‘A Large Quantity of Edibles, Too Much to Ruin Them All’: Dutch Colonial Language on Maroon Crop Diversity and Wild Plant Use Suriname (c. 1712-1850)

Tinde van Andel *

Posted Date: 5 May 2026

doi: 10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Keywords: Maroons; agrodiversity; ethnobotany; archival studies; Suriname

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Article

'A Large Quantity of Edibles, Too Much to Ruin Them All': Dutch Colonial Language on Maroon Crop Diversity and Wild Plant Use Suriname (c. 1712-1850)

Tinde van Andel [1,2]

[1] Senior Researcher, Naturalis Biodiversity Center, the Netherlands; tinde.vanandel@naturalis.nl

[2] Guest professor History of Botany and Gardens, Leiden University

Abstract

The succesful escape from slavery between the late 17th and the mid 19thth century depended greatly on the runaway's skills in adapting themselves to their natural environment. Although published works on the (oral) history of the Maroons hardly contain information on the gardens of the runaways, archival records of military expeditions aimed to destroy Maroon settlements report large provision fields, a variety of crops and ingenious uses of the surrounding forest. Vegetation types, cultivated crops and wild plants, indicated with archaic Dutch and Surinamese names, and written in a variety of spellings, are difficult to interpret for researchers studying archival records of this period. Still, these scholars have seldom collaborated with botanists to decipher such names. What crops did the Maroons grow in and around their hideouts? Which wild plant species were essential for their survival? Here we present a list of ultivated crops, wild useful plants and vegetation types that appear in colonial accounts on the violent destruction of the settlements of those who had sought freedom from the the harsh conditions of slavery. Although written by people who generaly despised Maroons, the accounts of the armed troops reflect the African agency in transforming plant use in the Americas. Their excellent agricultural skills and knowledge of the local flora helped the Maroons to survive and thrive in their hidden forest settlements. Although never mentioned by the reporters, these archival documents also reflect the plant knowledge of indigenous and enslaved militia members.

Keywords: Maroons; agrodiversity; ethnobotany; archival studies; Suriname

Introduction

…dat sy den eersten maert zyn gecoomen op het dorp bestaende uit 25 huysen ..[…] dat sy daer hebben gevonden een groote quantitijt van eetwaeren als bananas taier, koren, cassave, james, rijs, suykerriet, appel China, catoen, rocou, etc. Dat zij de huysen hebben verbrand en de digt by de wegh staende geruineerd, dogh de affgelege nieuwe gronden die vol cost stonden, dewyl het onmogelyk was die te ruineeren, niet aengeraekt.

…that they encountered the 1st of March the village, consisting of 25 houses […] that they found there a large quantity of edibles, such as bananas, taro, maize, cassava, yams, rice, sugarcane, oranges, cotton, achiote, etc. That they burned the houses and ruined the ones close to the path, but that they did not touch the more remote, new provision fields that were full of crops and impossible to ruin.

Report to the Society of Suriname, 4 March 1712[1]

In March 1712, a military patrol led by corporal Christoffel Pruijsler and consisting of 110 persons, including the Jewish planters and members of the civil company corporal Isaac David Cohen

[1] National Archives, Archive of the Society of Suriname, inv. nr. 129 (scan 252).

https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/browse?scan=30530&archief=SVS

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Nassy, sergeant Jahacob Urijel Cardoso, Abraham de Britto and David Montesinos, and dozens of soldiers , enslaved Africans, and indigenous people who served as porters and guides, marched through the swamps near the Saramacca River in Suriname, searching for the Maroon rebel leader Claes, also known as Kaási. When they finally found the village, it was hidden behind dense *kappewerie* (secondary forest on abandoned fields)and a deep creek that could only be crossed via a fallen tree log. Apart from the large provision fields and storehouses full of rice, tobacco and palm oil, the Kaási Maroons also kept goats, turkeys, chickens and ducks there[1]. Probably they knew the troups were coming, as they had left two weeks earlier, taking along their tools and livestock (Dragtenstein 2023:84-86).

No single act of self-assertion was more significant among enslaved Africans or more disconcerting among white plantation owners than that of running away (Wood 1974: 239). Marronnage, the escape from slavery by people of African descent and the forming of independent communities in remote areas, took place in almost every plantation colony in the Americas (Price 1996). Maroons engaged in violent attacks on plantations and put up heroic struggles for their freedom and independence, which seriously disrupted the plantation economy (Marshall 2008; van Stipriaan 2020; Fatah-Black 2013).

Compared to the situation elsewhere in the Americas, marronage was particularly successful in the former Dutch colony of Suriname (Price 1996). The Surinamese runaways were helped by the country's challenging geography: vast stretches of tropical rainforest, deep swamps and rivers unnavigable due to dangerous rapids (de Groot 1984; Price 1990). The relative weakness of colonial control in certain areas (Stedman, [1790] 1992; Nassy et al. 1788), the Maroon's effective guerilla wars against colonial forces (Hoogbergen 1990) and their ability to develop self-sufficient societies and adapt to the environment (Van Stipriaan 2020:5) further contributed to the success of maronnage.

To prevent plantations from being plundered and rebel villages attracting new runaways, military patrols were regularly sent off to the jungle to capture or kill the Maroons and destroy their settlements (Hoogbergen 1990; Stedman [1790] 1992). The colonial tactics were to defeat the Maroons by starvation, and consisted of burning their provision fields and storage houses (Hostmann 1850), and even pulling their tuber crops from the ground (Nassy et al. 1788:115). The military expeditions, which were very costly and logistically difficult, were seldom successful in killing or capturing large numbers of runaways (Dragtenstein 2023). Most settlements had been abandoned when the troops arrived, as the Maroons either heard them coming or were tipped off by their spies on the plantations or in the militias (Makdoembaks 2023). Besides, the runaways quickly built new villages and laid out their fields at some distance from these villages, planted more corps than necessary and hid their food stocks (Hoogbergen 1990). The colonial authorities, unable to defeat them with armed militias, were forced to sign treaties with several Maroon groups in the 1760s, guaranteeing them their independence (Price 1983; Dragtenstein 2023; Thoden van Velzen and Hoogbergen, 2011).

How did the Maroons manage to survive in the rainforest while constantly on the run? To be successful, Maroon refugee camps had to provide their inhabitants with a sanctuary almost inaccessible to Europeans, but also with commodities necessary for sustenance (Marshall 2008; Maat et al. 2023). Although a textbook example of environmental adaptation and survival, Maroon agricultural skills, the diversity of their food crops and their knowhow on wild plant uses are hardly mentioned by scholars of Maroon culture and (oral) history. Instead, they focused on their heroic battles with colonial authorities (Price 1983; Hoogbergen 1990) their ability to escape the constant pursuit of military expeditions that aimed to capture or kill them (Makdoembaks 2023; Dragtenstein 2004), the formation of independent societies (Thoden van Velzen and Hoogbergen, 2011; De Beet and Sterman 1981; Lenoir, 1973; Price 1983).and the peace treaties that brought an end to the constant guerilla warfare which nearly ruined the plantation economy of Suriname (Dragentenstein 2002; Fatah-Black 2013).

As the successes and failures of these costly military raids were meticulously reported to the colonial authorities, there is a wealth of archival documents on these expeditions with detailed descriptions of the rebel settlements. One reason for the lack of interest from anthropologists and

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

historians in archival information on Maroon plant use may be the difficulty to interpret archaic plant names. In the multilingual society of Suriname, thousands of vernacular names exist for a large number of plant species (van 't Klooster et al, 2003; van Andel et al. 2014). Crops and wild plants are mentioned in archival documents with historic, sometimes obsolete names, in a myriad of spelling variations. Although a great compilation of historic Dutch-Surinamese terms has been made (Van Donselaar 1989; Van Donselaar and van der Sijs 2013), interpreting historical terms for plants in colonial archives is challenging and requires multidisciplinary (and multilingual) scientific collaboration. Neglect of the Dutch archival information on Maroon agriculture has led to historically incorrect statements, such as those of Eltis et al. (2007:1344) who dismissed rice production by Maroons before 1730 (Midlo Hall 2010),while a recent study, based on archival documents like the one quoted above, showed that rice was already grown in Suriname in the late 17th and early 18th century, both by enslaved Africans and Maroons (Elfrink et al. 2024).

