

## José Cuatrecasas and Vicki Funk: Passion for the Neotropics. New special issue of *Mediterranean Botany*

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José Cuatrecasas Arumí, a botanist and pharmacist, was full professor in the Faculty of Pharmacy at the Complutense University of Madrid from 1931 to 1939, at that time called Central University. The Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) and the beginning of Franco's dictatorship led him into exile, first to Colombia (1939–1947) and then to the United States of America (1947–1995), where he developed a rich and important scientific career, now being considered one of the best botanist of 20<sup>th</sup> century (López Sánchez, 2022). As his brilliant career started in Spain, first in Catalonia, and then continued in Madrid, where he finished his Ph.D. and was Full Professor (González Bueno, 2022), we want to pay this tribute to his memory despite Spain lost his scientific talent and that of many other scientists. His contribution to Neotropical botany made him collaborate with other scientists, mainly at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, where he carried out the most important part of his professional activity. There he met other botanists focused on similar research areas, such as Vicki Funk, Harold Robinson, etc.

*Mediterranean Botany*, the scientific journal published by the former Cuatrecasas's Botany Department at the Complutense University (Faculty of Pharmacy) from 1979, opened a 'call for papers' for this Special Issue in 2021 to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of José Cuatrecasas as Full Professor (1931). Vicki Funk, a member of the Editorial Board for more than a decade and close collaborator of professor Cuatrecasas was involved as a guest editor. Unfortunately, we lost her prematurely. In this way, we also would like to pay the homage to her, a brilliant scientist studying deeply the Neotropical flora, particularly the family Asteraceae.

The papers published in this Special Issue are focused on the person of Cuatrecasas (López Sánchez 2022; González Bueno, 2022), contribute to the knowledge of Asteraceae (Calvo & Beltrán, 2022), and provide a new botanical checklists from Andean paramos (Ansaloni *et al.*, 2022), which were well studied by Cuatrecasas and Funk.

Due to the interest shown by many others researchers and colleagues to contribute to this Special Issue, a journal section will still remain open. All works dedicated to any aspects of the life of Vicki Funk and José Cuatrecasas or focused on botany or plant ecology in Neotropical areas are welcome in *Mediterranean Botany*. This tropical areas usually are in contact through dry or arid lands with Mediterranean areas, main focus of the journal.

### References

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