



# THE NEW YORK BOTANICAL GARDEN

Bronx, NY, 7 January 2020

Dipl.-Ing. Eva Král'ovičova  
Managing Secretary, IAPT

I am delighted to give my strongest recommendation for **Herison Medeiros de Oliveira**, who is applying for an ASPT Research Grant. I am very familiar with both him and his research project and can safely say he is an excellent candidate.

I have known Mr. Medeiros since he was beginning his undergraduate studies at the Federal University of Acre. Many students there cycle through internships with various science faculty under a small-fellowships program, and Prof. Marcos Silveira and I would hand-pick the most promising of them for more in-depth training and opportunities. Mr. Medeiros was the brightest of his cohort, as borne out by his subsequently being accepted into a competitive master's program and then a competitive Ph.D. program. He is an excellent field botanist and an absolute pro in planning, executing, and following up on complex botanical expeditions. He has broad familiarity with the Amazon flora, and he already has a great deal of experience in teaching basic plant morphology and taxonomy at various levels.

He now seeks support for molecular lab work that will help him develop a robust phylogeny for his dissertation on the genus *Thinouia* (Sapindaceae). He has already done a great deal of work on the group's taxonomic history, nomenclature, geography, ecology, morphology, and taxonomic framework; the molecular phylogeny will help him to refine the taxonomy, resolve the infrageneric classification, and enable him to test hypotheses about the group's historical biogeography and the importance of key innovations (climbing habit, tendrils, and cambial patterns) that might have enabled rapid radiation in the Neotropics. This clearer vision of the genus will also allow him to evaluate the conservation status of the species.

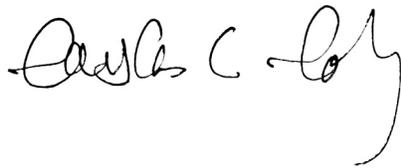
Two important impacts of the proposed research are not immediately evident from the proposal. First, Mr. Medeiros chose to work on the genus *Thinouia* because it will serve him well as a springboard for broader, long-term studies of the Sapindaceae. It should be noted that the taxonomic specialist for this prominent family is not too many years away from retirement and Mr. Medeiros would be indicated to take up the banner for a career studying the Sapindaceae, especially in the Neotropics.

Second, there are exceedingly few good professional botanists based in Amazonia and studying the Amazonian flora, and there is a perpetual brain drain of scientific talent heading south for better pay and infrastructure. Herison Medeiros is one of the most promising young botanists to come out of Amazonia in recent years, and after finishing his Ph.D. in the south, he fully intends

-2-

to set down roots in the Amazon, where he will quickly become an invaluable resource and point of reference for anything related to the Amazon flora.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas C. Daly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Douglas C. Daly, Ph.D.  
Director  
Institute of Systematic Botany  
New York Botanical Garden  
718-817-8660  
[ddaly@nybg.org](mailto:ddaly@nybg.org)