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Announcement

Projeto Nordeste is now known as **Plantas do Nordeste** (Plants of the Northeast). This name change is to avoid confusion with another project currently running in Brazil of the same name. **Plantas do Nordeste** will continue to be referred to as **PNE**.

What is PNE?

Plantas do Nordeste (PNE) is a collaborative research programme between the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and a number of academic, governmental and non-governmental institutes in Northeast Brazil. PNE is working towards the preservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of native plant resources for the benefit of local people in Northeast Brazil.

PNE consists of three interlinked Subprogrammes: the Biodiversity,

the Economic Botany and the Plant Information Subprogrammes. The Biodiversity and Economic Botany Subprogrammes undertake research on the plants of Northeast Brazil, whilst the Plant Information Subprogramme collects and disseminates the resulting information so that it may be used effectively by those aiming to improve the region's environment.

PNE raises funds independently to support its activities. ✨

Karen and Ray in Brazil

Karen Pipe-Wolferstan, the new UK-based manager for PNE, made her first visit to Brazil during June and July. The purpose of her visit was to meet PNE participants and collaborators, and to familiarize herself with the region. Karen was accompanied by Dr. Ray Harley, and together they covered six states and visited nearly twenty institutions.

Despite an extremely busy schedule, they still found time to dance forró and enjoy the June Festivals!

Karen and Ray wish to thank all PNE participants and collaborators for their welcome, hospitality and helpfulness. The visit was important for the further strengthening of PNE. ✨



Back in the UK, Karen Pipe-Wolferstan works on restructuring the budgets with the PNE assistant Vanessa Sequeira.



PhD Studentships at Kew

Two PhD Studentships at Kew (as yet unfunded) are currently available which may be of interest to Brazilian plant taxonomists and phytochemists. Titles follow below. For information please direct enquiries to **Dr. Brian Schrire, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AE, UK.**

- ◆ *Taxonomy and Evolutionary relationships of the genus *Hypenia*: *Hyptidinae* (*Labiatae*).*
- ◆ *Biological and taxonomic significance of terpenoids and flavonoids in *Ocimeae* (*Labiatae*).*



Next PNE International Committee meeting

The next PNE International Committee meeting will be held in **Teresina (Piauí)** on **September 22nd**, preceeding the Northeastern Botanical Congress. A PNE Biodiversity workshop will be held on September 20-21.



Biodiversity and the Environment Meeting

On the 6th and 7th of May, the meeting "Biodiversity and Environment - Brazilian Themes for the Future", organized by Dr. Simon Mayo, Dr. Daniela Zappi (Kew) and Dr. John Marsden (Linnean Society) was held at the Royal Geographical Society, in London. The purpose of the meeting was to show the post-graduate research carried out by Brazilian botany, ecology and biology students in Britain. Their work was presented as oral papers and posters. The meeting ended with a round-table discussion on topics concerning the collaboration between Brazil and the UK in biodiversity research.

A number of distinguished guests were present at the conference, including Prof. José Israel Vargas (Brazilian Minister for Science and Technology), His Excellency Paulo Tarso Flecha de Lima (Brazilian Ambassador to the UK), Prof. Nanuza Menezes, Prof. José Márcio Ayres, Prof. Warwick Estevam Kerr, Dr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias (IBAMA), Prof. Ghilleen Prance, and Prof. William Hamilton, amongst others. ✂

PNE exhibit at the Chelsea Flower Show

The new PNE exhibit was displayed for the whole week of the Chelsea Flower Show as part of the Friends of Kew stand. The Chelsea Flower Show, organised by the Royal Horticultural Society, is the most important event of the horticultural world in the UK, dominated by beautiful flower and garden displays. The Chelsea Flower Show is frequented by hundreds of thousands of people every year, and thus was a good opportunity to provide information on PNE to the general public.

The PNE exhibit consists of panels of short explanatory text and colourful photographs which are combined to give an attractive view of PNE's work. ✂

Proposal for Drought Polygon

A large funding proposal for a component of the Biodiversity Subprogramme is currently being compiled called "*The Biodiversity of the Drought Polygon of Northeast Brazil*", which aims to survey the plants and vegetation of the area of Northeast Brazil most prone to drought and degradation. Funding will be sought for five projects falling within three focus areas of *Caatinga*, *Upland Forests* and *Chapada Diamantina (Bahia)*, totalling over three quarters of a million pounds. Details of the five projects follow below:

Caatinga

- ◆ *Woody plants of the caatinga of Pernambuco*. Coord.: Dr. Maria J. Nogueira Rodal, Federal Rural University of Pernambuco (UFRPE).
- ◆ *The semi-arid flora of the northern states of North-east Brazil*. Coord.: Dr. M. Angélica Figueiredo, Federal University of Ceará (UFCE).

Upland Forests

- ◆ *Floristic composition and diversity of the Brejos of Pernambuco*. Coord.: Dr. Margareth F. de Sales, Federal Rural University of Pernambuco (UFRPE).
- ◆ *Survey of the Brejo Forests of Paraíba*. Coord.: M. Regina V. Barbosa, Federal University of Paraíba - João Pessoa (UFPB).

Chapada Diamantina

- ◆ *Floristic diversity and plant distribution in the central Bahian mountains*. Coordinator: To be selected. ✂

The PNE team based at Kew would like to extend our sincere thanks to Mrs. Thelma Cherry for her invaluable help to PNE. Thelma, originally from Rio de Janeiro and now living in London, works as a PNE volunteer every Wednesday. Cheers Thelma!

✂ HRH The Prince of Wales paid a visit to Kew Gardens on Tuesday, 20th of July. Prince Charles, who is the patron of the Friends of Kew, visited the Jodrell and also the Economic Botany section in the Banks Building. The Prince expressed great interest in Ms. Pipe-Wolferstan's talk on PNE, and on his departure, he wished us much luck!

✂ The Director of Kew Gardens is due to take a group from the Friends of Kew to Brazil in August.

The group will stop in Recife for a day, where they will be taken to visit the UFRPE and remnants of native forest outside the city.

✂ On the 5th of July, HRH The Princess Royal of Thailand, Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn visited Kew Gardens. Dr. Simon Mayo gave HRH Princess Maha Sirindhorn a presentation on PNE, as her particular interest was to learn about Kew projects which are aimed at low income communities in the tropics.

✂ Dr. Bob Allkin is in Northeast Brazil until mid-August to help the coordinators of the four economic botany projects currently in progress set up the databases.