be done to correct the error.

On examination of our specimens, I find that I can safely extract a fragment of my number 5547, in what I take to be young fruit, which may serve to supplement such material as you may already have. Needless to say, I shall be extremely interested in your conclusions and am of course more than willing to abide by any decision that you may reach.

Dorothy, at the moment, is finishing a drawing of Luehea grandida

one of our local favorites, but joins me in warmest regards to you and yours.

Most sincerely,

Paul H. Allen

August 1, 1937

Dear Don Jose:

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Strangely enough, the by now extremely controversial Dactyloctenium aegyptium did not, at the time, cause me any more concern than a number of other things in the same unpublished category, since I had somehow gathered from earlier conversations with you and subsequent presumed confirmations from Louis and Standley that the plant was at least placed in the correct genus. Your bombshell indicating that this was not the case reached me when the book was already in the hands of the binders, so that nothing could be done to correct the error.

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Dorothy, at the moment, is finishing a drawing of Luehea grandis

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

7 de enero de 1957

Sr. Dr. Paul Allen
Escuela Agrícola Panamericana
Tegucigalpa

Dear Paul:

Hace muchos días que quería escribirle sobre los fragmentos que me envió del famoso "Dacryodes epiphytica". Estos frutos eran buenos y permitieron determinar enseguida el género de esta planta, que no es ni Dacryodes ni Protium, sino BURSERIA.

Se ve, pues, que hemos hecho un poco el ridículo con todo esto. Pero, siquiera, por fin dilucidamos el problema; poco a poco vamos aprendiendo. La causa inicial de nuestro error fue el que las flores a nuestra disposición son trímeras; esto se cita ya en Bursera, pero el material de herbario, muy abundante, es casi todo de flores 5-meras o 4-meras. En cambio las flores 3-meras son típicas de Dacryodes. También nos despiesto el que la planta es epífita.

Al ver que la planta es Bursera, creí que sería una especie nueva. Ahora, hace varios días, investigué la cosa antes de emitir una opinión concreta. Examiné gran cantidad de material del herbario y llegué a la simple conclusión, de que su planta difiere muy poco de Bursera simaruba (L.) Sarg.; creo que debería considerarse una variedad de esta. Creo también que las flores trímeras representan un caso de dimorfismo sexual. B. simaruba de Colombia, la he descrito de flores 5-meras. Creo que éstas son las flores masculinas y que las flores femeninas son 3-meras. Esto habrá que comprobarlo y mucho mejor en el campo.

Todo esto lo pongo a su consideración para que proceda como le parezca. Podría usted, por ejemplo, publicar por su cuenta la variedad. El nombre Dacryodes epiphytica, tal como está publicado es inválido, por no estar la descripción en latín, de modo que es muy sencillo rebautizar la planta. Le advierto que tal como está hoy Bursera simaruba en los herbarios es polimorfa, y quizás resulten más de una especie el día que se haga una revisión a fondo. Por esto tampoco sería un disparate publicarla como especie nueva, Bursera epiphytica. Me gustara saber su opinión y lo que decida.

Ahora le pido otro favor. En su magnífico libro cita usted Sacoglottis excelsa. He visto un ejemplar de Costa Rica en este herbario (US), pero no lo tengo a mano y no se si es el de usted; de no serlo convendría que nos enviara usted. En todo caso aquí no hay frutos de esta especie de Costa Rica y estos son muy necesarios en esta familia; estoy haciendo una sinopsis de la misma.

Afectuosos saludos de Martha y míos para ustedes dos, deseándoles muy feliz Año Nuevo. Su amigo

José Cuatrecasas

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

11 de julio de 1956

Sr. Dn. Paul Allen
Tegucigalpa

Estimado amigo:

Gracias por su carta del 27 de junio. Hace ya días que el Dr. Williams me escribió dándome informaciones sobre su Dacryodes y remitiéndome en préstamo fragmentos de frutos de la propia colección.

El resultado del examen del fruto ha sido que la planta no es Dacryodes. Estos frutos son más bien semejantes a los de Protium. No obstante no me inclino por considerarla de este género. Ante todo convendría examinar las semillas, que constituyen un carácter importante en la determinación del género de las Burseráceas.

Por el momento mi problema está despejado, pues quedando su planta fuera de Dacryodes, puedo concluir mi synopsis.

Siento que la cosa se haya complicado, con respecto a su planta, pero tal vez sea todavía más interesante y el futuro resolverá.

