

Book Review

Líquenes do Porto Santo

By J Campinho. 2021. Published by Imprensa Academia, Porto Santo, Madeira, Portugal. Pp. 150. 150 × 200 × 10 mm. ISBN 978-989-9062-07-8. Soft cover. €16.65. [In Portuguese]

Porto Santo is a small island belonging to the Madeira Archipelago. It is a rather flat, dry island with a long beach, but it contains several volcanic cones and other rock outcrops, as well as some forest on the slopes. It is geologically old for a volcanic island (15 MA) with volcanic activity ceasing 8 MA ago. As a result of its age and isolation, many of the native plants and animals on the island are local endemics.

Lichens are abundant on the island, and dominant on the rocks and trees. Among them are several *Ramalina* species, and an *Anzia* species, that are endemic to the island. They have been registered on the IUCN Red List¹ but that does not guarantee they are protected. The *locus classicus* of the *Anzia* species was completely destroyed to broaden and straighten a walking trail, and for a time it was feared that the species was extinct, as it was known only from one (large) population. As Porto Santo is a common holiday destination for tourists and biologists alike, the lichens are relatively well known² and a recent joint trip of lichenologists³ found additional specimens of the *Anzia* species at several locations, although the number of thalli found was much smaller than that once present at the original site. Some of the endemic *Ramalina* species are even rarer, with only a few dozen thalli remaining¹.

The lichens of Porto Santo deserved more attention than the small number of scientific publications and Red Listings, and it is very fortunate that this book, aimed at the general public, has now been published. The book gives introductory information on the island and its lichens, treats some of the main genera and species, and mentions biomonitoring and Red Listing. It also suggests trails and discusses the impact of tourism and even lichens in art. However, the best feature is that half of the book consists of beautiful colour pictures of lichens and lichen

habitats of Porto Santo, often taking up whole pages or even two facing pages. Since the book is readily available to residents as well as visitors to the island, and because of the attention it attracted in the media, it is hoped that with future planning lichens will no longer be neglected.

The author should be congratulated on this publication, especially the beautiful pictures, and on his enthusiasm to write this book and introduce lichens to the general public. He himself became enchanted by the lichens of Porto Santo and has found the perfect way to express it. The book is a must for every lichenologist visiting the island, or any other Macaronesian island, and it is a gem for every lichen book collection. Let us hope that it indeed raises awareness that the Porto Santo lichens are special and worth protecting. Lichenologists are recommended to visit the island and enjoy the special lichens there, providing they do not collect the rare endemics since they are well researched now.

References

- ¹ Aptroot A and Thor G (2020) *Ramalina portosantana* (amended version of 2019 assessment). The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2020: e.T70380974A175190113. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2020-2.RLTS.T70380974A175190113.en>
- ² Sipman HJM and Aptroot A (2020) *Ikaeria serusiauxii*, a new *Caloplaca*-like lichen from Macaronesia and mainland Portugal, with a lichen checklist for Porto Santo. *Plant and Fungal Systematics* 65, 120–130.
- ³ Sparrius LB, Aptroot A, Sipman HJM, Pérez-Vargas I, Matos P, Gerlach A and Vervoort M (2017) Estimating the population size of the endemic lichens *Anzia centrifuga* (Parmeliaceae) and *Ramalina* species (Ramalinaceae) on Porto Santo (Madeira archipelago). *Bryologist* 120, 293–301.

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