The herbarium of Utrecht University, the Netherlands, specialized the flora of Suriname since 1900, kept a card box archive with local plant names of the Dutch Guianas (van Donselaar, 1989) which later culminated in the index of vernacular plant names of Suriname (van 't Klooster et al. 2003). Failure to consult this archive or botanists like Jan van Donselaar resulted in several un- or misidentified plants in accounts on Maroon history, such as in the works of Hoogbergen (1990) and in the list of useful plants pieced together by Price (1991) from German missionary documents and Dutch archives on the Saamaka Maroons. The digitization of the Dutch archives and the development in AI-assisted automatic transcriptions and digital search tools offer new opportunities for archival research (Elfrink et al. 2024). In this paper, we describe historical terms used in archival documents and published historic literature for crops encountered in runaway settlements and for wild plants used by Maroons during their struggle for freedom.

Methods

Published reports by direct eye witnesses of Maroon provision fields the late 17th century, such as those of the group of runaways led by Ganimet near the Para Creek (Dragtenstein 1993, 2002), are not available in digital format or do not provide information on crops. For the 18th century, there is much more first-hand information. We reviewed the published historic accounts of colonial militias (Nassy et al. 1788; Stedman [1790] 1992) on crops grown by the runaways. We also analyzed early reports of Surinamese useful plants such as Warren (1667) and the manuscript by Reeps [1692-1694], transcribed and analyzed by van Alphen (1962). We reviewed the diary of Daniel Rolander [1754-1756] 2008), analyzed by van Andel et al. 2012a); the botanical catalogue of Dahlberg [1771], analysed by De Moraes (2012) and archival documents mentioned in studies on the (oral) history of the Maroons (e.g., Hoogbergen 1990; Dragtenstein 2004; 2023, Makdoembaks 2023; Price 1983, 1990, 1991) to search for descriptions of agriculture and plant use in rebel villages. We used historical plant names (in various spelling variants), names of rebel leaders, Maroon hideouts and army officers as keyword to search reports on the military raids in the digital archives of the Society of Suriname (https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/). We limited ourselves to those plants that were explicitly mentioned as cultivated or wild-harvested by Surinamese Maroons from the late 18th to the mid 19th century.

We consulted Van Donselaar and van der Sijs (2013), Lindeman and Molenaar (1959), Van 't Klooster et al. (2003) and Van Andel and Ruysschaert (2011) to interpret historic names for plants and vegetation types. We used Plant of the World Online (https://powo.science.kew.org) to update scientific names. We show how language served as a tool of empire, reflecting colonial strategies and practices to locate, describe and destroy Maroon settlements. We highlight several wild and cultivated plants that supported the Maroons in their struggle for freedom. Finally, we speculate on who supplied the ethnobotanical knowledge on those plants to the reporters in the colonial militias. Throughout the paper, terms in local indigenous, Sranantongo (Dutch Creole) or Maroon languages are written in italics, while archaic Dutch terms are put between brackets.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Results

Surviving on Wild Palms

Gwamba mama, mi masi kaba
Kebu mama, yu mu yepi-o
Misina bobo maida….
Akwinda Mama
wampu siri mi nyan
Mi sina wega…..iyaaa
Mother Meat (wild animals), my *masi* (food?) Is finished
Mother Kebu, you must help me
-Untranslated-
Snake Mother
Swamp seeds I eat
-Untranslated-

In this folk song, sung partly in Sranantongo (Dutch Creole) and partly in an unknown African language by Anne Goedhart and Hillyanthe Kendall (1983), someone calls out for help to several female forest spirits, as there is nothing to eat but swamp seeds. According to Edith Adjako (pers. comm.), this song was sung in her Saamaka Maroon village when there was a food shortage due to a failed harvest in the 1970s. Soon after the villagers sung this song, a herd of peccary appeared and started swimming over the river. The happy villagers killed the wild pigs and feasted on their roasted meat.

Euterpe oleracea

Although the origin and the complete translation of this song are unknown, it may have been composed by hungry runaways wandering through the coastal swamps, with nothing to eat except swamp seeds. These were likely the fruits of *Euterpe oleracea* (Figure 1A), currently known in Suriname as *pina* (the tree) and *podosiri* (the fruits), and known elsewhere by their Brazilian name *açai*. This multi-stemmed palm, occurring in large quantities in coastal swamps of the Guianas (van Andel 2003), known as *pinezwamp* in Suriname (Table 1, vegetation types). From the archival documents it becomes clear that this palm has played a major role in the survival of Maroons in Suriname, especially for people in the coastal swamps who recently escaped and did not have the time or opportunity to join established rebel communities. Apart from the nutritious purple fruits, the young, undeveloped leaves in the crown (palm heart) can be eaten fresh Table 1 wild plants). It appears in the archives as *kabbes* (from the English term 'cabbage') and there are several accounts of 'runaways without residence', who 'wander about and have no provision fields' and 'no other food than cabbage and fish' (Hoogbergen 1990: 12; Makdoembaks, 2023: 288, 289, 297). From the age of felled *pina* palms in the forest militias could tell when Maroons had been in that location[2]

The *pina* palm was also employed to build *pallisaden*, stockades of sharpened stems of *Euterpe oleracea* that are places closed together as a fence around rebel hideouts. Sometimes such sharpened stems (*pinnen* or *pennen*) were buried in pitfalls, in which soldiers would fall and get wounded (Makdoembaks 2023:472). One rebel village long the Upper Cottica River was so well protected by pallisades that it was called 'Pinnenburg' (Stedman[1790] 1992:400).

Split and flattened *Euterpe* stems were tied together as tables, drying racks for fish and meat (*barbacots*), and as walls and floors of huts, while its leaves were used as roof thatch (Stedman [1790] 1992:194). Such a dwelling was known as a *pienenhut*, *pienenhuis* or p*alisaden huijs*.

[2] SvS archive, May 1768. Inv. nr. 160 (scan 35). Report of Van J.E. Vogdt about the return of the troops. https://htrhub.dekok.xyz/document/svs/B5oNVzjT?query=coemoe&collection=svs&page=1&position=0&spelling=0&sensitivities=0&invFrom=1&invTo=566

