

The Five Cs and *Saribus* and *Veillonia*

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This last installment of the overview of the New Caledonia palm genera covers the genera with only one or a few species. Five of these genera begin with the letter “C” and several are phonetic wonders with the same prefix, *Cypho-*, including *Cyphophoenix*, *Cyphokentia*, and *Cyphosperma*. Rounding out the Cs are *Campecarpus* and *Clinosperma*. The remaining genera include *Veillonia* and the only coryphoid (palmate-leaved) palm on the Island, *Saribus*. All are the quintessential New Caledonia palm with a solitary, ringed trunk, prominent crownshaft, and pinnate leaves, except for *Cyphosperma*, which lacks a crownshaft, and *Saribus*, of course, which has palmate leaves.

I have visited the fabulous plant paradise of New Caledonia seven times, all primarily looking at palms, first nearly a half-century ago in 1976 and the most recent a whirlwind of a trip early this year to investigate and write up with Gilles Pierson two new species of *Basselinia* and a new variety of *Chambeyronia*

divaricata (var. *flavolineata*) (see companion article, p. 57). Those who are fortunate to attend the 2024 Biennial and its pre- and post-tours will not be disappointed; you will be able to visit places to which I have never been.

Campecarpus

Very recently resurrected from the genus *Cyphophoenix* (Pérez-Calle et al. 2024), where it was for 15 years, *Campecarpus fulcitus* is well known and easily recognized for its striking cone of stilt roots (Fig. 1), which supports a green trunk with prominently ringed and indented leaf scars topped by a crown of green, spreading leaves and a white crownshaft (Fig. 2). Look for it at the Rivière Bleue Botanical Reserve and Park and at the Forêt Cachée, both in the southeast part of the Island.

Clinosperma

Until 2008, *Clinosperma* was a one-species genus, having *C. bracteale*, a slender, smallish, few-leaved palm looking like a white-

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Editors' Note: This is the last of four commissioned articles highlighting the exceptional palm diversity of New Caledonia, the destination for the IPS Biennial in 2024.



1. *Campecarpus fulcitus* is well known and easily recognized for its striking cone of stilt roots, here with the late Jean-Christophe Pintaud at the Rivière Bleue Botanical Reserve and Park.



2. *Campecarpus fulcitus* has a green trunk with prominently ringed and indented leaf scars topped by a crown of green, spreading leaves and a white crownshaft, as here at the *Fôret Cachée*.



3. *Clinosperma bracteale* is a slender, smallish, few-leaved palm with a white-crownshaft, southeast coastal road beyond Yaté.



4. *Clinosperma lanuginosa* has spreading leaves, a fuzzy red crownshaft, and a shorter, robust inflorescence, 700 m elevation on Mt. Panié.



5. *Clinosperma vaginata* has gracefully arching leaves and a smaller inflorescence on a slender, long peduncle, Rivière Bleue Botanical Reserve and Park.



6. The rare *Clinosperma macrocarpa* is famous for its elusive nature as well as its large fruits, 500 m elevation on Mt. Panié.



7. *Cyphokentia cerifera* has orange leaf bases under the white-waxy covering of the crownshaft and a spreading inflorescence, 500 m elevation on Mt. Panié.



8. *Cyphokentia macrostachya* has green leaf bases under the white-waxy powder of the crownshaft and pendulous inflorescences, Rivière Bleue Botanical Reserve and Park.



9. The handsome *Cyphophoenix elegans* has prominently recurved leaves, a swollen crownshaft, and green, indented trunk, Col d'Amos.



