



# ALBERTO

Fundador: J.P.P. Carauta (1930-2013)

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*SIC VOS NON VOBIS*: IN HONOUR TO THE BOTANIST PEDRO CARAUTA (1930 – 2013)\*

Our beloved friend Jorge Pedro Pereira Carauta, 83, died at his home in Rio de Janeiro on Tuesday, October 8, 2013. He was born in the same Brazilian city, on April 23, 1930. His life was dedicated to Botany and spirituality, as a faithful man devoted to philanthropic causes.

Pedro Carauta, as he liked to be addressed, received his BAsC in 1955 in Natural History, from the Universidade Estadual do Rio de Janeiro. Afterwards, he graduated in Systematic Botany, trained by Prof. Alberto Castellanos from Museu Nacional/Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro. He concluded his MSc in 1977 in the same institution, with a monograph on “*Dorstenia* L. (Moraceae) from Brazil and neighboring countries”. Carauta received his PhD from the Universidade Mackenzie in 1988 with the thesis “*Ficus* (Moraceae) in Brazil: Conservation and Taxonomy”, the most complete treatment of the genus for the Americas. He was also Fellow of the

\* The latin expression “*Sic vos non vobis*” means: “So you not for yourselves”. This verse opening a poem by Vergil (70 BC - 19 BC). Carauta considered these words an expression of altruism he sought your research.

Linnaean Society; Member of the Academia Brasileira de Ciências, the Sociedade Botânica do Brasil, International Association for Plant Taxonomy, Herbarium Bradeanum, The Torrey Botanical Club, Sociedade Botânica de São Paulo, Sociedade dos Amigos do Museu Nacional, Clube Excursionista do Rio de Janeiro; president of the Associação Brasileira de Taxonomia Biológica; Editor in chief of the Journal *Albertoia* and *Atas da Sociedade Botânica do Brasil – Seção Rio de Janeiro*.

His professional biology career as Ecosystem Analyst was entirely at FEEMA (Fundação Estadual de Engenharia do Meio Ambiente) (1963-2000), also teaching in Museu Nacional as Invited Professor (1977-2000). Pedro was Visiting Professor at the Museu Nacional from 2001-2002 and also continued in this position until his passing away. He was an internationally renowned expert in Rosales, particularly the family Moraceae.

Pedro published on many themes in nature conservancy and appeared frequently as an expert in plant taxonomy and in urticalean genera. He published more than 100 papers, almost all with his graduate students as co-authors, and was working on some 8 additional papers at the time of his death. Pedro Carauta was a dedicated activist for nature conservancy, promoting public wellness. He led, with enchanting passion, uncountable field trips, courses and public lectures on this subject.

As expert of nomenclature rules of taxonomic botany and Latin, Pedro ministered many courses from 2000 to 2010. He had the qualities of a true scientist: simplicity, devotion to research, respect and love of others. Those qualities and his sympathy, made him respected and admired by his colleagues, students and friends.

Pedro was also a sportsman, actively participating in the Clube Excursionista do Rio de Janeiro as a mountain climber. For that reason, one of the climbing routes on Dois Irmãos peak in Rio de Janeiro was named “Professor Pedro Carauta”. The herbarium of the Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO) is also named after him.

Pedro Carauta described about fifty new taxa during his career. He was also honored by eponymy (e.g. *Ficus carautana* L.J. Neves & Emygdio; *Sorocea carautana* M.D.M. Vianna, Carrijo & Romaniuc; *Couepia carautae* Prance; *Stigmaphyllon carautae* C.E. Anderson; *Dorstenia carautae* C.C. Berg; *Stylogyne carautae* Carrijo & M.F. Freitas; *Cleistes carautae* Toscano & Leoni; *Panicum carautae* Renvoize; *Serjania carautae* Somner; *Telminostelma carautanum* Fontella & E.A. Schwarz; *Solanum carautae* Carvalho and *Pilea carautae* M.D.M. Vianna & R.J.V. Alves). *Pilea carautae* was elected in 2013 as the symbol of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Jornada Fluminense de Botânica (a traditional scientific meeting) during which he was honored.

As a religious man, he was layman of the Ordem dos Carmelitas Descalços Seculares - Order created by the desire of some lay communities can be part of the distinctive charism of religious communities - known as *Irmão Pedro* (Brother Pedro). Fraternity, service and contemplation are essential values for all Carmelites, and were characteristic of our friend.

Professor Pedro Carauta survives through his students (more than 300), for whom he had an amazing care and with whose he maintained a strong friendship (Fig.1). He never retired from Botany and gladly supervised many students until his last day.



**Figure 1:** Professor Carauta and some of his students, at his office. April, 2005. From left to right: Marcelo Vianna, Pedro Carauta, Ricardo Lacerda, Tatiana Carrijo and Anderson Machado.

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