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

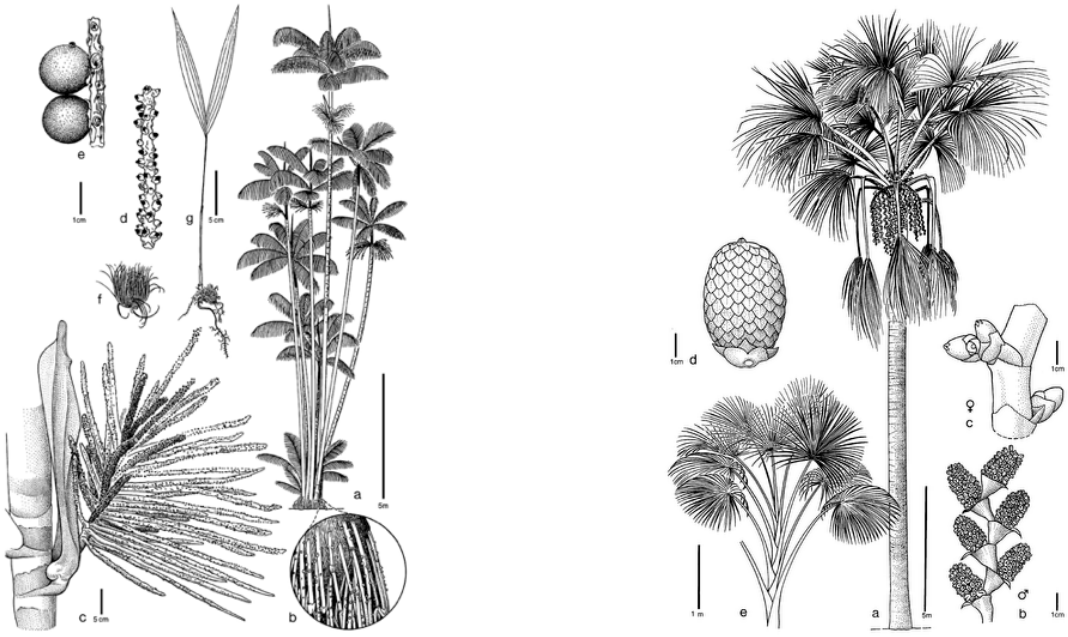

Figure 1. A. Pina palm, *Euterpe oleracea*. B. Morisi palm, *Mauritia flexuosa*. Drawings by Hendrik Rypkema, Naturalis Biodiversity Center.

The times of homeless wandering through the swamps and surviving on palms is remembered by Maroons as periods of suffering and hardship. The name *pina* for *Euterpe oleracea* is likely related to the Sranantongo verb *pinaren* for suffering from poverty and hunger. There were not enough forest products (wild edible plants, eggs, honey, nuts, game) to support the Maroons. There are several accounts of runaways who died in the forest from starvation (Hoogbergen 1990:19), returned to their plantations due to a lack of food (and after eating nothing but the seeds of *Pachira aquatica* or *mokomoko* fruits (*Montrichardia arborescens*) or were poisoned after eating toxic fruits like *Hippomane mancinella* (Rolander [1754-1756] 2008; van Andel et al. 2012a).

Mauritia flexuosa

Another useful wild palm mentioned in the archives was *Mauritia flexuosa* or *mosisi* (Figure 1B). This stout palm grows abundantly in coastal swamp forest in the Guianas, and remains as lone tree in open savannas that were created after the burning of marsh forests during dry season by indigenous peoples, now and in the past (Van Andel 2003; Iriarte et al. 2012). Such open savannas, consisting of towering *morisi* palms over floating layer of sedges (Cyperaceae) known as *piripiri* in the indigenous Carib language (van 't Klooster et al. 2003), can only be passed with a canoe in the rainy season. These swamps are mentioned in archival documents as *bieriebierie savannes* (Table 1, vegetation types). Fallen trunks of *Mauritia flexuosa*, submerged below the waterplants and sedges, served as hidden bridges to cross the deep swamps and reach the settlements of the runaways (Figure 2). These submerged bridges, however, meandered to such a degree that one had to know the exact location of the trunks to avoid sliding off (Hoogbergen 1990).Maroons also set fire to these *bieriebierie* swamps when being pursued by armed forces, as colonel Fourgeoud noted when he was caught in the middle of a savannah fire when chasing Maroons near the lower Marowijne River in 1777[3].

The transparent cortex of young leaf shoots of *morisi* leaves can be stripped off and, after soaking, beating, rinsing and drying, the strips can be plaited into mats and baskets or twisted into cordage and used as bowstrings or woven into fishing nets and hammocks (Stedman [1790] 1992:373; van Andel 2000). 'Some linen made from *maurice* trees' was found the village of Maroon chief Kormantin

[3] SVS-archief, inventarisnummer 169 (scan 50). 26 January 1777.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Kodjo in 1758.[4] The fatty larvae from the South American palm weevil (*Rhynchophorus palmarum*) that feeds on rotten trunks of *morisi* palms, were also eaten by the Maroons (Stedman [1790] 1992:374). Although the fruits of this palm are edible, the archives do not mention their consumption.

Other palm products

The Maroons used palm leaves for making baskets, brooms, mats and bags (Hoogbergen 1990). The small *tas* palm (*Geonoma baculifera*) that grows on well-drained soils was (and still is) the most preferred roof thatch (Stedman [1790] 1992; Ostendorf 1962). The *maripa* palm (*Attalea maripa*), also growing on dry soil, yielded roof thatch, cabbage, edible fruits and cooking oil from the seeds (Hoogbergen 1990). The black fruits of *coemoe* (*Oenocarpus bacaba*) and *patawa* (*Oenocarpus bataua*) were (and still are) processed into a purple, nutritious drink. Felled trunks of this palm were a sign that Maroons had passed by[5]. Hostmann (1850:295) mentioned that rebel leader Boni had planted African oil palms (*Elaeis guineensis*) on the French bank of the Marowijne River at the village of Bonidoro ('Boni arrived'). African oil palms, introduced in Suriname during the slave trade, are still grown in Maroon villages today.

According to a widespread belief in the Caribbean, spirits of enslaved Africans who had tasted the salt of the whites were doomed to stay in the Americas, but the souls of those who refused to do so would fly back to Africa after their death (Dewulf 2021). As a result, Maroons and Creoles in Suriname have been making (or buying) plant-based salt for centuries (Van Andel and Ruysschaert 2011). Militia's entering rebel villages found 'sout van pienen': clumps of potash (plant-based salt) made from burnt *pina* palms (Makdoembaks(2023:199)

To build houses and grow food, well-drained soils were needed. The rebel villages and their provision fields were located on the so-called 'schulpenritsen' (shell ridges): dry elevations, a few meters high, hundreds of meters wide and kilometers long, formed by ancient beaches and consisting of sand, sea shells and shell grit, intervening with marsh forest (Lindeman and Molenaar 1959). The Maroon hideouts were strategically located on a ridge bordered on one side by a deep swamp that could only be crossed via sunken logs of a *Mauritia flexuosa* and protected on the other side by palisades (Makdoembaks (2023:345); Figure 2.).

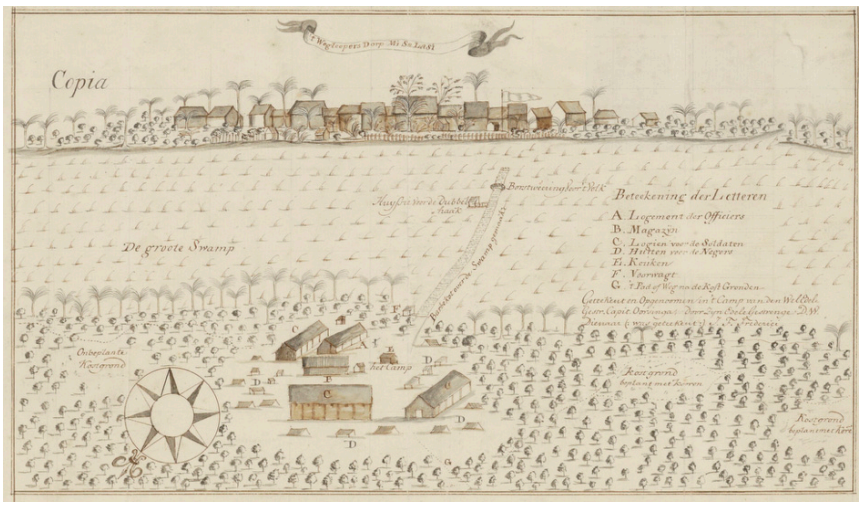

Figure 2. Map of the rebel village Mi Sa Lasi, also known as Boekoe (Friderici, 1772). On the foreground, the camp of the militia led by captain J.H. Oorsinga and Maroon provision fields with maize ('kostgrond beplant

[4] 26 January 1777. SVS-archive, inv. Nr. 169 (scan 51); 2 February 1768; Inv. nr. 160 (scan 38); December 1758, Inc. nr. 150, scan 528.

