From: George Staples [mailto:gstaples@mail.bishopmuseum.org]
Sent: Wednesday, March 29, 2000 5:42 PM

Philip et al.:

Piper auritum is cultivated in HI; BISH has a confirmed voucher specimen from a botanical garden on Oahu.

Once the Museum's webpage has been restored (hackers broke in last week), you won't find data on cultivated plants (yet) until the Museum receives some funds to allow us to complete and publish the massive database we've been working on for 11+ years. We also intend to make it available on the web, funds permitting. Hopefully that won't take too many more years! We are hopeful that some support might be forthcoming this year from NPS to help us get this data out in final form. Keep your fingers crossed for us.

I would also point out that on two previous occasions during 1999 kava growers in HI have complained about a weedy species of Piper that invades their fields and outcompetes Piper methysticum. The weed has rampant underground rhizomes that send up aerial shoots all over the place. In the absence of a voucher specimen of fertile material, we have not been able to tell the growers what the weed is (one did send over some leaves, but that didn't help much: with 2,000 species of Piper you need a decent fertile specimen to work with). And there the matter rests. Wonder if the weed in the kava fields could be this P. auritum? George

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