



MONTGOMERY BOTANICAL CENTER

*Advancing Research, Conservation, and Education
through Scientific Plant Collections*

FUNDING REPORT

PREPARED FOR TIM GREGORY
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Belize 2008 Cycad Research and Conservation Project: *Ceratozamia robusta* | August 2008





Project Team and Contact Information

Project Leader:

Michael Calonje, M.S.
MBC Cycad Biologist
michaelc@montgomerybotanical.org

Team:

Dr. Miguel Angel Perez-Farrera
Herbario Eizi Matuda
Escuela de Biología
Universidad de Ciencias y Artes de Chiapas
Mexico

Jan Meerman

Director

Biodiversity & Environmental Resource Data
Systems of Belize
Green Hills Botanic Garden
Belize

Boris Arevalo

Biologist

Belize Tropical Forest Studies
Seven Miles, Cayo District
Belize

Summary

Montgomery Botanical Center's Belize 2008 Cycad Expedition surveyed native cycad populations in Belize, obtaining valuable phylogeographic, ecological, botanical, and demographic data. Germplasm for *ex situ* horticultural conservation was obtained, and voucher specimens were deposited in Belize and in the United States. The project represented collaborative efforts between Montgomery Botanical Center and Green Hills Botanical Collections, Belize. Generous support from Dr. Tim Gregory allowed Miguel Angel's par-

ticipation in the *Ceratozamia robusta* focused segment of the Expedition in support of his research on the *C. robusta* species complex.

Introduction

The Montgomery Botanical Center Belize 2008 Cycad Expedition took place from Aug. 17th, to Sep. 11, 2008. The expedition focused on studying native cycad populations in Belize and obtaining germplasm for *ex situ* conservation. The first leg of the expedition, focusing on studying *Ceratozamia robusta*, took place from Aug. 17 to August 23.



Ceratozamia robusta with mature female cone.



***Ceratozamia robusta* Research**

Ceratozamia robusta as currently circumscribed occurs in Mexico, Guatemala, and Belize. However, the considerable variation observed between populations throughout its range suggest that these may be part of a species complex that requires further work to adequately understand it.

Dr. Miguel Angel Perez-Farrera is currently undertaking a study examining the genetic and morphological variation within this species complex. Generous support from Dr. Tim Gregory allowed Miguel Angel's participation in the *Ceratozamia robusta* focused segment of the Montgomery Botanical Center Belize 2008 Cycad Expedition in support of his research project titled "Genetic variation and Morphology of the *Ceratozamia robusta* Miq. Species Complex".

Miguel Angel's participation in the expedition took place from August 17-23, 2008. During this time, two populations of *Ceratozamia robusta* in the Maya Mountains of Cayo District were visited. Detailed morphometric measurements, photographs, herbarium specimens, and leaflet samples were collected in support of Miguel Angel's research, and seeds were collected for *ex situ* conservation collections at MBC, Green Hills Botanical Collections, and Belize Botanic Garden. Herbarium specimens collected were deposited at BRH (Belize Forest Department) and FTG (Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden).

Acknowledgements

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Dr. Miguel Angel Perez-Farrera
next to *Ceratozamia robusta*.

- Jan Meerman of Biodiversity & Environmental Resource Data Systems of Belize provided botanical expertise, and facilitated efficient planning of fieldwork.
- Green Hills Botanical Collections provided significant in-kind support by donating lodging, equipment, and work infrastructure.
- Boris Arevalo, Biologist at Belize Tropical Forest Studies facilitated expert guidance to the *Ceratozamia robusta* study sites.
- The Belize Forest Department granted permission and provided herbarium infrastructure for conserving voucher specimens. Special thanks to Chief Forest Officer Wilber Sabido and Herbarium Curator Hector Mai at the Belmopan Forest Department Headquarters for assistance with permitting.