[5] SVS archive, Inv. nr. 150 (scan 524), December 1758.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

met kooren'), on the background the village surrounded by palisades and a bridge made of sunken *Mauritia flexuosa* trunks to reach the village. When the militia attacked Boekoe the Boni Maroons yelled: "This village is named *Mi Sa Lasi* (I will get lost) but our new village will be named *Yu No Sa Fini* (you will not find).".

Kapuweriman

The fugitives often hid for some time in the forest behind the plantations. This gave them the opportunity to get food from their own hidden gardens or from other people's provision grounds (Hoogbergen 1990; Maat et al. 2023; Makdoembaks 2023). The 'keppewerie' (from the Carib word *kapuweri* for secondary forest on abandoned provision fields) at the edge of the plantations often yielded some leftover crops, such as cassava roots, bananas, plantains and *maripa* fruits. Frequent contact and exchange in food and information took place between the enslaved people on the plantations and the runaways in the surrounding forest (Makdoembaks 2023; Lenoir 1973). A substantial number of 'schuilders' (people in hiding) hid close to the capital of Paramaribo, in the forest behind the provision grounds of the Society of Suriname. Later, they later trekked further inland and formed the Kwinti Maroons (Makdoembaks 2023). Still, 90% of these so-called *kapuweriman* or 'kappewerieneegers' returned to their plantations within a year due to food shortage (Hoogbergen 1990; Rolander [1754-1756] 2008).

Staple Crops

"In the beginning, the runaways were hungry, because they had to live from only hunting and gathering. Luckily Sa Sapá had hidden rice grains in her hair before she ran away, and in this way, they had rice to sow". Aucan Maroons along the Cottica River explained in 1961 to anthropologist André Köbben how their ancestors depended on female runaways for the necessary crop seeds to start agriculture (Köbben (1968:66). On the plantations, women were often tasked to tend provision gardens and cook for the white owners, and thus had access to crop seeds (van Andel et al. 2024). As soon as the runaways could grow sufficient crops at their gardens, they no longer needed to hide close to the plantations, although they still needed them for iron tools, guns and women (Hoogbergen 1990:12). According to Maroon oral history, however, it was the women that smuggled along crop seeds when they joined the runaways, and it was them who started agriculture in the rebel villages (van Andel et al. 2024).

The crops most frequently mentioned in the archival documents on Maroon villages are rice, bananas, maize, tobacco and the so-called 'aardvruchten' or ground provisions (sweet potato, cassava, taro, yams). We will elaborate more on these staple crops below and discuss a few crops that were occasionally mentioned, either because they were not often grown or not recognized by the militia members.

The militia members were amazed by the large quantity of staple crops that were grown. Some Kwinti Maroon villages were larger than Paramaribo and were clearly self-sufficient in crop production and animal husbandry (Makdoembaks 2023:406). Provision fields of 10 *akkers* (4.3 hectares) were no exception. When searching for rebel leader Claes along the Saramacca River in Februari 1712, the troops found several 'large, new provision fields, estimated together 50 to 60 *akkers* planted with taro, cassava, rice, sugarcane, yams and lots of maize[6]'. This would equalize some 17 to 25 hectares, which, if estimated well, is indeed enormous

Rice

On 20 August 1775, when the Scottish mercenary John Gabriel Stedman and the troops led by colonel Fourgeoud marched through the Cottica swamps to fight the Boni Maroons, they saw a small group of rebels. They ran away and dropped their baskets, which were filled with 'the most beautiful cleaned rice that I ever saw'. Later they came to a 'fine field with rice' (Stedman [1790] 1992:404). One of the rebel villages was even named *Reisee Condre* ('rice country'). Stedman drew a map (Figure 3) on which he marked the rice fields ('veld met rijst bezaait') and also the destroyed Maroon settlements

[6] SVS archive, inv. Nr. 129 (scan 249). 17 February 1712.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

('vernielde verblijfplaats der muitelingen') such as *Boekoe* ('Boucou') and *Gado Sabi* ('Gado Saby', lit. 'god knows'). Stedman's accounts and maps of the Boni rice fields from the 1770s were often used to argue that rice was the signature crops of the Maroons (Carney 2005), although archival documents from the Society of Suriname show that Maroons were already planting rice around their settlements in 1712 (Elfrink et al. 2024). In the first decade after the peace treaty in 1762, Saamaka Maroons produced such large quantities of rice along the upper Suriname river that they sold the surplus to plantations and in the city of Paramaribo (Price, 1990:386). Little is mentioned about the varieties of rice that were grown on the fields of the runaways. Today, Maroons grow a huge number of rice varieties (Pinas, 2025), but in the historic literature and archival documents, we find evidence that both Asian rice (*Oryza sativa*, with white husks) and African rice (*Oryza glaberrima*, with black husks) were cultivated on coastal plantations (Elfrink et al. 2025) and later by Maroons in the interior, both by Okanisi (Hostmann 1850) and Saamaka (Price 1991).

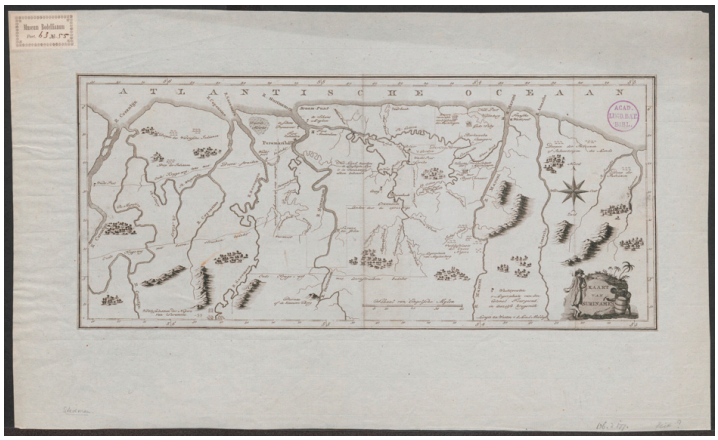

Figure 3. A. John Gabriel Stedman's original map of Suriname (1790]. Source: Rare Books Collection, Pennsylvania State University Library. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stedman1.jpg.

Figure 3. B. Detail of Stedman's map, showing the burnt Maroon settlements (('vernielde verblijfplaats der muitelingen') and rice fields ('veld met Rijst bezaait'). Stedman [1790].

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Cassava

Another major staple food of the Maroons was cassava (Hoogbergen 1990). On 10 July 1743, corporal Nassy ordered his soldiers to 'uproot cassava plants, make 14 prisoners and kill many' (Nassy et al. 1791: 115) in a hideout of the Okanisi Maroons, which later became known as *Nassy broko* ('Nassy destroyed it'). Although the crop is mostly described in the archives simply as 'cassava', it is likely that both bitter and sweet varieties *Manihot esculenta* were grown. The roots of sweet cassava can be boiled and eaten as potatoes, but the roots of bitter cassava need to be grated and the poisonous juice squeezed out through a woven cylinder (*matapi*, plaited from *Ischnosiphon arouma*). The cylinders of pressed cassava are dried, before they are broken and sifted through a sieve (*manari*) plaited from the same fiber and baked on an iron girdle into flat, circular cakes known as cassava bread (Ostendorf 1962; van Andel 2000)[7]. Occasionally, the variety of cassava is mentioned in the archives. In May 1768, when army officer J.E. Vogdt marched the *biribiri* samps along the Casipora Creek, he found a settlement of the runaways who escaped plantation Haagenbosch along the Cottica River[8]. They had large provision fields with bitter cassava. On 10 December 1766, militia leader B.S. Stoelen, wrote to the colonial authorities that he planned to build a camp on the location of the former Maroon hideout Tesisi (lit. 'taste and see', Stedman [1790] 1992: 400). Stoelen 'humbly asked the authorities asked for graters, a *cassava plate* (iron girdle), a cassava sieve and a *matapi* in order to bake cassava bread, because the new grounds at Tesisi are full of sweet and bitter cassava'[9].

