PLANT COLLECTORS IN ECUADOR: CAMP, PRIETO, JØRGENSEN AND GILER

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Balslev, Henrik and Elaine Joyal (New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458). Plant collectors in Ecuador: Camp, Prieto, Jørgensen and Giler. Brittonia 32: 437–451. 1980.—The itinerary of W. H. Camp and his assistants in Ecuador has been reconstructed from fieldbooks deposited in the archives of the library at The New York Botanical Garden. The visited localities are listed according to collection numbers, an alphabetical list of the localities with geographical coordinates or best approximation is provided, and a map is presented showing the area where most numbers were collected.

Wendel Holmes Camp was born in 1905. He joined the staff of The New York Botanical Garden in 1935 and was a staff member until 1949, a tenure interrupted only by the second world war. His wide research interests included the taxonomy of the Ericaceae, nomenclatural principles and horticulture, and the presentation of science to the layperson.

Collecting expeditions brought him to Virginia and Kentucky in 1936 and to Mexico in 1937. With the onset of World War II he went to Haiti on a United States mission planting Cryptostegia, and later he travelled in Central America in search of luffa. In May 1944 he joined a team of workers enlisted by the U.S. Foreign Economic Administration’s Misión de Cinchona del Ecuador, searching for Cinchona with high quinine content. In early May 1944 he went with Dr. William C. Steere of The New York Botanical Garden to the Bafios and Puyo regions of Ecuador, inspecting Cinchona barks and methods of preparation. Some collecting was done on that occasion, but the collections were numbered later and, therefore, appear as E1682–E1703, out of chronological sequence, in the main collecting series. Camp then went to Loja to establish his headquarters, and hired his first assistant, Francisco Prieto.

Prieto, a native of the San Marcos area northeast of Azogues, came from a long line of “Cholo cascarilleros” (Cinchona collectors). Because he was an expert at collecting Cinchona (and even taught Camp) he often made collecting trips on his own. Henning Jørgensen, a native of Copenhagen, Denmark, was hired out of the Misión’s central office in Quito. He had lived in “Oriente” for a few years and was on friendly terms with the feared Jivaro tribe. Camp had therefore requested him as an assistant. Henning Jørgensen still lives in Ecuador, working as an horticulturist, and is known among a small group of countrymen as “Sonnyboy.”

From the headquarters in Loja, Camp, Prieto and Jørgensen made collecting trips to the Zamora area and to the areas west and northwest of Loja towards the provincial border with El Oro. The headquarters remained in Loja until early August 1944. The collections made out of Loja numbered less than 400, a number low when compared to the group’s later productivity. Camp spent most of August 1944 on “official duty” in Quito and northern Ecuador and did some collecting (90 numbers) at the Ecuador/Colombia border. From late August 1944 collecting proceeded out of a new headquarters in Cuenca. At that time Camp was joined by Manuel Giler who had been working as a cook for one of the crews searching for Cinchona in the northern provinces of Ecuador.

A large number of collections were made out of Cuenca (ca 3000), of which the most interesting ones are probably those from the Cordillera Cutucú. While collecting in the Cutucú from mid-November to mid-December of 1944, Camp...
and his crew were helped by the Jivaro tribe, a tribe otherwise known to be extremely hostile to intruders. In addition to collecting in the southern provinces near Cuenca, smaller numbers of collections were made in the northern provinces on the way to and from official duties in Quito. The headquarters remained in Cuenca until April 1945, when the *Cinchona* mission was called off. Until this point of Camp's stay in Ecuador, most collections made were of *Cinchona*, but general collecting was done when time permitted.

After leaving the *Cinchona* mission, Camp remained in Ecuador for six additional months. During that period he and his assistants from the *Cinchona* collecting expeditions made general collections for The New York Botanical Garden. Two main areas were visited during that time span. One was along the railroad from Naranjito on the coastal plain, over Bucay, and up through the Río Chanchán valley past Huigra. Almost 1000 numbers were acquired there. The other main collecting area was that of Sevilla de Oro in the eastern cordillera of Prov. Azuay. In this area more than 1000 numbers were collected in the Páramo del Castillo and surrounding montane forests.

In total Camp and his assistants collected 5828 numbers between May 1944 and September 1945, which with duplicates amount to some 26,000 sheets. These were all shipped to The New York Botanical Garden for further processing. Upon his return to the Garden, Camp started the processing of his collections. This had not been completed when in 1949 he took a position at the Philadelphia Academy of Sciences. He did, however, publish two large papers and several shorter notes on his work in Ecuador (Camp, 1945a, 1945b, 1946, 1947, 1949, 1952). After leaving The New York Botanical Garden other projects took higher priority.

John J. Wurdack, who is now at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., was at the time a graduate student at The New York Botanical Garden, and the task of identifying, preparing labels and sending specimens to specialists fell largely to him. When Wurdack left The New York Botanical Garden, other projects took higher priority for the staff, and the remaining unidentified material was boxed up and mostly forgotten until 1967. At that time the writing of the *Flora of Ecuador* was about to start, a project led by G. Harling from the University of Gothenburg and B. Sparre from the Naturhistoriska Riksmuseet in Stockholm, Sweden.

A letter of inquiry about the Camp collections was sent from the herbarium in Stockholm to The New York Botanical Garden. As a result of that letter, all remaining unidentified material from the Camp collection and a few sheets of Wiggins and Prescott material were sent to Stockholm (702 sheets on loan, 1551 sheets as a gift, total 2253 sheets). That material is sent directly from Stockholm to specialists treating families for the Flora. From 1967 to 1977 there was little communication between the herbaria in Stockholm and New York regarding the Camp collection. In 1977 it was decided to determine the status of the collection. All correspondence relating to the collection was checked, and published lists of exsiccatae were checked for determinations of Camp collection numbers. From Stockholm material of only those families on which specialists were actively working for the Flora had been sent out. The remaining material was now sent to specialists for identification, and those groups for which no specialists were available were identified at the herbarium in New York.

The Camp collection is both of high quality and from little explored areas, and many new species have been described from the material. It should also be mentioned that Camp's fieldnotes were often extensive and contained much ethnobotanical information. Camp never compiled these ethnobotanical notes. A paper based on these notes is now under preparation by Joyal.