

Plant species discovered in Colombia named to honor Santos

March 7 2017



This March 10, 2009 photo shows the inflorescence of an *espeletia praesidentii*, a member of the sunflower family, in Paramo de Almorzadero, Colombia. Scientists have named the plant species after President Juan Manuel Santos for his efforts building peace after five decades of armed conflict. (Photo by Mauricio Diazgranados via AP)

Scientists have named a recently discovered Colombian plant species in

honor of President Juan Manuel Santos' efforts to build peace following five decades of armed conflict.

The plant known by its scientific name as *espeletia praesidentis* was discovered during an expedition sponsored by Britain's Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. It is a member of the sunflower family and believed to be endemic to high-altitude moorlands in northeastern Colombia. The ecosystem known as paramo is found only in the Andes and is increasingly threatened by ranching.

The Royal Botanic Gardens said in a statement that its scientists ran into leftist rebels during the expedition. It said with a peace deal now in place, many more species are waiting to be discovered in previously off-limit areas.

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Citation: Plant species discovered in Colombia named to honor Santos (2017, March 7) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-03-species-colombia-honor-santos.html>

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