

Coastal forests of Kenya are part of the coastal forests of East Africa. Though highly fragmented, they have been set apart as a biodiversity hotspot by conservation international due to a high number of endemics, threatened species, and species richness. Coastal forests of Kenya are located in the southeast part of the Kenya and are distributed mainly in four counties: Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu, and Tana River County. They are a stretch of fragmented forests ca. 30–120 km away from the Indian Ocean. In spite of the high plant species richness and their importance towards supporting the livelihoods of the communities that live around them, floristic studies in these forests have remained poorly investigated.

This manuscript presents an updated checklist of plants of this region, based on numerous field investigations, plant lists from published monograph/literature, and data from BRAHMS (Botanical Records and Herbarium Management System) database at East African herbarium (EA). Our results show that Kenyan coastal forests play an essential role in the flora of Kenya and the plant diversity of the coastal forests of East Africa. The checklist represents 177 families, 981 genera, 2488 species, 89 endemic plants species, 45 exotic and 115 species that are included in the current IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as species of major conservation concern. Besides, three new species to the world from these relicts were discovered from these forests. Thus, Kenyan coastal forests present a remarkable and significant center of plant diversity.

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AN ANNOTATED CHECKLIST OF THE COASTAL FORESTS OF KENYA, EAST AFRICA  
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*Croton kinondoensis* G.W. Hu, V.M. Ngumbau & Q.F. Wang, sp. nov.

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