

DR. EIZI MATUDA
MEXICAN AROID SPECIALIST
1894 - 1978

The world of aroid lovers mourns the death of Dr. Eizi Matuda, Senior Curator of the Instituto de Biología at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in Mexico City. Dr. Matuda, a long time expert in Araceae died February 12, in Peru, while on a field trip following the Second Latin American Botanical Congress in Rio de Janeiro. He was born in Nagasaki, Japan, on April 20, 1894, but became a naturalized Mexican citizen in 1928. He received his botanical training at the Taihoku Imperial University in Taiwan (now the National Taiwan University) during the years 1911-1916 under the direction of Dr. B. Hayata and his associates. From 1917 to 1921 he held the position of Investigator in the department of botany of the National Institute of Natural Sciences, Taihoku, Taiwan. He emigrated to Mexico in 1922, where he founded the Matuda Herbarium in the state of Chiapas (now a part of the National Herbarium at U.N.A.M. in Mexico City) and conducted field work and research on systematic botany in Chiapas until 1951.

Beginning in 1950 until his death he taught and continued his systematics research in the botany department at U.N.A.M. and was awarded a doctorate in sciences from the University of Tokyo in 1962 for his thesis "Estudios taxonomicos y ecologicos del sureste de Chiapas, Mexico."

Dr. Matuda's interest in the Araceae began in Chiapas in the 1940's and he began publishing new species of Araceae in 1949. In his numerous papers on the Araceae, Dr. Matuda described more than 50 species of Araceae, including 35 species of *Anthurium*, 8 species of *Philodendron*, 4 species of *Monstera*, 2 species of *Syngonium*, and one species each of *Dracontium* and *Xanthosoma*. His most useful paper, entitled "Las Araceas Mexicanas" (Annales Inst. Biol. Mex. 25:97-218. 1954) provides a key to all species of Araceae known in Mexico up to 1954. Dr. Matuda made numerous general collections in Chiapas, and has contributed greatly to the knowledge of the flora of southern Mexico. He was a prolific collector of Araceae. His specimens are deposited chiefly at the National Herbarium at Mexico City, but many duplicates are also available elsewhere, especially at the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and at the Field Museum in Chicago. Although his collecting was concentrated principally in Chiapas, Matuda also described many collections made by Thomas MacDougal from Oaxaca. His contribution to the understanding of the Araceae of Mexico has been immense and the aroid world is sad to hear of his death.

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