Con afecto le saluda y e.s.m.,

Jose Cuatrecasas

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

9 de junio de 1956

Sr. Dn. Paul Allen
Tegucigalpa

Estimado amigo:

No le he contestado antes su atenta carta del 22 de marzo pues según me decía usted en ella no estaría de regreso hasta primeros de junio. Su carta me recordó que nosotros habíamos examinado su colección 5966 cuando estuvo usted de visita en Chicago.

La noticia que me da usted de que la planta ha sido descrita por los doctores Standley y Williams me decidió a esperar a publicar mi trabajo hasta que ellos hayan publicado su nueva especie. A este respecto escribí al Dr. Williams con fecha de 17 de abril, pero hasta la fecha no he recibido contestación a su carta. Pensé que tal vez se hubiera perdido la carta o que el no estuviera aún de regreso en Tegucigalpa, pues también estuvo aquí en los EEUU.

Le agradecería que me diera alguna noticia sobre el estado de publicación de la especie. Supongo que como CEIBA se publica regularmente, no hay dificultad para ustedes en publicar artículos; sino lo publicaría enseguida TROPICAL WOODS.

Pero aparte de la publicación original de esa especie, un asunto que me interesa es obtener más material de esta especie para complementar su estudio y el estudio del género, que estoy haciendo. Me interesa especialmente recibir alguna colección con frutos. Varias colecciones florecidas me serían útiles para estudiar el dimorfismo floral sexual. Como tengo entendido que usted coleccionó varias veces la planta, por esto le hago este ruego.

Últimamente pensé también escribirle al Dr. Standley, pero como le debía a usted carta he creído que usted puede fácilmente aclarar este asunto.

Le ruego salude de mi parte al los señores Standley y L.O. Williams.

Con gracias anticipadas, le saluda su amigo

Jose'

Jose Cuatrecasas

5884
5966
6271
Asunción June 27

March 22, 1956

Dr. Jose Cuatrecasas
Smithsonian Institution
United States National Herbarium
Washington, D.C.

Dear don Jose:

At the present time both Louis Williams and Paul Standley are away from the School on leave, so I am going to have to reconstruct the fairly complicated case of the Dacryodes from such evidence as I can either find or remember.

After seeing you in Chicago, and receiving your opinion that my No. 5966 represented an undescribed species of Dacryodes, I wrote the following letter to Dr. Standley:

Chicago
April 25, 1952

Digitized by Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation
Dear Dr. Standley:

During my very pleasant visit here I have had the opportunity to discuss the by now infamous epiphytic Burseraceous tree (my numbers 5547, 5884, 5966 and 6271) with don Jose Cuatrecasas, who is interested in the group, and he is of the opinion that it is an undescribed species of Dacryodes, citing the 3-parted ovary and trimerous floral segments as evidence. Since you have about 99% of the material, perhaps it might be worth checking to see if you are of a like opinion. I'm not trying to rock the boat any harder than I have already, and am willing to settle for nearly anything other than the original determination of Protium panamense. I don't think anyone believes me yet, but this is one of the most striking, and in our area common plants that I have ever seen. If it proves to be a true Dacryodes it will, I believe, be the first record for that genus in North America, as well as the first epiphyte in the Burseraceae. I can most sincerely assure you that this is no isolated freak specimen, epiphytic by accident. I suppose I must have seen at least several hundred, and they are always in the tree tops.

Paul

The above was found attached to a single flowering specimen in the herbarium, on which the original determination had been scratched out, and "Dacryodes epiphytica Standl. & L. Wms." inserted in Standley's handwriting.

In the same folder is a latin description of the species, which reads in part, "drupa parva, sessilis, 6-8 mm. longa, 4 mm. crassa, 1-locularis, obtusa, basi subcontracta; semen 1."

The description is followed by the acknowledgement reproduced below:

"El Dr. Jose Cuatrecasas ha tenido la amabilidad de estudiar estos materiales, y es de la opinion que el arbol representado debe referirse a *Dacryodes*, genero conocido antes de una sola especie, en Puerto Rico, Montserrat y Grenada. Nosotros estamos de acuerdo con esta disposicion; a pesar de la descripcion de las flores de *Dacryodes* como poligamas; las del arbol costaricense parecen perfectas."

This name has been known to me for about two years, but I am not at all sure as to whether it has ever been published or not, and in the absence of Williams and Standley I have no way to find out. There are many more specimens somewhere, including the fruiting material, but again, I don't seem to be able to locate them.

We are about to leave for the American Horticultural Society meetings in Guatemala, and plan to go from there to the U.S. on vacation, to be gone until nearly June 1. In the interval I would suggest that you contact either Dr. Williams or Dr. Standley and see what either has already been done, or what can be worked out between you.