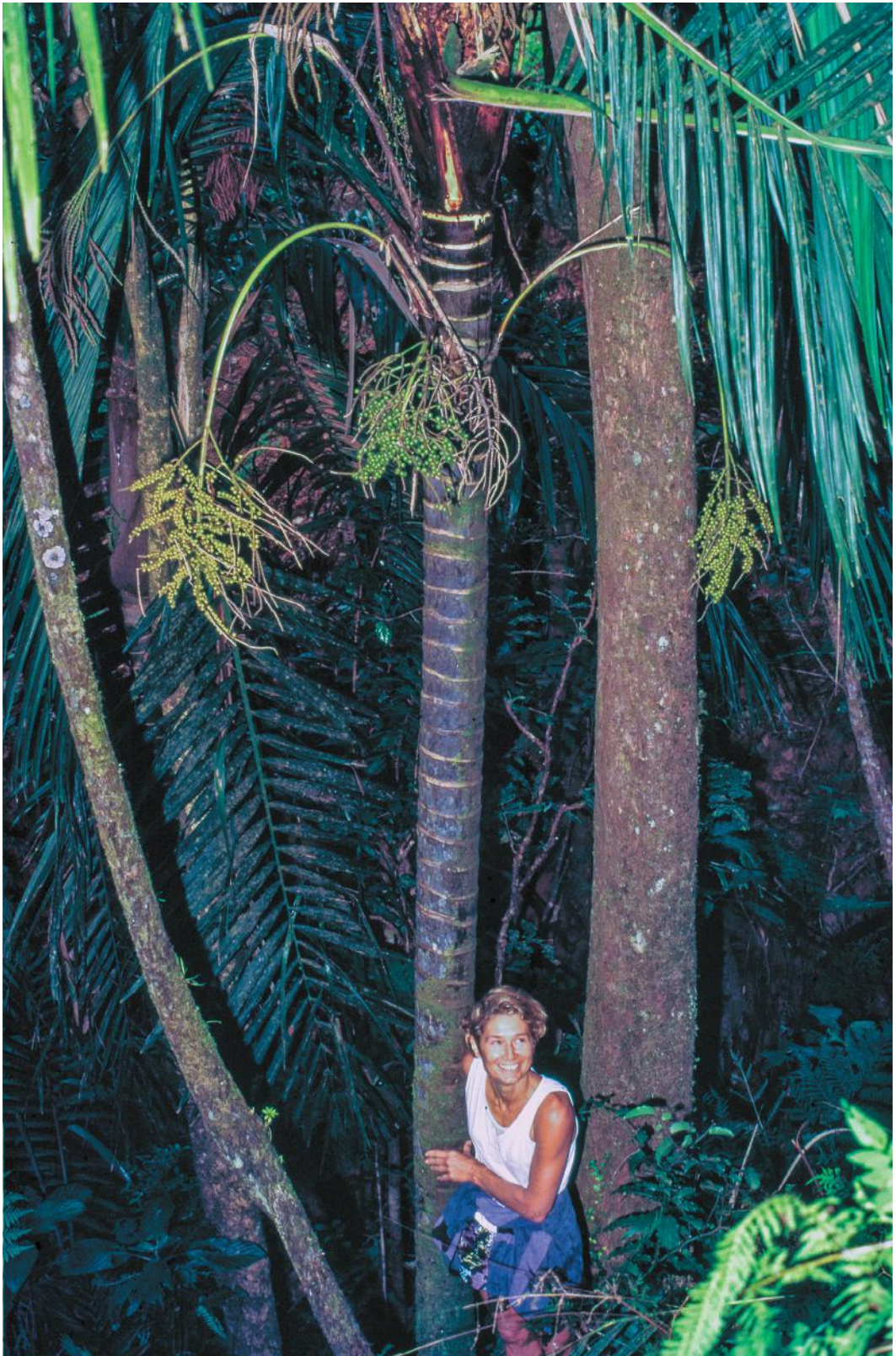
10. On low-elevation limestone substate on Lifou Island, *Cyphophoenix nucele* has ascending to spreading leaves, a green, slightly indented trunk, and a white-patched crownshaft.



