

# Mata de Plátano Field Station and Nature Reserve, Arecibo, PUERTO RICO

## Lichens of Mata de Plátano Field Station

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Joel A. Mercado-Díaz & Robert Lücking

Photos by Robert Lücking & Waldemar Alcobas. Produced by Joel A. Mercado-Díaz, R. Lücking, T. Wachter, R. Foster, J. Philipp, with support from the National Science Foundation, Ford Motor Company's Conservation & Environmental Grant awarded to the first author (2014), Andrew Mellon Foundation, and Connie Keller.

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Rapid Color Guide # 592 version 1 05/2015



Landscape view of the Northern Karst region of Puerto Rico

Mata de Plátano Field Station is located in the town of Arecibo, Puerto Rico. The station is part of the Northern Karst, an important geological formation that covers almost 33% of the island's surface area. This region is characterized by the presence of cone-shaped hills locally known as "mogotes", sinkholes, dozens of underground river systems and hundreds of caves and caverns. It contains one of Puerto Rico's most important aquifers, satisfying about one fourth of the total domestic water demand of the island. Karst forests are among the most biologically diverse ecosystems of Puerto Rico and serve as home for a number of endangered and threatened species like the Puerto Rican Crested Toad (*Peltophryne lemur*) and the Beautiful Goetzea (*Goetzea elegans*). The lichen flora of the station is typical of young and old secondary forests in the tropics, including numerous species belonging to the genera *Graphis*, *Pertusaria*, *Bacidia*, *Phyllopsora*, *Coenogonium*, *Pyrenula*, *Malmidea*, *Fissurina*, *Astrothelium*, etc. Only the thelotremoid genera *Pycnotrema*, *Thelotrema*, *Chapsa* and *Trinathotrema* have been found in these forests, which agrees with the long history of disturbances that these ecosystems have faced in the past. Mata de Plátano Field Station is the only scientific field station in the northwestern portion of the island. It is managed by the Interamerican University.



1 *Anthracothecium prasinum*



2 *Asterothrium spec.*



3 *Astrothelium aeneum*



4 *Astrothelium degenerans*



5 *Byssoloma subdiscordans*



6 *Chapsa astroidea*



7 *Coccocarpia erythroxyli*



8 *Creographa brasiliensis*



9 *Dichosporidium nigrocinctum*



10 *Diorygma hieroglyphicum*



11 *Diorygma poitaei*



12 *Dyplolobia afzelii*

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