New Species and Combinations in Costa Rican Orchids

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As the orchid treatment for the Manual de la Flora de Costa Rica nears completion, several additional new species and combinations are needed. There remain a number of probable new species for which the available material is insufficient.

Oncidium imitans Dressier, sp. nov. TYPE: Costa Rica. San José: about 25 km N of San Isidro del General along the Interamerican Highway, 9°20’N, 83°41’W, 1800 m alt., tall wet evergreen forest on steep slopes, on roadside bank on moss-covered log, W. Burger & R. Baker 10075a (holotype, F). Figure 1.

O. obryzatoide similis sed bracteis longissimis tenuibus, sepalis lateralibus connatis, columna sine tabula infrastigmaticca vel constrictione basali.

Caespitose, pseudobulbs ovoid, compressed, ca. 4 × 2 cm; leaves 1 apical, 2 sheathing, ligulate, narrowed basally, ca. 15 × 1.6 cm; inflorescence ca. 20 cm, simple, of 3–4 flowers; bracts long and narrow, thin, scape bracts 4.5–5 × 0.4–0.5 cm, floral bracts to 2.5 × 0.3–0.5 cm; sepals greenish yellow, callus white with red-brown spots, lip and petals yellow, with red on margins of isthmus and red spots on column wings; dorsal sepal elliptic, 9 × 2.5–3 mm, lateral sepals lance-elliptic, united for ca. 7 mm, together 9 × 4 mm; petals oblong-oblanceolate, obtuse, 10 × 4 mm; lip 15 × 16 mm, base with a 2-mm-wide thickening to callus, lateral lobes oblong, to 2.5 × 1.5 mm, isthmus subtrigonal, 5 × 4 mm, callus 2.5 × 4 mm, 7-lobed, midlobe 6 × 15–16 mm, shallowly retuse; column 8 mm, trigonous-terete, without tabula infrastigmaticca, wings ca. 1.5 × 3.5 mm.

I first encountered this species in the Jardín Lankester, where a plant from Santa María de Dota was labeled as O. obryzatoide Kraenzlin. My wife and I photographed the flowers and preserved a couple in liquid, without questioning the identification. When I later studied O. obryzatoide, it was immediately obvious that the plant from Santa María de Dota was distinct. The long bracts, the column without a tabula infrastigmaticca, and the partially united lateral sepals all suggest O. warscewiczii. Though superficially similar to O. obryzatoide, the column without either tabula infrastigmaticca or basal constriction and the conolate lateral sepals at once distinguish O. imitans. The epithet, imitans, refers to its superficial similarity to O. obryzatoide.


Habitu genere, sepals ovatis carinatis apiculatis, petals cuneato-unguiculatis spathulato-flabellatis, labello pandurato-oblongo callo humili.

Plant psygmoid, leaves linear-lanceolate, subfalcate, acuminate, 4.2–8 × 0.3–0.5 cm, abscission layer ca. 5 mm from base; inflorescence lateral, 8–9 cm, rachis fractiflex, bracts triangular-ovate, cor- date, acute, keeled, glandular-erose, 2–3 mm; ovary and pedicel 6–7 mm; sepals ovate, carinate, apiculate, laterals reflexed, 3–3.2 × 2–2.2 mm; petals cuneate-unguiculate, truncate-subpatulate, 6 × 5.6 mm; lip 9 × 3.2 mm, lateral margins recurved, callus 3 × 2.8 mm, cor- date, ovate, distally continuous with surface of blade; shaft of column ca. 0.8 mm, anther with rostellum beak ca. 3 mm.

A single plant of this species was found by the

When C. H. Dodson and I found a white-flowered Paphinia between Turrialba and Siquirres in 1965, it was thought to be the plant described as P. cristata var. modiglianiana Reichenbach f. (Fowlie, 1964). Flowers were kept in fresh condition as long as possible to attract pollinators for photography and identification, so the flowers available for pressing were few and rather battered. The lack of an adequate type specimen was one reason that I treated P. clausula as a new name, based on P. cristata var. modiglianiana, rather than a new species. Now, both Jenny (1979) and Dodson and Neu-decker (1990) have studied the European herbarium material and found that P. cristata var.
modiglianiana is, indeed, a white-flowered form of P. cristata from Brazil. As the name P. clausula is irrevocably tied to the type of P. cristata var. modiglianiana, the Costa Rican Paphinia must be described as new. Fortunately, an excellent type specimen is now available.

