

***Dracula veleziana* Luer & V.N.M. Rao, sp. nov.**

Ety.: Named for Aura Velez, mother of Francisco Villegas of Orquifollages, Medellín, Colombia.

Species haec *Draculae simiae* (Luer) Luer affinis, sed foliis majoribus latissimis, sepalis eburneis lateralibus ad medium bruneo suffusis et labello multissime venoso differt.

**Plant** large, epiphytic, densely caespitose; roots coarse. Ramicauls stout, erect, 4-6 cm long, enclosed by 2-3 loose, tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, thinly coriaceous, carinate, elliptical-oblongate, acute, 18-20 cm long including an indistinct petiole ca. 5 cm long, 3-4 cm wide, gradually narrowed below into the conduplicate, petiolate base. **Inflorescence** a successively few-flowered raceme, borne by a sparsely bracted, horizontal to descending peduncle to 25 cm long, from low on the ramicaul; floral bract tubular, 13 mm long; pedicel 23 mm long; ovary white, 6 mm long, 3 mm thick, round in cross section; **sepals** creamy white, shortly pubescent within, the dorsal sepal broadly ovate, 20 mm long, 25 mm wide, concave, connate to the lateral sepals for 8 mm to form a gaping, cupped flower, the apex rounded, abruptly contracted into a slender, erect, red-brown tail ca. 5 cm long, the lateral sepals connate 20 mm into a transversely ovoid lamina, 25 mm long, 39 mm wide, with a broad, shallow mentum suffused with brown centrally, the apices obtuse, contracted into slender, red-brown tails similar to that of the dorsal sepal; **petals** white, marked with dark brown, cartilaginous, oblong, 4 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, the apex bivalvate, papillose between the laminae, the inner lamina incurved, the outer lamina rounded, denticulate; **lip** yellow-white, spatulate, 16 mm long, 10 mm wide, the epichile suborbicular, shallowly concave without incurved margins, filled within with multiple, branched lamellae radiating from a central lamella, 11 mm long, 10 mm wide, the hypochile broadly thickly ovoid, 5 mm long, 5 mm wide, with rounded sides, cleft centrally, the base concave, hinged to the column-foot; **column** white, stout, semiterete, 5 mm long, with a stout foot 5 mm long.

COLOMBIA: **Antioquia:** Urrao, Encarnación, alt. 1900-2100 m, first collected in 1994 by Manuel Zapata, cultivated by Francisco Villegas at Orquifollages, Medellín, flowered in cultivation, 25 Apr. 2004, by V.N.M. Rao 171 (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 20805.

This species from the Western Cordillera of Colombia, is most similar to *Dracula simia* from southeastern Ecuador. Vegetatively, *D. veleziana* is larger with broad leaves. The sepals are creamy white with brown suffusion behind the lip. The lips of both species are similar, shallowly concave with non-incurved margins, but the latter with many more radiating veins.

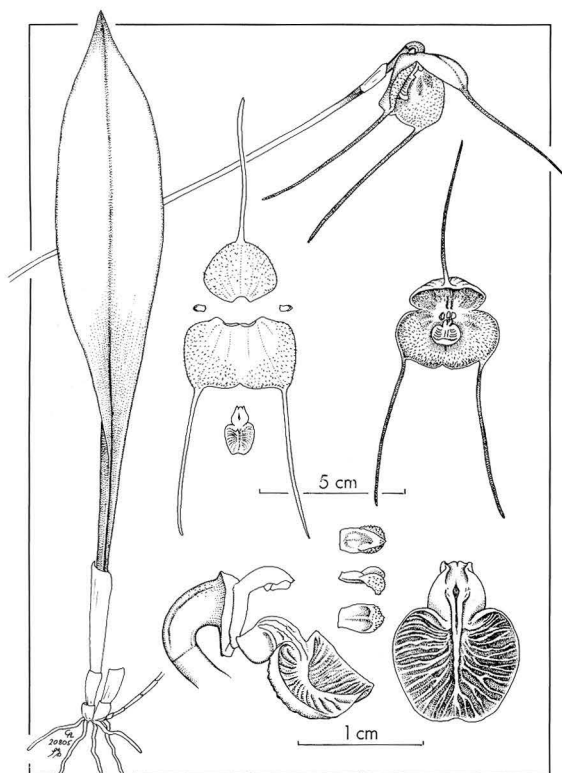


Fig. 3. *Dracula veleziana*