11. *Cyphosperma balansae* lacks a crownshaft and has ascending to spreading leaves and inflorescences composed of a short, small panicle at the end of an exceptionally long peduncle, Col d'Amieu.

crownshafted version of *Chambeyronia divaricata* as its only species (Fig. 3). Then the two *Brongniartikentia*, *B. lanuginosa*, with spreading leaves, a fuzzy red crownshaft, and a shorter, robust inflorescence (Fig. 4), and *B. vaginata*, with gracefully arching leaves and a smaller inflorescence on a slender, long

peduncle (Fig. 5), as well as the elusive and rare *Lavoixia macrocarpa* (Fig. 6), a holy grail of the palm family and affectionately known as the "*palmier á gros fruits*," were sunk into *Clinosperma*. Look for *C. bracteale* along the southeast coastal road beyond Yaté, *C. vaginata* at the Rivière Bleue Botanical Reserve and Park



12. *Cyphosperma balansae* is known for its dark, sometimes nearly black trunk with white rings, earning the moniker zebra palm. Here it is with Chantal Pierson on Mt. Aoupinié.



13. *Veillonina alba* is a colorful palm with a stunning trunk, inflorescence bracts and crownshaft, 500 m elevation on Mt. Panié.

in the south, and *C. macrocarpa* and *C. lanuginosa* at about 500 and 700 m elevation, respectively, on Mt. Panié.

Cyphokentia

Cyphokentia, which is typically easily identified by its crown of recurved leaves and powdery, white-waxy crownshafts, was another one-species genus until 2008 when *Moratia cerifera* was sunk into it. Of the two species, *C. cerifera* has orange leaf bases under the white-waxy powder and spreading inflorescences (Fig. 7) while *C. macrostachya* has green leaf bases under the white-waxy powder and pendulous inflorescences (Fig. 8). Look for the former at Col d'Amos in the north and on Mt. Panié at about 500 m elevation while the latter can be easily seen at the Rivière Bleue Botanical Reserve and Park in the south and on Mt. Aoupinié in the central-east part of the Island.

Cyphophoenix

Cyphophoenix had only two species until 2008, *C. elegans*, with its crown of handsome, prominently recurved leaves, swollen crownshaft, and green, indented trunk (Fig. 9) from the north of the Island, and *C. nucele*, with its ascending to spreading leaves, green, slightly indented trunk, and white-patched crownshaft (Fig. 10), a denizen of low elevation, limestone substrate on Lifou Island off the southeast coast of New Caledonia. Then *Campecarpus* and *Veillonia* were sunk into *Cyphophoenix* but very recently both were resurrected. Look for *C. elegans* at Col d'Amos in the north.

Cyphosperma

The only one of two non-endemic genera of palms on New Caledonia, *Cyphosperma* also is found in Fiji and Vanuatu. On New Caledonia, *C. balansae* is known for its dark, sometimes

nearly black trunk with white rings, earning the moniker zebra palm (Fig. 11), lack of a crownshaft, ascending to spreading leaves, and inflorescences composed of a short, small panicle at the end on an exceptionally long peduncle (Fig. 12). You can see it at Col d'Amieu and on Mt. Aoupinié, both in the central part of the Island.

Saribus

The only fan palm and second non-endemic genus on the Island and long-known as *Pritchardiopsis*, *Saribus jeanneneyi* was once thought to be extinct. One of the rarest palms in habitat, known from only one or two adults and several saplings (Front Cover), it was long-thought to be extinct but was rediscovered in 1980 near Prony in the southeast part of the Island. As part of the effort to save this species, the government in the 1990s and early 2000s collected seeds to grow and replant into the wild. They also distributed seeds to local palm collectors, many of whom now have it in their gardens.

Veillonia

Veillonia alba is likely the most colorful palm on the Island (Fig. 13). It has a stunning combination of a white-waxy trunk with brown, indented leaf scars, yellowish inflorescence, and white bracts against the reddish brown crownshaft. It was sunk into *Cyphophoenix* in 2008 but very recently was resurrected (Pérez-Calle et al. 2024). Look for it on Mt. Panié at about 500 m elevation.

LITERATURE CITED

- PÉREZ-CALLE, V., S. BELLOT, B.G. KUHNHÄUSER, Y. PILLON, F. FOREST, I.J. LEITCH ET AL. 2024. Phylogeny, biogeography and ecological diversification of New Caledonian palms (Arecaceae). *Annals of Botany* (online early).