



SHORT COMMUNICATION

Expanding the distribution of *Encyclia alboxanthina* Fowlie (Orchidaceae, Laeliinae)

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ABSTRACT: (Expanding the distribution of *Encyclia alboxanthina* Fowlie (Orchidaceae, Laeliinae)). Based on specimens collected in Parque Nacional da Serra de Itabaiana, this paper reports *Encyclia alboxanthina* from Sergipe and establishes a new distribution limit for this taxon, which was thought to be an endemic species from the Chapada Diamantina in Bahia.

Key words: biogeography, flora of Sergipe, Laeliinae, new record, Parque Nacional da Serra de Itabaiana.

RESUMO: (Ampliação da distribuição geográfica de *Encyclia alboxanthina* Fowlie). A partir de espécimes coletados no Parque Nacional da Serra de Itabaiana, reporta-se para Sergipe o registro de *Encyclia alboxanthina* e se estabelece um novo limite na distribuição da espécie, até então, considerada endêmica da Chapada Diamantina, na Bahia.

Palavras-chave: biogeografia, flora de Sergipe, novo registro, Parque Nacional da Serra de Itabaiana.

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Encyclia* comprises approximately 150 species that are distributed from the southern United States of America, and islands of the Caribbean, to Argentina (Withner 2000). According Barros *et al.* (2010), there are 56 species of *Encyclia* in Brazil. Of these species, 42 are endemic, including *Encyclia alboxanthina* Fowlie.

Encyclia alboxanthina was described in 1990 from material that was collected in Serra do Sincorá, in the municipality of Mucugê, Bahia (Fowlie 1990). Until now, this species was considered to be endemic to the Chapada Diamantina in Bahia (Toscano-de-Brito & Cribb 2005, Azevedo & van den Berg 2007), where it occurs in areas of *Cerrado* and *Caatinga* in the municipalities of Abaíra, Andaraí, Barra da Estiva, Campo Formoso, Ibicoara, Jacobina, Lençóis Morro do Chapéu, Mucugê, Palmeiras, Rio de Contas, Ruy Barbosa and Seabra.

This paper reports the occurrence of *E. alboxanthina*, which was recently collected in Parque Nacional da Serra de Itabaiana, from the municipality of Areia Branca, in the state of Sergipe. This is 646 km from the type locality, extending the geographic distribution of this species, and is a new record for the state of Sergipe.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Collections from Parque Nacional da Serra de Itabaiana (PNSI) were made monthly, from December 2008 to May 2011, as part of a monocot survey of the Serra de Itabaiana. This park occurs in the municipali-

ties of Areia Branca, Itabaiana, Laranjeiras, Itaporanga D'Ajuda and Campo do Brito, comprises 7966 ha, and contains three mountain ranges: the Cajueiro, Comprida and Itabaiana mountains, of which the Itabaiana mountains cover the largest area (Carvalho & Vilar 2005).

According to Dantas & Ribeiro (2010), the vegetation of PNSI can be grouped into three formation types: forests (primary and secondary); natural, open formations (white sands and grassy fields that are wet or dry); and disturbed, open formations (exposed soils, crops and livestock).

The specimens collected were identified by consulting the literature and specialists, and were deposited in the herbarium of the Universidade Federal de Sergipe (ASE).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The specimens were found only in two formations of the Serra de Itabaiana: grassy fields and areas with white sand. The grassy fields are located at higher elevations (about 600 m) and include rocky outcrops that are typical of *campos rupestres* in other areas of northeastern and southeastern Brazil. All specimens of *Encyclia alboxanthina* collected in this formation were rupicolous and occurred in a habitat similar to specimens from the Chapada Diamantina.

The white sand formations have sedimentary, yellowish white, sandy soils with an herbaceous-shrub to shrubs-tree vegetation, and occur at lower elevations than the grassy fields. All of the specimens found in this formation were terrestrial, which is different from the typical rupicolous habit attributed to this species. Most

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likely, these plants are occasionally terrestrial when the right environmental factors are present, for example, the porous substrate and high humidity found in the white sand formations (Locatelli 2010 reports a similar situation).