Maize

A crop frequently encountered on the provision fields of the runaways is 'Turkse kooren' (maize). This is illustrated by the large maize fields outside the runaway village Mi Sa Lasi (Figure 2). The term Turkish corn' for maize, which was domesticated in Mexico and brought to Europe in the early 16th century, was coined by the German botanist Leonhard Fuchs. He was the first to provide a botanical description and a woodcut image of the maize plant in his illustrated herbal, and wrote that the grains were first brought to Germany from Turkey (Fuchs 1543: kapitell 320). The adjective 'Turkish' has now been lost in Surinamese Dutch, but the term 'koren' is still used for maize, while in the Netherlands this term refers to cereals like wheat, barley and rye. In 1639, the Dutch had already started to plant maize in to feed the enslaved in Dutch Brazil, maize was known under the Portuguese term *milho* (Herckmans, 1879), which was still used in 1705 in Suriname as *millis* (Table 1 crop names). One rebel village had such large maize fields that is was called *Caro Condre* (lit. 'maize country', Stedman [1790] 1922:400).

Bananas and plantains

Banana trees were often reported around Maroon settlements, but could probably also be interpreted as plantains, which must be boiled or fried before they can be eaten, either unripe or ripe. Plantains contain more starch and less sugar than dessert bananas, known in modern Surinamese as *bacoves*, which are only eaten when ripe. In some archival documents, the distinction is made between 'plantijns' or 'plantans'and 'bakoves' (Table 1, crop names), 'of which the only difference is like that of a sour and a sweet apple in Europe, and very profitable because a field full of them produces fruit for more than 20 years', according to a letter by Jan van der Veen to the Society of Suriname in June 1705.[10]

---

[7] For an extensive description of bitter cassava processing in an archival document, see the letter of Jan van Veen: SvS-archive, inv. nr. 232 (scan 228), https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/browse?scan=74421&archief=SVS

[8] . SvS archive in inv. nr. 160 (scan 36). https://htrhub.dekok.xyz/document/svs/mGb6km8T?query=coemoe&collection=svs&page=1&position=0&spelling=0&sensitivities=0&invFrom=1&invTo=566

[9] SvS, inv. nr. 158 (scan 178) https://htrhub.dekok.xyz/document/svs/uGsy-HM7?query=matts-pie&page=1&position=0&spelling=2&sensitivities=2&invFrom=1&invTo=566

[10] Letter from Jan van der Veen to the Society of Suriname. SvS archive, inv. nr. 232 (scan 230) https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/browse?scan=74423&archief=SVS

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Tajer

On 9 December 1762, while searching for the rebel settlement Pinnenburg, the armed forces found a newly built *palisaden huijs* (hut built from *Euterpe oleraceae* stems) and 100 to 200 young *tajer* plants. They pulled them from the ground, threw them on the thatched roof of the hut and set everything to fire[11]. At least three species of edible aroids (*Colocasia esculenta*, *Xanthosoma violacea* and *X.* cf. *sagittifolium*) are known in Suriname under the general name *tajer* and elsewhere grouped under the name 'taro' (Fang et al. 2025). Some species and varieties, like *tajerblad* are cultivated as leafy vegetable, stir-fried as spinach, while others are grown for their starchy corms that are cooked like potatoes, or "mashed with purslane and *Indiaense peper*" (hot pepper)[12]. Tajer was frequently observed on Maroons provision fields and was probably also grown in large quantities on *kostplantagies* (food gardens) on the edge of plantations. "The slaves cannot live well without this root", wrote Jan van der Veen in 1705[13].

Yam

Another type of ground provision (starchy root crops), indicated in the Dutch archives as 'aardvrugten' found on Maroon provision fields was yam (*Dioscorea* spp.). Several species were grown, of which the indigenous domesticate *D. trifida* (*napi*, *naapjes* or *napjes*) was easily distinguished by the militia members from the African species of yam (*D. alata* and *D. cayennensis* ssp. *rotundata*), which were grouped under the names *james* or *jamsi* (Table 1, crop names). According to Jan van der Veen (1705), "they [the yams] are much more moist and watery inside than *tajer* and tend to rot more quickly, and therefore planted hardly anymore". [14]. Today, however, Maroons still grow both the African and American species of yams (van Andel et al. 2016).

Rocou

Anatto or *rocou* (derived from from the Tupi name *urucum* for *Bixa orellana*, Alcantara Rodriguez et al., 2019) was another indigenous domesticate (Clement et al., 2010) cultivated in Maroon hideouts. The spiny fruits of this large shrub contain a bright orange pulp, which is used as food colorant or mixed with animal fat or tree resin and used as body paint (Ostendorf 1962). On 17 February 1712, processed *rocou* was found in the hut of rebel leader Claes[15]. The fruit pulp, kneaded into lumps, was already a trade item between indigenous people and the Dutch in the very beginning of their colonial activities in South America (Cardoso 2024). The Maroons probably grew *rocou* for ritual use or for trade.

Minor crops

Other crops reported from the Maroon fields were tobacco, okra, sugarcane, hot peppers, peanuts, sesame (*bonjera*), oranges (*appel China*), pineapple, sweet potato, cotton and beans (Table 1). The species or variety of beans is hardly specified, although 'pees' and 'erten' refer to peas (*Pisum sativum*), but as these do not grow well in the tropics. The beans grown by the Maroons were probably *djari pesi* (*Vigna unguiculata*), *sebijari pesi* (*Phaseolus lunatus*) and *loango pesi* or *Angola pesi* (*Cajanus*

---

[11] SVS-archive, inv. nr. 154 (scan 249) https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/browse?scan=42722&archief=SVS

[12] Letter of Jan van der Veen (21 June 1705) to the Society of Suriname, SvS archive, inv. nr. 232 (scan 229) https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/browse?scan=74422&archief=SVS

[13] Letter of Jan van der Veen (21 June 1705) to the Society of Suriname, SvS archive, inv. nr. 232 (scan 229-230), https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/browse?scan=74425&archief=SVS

[14] Letter of Jan van der Veen (21 June 1705) to the Society of Suriname, SvS archive, inv. nr. 232 (scan 230) https://dekok.xyz/htrsearch/browse?scan=74423&archief=SVS

[15] 10 February 1712, SVS-archive, inv. Nr. 129 (scan 249). https://htrhub.dekok.xyz/document/svs/KbvVhviW?query=rocou&collection=svs&page=1&position=9&spelling=2&sensitivities=2&invFrom=1&invTo=566

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

cajan), of which Stedman ([1796] 1992:397) wrote: "All the Negroes are extremely fond of them and cultivate them in their gardens without expense or trouble".

Most of these beans are still grown by Maroons today (van Andel et al. 2016; Van Donselaar and van der Sijs 2013). One crop that is not mentioned in the archives, but must have been grown by the Maroons, is *Canna (C. glauca* and *C. indica)*. In 1755, the Swedish biologist Daniel Rolander mentioned that this this wild herb was cultivated in great quantities to feed the enslaved population with its starchy rhizomes. "Hostile blacks industriously cultivate *Canna* at the mountain foot to have many seeds" (Rolander [1754-1756] 2008; van Andel et al. 2012a). The hard, globular seeds of this herb also served as bullets. "The runaways use the seeds instead of hail to shoot with" noted plantation owner and amateur botanist Carl Gustav Dahlberg [1771] in de Moraes (2012).

