

*Masdevallia simia* Luer, sp. nov.

Species haec *M. benedictii* Rchb. f. similis, sed epichilio labelli non-concavo longitudinale unicarinato cum lamellis brevibus radiantibus praecipue differt.

Plant medium-sized to large, epiphytic, caespitose; roots coarse, flexuous. Secondary stems channeled, 2-4 cm long, enclosed by 2 loose, tubular sheaths, unifoliolate. Leaf erect, thin, coriaceous, very narrowly elliptical, 10-21 cm long, 13-17 mm wide, carinate dorsally, tridentate at the acute apex, the base gradually narrowed into a conduplicate base. Inflorescence a few-flowered, contracted raceme of successive, showy flowers, borne by a more or less horizontal, minimally verrucose peduncle about 10 cm long, from a node on the secondary stem; floral bract tubular, 10 mm long; pedicel 13 mm long; ovary brown, lightly verrucose, 8 mm long; sepals widespread, more or less flat, subcarinate and glabrous externally, covered within by short thick hairs or spicules, the outer halves of the sepals heavily suffused with red-purple, the inner halves white, the dorsal sepal broadly ovate, 20 mm long, 26 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals 8-9 mm, the obtuse apex contracted into a slender tail 7 cm long, the lateral sepals broadly ovate, oblique, 20 mm long, 24 mm wide, connate 13 mm to form a broad, shallow mentum, the obtuse apices contracted into tails similar to that of the dorsal sepal; petals thick, elliptical-oblong, 5 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, white marked with brown, bivalved at the rounded apex, papillose between the laminae, the inner lamina toothed and acute; lip spatulate, white, 12 mm long, 9 mm wide, the hypochile 5 mm long, 4 mm wide, cleft centrally, the sides erect, rounded, the base concave, hinged to the column-foot, the epichile broadly ovate, 7 mm long, 9 mm wide, not concave, but slightly curved up at the rounded apex, the disc with a longitudinal keel from the hypochile to the apex, with several lamellae radiating to the flattened, lightly sinuate margins; column stout, white, 5 mm long, with a foot 3 mm long.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *simia*, "an ape or monkey," in fancied allusion to the appearance of the flower.

TYPE: ECUADOR: ZAMORA-CHINCHIPE: epiphytic in cloud forest between Loja and Zamora, alt. ca. 2000 m, B. Malo 25, cultivated by M. & O. Robledo at La Ceja, Colombia, *R. Escobar 1692*, flowered in cult. 25 Sept. 1977, *C. Luer 1836* (HOLOTYPE: SEL, ISOTYPE: JAUM).

DISTRIBUTION: Southeastern Ecuador.

This grotesque species may be distinguished from the closely related *Masdevallia benedictii* Rchb. f. by the ovate epichile of the lip which is provided with a prominent central keel with lesser lamellae radiating downward to a level, non-incurved margin. A distinct zone of white surrounds the column and petals in the otherwise minutely spiculate, deep red-purple sepals imparting the impression of a capuchin monkey.