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Encyclia rufa (Lindley) Britton & Millspaugh in Cuba

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ABSTRACT: This paper addresses several issues concerning *Encyclia rufa* (Lindley) Britton & Millspaugh. The type locality of *E. rufa* is discussed. The distribution of this species is reviewed and its presence in Cuba is verified. The pollinator of *E. rufa* in the Bahama Islands is reported.

Encyclia rufa (Lindl.) Britton & Millspaugh is one of the most common orchids in the Bahama Archipelago. It is found from the northern most islands, all through the Bahama Islands down to the Turks and Caicos Islands. It occurs in almost every habitat from Beach and Dune to Inland High Coppice. In Coastal Rock Scrub it grows in full sun and in Inland High Coppice it grows in deep shade.

In the protolog of *Epidendrum rufum*, Lindley in 1847 quotes a memorandum from Mr. Booth, gardener to Sir Charles Lemon, that fully explains its history. "This plant was imported from Rio in 1842 by Lieut. Turner, of H. M. Packet 'Ranger', and presented to Sir Charles Lemon, Bart., M. P., with whom it flowered at Carclew, in May, 1844." Although Booth only states Rio, we know Booth meant Rio de Janeiro, Brazil because in several other species, that Lindley describes, Booth states that plants presented to Sir Charles were received from Lieut. Turner from Rio de Janiro. The type specimen at K-L is only labeled "Rio Booth".

Nir (2000) reports Encyclia rufa (Lindl.) Britton & Millsp. for the Bahama Islands and cites the type as "Bahamas, Abaco, Skinner (K)". The specimen that Nir refers to could not be located at Kew (Borosova, personal communication) and Nir does not indicate that he has seen the specimen.

Several authors have questioned the use of the name *E. rufa* for the population of plants in the Bahama Islands because of the location cited for the type. Grisebach (1864) lists in his flora *Epidendrum rufum* Lindl. with the habitat, Bahamas. However, in the same publication names the population of *E. rufa* in the Bahama Islands, *Epidendrum bahamense* Grisebach. Cogniaux (1909) lists *E. rufum* for Abaco and questions it occurring in Rio de Janeiro. Britton & Millspaugh (1920) state that *E. rufa* is "Not known to us from the archipelago" and "Cogniaux's reference to this species as recorded by Britton from Abaco is an error." Britton & Millsp. instead use the name *Encyclia*

bahamensis (Griseb.) Britton & Millsp. for the Bahamian population of *E. rufa*. Sauleda and Adams (1983) question the veracity of the Brazilian locality cited for the holotype of this species, since no other specimens of *E. rufa* have ever been collected in Brazil. We also question the Brazilian locality cited for the holotype for the same reason. However, we feel that the species in the Bahama Islands matches the type of *Epidendrum rufum* Lindl. *Encyclia bahamensis* is a synonym of *E. rufa.*

Britton and Millspaugh (1920) cite a specimen From Hispaniola collected at Bayeux, Haiti, by George V. Nash (No. 300), which was determined as *Epidendrum rufum* Lindl. By R. A. Rolfe at Kew.

In addition, *E. rufa* was collected in Florida by J. K. Small in a hammock north of Eau Galle, Brevard County, Florida and the specimen is extant in NY (*Small, Mosier and Matthaus, 12938*, 24 May 1926). This is the only plant that has been found in Florida.

The pollinator of *E. rufa* in the Bahama Islands is *Syntomeida epilais* Walker (observed by the junior author). The moth is common in Florida and throughout the Caribbean. This would indicate that if *E. rufa* is extinct in Florida it was not due to the lack of a pollinator.

The genus *Encyclia* appears to have three centers of distribution. One is in Central America through North Western South America, the second is in Brazil and the third is in Cuba. The type specimen could have originated either in Cuba, Haiti, Florida or the Bahama Islands. With the information currently available it is impossible to determine where *E. rufa* was sent to Rio de Janiro from originally.

The only specimen extant of *E. rufa* that we have been able to find from Cuba is a specimen (no. 77048) in the Orchid Herbarium of Oak Ames. The specimen was collected at Nuevitas, Camaguey Prov., Cuba, by T. F. Camacho in May 1952. The identity of the specimen was determined by C. Schweinfurth on September 1955.

Since the collection of the Camacho specimen, *E. rufa* has only been observed one other time in Cuba. The senior author observed *E. rufa* growing on the ground in a dry deciduous forest in the Peninsula Nuevas Grandes, Camaguey, Cuba in 1987.