Fibers

According to Hoogbergen (1990:10, 21) the refugees certainly had to rely on the plantations for their clothes, "so they could not move away too far". Still, several of the Maroon provision fields that were set to fire by the militias contained cotton plants. On 2 January 1762, when Luitenant Marchandt and his team were chasing Kwinti Maroons between the Saramacca River and the Wanica Creek, their group encountered four new huts with pe-palm-thatched roofs ("4 nieuwe pina hutten") in which the fire was still burning, pots and pans with freshly cooked food, cotton, loincloths (*camissies* from the Portugese-Carib word *kamisa*), caps and ''tools for spinning and weaving" (Makdoembaks 2023: 186-187).

Household equipment

The archives sometimes mention names that are derived from indigenous words for types of basketry, woven from strips of *Ischnosiphon arouma* stems (van Andel 2000), such as the *kurrekurre*, the *menari* and the *mattapie* (Table 1, wild plants). Apart from iron cooking pots and Chinaware stolen from plantations, such as the Delft blue plate from plantation Haagenbosch found by officer Vogdt in a the hut of Maroon chief Kormantin Kodjo[16], the Maroons cooked in self-made clay pots and cultivated calabashes to use as bowls and containers, likely both the indigenous tree calabash (Crescentia cujete) and the vines of the African bottle gourd (Lagenaria siceraria). Both species are still grown by Maroons today (van Andel et al., 2016).

Discussion

Crop Diversity

Archival documents, especially the reports from the military raids against the Maroons, provide a wealth of documents that testify on the agricultural skills of the runaways in the 18th century. The Maroons did not only plant crops that provided food in a few months, such as rice and maize, but also invested in crops that took much longer to produce, such as *rocou* shrubs and orange trees, indicating that they planned to stay in their hideouts for a longer period. The militia members were amazed by the size of their provision fields and the diversity of their crops (Makdoembaks 2023), and although they were not trained in natural sciences, they seemed to recognize many of the crops that they encountered. If botanists would have joined these troops, we would have had much more detail on crops and useful plants, like in the case of Dutch Brazil, where scientists like Marcgraf and Piso took part in military expeditions against hostile indigenous groups and documented plant use on the way (Alcantara Rodriguez et al. 2024). In Suriname, it was considered too dangerous for botanists to join these troops, although several of them, such as Maria Sybilla Merian (1705), Daniel Rolander ([1774-1756] 2008) and Hendrik Meyer (1687) were certainly interested in the wild and cultivated flora of Suriname (van Andel et al. 2012a, 2012b). Two botanists who did venture into the interior,

[16] scan 36 van 158 in inv. nr. 160, Cottica River, 2 May 1768. Vogdt found a large quantity of earthenware pots, dishes, wooden trays and pipes in the headman's hut https://htrhub.dekok.xyz/document/svs/mGb6km8T?query=coemoe&collection=svs&page=1&position=0&spelling=0&sensitivities=0&invFrom=1&invTo=566

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Johannes Bartsch and a certain Mr. Bik, were allegedly killed during Maroons attacks on the lower Suriname River in the early 18th century, although the archival evidence for these incidents is inconclusive (Engelmann et al., *in press*). The few herbarium specimens of crop species and useful wild plants that exist for this period, collected by Hendrik Meyer, came from indigenous villages and gardens of the enslaved around Paramaribo (van Andel et al, 2012b).

The small gardens that the enslaved Africans were allowed to tend at the edge of the plantations were already spaces outside mastery (Roane 2018: 244), and enabled them to continue their culinary and spiritual practices (Midlo Hall, 2010; Price 1991). Once living in freedom, Maroon agriculture was quintessential to guarantee their independence and autonomy (Price 1991). Growing many varieties of a crop in one field ensures a steady harvest, regardless of unpredictable weather conditions (Maat et al. 2024). Apart from distinguishing between plantains and bananas or between sweet and bitter cassava, the archives provide little information on specific crop varieties. Today, Maroons cultivate not only a wide array of crop species, but also many varieties within these crops (van Andel et al, 2016; Pinas, 2025). Price (1991) wrote that he collected information on many different varieties of rice, okra, maize, *napi* and yam, but neither published their names nor made specimens, which hinders further comparison of Maroon agrodiversity between the past and the present.

Whose Plant Knowledge Was Reported?

The archived reports to the Society of Suriname on military actions against Maroons were written by educated Europeans. Were they able to recognize a sesame plant? Could they see the difference between bitter and sweet cassava varieties, and between plantains and sweet bananas on the Maroon provision fields? Probably not, but the bulk of the armed troops was illiterate and consisted of indigenous field guides and enslaved Africans specifically bought to be trained as soldiers (Hoogbergen 1990). These Black Rangers (*Neeger Vrijcorps*), who were given a red beret and promised freedom after their military service, were known locally as *Redi Musu* (red caps) and considered as traitors by the Maroons (Dewulf 2018). It is likely that some of the Information on specific crops and objects produced from wild plants, such as the *pienen* salt and the *morisi* linen in Kormantin Kodjo's dwelling, was provided by the *Redi Musu* and the indigenous militia members.

Exchange with Indigenous Peoples

Both indigenous people and Africans have lived together in bondage on plantations. From the early colonial period onwards, there has been an ambivalent relationship between indigenous peoples and Maroons in Suriname (Price 2010). This animosity was fueled by colonial authorities, who feared that a coalition between these two groups would mean the end of the colony (Dragtenstein 1993). At the end of the 17th century, enslaved Africans were used by planters in their battle against rebellious indigenous groups, while in the 18th century, indigenous scouts were frequently hired to search for Maroon hideouts in the forest (Dragtenstein 1993; Hoogbergen 1990). At the same time, indigenous people also freed enslaved Africans and facilitated marronage. The earliest Maroons were taken up by indigenous communities and took indigenous wives. The group of runaways led by the African-born Ganimet had a hideout named Fort Berima, some 40 km from Paramaribo. It was destroyed in 1680 by colonial forces, after which the survivors joined the indigenous Carib communities living along the Saramacca and Coppename Rivers (Dragtenstein 2002).

In spite of being 'uneasy neighbors', indigenous peoples traded hammocks, baskets, dyes (*rocou*), clay pots, bows and arrows with Maroons and plantation residents (Dragtenstein 1993; Price 2010). What is striking from the archival documents is that indigenous people apparently had also taught the enslaved Africans to make these things themselves. The complicated techniques needed to detoxify and process bitter cassava was developed by native Amazonians (Clement at al. 2010), just like the skills to extract fiber, salt, palm heart and fruit juice from native palms (Penard & Penard, 1907). Maroons and indigenous people in Suriname had (and many still have) similar subsistence strategies: slash-and-burn agriculture, complemented by hunting, fishing and gathering forest

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

products. While cassava has always been the most prominent crop on indigenous provision fields, rice is the most important staple food in many Maroon communities (Penard and Penard 1907; Pinas et al. 2025). The exchange of information on useful plants, crop propagules and the knowledge on how to grow them between enslaved Africans and indigenous peoples is not documented in the archives, but was noted by botanist Rolander in the 1750s (van Andel et al, 2012a). To trace this past ethnobotanical exchange, we will have to look beyond the archives (Watkins and Carney 2022) and engage in further research on the ethnobotany and oral history of both groups.

Maroon Agriculture Always Has a Bad Name

The language of empire about Maroon agriculture did not end with the abolition of slavery. While indigenous peoples are frequently described as stewards of the rainforest, colonial historiography of Suriname has often portrayed Maroon crop cultivation as backward, primitive and destructive, in spite of the similar subsistence strategies of both groups (Lobach, 2023). This negative framing completely contradicts the Maroon's ability to be self-sufficient in the rainforest in spite of centuries of military pursuit and has justified the dispossession of Maroon ancestral lands until today (Lobach 2023; van Stipriaan 2020). The Dutch archives, however, clearly show the African agency in subsistence agriculture in Suriname.