The flowering period of this species in Sergipe coincides with the period cited by Azevedo & van den Berg (2007) and Toscano-de-Brito & Cribb (2005).

The data presented in this work reports the first record of *E. alboxanthina* for the state of Sergipe and also extends the geographic distribution of this species by approximately 600 km (Fig. 1).

Encyclia alboxanthina Fowlie, Orchid Digest 54: 27. 1990. (Fig. 2).

Herb rupicolous or terrestrial, about 40 to 100 cm tall, including the inflorescence. Pseudobulbs 5.2–7.6 × 2–3.8 cm, ovoid, clustered. Leaves 18–28 × 2.2–3 cm, sessile, oblong or oblong-lanceolate. Inflorescences about 55 cm tall, in terminal panicles. Flowers resupinate, 3.2–4 cm diameter, fragrant. Sepals 20–25 × 7.4–9.5 mm, the dorsal sepal slightly obovate, the lateral lanceolate, yellowish-green, sometimes stained brown. Petals 20–23 × 7.8–10 mm, spatulate, the same color as the sepals. Lip trilobed, lateral lobes 8.6–11 × 4.8–5.8 mm, white; median lobe 14–17.8 × 10–12 mm, orbicular, white with small reddish spots; column 11–12 × 5–5.5 mm, yellow green.

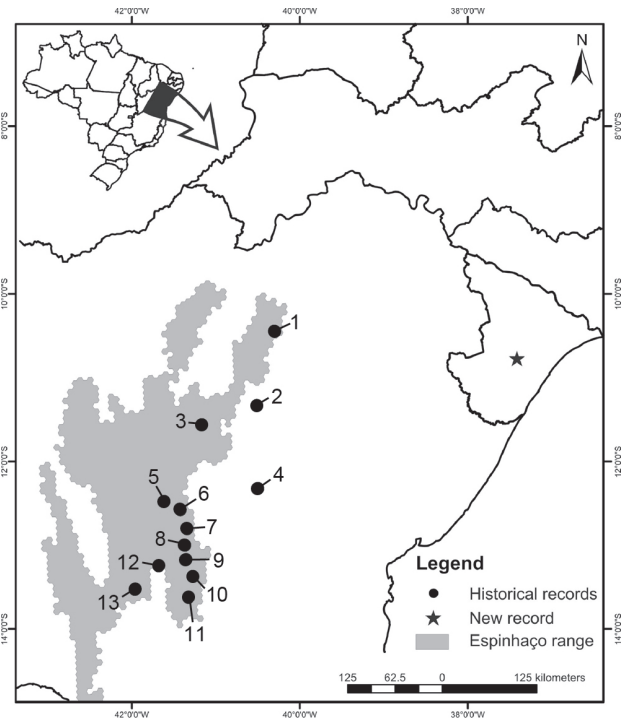


Figure 1. Distribution of *Encyclia alboxanthina* Fowlie. Historical records (1, Campo Formoso; 2, Jacobina; 3, Morro do Chapéu; 4, Ruy Barbosa; 5, Seabra; 6, Palmeiras; 7, Lençóis; 8, Andaraí; 9, Mucugê; 10, Ibicoara; 11, Barra da Estiva; 12, Abaíra; 13, Rio de Contas) and new record (star, Parque Nacional da Serra de Itabaiana).



Figure 2. *Encyclia alboxanthina* Fowlie. **A.** Habitat. **B.** Flower detail. Scales: 5 cm. Photos: Melo, D.S. (A) and Santos, L.A.S. (B).

In PNSI, *Encyclia alboxanthina* occurs with *Encyclia oncidoides* Lindl. but *E. alboxanthina* differs by its smaller and ovoid pseudobulbs, lip with small spots on the median lobe, and yellow-green column. In addition, *E. oncidoides* has larger and pyriform pseudobulbs, a lip with lobes conspicuously marked with violet stripes, and a white column with violet stripes.

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