Encyclia rufa could have had a wider distribution in the past. The isolated reports from Cuba, Hispaniola and Florida may represent relic populations. However, we expect new reports of this species from Camaguey, Cuba once a floristic inventory of the genus *Encyclia* is completed in that area.

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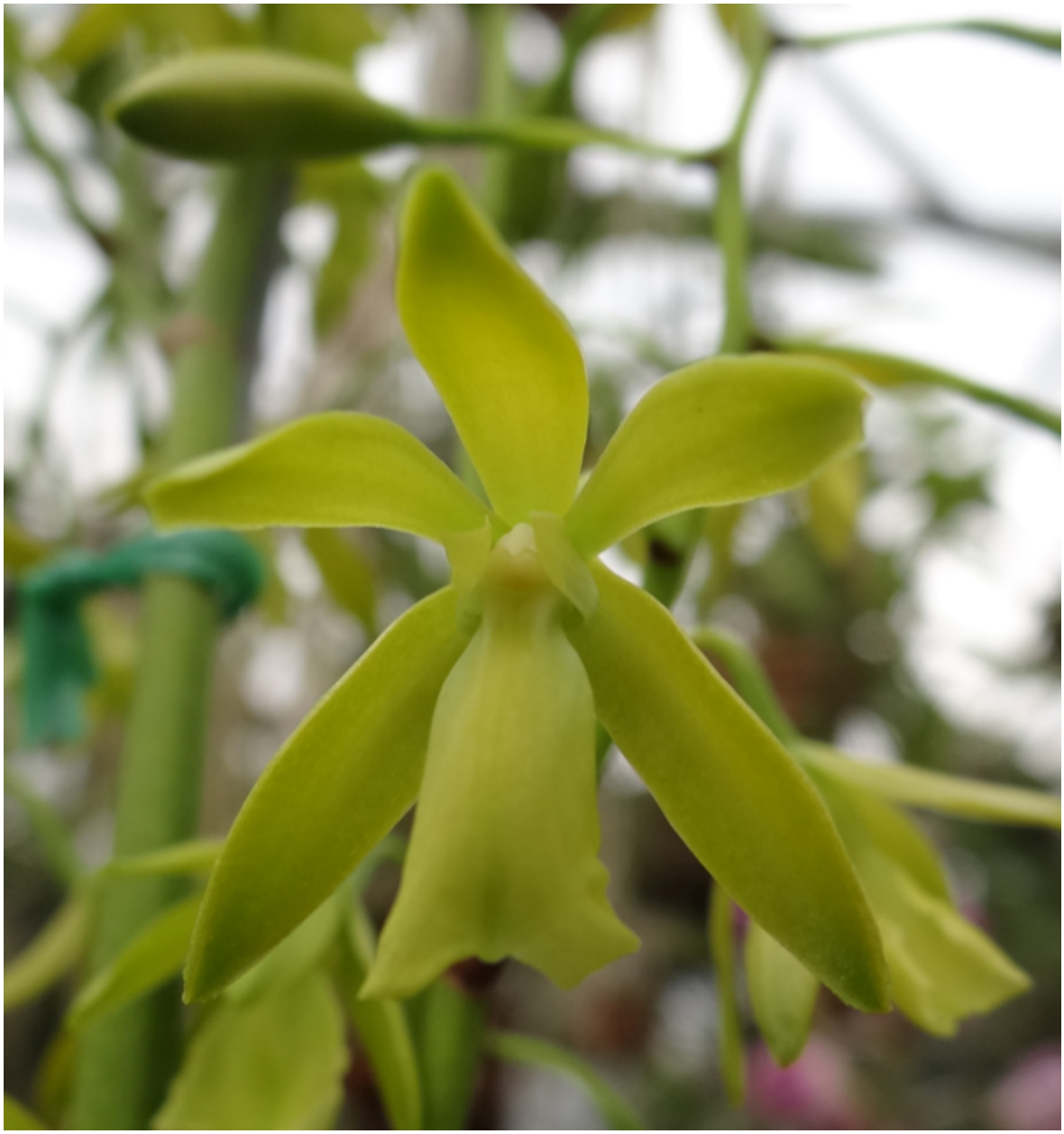
Encyclia rufa on *Cocothrynax*, Abaco, Bahama Islands.



Encyclia rufa green form. Andros, Bahama Islands.

Encyclia rufa bronze form from selfing of a green form.

Syntomeida epilais pollinator of *Encyclia rufa.*