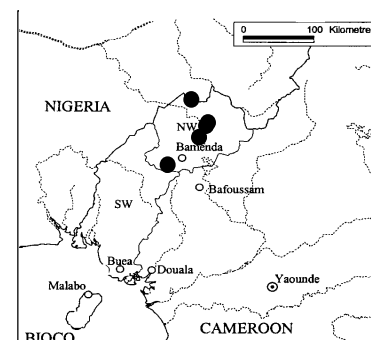
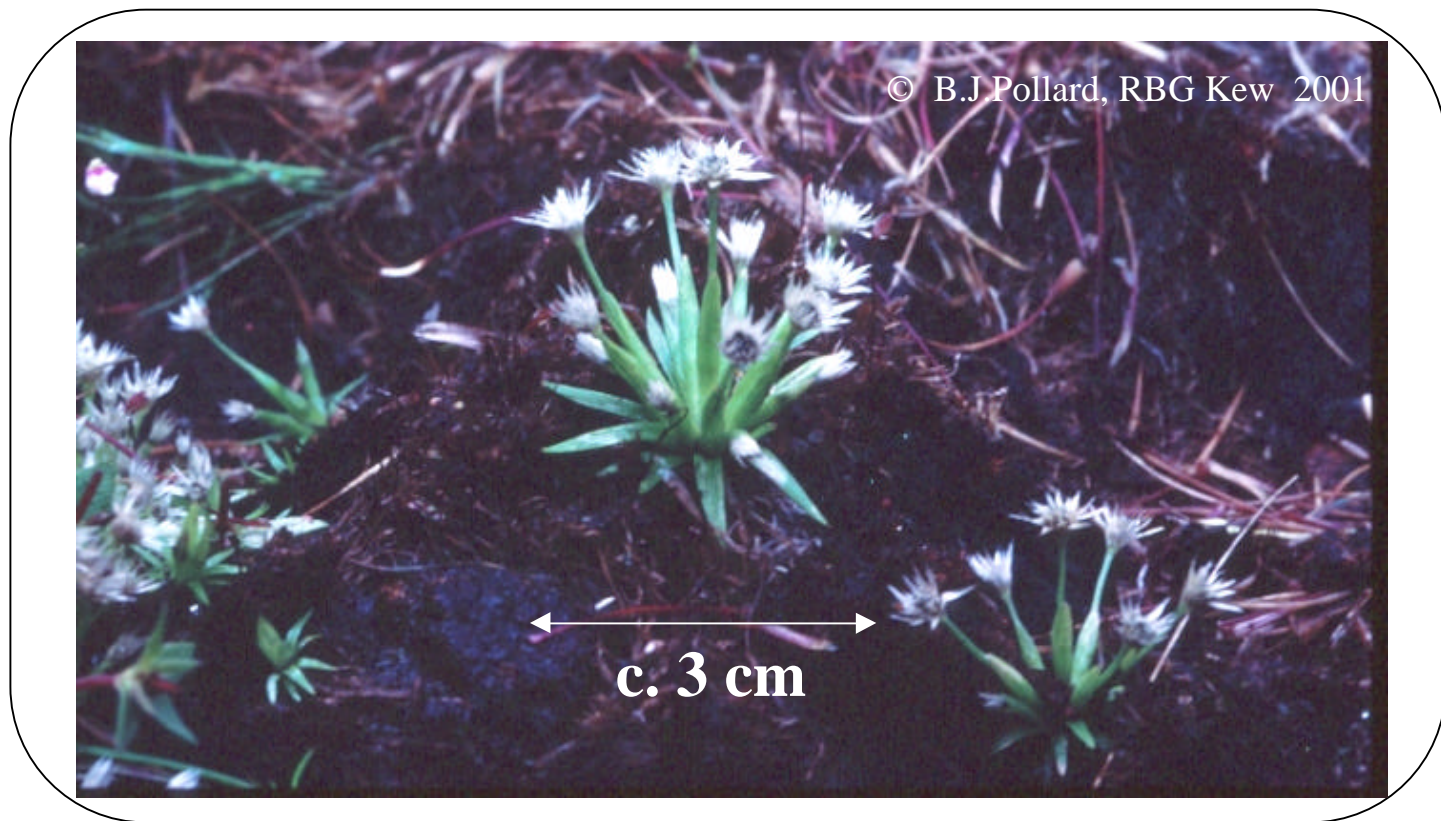


# Threatened plants of western Cameroon

## *Eriocaulon asteroides* S.M.Phillips\* (*Eriocaulaceae*)

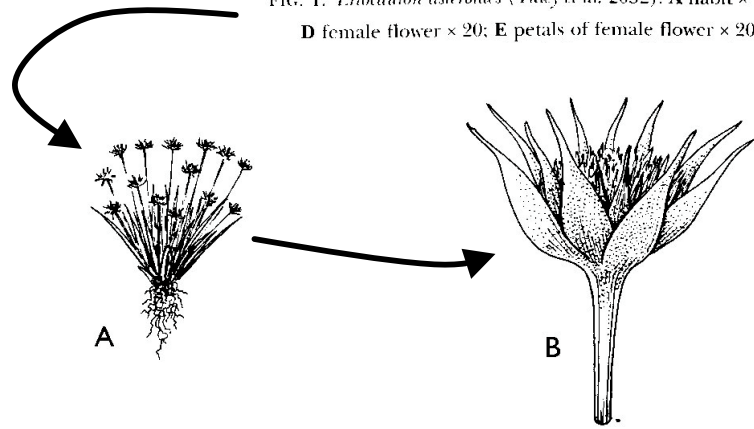
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Distribution of *Eriocaulon asteroides*

