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MONKEYS AND PECCARIES FATALLY HARVEST ENDANGERED PALM (*Euterpe edulis* Mart.)

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Tema/Meio de apresentação: Interações ecológicas/Oral

Euterpe edulis (the heart of palm) is a monopodic Atlantic Forest native palm. It fructifies yearly and its globose fruits are eaten and dispersed by a wide range of animals, from birds to mammals. *E. edulis*, which lacks the capacity to resprout, has been so viciously harvested by local people for its heart of palm, that is listed vulnerable in the Red Book of Brazilian Flora. We found that, besides humans, peccaries (Family: Tayassuidae) and monkeys (probably Families: Cebidae and/or Atelidae) also fatally harvest *E. edulis* for its heart of palm. The fieldwork was performed in three old-growth forest inventory plots (NSV-01, NSV-02 and NSV-03, size: 1 ha each), that were installed in nucleus Santa Virginia of “Serra do Mar” state park in 2007 and have been monitored since. Peccaries consume young palms (here, \varnothing at soil height 2 to 5 cm; but they might consume smaller individuals), which they uproot before eating. In 2016, they harvested up to 233 individual $\text{ha}^{-1} \text{year}^{-1}$ and consumed between 0.002 and 0.01 $\text{m}^3 \text{ha}^{-1}$ of actual heart of palm. On the other hand, monkeys harvest bigger individuals (\varnothing at breast height ≥ 4.9 cm); they climb the palms and break the crown to access the heart. This behavior suddenly increased after 2014 drought, resulting in a rise of 50% in *E. edulis* mortality: 24 individual $\text{ha}^{-1} \text{year}^{-1}$ (6% of individual’s pool); while in years with normal climatic conditions, mortality was 13 individual $\text{ha}^{-1} \text{year}^{-1}$ (3% of individual’s pool). From an *E. edulis* conservation perspective, these kinds of harvest are an additional threat. Nonetheless, preserving healthy populations of *Euterpe edulis* is important for the maintenance of local fauna, as it serves as an alternative source of food in times of change.

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