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Cárdenas Hermosa, Martín (1899-1973)

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Cárdenas Hermosa, Martín (1899-1973)

Herbarium	Natural History Museum (BM)
Collection	Plant Collectors
Resource Type	Reference Sources
Contributor	Natural History Museum (BM)
First name(s)	Martín
Last name	Cárdenas Hermosa
Initials	M.
Life Dates	1899 - 1973
Collecting Dates	1921 - 1971
Specification	Plant collector
Groups collected	Spermatophytes
Organisation(s)	LIL (main), AMES, F, G, GH, K, NY, S, SI, US, WIS
Countries	Tropical South America: Bolivia
Associate(s)	Asplund, Erik (1888-1974)(co-collector)Cárdenas, Martín(synonym)Cutler, Hugh Carson (1912-1988)(co-collector)Nelson, Ira Schreiber (1911-1965)(co-collector)Rusby, Henry Hurd (1855-1940)(co-collector)Ugent, Donald (1933-)(co-collector)Ugent, Vivian (fl. 1962-1963)(co-collector)Vidaurre, A. (fl. 1963)(co-collector)White, Orland Emile (1885-)(co-collector)
Biography	Martin Cárdenas is considered as one of Bolivia's most important botanists. The son of Indian parents from the city of Cochabamba, he travelled the country, mostly at his own expense, collecting plants for his 'Herbarium Cardenasianum', as he called his private collection. His best known book is Manual de Plantas Económicas de Bolivia (1969), a comprehensive review of useful Andean plants. After obtaining his baccalaureat in 1918, he received a scholarship to continue his studies in natural sciences and chemistry in La Paz. In 1921, just four months before his graduation, the Bolivian government seconded him to the Mulford Biological

Expedition led by H.H. Rusby, which bioprosped the drainage area of Rio Beni. On his return from the Amazon in 1922, Cárdenas received his doctorate and was immediately appointed lecturer in botany at the Instituto Normal Superior in La Paz, where he remained for eight years.

From 1932 to 1933, as professor and director of natural sciences at the Colegio Nacional in Potosi, he had the opportunity to collect plants at high altitudes. During the Chaco War, he served with the Sanitary Corps and afterwards was sent to Washington to study ways of improving quinine production in Bolivia. In 1937 he became president of the Universidad Autónoma de Cochabamba. Although he resigned from this position in 1946, he remained at the University as a professor until 1969. His vacations were spent hiking and collecting plants around Cochabamba, which he would then research in the library at La Paz.

He was elected a corresponding member of the Botanical Society of America, a life member of the Potato Association of America, and a foreign member of the Linnean Society of London. He often collected with visiting botanists, such as Erik Asplund and Ira S. Nelson. At the time of his death he had just completed the manuscript to his memoirs, which was later published as *Recollections of a Naturalist: Travels in the Andes, Argentina, United States, and Europe*. His herbarium, which totalled about 6,500 numbers, including 180 new species of cacti, as well as his books and botanical reports, were bequeathed to the University of Tucumán in Argentina. His portrait appears on a Bolivian commemorative stamp.

Sources:
S.M. Rossi-Wilcox, 1993, *Harvard Papers in Botany*, 4: 1-30
T.W. Whitaker, 1974.

References

Brummitt, R.K. & Powell, C.E., *Authors Pl. Names* (1992): 102;
 Lanjouw, J. & Stafleu, F.A., *Index Herb. Coll. A-D* (1954): 115;
 Vegter, H.I., *Index Herb. Coll. T-Z* (1988): 1055;

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