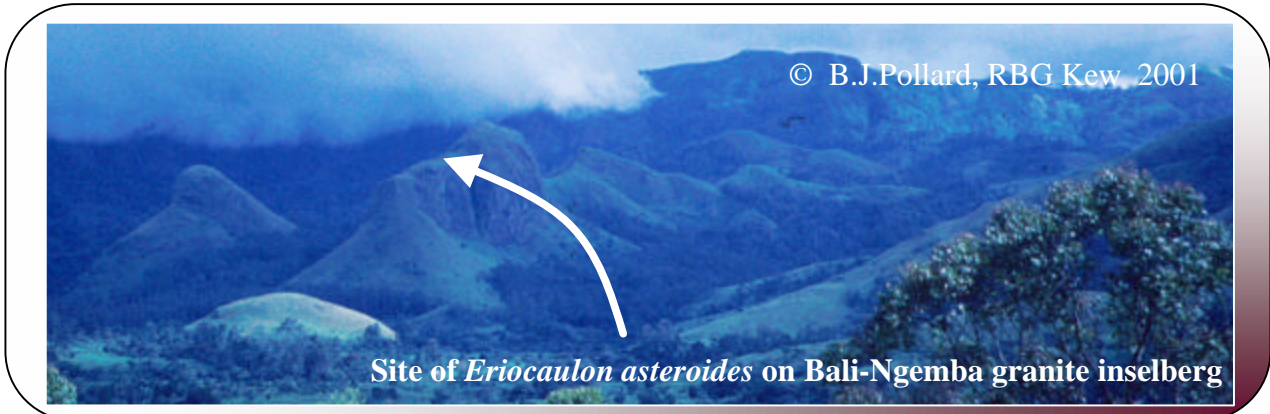
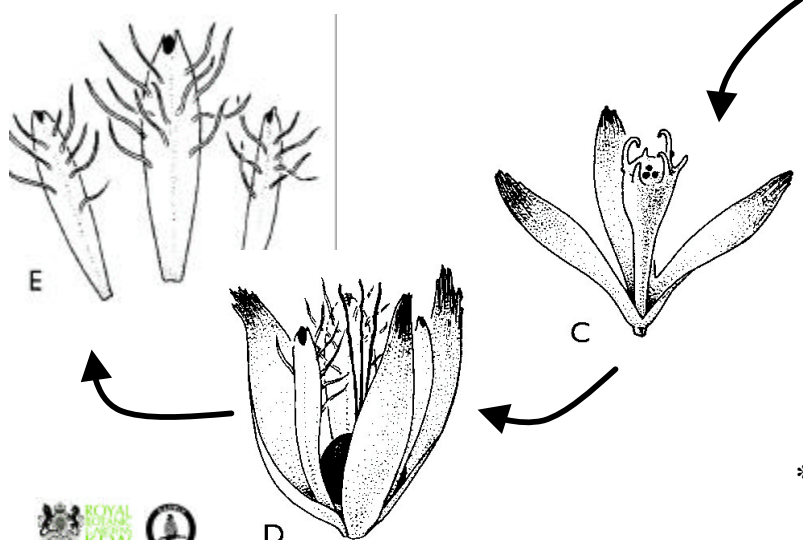
- The seven known sites**
- Nigeria**
  - Cross River state - Chappal Wadi
  - Cameroon**
  - (Bamenda Highlands)
  - Kumbo-Elak road
  - Laikom spur of Ijim Ridge
  - Ijim ridge near Ardo's compound
  - Laikom to Fundong
  - Km 21, Bamenda-Jakiri road
  - Bali-Ngemba Forest Reserve

FIG. 1. *Eriocaulon asteroides* (Tuley et al. 2052). A habit  $\times \frac{2}{3}$ ; B capitulum  $\times 8$ ; C male flowers (anthers shed)  $\times 20$ ; D female flower  $\times 20$ ; E petals of female flower  $\times 20$ .



This diminutive annual was first collected in 1969 by Tuley on the Nigeria / Cameroon border, and was not seen again until discovered on Mt Oku in 1996 by Cameroonian botanist Dr Zapfack Louis. Another large population was found at the Ijim Ridge in 1998. *Eriocaulon asteroides* is now known from seven sites, of which six lie between 1600 and 2500m altitude in the Bamenda Highlands region.

*Eriocaulon asteroides* is known to occur primarily in 'basalt pavement', i. e. thin, peaty, seasonally waterlogged soil, in the cracks between blocks of basalt. In 2000, botanists on an Earthwatch expedition discovered another large colony of perhaps 200 individual plants in the Bali-Ngemba Forest Reserve, SW from Bamenda. These were growing on a gently sloping rockface of a granite inselberg, at about 1600 m altitude. Possible threats to this species include trampling by cattle on the Ijim Ridge, and dry season fires. A management plan for this species would be useful, but we require more information on the effects of threats to the 7 sites.



\* Phillips, S. M. (1998). Two new species of *Eriocaulon* from West Africa. Kew Bull. 53: 943 – 948.