ISSN 2325-4785
New World Orchidaceae – Nomenclatural Notes
Nomenclatural Note – Issue No. 52
July 8, 2019

A Locality for *Encyclia xosmentii* Sauleda & Esperon is documented in Cuba.

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Abstract

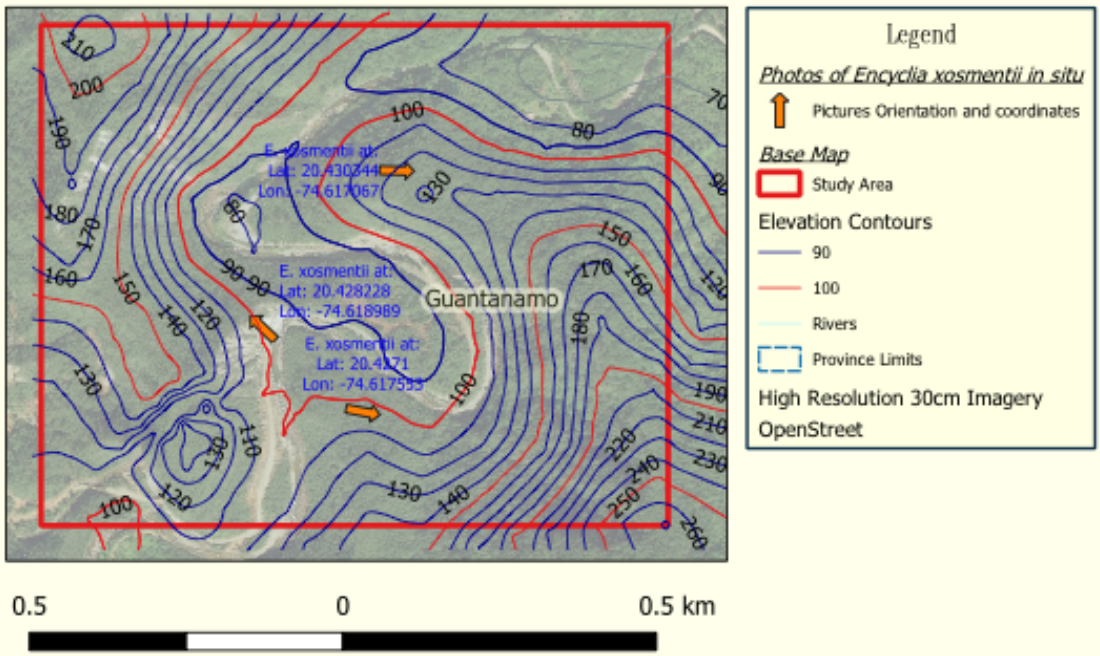
The discovery of plants of the natural hybrid *Encyclia xosmentii* Sauleda & Esperon in its natural habitat is documented.

Encyclia xosmentii Sauleda & Esperon, a natural hybrid of *Encyclia hamiltonii* Sauleda and Esperon and *Encyclia moebusii* H. Ditr., was previously only known from a plant exhibited in early 2011 at a meeting of the St. Augustine Orchid Society, in St. Augustine, Florida, by Marv Ragan of Orange Park, Florida. The plant exhibited was labeled *Encyclia pyriformis* (Lindl.) Schltr. It had been purchased as a seedling from Hamlyn Orchids of Jamaica. The seed came from a seed capsule collected in eastern Cuba from a plant not in flower. The plant resembled *Encyclia hamiltonii* Sauleda & Esperon but the flowers were slightly smaller and with purple labella. Prior to *E. hamiltonii* being described, all of the plants of *E. hamiltonii* from eastern Cuba were being identified as *E. pyriformis*, a species restricted to western Cuba. Plants with the purple labella had been observed on several occasions in eastern Cuba where *E. hamiltonii* and *E. moebusii* are sympatric. No official record was made of the exact locality.

In the genus *Encyclia* Hook. natural hybrids are common and several hybrid swarms have been documented (Sauleda & Adams, 1984 and 1990, Dressler and Pollard, 1974). In Cuba several natural hybrids have been described (*Encyclia xcamagueyensis* Seijo et. al., *Encyclia xbrevifolia* (Jenn.) Ackerman & Mùjica-Benitez) and a hybrid swarm (*Encyclia grahamii* (Hook.) Bosmenier et. al.) which includes as a synonym one of the morphs described as *Encyclia navarroi* Vale & D. Rojas have been recognized. Several other species recently described for Cuba are possibly natural hybrids and several observed natural hybrids are yet to be described. In Cuba, one of the centers of adaptive radiation of the genus *Encyclia*, and in the Bahama Islands, anywhere that encyclias are sympatric, natural hybrids or hybrid swarms occur.

Plants of *Encyclia xosmentii* were observed at three localities at elevations from 87 m to 117 m, around the Latitude: 20°25'41.62"N, Longitude 74°37'8.36"W by the river bank of Rio Baez, Guantanamo. *Encyclia hamiltonii* and *E. moebusii* are sympatric in this area, but they have different growing habits. *Encyclia hamiltonii* is an epiphyte while *E. moebusii* is a lithophyte. *Encyclia xosmentii* grows as an epiphyte similar to *Encyclia hamiltonii*, plants of the natural hybrid have not been found growing lithophytically.

LOCALITY OF ENCYCLIA XOSMENTII AT RIO BAEZ, GUANTANAMO, CUBA



Type illustration of *Encyclia xosmentii* Sauleda and Esperon.

Encyclia xosmentii in situ at the riverbank of the Rio Baez, Guantanamo.

Type flower of *Encyclia xosmentii* Sauleda and Esperon.

Encyclia xosmentii Sauleda and Esperon from the riverbank of Rio Baez, Guantanamo.

Encyclia xosmentii Sauleda and Esperon from the riverbank of Rio Baez, Guantanamo.

Encyclia moebusii H. Ditr., in situ growing lithophytically at the riverbank of the Rio Baez, Guantanamo.

Note: Photograph of plants in situ by Noel Coutin Lobaina.