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Tracing plant histories: linking botanical collections, peoples, and illustrations in seventeenth century Dutch Brazil

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TRACING PLANT HISTORIES

**Linking Botanical Collections, Peoples, and
Illustrations in Seventeenth Century Dutch Brazil**



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Plants and peoples' connections intertwine in multiple histories, often captured in textual accounts and illustrations, such as the *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* (1648) and the *Libri Picturati* (c. 1640). These materials originated in the colonial context of Dutch Brazil and circulated among naturalists, physicians, merchants, and wealthy collectors for centuries. Today, we looked at these collections to identify the documented flora. With an ethnobotanical approach, we analyzed whether these plants are still used the same way in Brazil, their origins, and how they were collected. This study pays attention to the Indigenous and enslaved peoples living in the colony, whose rich corpus of botanical knowledge was appropriated within Western epistemologies and used in the colonial enterprise in Brazil, and beyond.