Paphinia subclausa is distinctive in the short column foot, lack of appendages or lobules at the base of the lip, and its white, half-closed flowers. These features suggest a close alliance with P. ruwings. The plants appear to be autogamous, flowering, and (3) the spoon-like column apex bent at the nectary, (2) the flabellate midlobe of the lip with the lip, which, with the column foot appears to form easily separated by (1) the abruptly bent base of petals ligulate, 6 X 0.7-1 mm; lip cuneate, 6 X 3.5—4 mm, shallowly 3-lobed, lateral lobes decurrent, 0.5 X 2 mm, midlobe subflabellate or transversely rhombic, verruculose, base of lip abruptly bent upward, paralleling column foot, lack of appendages or lobules at the base of the lip, and its white, half-closed flowers. These features suggest a close alliance with P. ruwings. The plants appear to be autogamous, flowering, and (3) the spoon-like column apex bent at the wings. The plants appear to be autogamous, flowering and setting fruits irregularly.


S. bilineatae similis sed base labello cum pede columna minutum sigmoideum, lobo intermedio labello flabelato papilloso eroso-denticulato, apice columna leviter deflexa in media alis.

Stems slender, superposed, basal stems 6—20 cm, basally with sheaths bearing caducous, reduced leaf blades; leaves oblong or elliptic-oblong, 5.5—9.5 X 0.6—1.1 cm; flowers solitary or fascicled, bracts oblong, brown, conuplicate, 5—7 X 3—4 mm; sepals narrowly oblong, acute, 6 X 1.6—2 mm; petals ligulate, 6 X 0.7—1 mm; lip cuneate, 6 X 3.5—4 mm, shallowly 3-lobed, lateral lobes decurrent, 0.5 X 2 mm, midlobe subflabellate or transversely rhombic, verruculose, base of lip abruptly bent upward, paralleling column foot, and then forward; column ca. 6 mm, with prominent wings, bent at the wings.

Atwood identified these plants as Scaphyglottis gracilis Schlechter. Though the protologue shows none of the unique features of that species, Schlechter's drawing of the flower could be taken to represent S. atwoodii. A tracing of the plant (AMES), however, shows much narrower leaves, indicating that S. gracilis is a synonym of S. prolifera Cogniaux. Scaphyglottis atwoodii resembles S. bilineata (Reichenbach f.) Schlechter in most features but is easily separated by (1) the abruptly bent base of the lip, which, with the column foot appears to form a nectary, (2) the flabellate midlobe of the lip with papillos surface and erose-denticulate distal margin, and (3) the spoon-like column apex bent at the wings. The plants appear to be autogamous, flowering and setting fruits irregularly.

This species is known only from Finca La Selva, where there have been several collections. Plants collected in nearby Chilamate proved to be S. bilineata, a species not recorded from La Selva.

Paratypes. COSTA RICA. Heredia: all from Finca La Selva: J. Folsom 8818 (DUKE), 9156 (DUKE), 10128 (DUKE), C. Todzia 842 (CR), 1084 (DUKE).

New Combinations


This may prove to be a natural hybrid, of which only a few collections have been made from the Atlantic slope of Costa Rica. Until its parentage can be determined, it should at least be treated with the rest of its congeners, in Encyclia.


The drawing, supposedly of this species, that was published (Repert. Spec. Nov. Regni Veg. Beih. 59: t. 44) proves to be a drawing of S. brachiatia Schlechter (= S.stellata Lodigies ex Lindley). There is, however, a photograph of the type in the Ames Herbarium, and this is clearly what was described as Hexisnea lankesteri Ames, for which the combination Reichenbachanthus lankesteri (Ames) Mora-Retana & J. García was only recently published. Scaphyglottis subulata, however, is earlier by a number of years, and so the epithet subulatus must be used for this species.


Unfortunately, the number of type specimens of Stellilabium is not much less than the total number of specimens available. Each, however, appears to be distinct and thus this new combination is needed.


I had no intention of poaching in Carl Luer's
area, but he somehow thought I would publish this combination and so left it to me.

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