

## A Trip to the Heart of Brazil

by Julie Cleaver Malzoni

Together with a group of friends, my husband Eduardo and I visited the very remote [Jalapão](#) National Park in the state of [Tocantins](#) to check out all the wonders we had heard about: rivers of clean water, waterfalls, crystal clear springs, sand dunes and a tropical savanna biome encompassing thousands of [Mauritia flexuosa](#) palms. It sounded like paradise to us. We just had to see for ourselves.

We set out in two 4WD cars, and after 150 km of an excellent paved road, this is where the adventure started... an unpaved, bumpy and sometimes very sandy road.



On the way to Mateiros we stopped to climb the sand dune that rises right in the middle of the park, offering a fantastic view over the valley below. We arrived at sunset and had the first glimpse of *Mauritia flexuosa* in their natural habitat – here they grow in “*veredas*,” swampy lands between rivers and hills.



*Continued next page...*

The next day in the national park was spent in search of water holes, the famous “*fervedouros*,” “boiling” natural pools fed by underground water bubbling upward through the sand with such pressure that it is impossible for a swimmer to sink. The palm trees grow in and around the pools. Even in June, the beginning of winter, temperatures were up to 35°C, and the day spent hopping from one pool to the next was bliss. Even though winter marks the end of the rainy season, we still encountered an odd shower now and again...



We came across a group of [\*Mauritiella armata\*](#) palms, native to the American continent and widespread in the Amazon region and adjacent areas. Although the state of Tocantins is located within the limits of Legal Amazon region, in terms of vegetation this region is characterized by the [Cerrado biome](#), Brazil’s tropical savanna, with corridors of forest along the rivers and streams.



On our last day we visited a *quilombo*, a settlement founded by people of African origin, mainly descendants of slaves that fled Bahia in 1909 seeking better living conditions. The Mumbuca rural community’s main economic activity is the production and sale of handicrafts made from *Mauritia flexuosa* and coils of golden grass (*Syngonanthus nitens*). --The End

## Dubai Has a New Smart Palm

Dubai's glitzy landscape will soon feature a new kind of palm trees that are common in the desert region, except that these trees will emit free wi-fi signals and can take selfies.

Known as Smart Palm stations, these wi-fi emitters are six metres tall and designed to look like palm trees, with the first such installation launched on Wednesday at one of Dubai's parks, according to [Gulf News](#).



According to Director-General of the Dubai Municipality Hussain Nasser Lootah, 52 more Solar Palms will be installed at various public locations like beaches and parks in the coming months.

This 6-meter tall solar-powered tech edifice has mono-crystal solar panels on top of the front roof which get charged all day long to make sure that you never have a battery running out of juice. There are 8 charging points in this hub and it can charge gadgets two and a half times faster than ordinary plugs. The free WiFi network connectivity of Smart Palm has a range of 53 meters with capability of connecting 50 users simultaneously, and is provided by telecom company Du.

## Drool-worthy: The July Palm Photo



Photo of *Cocos nucifera* in silhouette taken on Oahu, Hawaii, spring 2015, by Stephen Horn  
Want to see more? [Click HERE](#)

Do you have a fabulous drool-worthy palm photo? Submit photos to be considered for publication to: [kimberley.b.cyr@gmail.com](mailto:kimberley.b.cyr@gmail.com). Photos must be your own original work

SHARE THE EXCITEMENT OF PALMS -- FORWARD THIS NEWSLETTER TO A FRIEND!

Is your IPS membership up to date? Visit [www.palms.org](http://www.palms.org) and renew your membership.