

SOUTH-EAST BRAZILIAN WILD CAPSICUM

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Claudio Dal Zovo (Associazione PepperFriends)

All photos by Claudio Dal Zovo.

More info: http://www.pepperfriends.com/south-east_brazilian_wild_capsicum <http://www.pepperfriends.org/cd>

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General information

A large number of little-known species of wild *Capsicum* grow in South-East Brazil.

The typical habitat of the endemic black-seeded South-Eastern species is the "Mata Atlantica", at altitudes between 500 and 2000 m asl, in the transition zones between light and shadow (edges of roads and trails or limits of clearings).

Plants have shrub or small tree habit with long branches and vigorous suckers and sprouts.

Some species are almost glabrous, other very pubescent, covered with mono-pluricellular trichomes.

Flowers in most species are multiple per node, erect and geniculate at anthesis; the corolla is stellate, white with greenish/yellowish spots in the throat and purplish red spots in the petals lobes.

Fruits are small and roundish, as large as a pea, pendulous, green when immature, greenish yellow, almost translucent and deciduous when ripe.

Fruits of all the species are pungent, quite hot when immature, less hot, sweet and juicy after ripening.

Seeds are black, very coriaceous.

Genoma is $26n$ ($2n=2x$) (not verified in *C.hunzikerianum*).

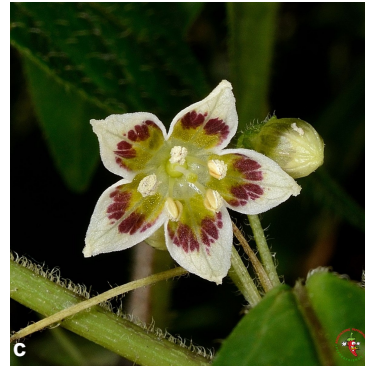
Flower position at anthesis, corolla colors, calyx teeth and pubescence may differs from species to species.



a Mata Atlantica.



b Typical plant.



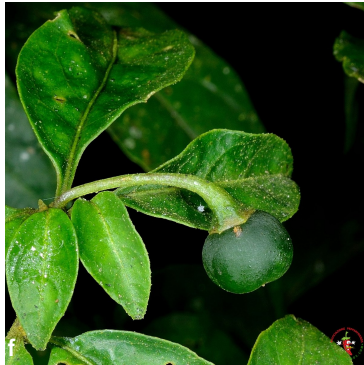
c Common flower colors.



d Common flower colors.



e Anthers and pistil.



f Immature fruit.



g Ripe fruit.



h Black seeds.



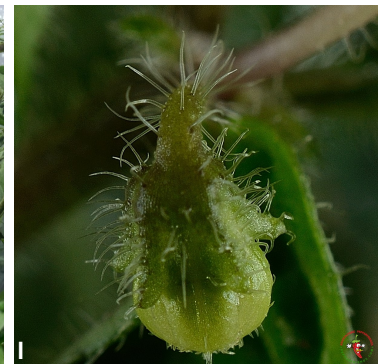
i Vigorous sprout.



j Young leaves.



k Lot of fruits.



l Trichomes.

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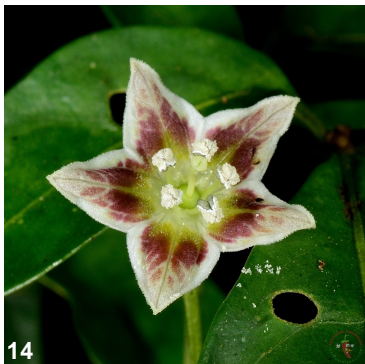
***Capsicum schottianum* Sendtn.** has corolla with greenish/yellowish spots, sometimes with more or less obvious purplish red spots. Calyx is toothless or with 5 tiny teeth. Plants are often very large (up to 3 m in height).



***Capsicum villosum* Sendtn.** is very pubescent; calyx has 5 long teeth; corolla has evident red spots in the lobes.



***Capsicum villosum* Sendtn. var *muticum* Sendtn.** is similar to *C. villosum*, but calyx is toothless and red spots in the corolla are very reduced or absent. Plants are larger than *C. villosum*.



***Capsicum buforum* Hunz.** includes many populations characterized by corolla with greenish yellowish spots in the throat and purplish red spots in the lobes, visible even in the back of petals; calyx has 5 evident teeth. Some experts think that these populations match *Capsicum mirabile* Sendtn.

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Photos by Claudio Dal Zovo, except flowers & fruits of *Capsicum dusenii* Bitter by Giuliano Lorenzini (Reserva Biológica do Alto da Serra da Paranapiacaba).
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***Capsicum buforum* Hunz.** Another variation, representative of populations known with the temporary name *Capsicum* sp.6, with more obvious red spots and shorter calyx teeth.



***Capsicum cornutum* (Hiern) Hunz.** is a heterogenous group which could include several species. This variation has calyx with 10 teeth (sometimes 5 to 9), corolla entirely white, leaves quite pubescent.



***Capsicum cornutum* (Hiern) Hunz.** This variation has golden spotted corolla and reduced pubescence.



***Capsicum dusenii* Bitter** is very pubescent; corolla is slightly campanulate with purplish spots; calyx has 10 long teeth of the same length. Fruits are quite pungent, although in literature they are reported as not pungent.

