

# Chapter 1

## Introduction



Over the years, I have received many specimens of Humiriaceae mistaken for Chrysobalanaceae because there is a superficial resemblance of some sterile and fruiting material. There are many differences in both the flowers and the fruits of these two families. They both belong to the order Malpighiales, but they are not very closely related. Receiving these specimens of Humiriaceae by mistake often led to my identifying the specimens and as a result gradually accumulating information and interest in the Humiriaceae. The aim here is to put together that information and a lot more from recent collections to supplement the last monograph of the family by Cuatrecasas (1961). Cuatrecasas cited the 889 herbarium specimens that he studied. This revision is now based on 5397 specimens, an increase of 4508, indicating how much collecting has taken place in the Neotropics over the past 60 years. It is encouraging that 70% of the additional collections were made by resident Latin American collectors. This indicates the vast increase in local collecting efforts, especially in Brazil and Colombia.