With most sincere regards,

Perh

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

15 de marzo de 1956

Sr. Dn. Paul Allen
Profesor de la
Escuela Agrícola Panamericana
Tegucigalpa

Mi estimado amigo:

Al hacer un estudio del género Dacryodes en el nuevo mundo, he encontrado una planta de usted que he descrito como Dacryodes Allenii. Se trata de su número 5966.

Antes de publicarlo quisiera completar la descripción con los frutos, cuyo conocimiento, además, daría mas seguridad al trabajo. Si usted tiene frutos le agradecería mucho me enviase algunos de ellos (juntamente con hojas) por correo aéreo. Esta planta estaba determinada en el herbario de aquí como Protium panamense.

Espero que ustedes se encuentren muy bien, nuevamente, en Honduras. Nosotros estamos muy satisfechos en Washington. Esperamos verles otra vez pronto por aquí.

Con mis atentos saludos a su señora, le recuerda su amigo

Jose Cuatrecasas

J ose Cuatrecasas

CHICAGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
FORMERLY FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
ROOSEVELT ROAD AND LAKE SHORE DRIVE
CHICAGO 5, ILLINOIS

3 de octubre de 1948

Dr. Paul A. Allen
Golfito (Costa Rica).

Estimado Dr. Allen:

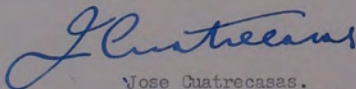
Recibí su apreciada carta, así como las publicaciones que tuvo V. la amabilidad de enviarme. Me han gustado mucho y son de sumo interés para mí; le felicito por la labor realizada allá y le agradezco el envío.

Digitized by Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation

También le agradezco el ofrecimiento de someterme las plantas para estudiarlas y clasificarlas. Haré con mucho gusto este trabajo caso de poder conseguir el préstamo de las plantas. Ahora no está aquí el Dr. Stanley, pero gestionaremos el asunto con el Dr. Steyermark que es amigo del Dr. Woodson.

Pronto le enviaré mis últimas publicaciones de las que tengo existencias.

Atentamente le saluda su aftmo.



Jose Cuatrecasas.

ESQUINAS EXPERIMENT STATION
CIA. BANANERA de COSTA RICA
GOLPITO, COSTA RICA

2 de Sept., 1948

Dr. Jose Cuatrecasas
Chicago Natural History Museum
Chicago, Illinois

Apreciado Dr. Cuatrecasas:

Su carta al respecto a mis pequeños observaciones en el maravilloso Vaupes me ha alcanzado hoy, habiendo sido demorado por haber sido mandado primero a Honduras. Adjunto estoy mandando una copia de una corta revista publicado en el Geographical Review, que por falta de espacio fue reducido casi por la mitad en el tiempo de publicacion. A pesar de esto, mis observaciones han sido muy generalizado, debido a una falta completa de determinaciones de mis pocas colecciones de plantas hechas alli. Una pequeña parte, incluyendo unas Palmas bastantes de interes fueron dejados con Dr. Dugand en Bogota, y los demas han sido depositadas y completamente enterradas durante los ultimas tres años en el herbario en St. Louis, bajo el cargo de Dr. Woodson. Hice ya varios ensayos soltar estas muestras para algun uso, de determinacion, hasta la fecha completamente sin exito alguno. Si Ud., por medio de Dr. Standley, o de Dr. Gregg puede sacar estas pocas muestras mias en calidad de prestamo para sus propias estudios, le agradeceria imensamente. Aunque los collecciones no son grandes, creo que pueden contener muchos especies de suma interes.

Si Ud. tiene disponible algunos de sus publicaciones, le agradeceria mucho mandarme unas copias.

Atte.

Paul H. Allen

CHICAGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
FORMERLY FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
ROOSEVELT ROAD AND LAKE SHORE DRIVE
CHICAGO 5, ILLINOIS

9 de julio de 1948

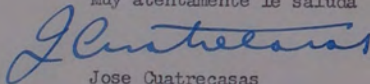
Dr. Paul H. Allen
Research Division
United Fruit Co.
La Lima, Honduras.

Apreciado Dr. Allen:

El Sr. Collier me ha mostrado unas publicaciones de Vd. sobre los cubeos del Vaupés. Por haber estado yo también, aunque corto tiempo, en el Vaupés de cuya flora me estoy ocupando estoy sumamente interesado en toda la literatura referente a botánica y etnografía de dicha región. Por ésto le agradecería un ejemplar de cada una de sus muy interesantes publicaciones al respecto.

Al propio tiempo ofrezco enviarle alguna de mis publicaciones si es que le pueden interesar así como mis servicios en esta institución.

Muy atentamente le saluda



Jose Cuatrecasas