

## The Rubiaceae family in the Carrancas Mountain Complex, state of Minas Gerais, southeastern Brazil

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Rubiaceae is the fourth largest family of the angiosperms in terms of species diversity worldwide. It is present in all plant physiognomies and occupies various vegetation strata, being one of the most important components of tropical vegetation. It is easily recognized by the opposite leaves, interpetiolar stipules, gamopetalous corolla, and inferior ovary. The main objective of this study was to investigate the diversity of the Rubiaceae in the Carrancas Mountain Complex, Minas Gerais, Brazil. This region encompasses approximately 17,609 km<sup>2</sup>, extending from the southern border of the state of Minas Gerais, approaching the Itatiaia Plateau, to the São João del-Rei and Barbacena region, where the São Francisco River basin begins. It includes the municipalities of Lavras, Itumirim, Ingaí, Itutinga, Carrancas, and Minduri. Situated in an ecotone between the Atlantic Forest and Cerrado domains, it presents a surface covered by various vegetation types, such as campo rupestre, savannas, open fields, scrublands, seasonal semideciduous forests, riparian or gallery forests, and cloud forests at the higher elevations. A total of 681 herbarium specimens were analysed, most of them deposited at the ESAL herbarium, which holds most of the collections made in the region. In this study, 26 genera and 51 species were recorded. These represent noteworthy 37.7% of the genera and 13.5% of the species of Rubiaceae recorded in Minas Gerais, including 14 endemic species to Brazil. *Borreria* and *Palicourea* were the most diverse genera (five species each), followed by *Cordia*, *Galianthe*, and *Psychotria* (four species each). Therefore, this work enriches the taxonomic knowledge of the Rubiaceae family in the state of Minas Gerais, particularly for the flora of the Carrancas Mountain Complex.