



World Magnolia Adventures

Magnolia darioi A.Vázquez & D.L.Kelly

Endemic to the Sierra del Merendón,
Cusuco National Park, Honduras

CR

Critically
Endangered

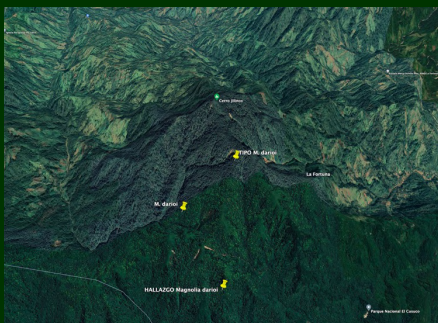
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Discovery: The botanical exploration supported by the CONSEFORH project at the top of the Sierra Merendón, Cusuco National Park, resulted in the discovery of *Magnolia darioi* which was found in fruiting in the summer of 1993 by Darío Alberto Mejía Valdivieso (known as Darío Mejía) to whom this species was dedicated. Their specimens were distributed to herbaria EAP, HEH, MO, TEFH. In the summers of 2004 and 2011, Daniel L. Kelly, as part of Operation Wallacea (endorsed by the Institute of Forest Conservation, Protected Areas and Wildlife (ICF)), collected vegetative samples and geopositioned the trees. It was not until July 2019 that Alan Ward, George Rodwell and Thomas Cole found flowers in the highest part of the tree, which facilitated the description and publication of the species.

Publication: In October 2022, the following paper was published in the scientific journal Phytotaxa: Vázquez-García, J. A., Kelly, D.L., Mejía-Valdivieso, D., Morales, W., Dahua-Machoa, A., Vega-Rodríguez, H. Ortega-Peña, A.S., Padilla-Lepe, J. & Muñiz-Castro, M. Á. (2022) *Magnolia* (Magnoliaceae) in Honduras: a synopsis with six new taxa. *Phytotaxa* 570 (2): 109–149. <https://doi.org/10.11646/phytotaxa.570.2.2>

TYPE:—HONDURAS. Cortés Department: Cusuco National Park, Sierra del Merendón, W of San Pedro Sula, montane rainforest, July 7, 2019 (flower), Alan Ward, George Rodwell and Thomas Cole CUCA2019 (holotype: IBUG!; isotypes: BIGU!, CR!, EAP!, HEH!, HEM!, MO!, NY, P!, TEFH!, TCD!).



WORLD MAGNOLIA ASSOCIATION FOR CONSERVATION (WMA)

“Saving magnolias and their habitats”

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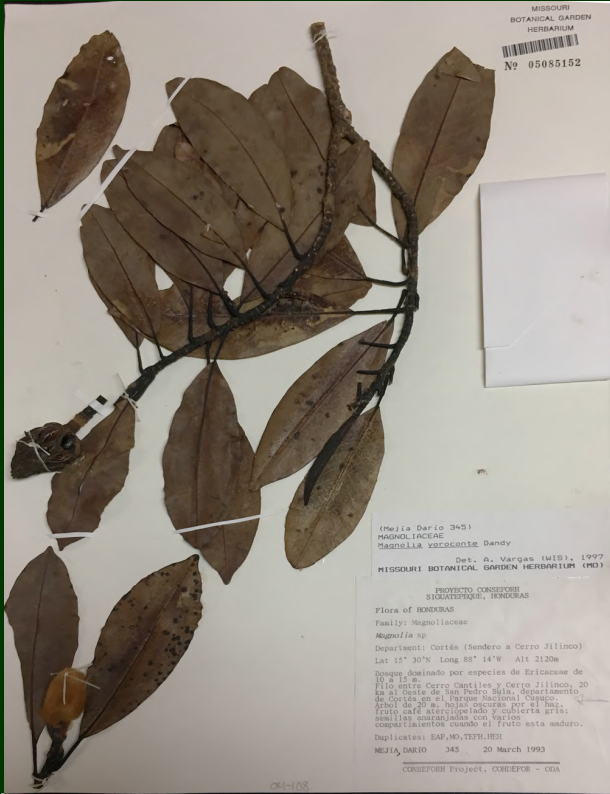
Habit and Habitat. Trees ca. 15.0–28.0 m tall, (19.0–)36.0–46.0 cm dap . It cohabits with dwarf forest elements such as *Podocarpus oleifolius* (Podocarpaceae), *Gentlea micranthera* (Primulaceae), *Ilex guianensis* (Aquifoliaceae). *Vaccinium poasanum* and *Bejaria aestuans* (Ericaceae). Distinctive features: It is recognized by its narrowly oblanceolate-elliptic leaves, flat and glaucous on the underside and pubescent vs. glabrous or slightly hairy felted carpels.

Conservation Status: Critically Endangered (CR), IUCN criterion B1ab(iii). This species is known from a very small number of individuals, apparently sparsely dispersed in a very restricted geographical area, an extension of presence (EOO) of 0.621 km² and an area of occupation (AOO) of 8 km². The habitat of this species is protected by the Cusuco National Park / There are no records of ex situ collections.

Acknowledgements: To the Institute of Forest Conservation, Protected Areas and Wildlife (ICF), and in particular to Rosamaría Hernández, Head of the Northwest Region (ICF), for research permits and other support. To Rina Fabiola-Díaz (EAP), Lilian Florencia Ferruffino-Acosta (TEFH) Wilson Zuniga (UNACIFOR, HEH) and our families for their unconditional support.



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Darío Mejía and his wife Heidi Vides at their home in Siguatepeque, Comayagua, developing a scientific project and a strategic action plan in order to find funding for the conservation of the Magnolias of Honduras