

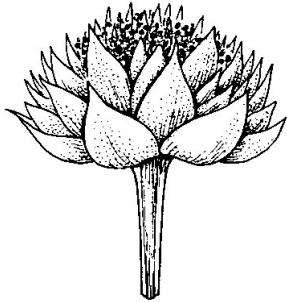
Threatened plants of western Cameroon

Eriocaulon parvulum S.M.Phillips* (Eriocaulaceae)

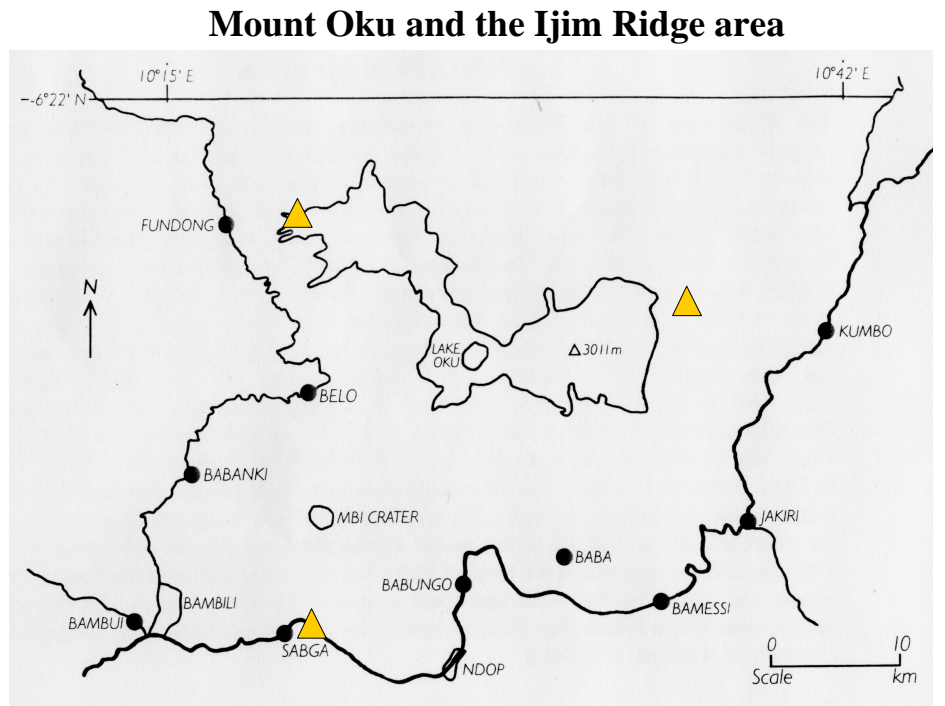
HERBIER
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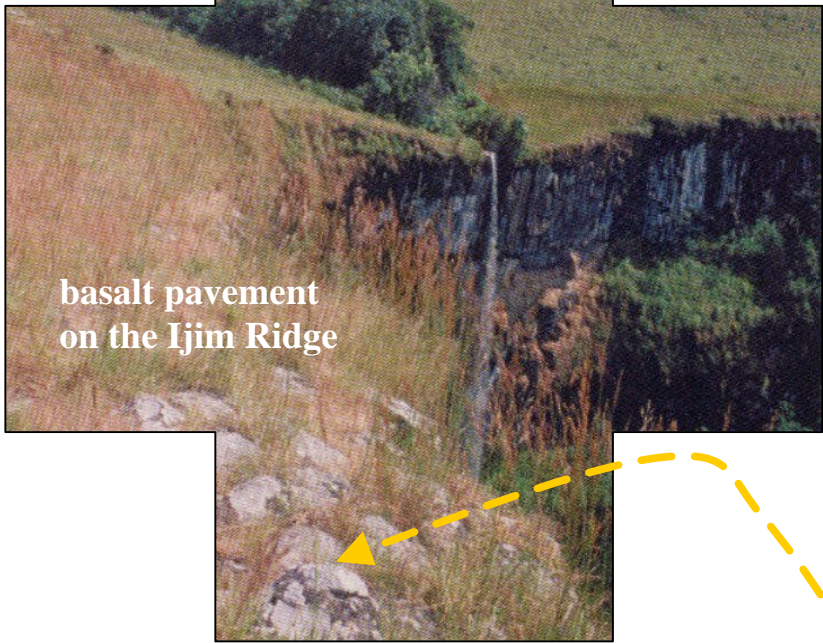
habit $\times \frac{2}{3}$:



capitulum $\times 8$:

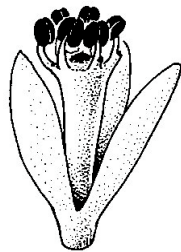


▲ approximate localities for *Eriocaulon parvulum*

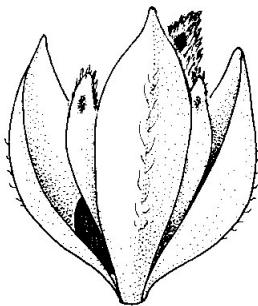


basalt pavement
on the Ijim Ridge

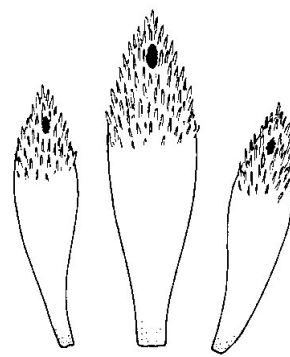
© Martin Cheek
RBG Kew 1998



male flowers $\times 20$:



female flower $\times 20$:



petals of female flower $\times 20$.



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Eriocaulon parvulum $\times 2$

Eriocaulon parvulum S. M. Phillips is a tiny annual herb endemic to Mount Oku and the Ijim ridge area. Described in 1998 as a species new to science, it is only known from three localities, where it is always found growing with its relative, *Eriocaulon asteroides*, in thin peaty soil on **basalt pavement**

Botanists from the National Herbarium of Cameroon, Yaoundé and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England have been conducting plant surveys and inventories on Mount Oku and the Ijim Ridge since 1996. Many species found in this time are extremely uncommon and in need of protection.

Eriocaulon parvulum is one of these species. **Have you seen this plant?** If so, please contact Romanus at the Kilum-Ijim Forest Project, Fundong.

Threats to this species are unknown, however trampling by cattle may cause damage to these small plants by dislodging from the basalt substrate the thin layer of peaty soil in which they grow. Conversely, lack of grazing or of intermittent grassland fires might permit build up of an enough soil on the pavement to allow other vegetation to encroach and perhaps compete with the *Eriocaulon*. A survey of basalt pavement in the Kilum-Ijim area would be most welcome. An estimate of the area of occupation and total number of plants should be made to allow more complete mapping of the species and an understanding of their population size. A species survival management plan can then be drawn up to try and protect this threatened herb.