

A little more information on the endangered species that we brought to class last week.

Brighamia - <http://florawww.eeb.uconn.edu/200500062.html>

Common name: Alula, Haha

This caudiciform plant is endangered in its native Hawaii. Only 20 individuals in 4 native populations are known to exist. It grows on cliffs and its pollinator is believed to be extinct.

A caudiciform is a plant with a swollen, water-storing stem (caudex). These plants produce green leaves and shoots during periods that are favorable for growth, and live off water and food stored in the caudex during long dry spells.

Wollemi Pine - <http://florawww.eeb.uconn.edu/200600137.html> - this one kind of cool as they are propagating it to raise conservation funds, and the exact location of the native population is not being disclosed. The link to the official Wollemi site has some interesting background info: <http://www.wollemipine.com/index.php>

Previously known only from the Mesozoic fossil record, the Wollemi Pine was rediscovered growing in a remote rainforest gorge in the Blue Mountains approximately 200km west of Sydney, Australia in 1994 by NSW park officer David Noble. Current wild population numbers fewer than 100 specimens with the largest being approximately 40m tall. Listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN Red List.

Erubia - <http://florawww.eeb.uconn.edu/200300321.html> - not sure if this is subject to any captive breeding, other than a few being grown for research.

Only 100 to 150 plants still exist on a single, 2-acre site in the Sierra de Cayey in central Puerto Rico. This site, known as the Tetas de Cayey, is privately owned. Historically, the species may have been scattered throughout the southeastern section of the central mountains

Dendroseris - <http://florawww.eeb.uconn.edu/199100125.html> - at one time, early 1980's, there were more living specimens in our greenhouse than in the wild.

Common name: Cabbage Tree

Endemic to the Juan Fernandez Islands (Chile). This species is of special interest because it was as near extinction as one can get - down to about three individuals in nature in the early 1980's. It is now the street 'tree' in San Juan Bautista, the only town on the islands. It is also now grown in a few botanical gardens around the world. It produces very large heads of orange flowers that are a) hummingbird pollinated, and very important sources of nectar for them where they grow, and b) is very likely self compatible, and perhaps even self pollinated, so seed set is pretty good. They are sometimes referred to as 'cabbage trees' because of the concentration of the very large and unusual leaves at the tips of the branches.

In all there are 27 specimens in the UConn greenhouse collection that are currently considered 'endangered'.