Sustainable agriculture requires a continuing renewal of crop varieties as an adaptation to the climate, soils, pest and diseases (Cleveland et al. 1994). Price (1991: 107) was certain that in the early 18th century, the Saamaka Maroons brought with them the full array of crops that their descendants grow today. This is far from the truth and he underestimates the experimental attitude of the Maroons. Recent research, using new methods such as DNA sequencing, shows that a continued exchange in rice varieties between different groups of Maroons, descendants of Asian contract laborers, Europeans and other ethnic groups has taken place in the past centuries (van de Loosdrecht et al. 2024). Apart from maintaining an astonishing agrodiversity (Pinas 2025; van Andel et al. 2016), Maroons in Suriname also have managed their surrounding forest in a sustainable way, conserving higher levels of biodiversity and lower levels of deforestation than outside their territories (Sangat et al. 2025).

Suggestions for Further Research

Our study is by no means a systematic review of all archival documents on of Maroon plant use from the late 17th to 19th century. Such a review would be interesting to trace the (dis-)appearance of certain crops on their provision fields and their growth seasons. The exchange in plant knowledge between indigenous peoples and enslaved Africans in the Guianas has hardly been documented, but could be further explored by reviewing 17th century archival documents on indigenous provision fields, both in the Dutch, British and French archives, for the entire Guianas. This research should then be combined with field interviews to document oral history on the exchange of knowledge and crops. Especially for Guyana, where in spite of recent archival research on Maroons (Alston 2023), ethnobotanical studies among the descendants of Maroons are lacking. Further research is also needed on the oral history about the agricultural practices of the Kwinti and Boni (Aluku) Maroons, for which much archival documents exist (Hoogbergen 1990; Makdoembaks 2023). This would allow us to compare the descriptions of Maroon subsistence strategies by the colonial authorities with the stories of the descendants of those who managed to carve a living in the impenetrable coastal swamps.

Conclusions

Although neglected by historians or downplayed by agronomists for a long time, the diversity of Maroon agriculture and their skillful use of the forest in the 17th and 18th century becomes apparent from archival documents. The digitized and transcribed archives of the Society of Suriname offer an unprecedented view on Maroon plant use, which contrast the negative framing of the past.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Knowledge of the 'language of empire' is needed to interpret these archival documents and collaboration between anthropologists, historians and ethnobotanists is essential to put this information in the right context. Further archival research could shed light on the crop diversity and the exchange in crops and agricultural skills between indigenous peoples and Maroons in all three of the Guianas.

References

Alcantara-Rodriguez, Mireia, Van Andel, Tinde R., & Françozo, Mariana 2024. Nature portrayed in images in Dutch Brazil: Tracing the sources of the plant woodcuts in the Historia Naturalis Brasiliae (1648). *Plos one*, 19(7), e0276242.

Alcantara-Rodriguez, Mireia, Mariana Françozo, and Tinde van Andel. 2019. Plant knowledge in the *Historia Naturalis Brasiliae* (1648): Retentions of seventeenth-century plant use in Brazil. *Economic Botany* 73(3): 390-404.

Alston, David (2023) The Guyana Maroons, 1796–1834: Persistent and Resilient until the End of Slavery, *Slavery & Abolition*, 44:2, 292-316.

Cardoso, Alirio. 2024. The Amazon Connection: Tupi and Tapuia Exchanges in Dutch Atlantic Trade (1600-1641). *Fronteras de la Historia* 29(2): 70-91.

Carney, Judith A. 2005. Rice and Memory in the Age of Enslavement: Atlantic Passages to Suriname. *Slavery and Abolition* 26(3): 325-348.

Clement Charles R., De Cristo-Araújo M., Coppens D'Eeckenbrugge G., Alves Pereira A., Picanço-Rodrigues D. 2010. Origin and Domestication of Native Amazonian Crops. *Diversity* 2(1):72-106. https://doi.org/10.3390/d2010072

Cleveland, David A., Daniela Soleri and Steven E. Smith. 1994. Do Folk Crop Varieties Have a Role in Sustainable Agriculture? *BioScience* 44(11): 740-751.

Eltis, David, Morgan, Philip and David Richardson. 2007. Agency and Diaspora in Atlantic History: Reassessing the African Contribution to Rice Cultivation in the Americas. *The American Historical Review* 112(5): 1329-1358.

Dahlberg, Carl G. 1771. Catalogus der Vlessen, van de boom, struik, plant & rank, gewassen, dewelke ik in spiritus vini bewaard heb. Unpublished manuscript, Linnean Society of London.

De Beet, Chris, & Sterman, Mirjam. E. 1981. People in between: the Matawai Maroons of Suriname. Meppel: Krips repro.

De Groot, Sylvia W. 1984. A comparison between the history of maroon communities in Surinam and Jamaica: An introduction. *Oso* 3: 73-82.

Dewulf Jeroen. 2021. Flying Back to Africa or Flying to Heaven? Competing Visions of Afterlife in the Lowcountry and Caribbean Slave Societies. *Religion and American Culture*. 31(2):222-261. doi:10.1017/rac.2021.12

Dewulf Jeroen. 2018. Grijs Slavernijverleden? Over Zwarte milities en redimoesoegedrag. Amsterdam:Amsterdam University Press.

De Moraes, Pedro Luís Rodrigues. 2012. Linnaeus's *Plantae Surinamenses* revisited. *Phytotaxa* 41 (1): 1-86.

Dragtenstein, F. 1993. ndiaanse opperhoofden rond 1700. Oso 12: 188-197.

Dragtenstein, Frank. 2004. De ondraaglijke stoutheid der wegloopers: Marronage en koloniaal beleid in Suriname (1667-1768). PhD thesis, Utrecht University.

Dragtenstein, Frank. 2023. Kaási de rebellenleider: Het vroege verzet tege de slavernij in Suriname. Amsterdam: Boom.

Elfrink, Thijs L., van de Hoef, Marden J., van Montfort, Jip, Bruins, Anna L., & van Andel, Tinde. 2024. Rice cultivation and the struggle for subsistence in early colonial Suriname (1668–1702). *New West Indian Guide* 98(3-4), 306-329.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Engelmann, Mario, van Andel, Tindw R., Berger, Mathias. (in press) The two half-brothers, Johann Christoph Bohlius and Johann Bartsch from Königsberg (Prussia): Physicians and natural scientists of the 18th century. *Sudhoffs Archiv*.

Fang, Qiong, Matthews, Peter J., Grimaldi, Ilaria M., de Jong, Hans, van de Belt, José, Schranz, M. Eric, & van Andel, Tinde. (2025). The invisible tropical tuber crop: edible aroids (Araceae) sold as "tajer" in the Netherlands. *Economic Botany*, 79(1), 44-64.

Fatah-Black, Karwan J. 2013. *Suriname and the Atlantic World, 1650-1800*. PhD thesis, Leiden University.

Friderici, J.F. 1772. Kaart van het weglopersdorp Mi Sa Lasi en het daarvoor door kapitein Oorsinga opgeslagen kamp.. 29 x 42 cm Manuscript. National Archive . Gefacsimileerd in Grote Atlas van de West-Indische Compagnie deel II p. 388 https://www.nationaalarchief.nl/onderzoeken/archief/4.VEL/invnr/2128/file/NL-HaNA_4.VEL_2128. Inventaris van de verzameling buitenlandse kaarten Leupe, 1584-1813 (1865)_4.VEL, inventarisnummer 2128.

Fuchs, Leonhart. 1542. De historia stirpium commentarii insignes. Isingrin, Basel.

