



## A new species of *Eriotheca* (Malvaceae: Bombacoideae) from Espírito Santo, eastern Brazil

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### Abstract

A new species of *Eriotheca* (Malvaceae: Bombacoideae) from a granitic rock outcrop in the state of Espírito Santo, eastern Brazil, is described and illustrated. *Eriotheca saxicola* represents the first reference of a xylopodium-like organ for the genus. The new species is compared to its putative closest relatives and notes on its distribution, ecology, and phenology are provided.

**Key words:** Brazilian Atlantic rainforest, endemism, granitic rock outcrop, morphology, taxonomy

### Introduction

*Eriotheca* Schott & Endlicher (1832: 35) is a member of the Bombacoideae (Malvaceae) which comprises 16 genera and approximately 120 species distributed throughout the tropics (Stevens 2011). As traditionally circumscribed, the genus is restricted to South America (Robyns 1963, 1968, 1979, 1981, 1999, 2003; Robyns & Nilsson 1975; Fernández-Alonso 1999, 2003), and includes 24 species of which 16 occur in Brazil mainly occurring in moist forests and cerrado vegetation (Duarte & Esteves 2011).

The genus is characterized by mostly medium to emergent trees with unarmed trunks; leaves that are palmately compound with leaflets that are articulate at the petiole apex; relatively small flowers with a persistent calyx that is accrescent in fruit; a receptacle often with glands; an androecium with 18–170 stamens partially connate in a glabrous tube and freely originating from it (phalanges absent); capsules with abundant brown kapok; and numerous, relatively small, striate seeds (Robyns 1963).

Recent molecular phylogenetic analyses have suggested the paraphyly of *Eriotheca* in relation to *Pachira* s.l., but further sampling of both genera is necessary to confirm this hypothesis (Duarte *et al.* 2011). Consequently, no taxonomic changes placing *Eriotheca* in synonymy with *Pachira* have been proposed.

Various studies on the systematics of Neotropical Bombacoideae (Carvalho-Sobrinho & Queiroz 2008, 2010, 2011; Carvalho-Sobrinho *et al.* 2009; Carvalho-Sobrinho *et al.* 2012; Carvalho-Sobrinho *et al.* 2013) in conjunction with field work monitoring of populations in the eastern and northern regions of Brazil has resulted in the recognition of a new species of *Eriotheca* from granitic rock outcrops in the state of Espírito Santo in eastern Brazil. This new species is described and illustrated here and it represents the first documentation of a xylopodium-like organ in *Eriotheca*. The new species is compared to its putative closest relatives and notes on its distribution, ecology, and phenology are provided. All cited specimens have been seen by the author.