

TAB. XXII.

BRASSIA\* VERRUCOSA:

WARTY-LIPPED BRASSIA.

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TRIBUS: VANDEÆ.—LINDLEY.

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BRASSIA. *R. Brown in Hort. Kew. ed. 2, 5, 215.—Lindley Gen. et Spe. Orchid. cxxxii.*

PERIANTHIUM explanatum. Sepala et petala angusta, libera; his sæpius minoribus. Labellum planum, indivisum, ecalcaratum, columnâ continuum, basi bi-cristatum. Columna libera, aptera, nana. Anthera 1-ocularis. Pollinia 2, posticè sulcata, caudiculâ brevi, glandulâ crassâ.—Herbæ Americanæ epiphytæ pseudo-bulbosæ. Folia pergamenea. Scapi radicales vaginati. Flores speciosi, spicati.

BRASSIA verrucosa; pseudo-bulbis compressis diphyllis margine obtusis, foliis ligulato-oblongis acutis scapo gracili multifloro duplò brevioribus, sepalis ovato-lanceolatis acuminatis, petalis minoribus acutis, labello petalis longitudine æquali unguiculato obovato apiculato: basi verrucis crebris munito.

Description.

PSEUDO-BULBS compressed, ovate, furrowed, obtuse at the edges, three or four inches long, and usually clustered. LEAVES two on each pseudo-bulb, oblong, strap-shaped, acute, varying in length from half a foot to a foot and a half. SCAPE radical, slender, about two feet high, bearing about a dozen flowers in a crowded raceme at its extremity. SEPALS ovate-lanceolate, acuminate, very slightly undulate, the upper one two inches and a half, the lower nearly three inches long, pale green, sprinkled near the base with small dark spots. PETALS scarcely more than half the length of the sepals, but of the same colour and form. LIP unguiculate, heart-shaped, acuminate, channelled down the centre, and provided at the base with two parallel glands,—whitish in the upper part, but in the lower curiously covered with green warts. COLUMN dwarf, light green.

THE genus *Brassia* is so nearly related to *Odontoglossum*, that a country known to abound in the one, might naturally be expected to offer numerous examples of the other;—it is, therefore, singular that, among the vast numbers of new *Orchidaceæ* which have of late years been imported from Mexico and Guatemala, not a single species of *Brassia* should have been found, until Messrs. ROLLISSON were so fortunate as to introduce the subject of the accompanying plate, which, if not so brilliant in its colours as *B. Lanceana* or *B. macrostachya*, is superior to either in the elegance of its habit. Messrs. ROLLISSON received their plant from Mexico, but the species has more recently been discovered in Guatemala, where—judging from the aspect of the specimens imported—there probably are many varieties.

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\* Thus named by Mr. Brown in due commemoration of the late Mr. Brass, a skilful botanical traveller and draughtsman, who collected seeds, plants, and dried specimens, on the Guinea coast, for Sir Joseph Banks, Dr. Fothergill, and Dr. Pitcairn, and whose sketches being most liberally lent by Sir Joseph Banks to Dr. Afzelius, on his visit to Sierra Leone, were maliciously damaged and partly destroyed, out of characteristic and wanton brutality, by some piratical slave-mongers, under the French flag, during the late war.—*Smith in Rees' Cyclopædia.*



*B. verrucosa* is readily distinguished from *B. caudata*, *B. Lanceana*, and *B. macrostachya*, by the obovate (not oblong, oval, or ovate) form of the labellum, and from *B. maculata* by the great disparity between its sepals and petals. Another peculiarity is to be found in the little green warts which are profusely scattered over the lower parts of the labellum, and which suggested to Professor LINDLEY the specific name. (*Vide Bot. Reg. Misc.* 1840, No. 66.) *B. verrucosa* also differs from its congeners in the form of the pseudo-bulbs, which are rounder at the edges than in the other species, and likewise more deeply furrowed; their colour, too, is darker.

As regards culture, the treatment ordinarily applied to Orchidaceæ will be suitable for *B. verrucosa*; the plant, however, is a slow grower. It flowered at Tooting in April, 1840.

In the Vignette are seen the famous Chinampas (or floating gardens) of Mexico, of which HUMBOLDT, in his "Personal Narrative," has given such an interesting account. They occur in the River Chalco, about ten miles from the capital, and owe their singular appellation to the circumstance of their having been formed upon what were originally drifting masses of reeds, roots of trees, &c., which, acquiring consistency by degrees, were at length compact enough to support a fresh vegetation of their own. Their peculiar fitness for what we call "kitchen gardens" seems to have early attracted the quick eye of the Indians, and the care still taken of them by these industrious people is sufficiently attested by the rich variety of fruits and vegetables which they furnish daily to the markets of Mexico. "In fine evenings," says HUMBOLDT, "hundreds of canoes, crowded with Indians neatly dressed, their heads crowned with the most gaudy flowers, are seen passing in every direction; each boat with its musician, and some of the party singing or dancing, or both."



"Quis est nam ludus in undis?  
Hic ver purpureum:—varios hic flumina circum  
Fundit humus flores."

VIRG. ECLOG. ix.