Goedhart, Anne, Kendall, Hillianthe (1983). Por' nen no bun. Compact disc, Catalogusnr.:KLX0997. https://www.muziekweb.nl/Link/KLX0997/Por-nen-no-bun

Hartsinck, Jan Jacob. Beschryving van Guiana, of de wilde kust in Zuid-America. Amsterdam: Gerrit Tielenburg.

Herckmans, Elias. 1879. Generale Beschrijvinge vande Capitanie Paraiba. Bijdragen en *Mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap* 2: 358–367.

Hoogbergen, Wim, S.M. 1990. The Boni Maroons wars in Suriname. Brill, Leiden.

Hostmann, F.W. 1850. Over de beschavind der Negers in Amerika door kolonisatie met Europeanen. Amsterdam: J.C.A. Sulpke.

Iriarte, José; Mitchell J. Power, Stephen Rostain, Frances E. Mayle, Huw Jones, Jennifer Watling, Bronwen S. Whitney, & Doyle B. McKey. 2012. Fire-free land use in pre-1492 Amazonian savannas, *PNAS* 109 (17) 6473-6478.

Köbben, André. 1968. Continuity in change-Cottica Djuka society as a changing system. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 124(1): 56-90.

Lenoir, J.D. 1973. The Paramacca maroons: a study in religious acculturation. Graduate Faculty of Political land Social Science research, New School for Social Research, New York.

Lindeman, Jan C and S.P. Molenaar. Preliminary survey of the vegetation types of northern Suriname. In: The vegetation of Suriname, Vol. 1 Part 2.De Hulster, I.A. and Lanjouw, J. (eds.). Utrcht: Kemink en Zoon N.V.

Lobach, Simon. 2023. Ecological stereotypes: Perceptions of Indigenous and Maroon communities in late colonial Suriname. *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies* 32 (2): 237-261.

Maat, Harro, Nicholaas Pinas, and Tinde van Andel. 2024. The role of crop diversity in escape agriculture; rice cultivation among Maroon communities in Suriname. *Plants, People, Planet* 6(5): 1142-1149.

Marshall, Bernard A. 2008. Maronnage In Slave Plantation Societies: A case study of Dominica, 1785-1815. *Caribbean Quarterly* 54(4): 103-110.

Merian, Maria S. 1705. Metamorphosis insectorum Surinamensium. Amsterdam: G. Valck.

Midlo Hall, Gwendolyn. 2010. Africa and Africans in the African diaspora: The uses of relational databases. *The American Historical Review* 115 (1): 136-150.

Nassy, David de Ishak Cohen, S.H. Brandon, M.P. de Leon, S.J.V. de la Parra and J. de la Parra. 1791 *Geschiedenis der kolonie van Suriname*.S. Emmering, Amsterdam.

Ostendorf, F.W. 1962. Nuttige planten en sierplanten in Suriname. Landbouwproefstation in Suriname. Bulletin 79. Paramaribo.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Price, Richard. 1991. Subsistence on the plantation periphery: Crops, cooking, and labour among eighteenth-century Suriname Maroons, *Slavery and Abolition* 12(1): 107-127.

Price, Richard. 2010. Uneasy Neighbors: Maroons and Indians in Suriname. *Tipití: Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America* 8(2): 4.

Price, Richard, 1996. Introduction, in: Price, R. (ed.) *Maroon societies: Rebel slave communities in the Americas*. Baltimore:The Johns Hopkins University Press. Pp. 1-32.

Price, Richard. 1990. Alabi's World. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Pres,.

Reeps, Jan. [1692-1694]. Reeps Ongeluckige Reijse na de Custe van America ende Amasones, 4 september 1692-4 juni 1694. Handwritten manuscript, National Library of the Netherlands (KB Den Haag), nr. KW 131 C 14. https://webggc.oclc.org/cbs/DB=2.37/SET=1/TTL=1/SHW?FRST=2

Roane, J. 2018. Plotting the black commons. *Souls* 20(3): 239-266.

Rolander, Daniel [1754-1756] 2008. The Suriname Journal: Composed during an exotic journey. In: Hansen, J. (ed.), The Linnaeus apostles: Global science & adventure, vol. 3, book 3. London: IK Foundation, pp. 1215–1576.

Sangat, S.S. et al. 2025. Afro-descendant lands in South America contribute to biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation. *Communications Earth & Environment* 6(1):458.

Stedman, John Gabriel. [1790] 1992. Narrative of a five years' expedition against the revolted negroes of Surinam. Price, R. & Price, S. (eds). Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Thoden van Velzen, H.U.E. & Hoogbergen, Wim. 3011. Een zwarte vrijstaat in Suriname: De Okaanse samenleving in ddee 18e eeuw. Leiden: KITLV Uitgeverij.

Van Alphen, G. 1962. Suriname in een onbekend journaal van 1693. *New West Indian Guide* 42(1): 303-313.

van Andel, Tinde, Maat, Harro, & Pinas, Nicholaas. 2024. Maroon women in Suriname and French Guiana: rice, slavery, memory. *Slavery & Abolition*, 45(2), 187-211.

Van Andel, Tinde, van 't Klooster, Charlotte, Quiroz, Diana, Towns, Alexandra, Ruysschaert, Sofie, & van den Berg, Margot. 2014. Local plant names reveal that enslaved Africans recognized substantial parts of the New World flora. *PNAS 111*(50), E5346-E5353.

Van Andel, Tinde, van der Velden, Amber, & Reijers, Minke 2016. The 'Botanical Gardens of the Dispossessed'revisited: richness and significance of Old World crops grown by Suriname Maroons. *Genetic Resources and Crop Evolution*, 63(4); 695-710.

Van Andel, Tinde. 2003. Floristic composition and diversity of three swamp forests in northwest Guyana. *Plant Ecology* 167(2): 293-317.

Van Andel, Tinde. 2000. Non-Timber Forest Products of the North-West District of Guyana Part II. Wageningen: Tropenbos-Guyana Series 8B.

van Andel, Tinde, Maas, Paul, & Dobreff, James. 2012a. Ethnobotanical notes from Daniel Rolander's Diarium Surinamicum (1754–1756): Are these plants still used in Suriname today?. Taxon, 61(4): 852-863.

Van Andel, Tinde, Veldman, Sarina, Maas, Paul, Thijsse, Gerard, & Eurlings, Marcel. 2012b. The forgotten Hermann Herbarium: a 17th century collection of useful plants from Suriname. Taxon, 61(6): 1296-1304.

Van Donselaar, Jan. 1989. Woordenboek van het Surinaams-Nederlands. Muiderberg: Dick Coutinho.

Van Donselaar, Jan; Nicolien van der Sijs. 2013. Woordenboek van het Nederlands in Suriname van 1667 tot 1876. Meertens Instituut/KNAW, Amsterdam.

Van Stipriaan, Alex. 2020. Suriname Maroons: A History of Intrusions into their Territories. In: Moussa iye, A.; schmidt, N.; and P.E. Lovejoy (eds.). Slavery, Resistance and Abolitions A Pluralist Perspective. A Contribution to the International Decade for People of African Descent 2015-2024. UNESCO, Paris. Pp. 215-224.

 doi:10.20944/preprints202605.0275.v1

Van 't Klooster, Charlotte I.E.A., Jan Lindeman, and Marion Jansen-Jacobs. 2003. Index of vernacular plant names of Suriname. *Blumea* Supplement 15.

Watkins, Case, and Judith A. Carney. 2022. Amplifying the archive: Methodological plurality and geographies of the Black Atlantic. *Antipode* 54 (4): 1297-1319.

Wood, Peter H. 1974. *Black Majority: Negroes in colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion.* New York: W.W. Norton & Company.