



# THE INTERNATIONAL PALM SOCIETY

MAY 2017

NEWSLETTER

Greetings, IPS members and palm enthusiasts! This month the newsletter addresses the spiny South American palm *Acrocomia aculeata* and its various uses ranging from food to biofuel, the de-palming of a Chilean airline logo, the spread of the Red Palm Mite (*Raoiella indica*) in the Caribbean, and information on an annual meeting of the European Network of Palm Scientists (EUNOPS).

## Sky Airlines Takes Palms from Logo

Chilean airline Sky Airlines has renovated its logo and has left out palms. The new design, purple with a green arrow, replaces the green circle and palms on the tail of the aircrafts.

Sky Airlines is Chile's second largest airline. Along with the new logo, the company also has launched a new website and uniforms for employees.



Above, Sky Airlines' plane with old design, the Andes mountains in the back (by © [Mauricio Carvajal](#)). Left, the new company design. [Source](#)

**A Promising Species: The Spiny *Acrocomia aculeata***

*Acrocomia aculeata*, which is known by many different names in the areas it inhabits, is a species from South America. It has potential as a biofuel crop, and its fruit can be used in a variety of fashions.

The fruit of this palm is suitable for human consumption, and the oil extracted from its seed is used in cosmetics. The fruit's endocarp can be used for activated charcoal processes used for purifying liquids and air. The mesocarp (pulp) can be processed for extracting an oil for biodiesel and processed with the exocarp (or skin) for animal feed.

Luiz Enrique Berton, a researcher at the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP), says that *Acrocomia aculeata* has an advantage over other plants that allows it to be exploited as a crop, namely, that it is naturally gregarious, which means that it is less susceptible to pests and diseases. He compared it to rubber, which was found in the Amazon at a density of one tree every hundreds of meters, hence when cultivated commercially at high density, is highly susceptible to plagues.



Although extensive palm plantations have been associated with a negative ecological impact, such as with *Elaeis guineensis* (Oil Palm), this species is suitable to be used in exhausted soils and, under the right management plan, should not have a negative impact.

Above: *Acrocomia aculeata* habit, photo by [mauroguanandi](#) (CC BY 2.0).  
Left: Spines of *A. aculeata*, at Naples Botanical Garden, Florida, USA. photo by [Daniel Meza](#) (CC BY-SA 2.0)

***Acrocomia aculeata*'s name in some countries:**

**Brasil:** macaúba, macaúva, mucajá, mucaia, coco-de-espinho, coco-seboso.

**México:** cocoyol, coquito baboso, palma de coyol.

**Dominica and Martinique:** dinde, glou glou, glouglou, palmier glouglou.

**Puerto Rico:** grugru palm, prickly palm, corozo.

**Colombia:** corozo redondo, chicle monposino, tamaca.

**Venezuela:** amankayo, tucuma, corozo de vino, corozo.

**Cuba:** corajo.

**Bolivia:** totaí, totaí barrigudo, mbocayá, cayará.

**Argentina and Paraguay:** cayete, ocori coquito.

**A Promising Species: The Spiny *Acrocomia aculeata* (continued)**



Despite its great potential applications, its exploitation remains low or underdeveloped due to low demand, according to Haroldo de Oliveira, a UNDP consultant.

Minas Gerais State in Brazil is where *A. aculeata* is being



Above: *A. aculeata* fruit.

Left: Meals of *A. aculeata* fruit.

Photos from [Macauba Brasil](#)

developed for commercial uses, with soap production as well coyl syrup which contains vitamins A and C.

Obtaining certified seeds is another obstacle. In Brazil commercialization of unregistered seeds is forbidden, and the commercialization of seedlings takes place instead.

We have discussed just the uses of the fruit of this species, but the immense

potential of many plants—including palms—is still under-realized, and its exploitation and usage could contribute to the diversification of available products and drive conservation for many species.



Above: (Left to Right) 1) **Charcoal** - produced from endocarp, energy source; 2) **Seed residue** from oil extraction, usable in human or animal feed; 3) **Seed oil** - For making cosmetics; 4) **Pulp residues** - for human and animal feed; 5) **Endocarp** - hardest part, covering seed, for charcoal (1) or mulch; 6) **Pulp oil** - food, bio-diesel, soaps and shampoos and other cosmetics. Photo and text taken (adapted) from [Macauba Brasil](#).