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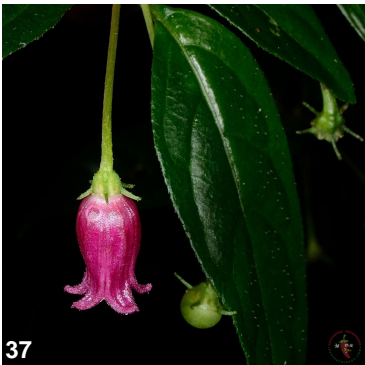
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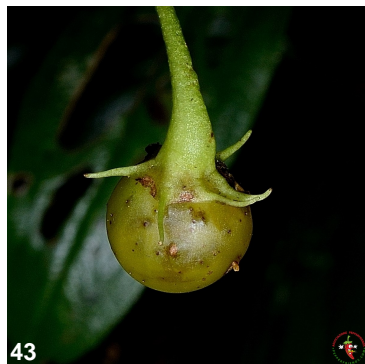
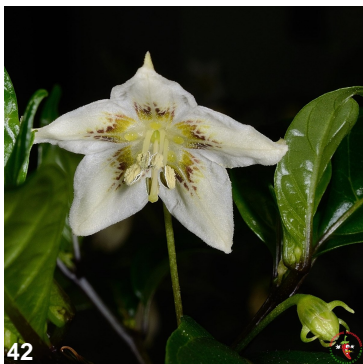
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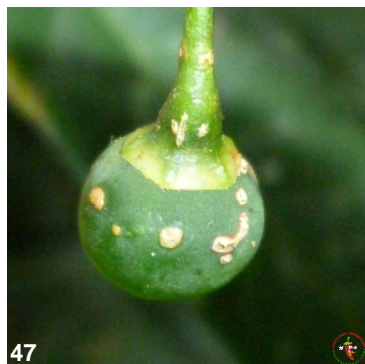
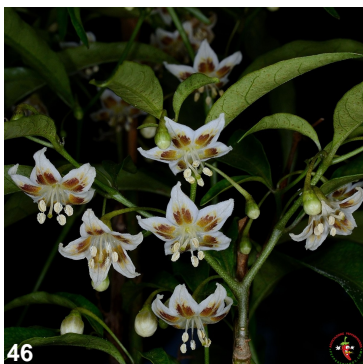
***Capsicum recurvatum* Witas.** has corolla with greenish/yellowish or pure green spots; calyx has 5-9 teeth curved backward, sometimes reduced or barely visible.



***Capsicum friburgense* Bianchetti & Barboza** is unique for its corolla campanulate urceolate, entirely lilac-fuchsia. Calyx has 5 teeth variable in size.



***Capsicum hunzikerianum* Barboza & Bianchetti** grows in marshy places. Plant is glabrous. Corolla is very large, with greenish-yellowish and purplish-brown spots; lobes tips are cucullate. Calyx has 5 evident teeth; fruit is quite large.



***Capsicum pereirae* Barboza & Bianchetti** grows in a very humid and dark habitat ("gruta humida"). Calyx is toothless. Flower is pendulous at anthesis; corolla has purplish-brown spots. Seeds are very large.

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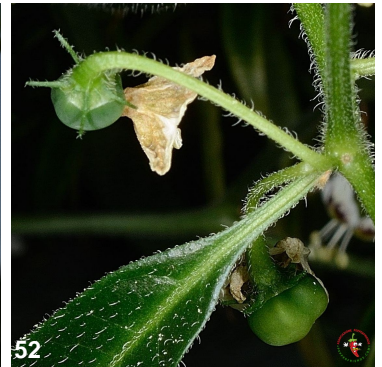
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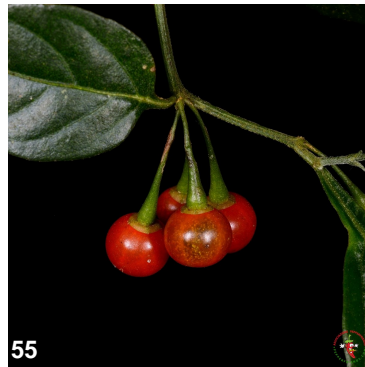
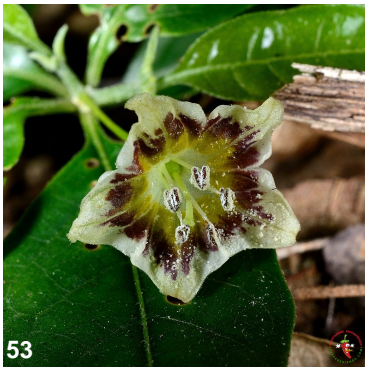
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Capsicum sp. growing near Caraça, known with the temporary name *Capsicum* sp.9; these population may be a species not yet classified. It has linear leaves, large flowers with purplish red spots, calix with 5 long teeth, fruits irregularly shaped with large seeds.



Capsicum flexuosum Sendtn. is a 24n species with red berries and black seeds. Corolla has usually golden spots, but a population near Monteiro Lobato has corolla with purplish red spots.



Capsicum praetermissum Heiser & Smith is a 24n species with straw seeds. Corolla is stellate or rotate, purple with two yellowish spots per lobe. Fruits are elongated, erect and deciduous, red when ripe.



Capsicum baccatum L. var. *baccatum* is a 24n species with straw seeds. Corolla is rotate, white with two yellow spots in the lobes. Fruits are elongated, erect and deciduous, red when ripe.