Left: Tree bearing the fruits, photo by [Jose Reynaldo da Fonseca](#), (CC BY-SA 3.0)

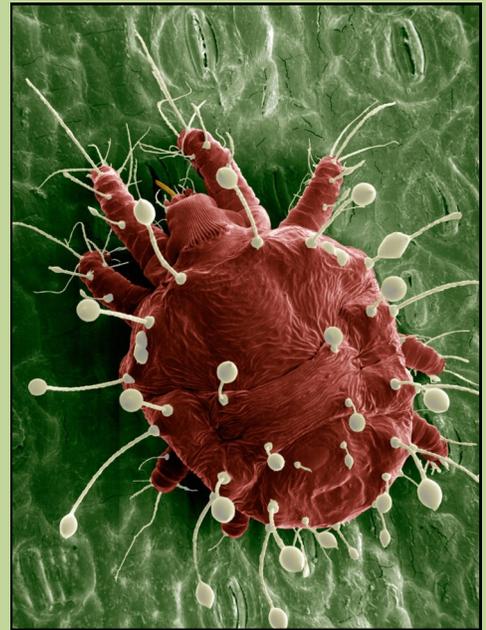


Read more: [El coyol, la palmera que se perfila como el nuevo "oro verde" en Brasil](#), BBC, (Spanish)

## Cuban Researchers Strike Back!

[Científicos cubanos buscan neutralizar plaga que ataca cocoteros y palmeras](#), Terra (Spanish)

The Red Palm Mite (*Raoiella indica* Hirst), already an invasive species in the Caribbean, may threaten several important palms found in the southern United States. Originally from India and described in 1942, the Red Palm Mite has become a considerable plague of coconut palms (*Cocos nucifera*) and areca palm (*Areca catechu*). It was detected in 2004 in Martinique and then spread through other Caribbean islands including Cuba. It was also collected in 2008 in South America in the Venezuelan states of Sucre and Monagas.



Above: The red palm mite, *Raoiella indica*, Photo by Eric Erbe; digital colorization by Chris Pooley. [Image Number D799-2](#) (Public domain)

Severe damage to plants caused by *Raoiella indica* (left: Coconut, below: Banana). Photograph by Jorge Peña, [University of Florida](#)



Cuban researchers of the University of Guantánamo are working to develop proper management strategies to avoid further spread of this pest.

Palms affected can appear yellowish, and the coconut palm is especially sensitive to damage from this mite. Chemical control can be expensive and difficult for tall palms, and there is still some uncertainty about which chemicals are the most effective.



It is known that in India there is a better environment by both climatic and natural predators.

## Cuban Researchers Strike Back! (continued)

The mite is easily distributed by wind and has been also recorded in other palm species like *Roystonea* spp. (Royal Palms) and in bananas.

The mite, other than infecting palms, has been found in other ornamental plants such as *Heliconia*, bird of paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*), gingers (*Alpinia purpurata* and *Etilingera elatior*). For these other plants, it is still unknown if they are valid hosts or if the mites' presence on them is just as result of a high populations of the insect on nearby host plants such as coconuts.

[The red palm mite, \*Raoiella indica\* Hirst, a threat to palms in the Americas \(Acari: Prostigmata: Tenuipalpi-dae\) 2004.](#)



Above: Adult females of the red palm mite, *Raoiella indica* Hirst. Photograph by Rita Duncan, [University of Florida](#).

## EUNOPS European Network of Palm Scientists

By John Dransfield

The annual meeting of EUNOPS (European Network of Palm Scientists) was held this year in the Biology Faculty of Lausanne University in Switzerland. It was attended by over 30 palm scientists, many of them IPS members or young recipients of grants from the IPS Endowment Fund. A wide range of informal papers were presented on subjects including the exploration for palms in New Guinea and Madagascar, the large project on *Geonoma* phylogeny based in Lausanne, *Hyphaene*, *Hydriastele* and *Raphia* taxonomy, the sexuality of palm inflorescences, the evolution of the largest palm seed, phylogeography of *Podococcus*, Amazonian palm ecology, south American palm phylogeny and the domestication of the pacaya palm. The wealth of subjects covered shows that palm research in Europe is alive and well.

**DOES YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER/PALM SOCIETY HAVE AN EVENT? Let us know by advertising it here! Or share your experiences afterwards! Contact us and send us pictures!**

**In addition to renewing your International Palm Society membership online this year, keep in mind that the IPS also offers merchandise online that can help you show off your membership, express your palm passion, and help spread the word about our community of palm enthusiasts!!**



**How do you get your own IPS items that include jewelry, shirts, caps, mugs, glasses, and many other practical items? Simply follow the “caps, t-shirt, totes, and more!” link from the IPS homepage [IPS Home](#), or go directly to this link: [IPS CafePress](#).**

**Remember to support our organization by participating with us! You can contribute by participating in our Palm Talk forum, our Facebook group, or by writing an article for either the Palms journal or a note for IPS newsletter. You can also make an extra donation to the International Palm Society.**



**Let's keep this alive!**

**Visit the discussion board to ask questions about palms: [www.palmtalk.org](http://www.palmtalk.org)**

**Visit the new INTERACTIVE FaceBook Group: International Palm Society**

**Follow us on Twitter: @IPS\_PalmSociety; on Instagram: @thepalmsociety; or**

**Email address for contact: [info@palms.org](mailto:info@palms.org)**



***Mauritia flexuosa* in a river, covered by fallen stamens of *Syzygium* sp. (Myrtaceae) in Reserva Tingana in Departamento de San Martín, Perú. Photo by: Daniel Meza (April 2016.)**