



EPIDENDRUM CAESARIS Hágsater & E.Santiago

Plate 915

EPIDENDRUM CAESARIS Hágsater et E.Santiago, *sp. nov.*

Type: COLOMBIA: Norte de Santander: near alto de San Francisco on road to Villacaro, 2750 m, 6 May 1982, C. Luer, J. Luer, R. Escobar & D. Portillo 7759. Holotype: SEL! (Illustration voucher.)

Epidendro restrepoano A.D.Hawkes in sepalorum petalorumque forma et in sepalorum superficiei abaxialis ornamentatione pustulosa simile; *Epidendro oxysepalum* Hágsater & E.Santiago in florum coloribus et in labelli carinarum numero formaque simile.

Hierba epítita, ramificada, de 27-36 cm de alto. **Raíces** basales, escasas, carnosas, delgadas, blancas, 1.4-1.9 mm de grosor. **Tallos** tipo caña, teretes, delgados, rectos, 3-34 x 0.3-0.5 cm, produciendo un tallo nuevo cerca del ápice del tallo anterior. **Hojas** 2-15, distribuidas a todo lo largo de los tallos, alternas, suberectas; vaina tubular, ligeramente inflada cuando seca, algo teñida de morado, levemente rugosa, 2-2.9 x 0.3-0.5 cm; lámina oblongo lanceolada, ápice bilobado, con una quilla dorsal baja, margen entero, subcoriácea, lisa, 3.8-8.5 x 0.4-1 cm. **Bráctea espatácea** ausente. **Inflorescencia** apical, florece una sola vez, racemosa, arqueado nutante, compacta, corta, 2.5-3 cm de largo; pedúnculo terete, delgado, corto, 6-8 mm de largo; desprovisto de brácteas. **Brácteas florales** cerca de la mitad del largo del ovario, angostamente triangulares, acuminadas, las apicales gradualmente más pequeñas, 3-6 mm de largo. **Flores** 4-19, resupinadas, simultáneas; translúcidas, de color rosado pálido, sépalos y pétalos amarillentos en la base; sin datos de fragancia. **Ovario** terete, delgado, ligeramente inflado ventralmente hacia el ápice, escasamente pustulado, 10-13 mm de largo. **Sépalos** extendidos, libres, carnosos, anchamente elípticos, subagudos, con una quilla dorsal prominente, margen entero, dorsalmente pustulados, 8-8.5 x 5-5.2 mm; el dorsal 5-nervado; los laterales 4-nervados. **Pétalos** extendidos, libres, carnosos, angostamente ovados, subagudos, 3-nervados, oblicuos, margen entero, 7 x 2.9 mm. **Labelo** unido a la mitad basal de la columna, subentero, subcordiforme en aspecto general, base cordada, ápice ligeramente emarginado, margen eroso, involuto en la base, 7.2 x 7.7 mm; ecaloso; provisto de 3-5 quillas, romas, lisas, las tres centrales alargadas hasta la mitad del labelo, el par lateral bajo y generalmente inconspicuo. **Columna** fuertemente arqueada, corta, gruesa, ventralmente provista de un par de alas apicales, redondeadas, no involutas, 5 mm de largo. **Clinandrium** corto, entero. **Antera** reniforme, con una quilla central lisa y baja, 4-locular. **Polinios** 4, obovoides, lateralmente comprimidos; caudículas en dos pares, suaves y granuladas. **Rostelo** apical, hendido. **Lóbulos laterales del estigma** no vistos. **Nectario** penetrando menos de la mitad del ovario, ligeramente inflado, liso. **Cápsula** no vista.

Epiphytic, branching, **herb.** **Roots** basal, scarce, fleshy, thin. **Stems** cane-like, terete, thin, straight, producing a new stem from near the apex. **Leaves** 2-15, distributed throughout the stems, alternate, suberect; sheaths tubular, slightly inflated when dry, minutely striated, tinged purple, and slightly rugose; blade oblong-lanceolate, apex bilobed, with a low dorsal keel, margin entire, subcoriaceous, smooth. **Inflorescence** apical, flowering only once, racemose, arching-nutant, compact, short; peduncle terete, thin, short, without bracts. **Floral bracts** about half as long as the ovary and gradually shorter, narrowly triangular, acuminate. **Flowers** 4-19, resupinate, simultaneous; translucent, pale pink with the base of the sepals and petals yellowish. **Ovary** terete, thin, slightly inflated ventrally towards the apex, scarcely pustulate. **Sepals** spreading, free, fleshy, widely elliptic, subacute, with a prominent dorsal keel, margin entire, dorsally scarcely pustulate; the dorsal 5-veined, the laterals 4-veined. **Petals** spreading, free, fleshy, narrowly ovate, subacute, 3-veined, oblique, margin entire. **Lip** united to the basal half of the column, subentire, subcordiform, base cordate, apex slightly emarginate, margin erose, involute at the base; ecallose, provided with 3-5 smooth, rounded keels, the three middle keels extending to the middle of the lip, the lateral pair low and generally inconspicuous. **Column** strongly arched, short, thick, ventrally provided with a pair of rounded, non-involute, apical wings. **Clinandrium**-hood short, entire. **Anther** reniform, with a central, smooth, low keel, 4-celled. **Pollinia** 4, obovoid, laterally compressed; caudicles in two pairs, soft and granular. **Rostellum** apical, slit. **Nectary** penetrating less than half the ovary, slightly inflated, smooth.

OTHER SPECIMENS AND OTHER RECORDS: See appendix.

DISTRIBUTION AND ECOLOGY: Apparently widespread in the Andes of western Venezuela (Lara, Trujillo, Mérida, Táchira) and northeastern Colombia (Norte de Santander, Santander, Boyacá and Cundinamarca) at around 1780-3160 m altitude. Flowering from May to December. Sympatric with *Epidendrum oxysepalum* Hágsater & E.Santiago and *Epidendrum restrepoanum* A.D.Hawkes

RECOGNITION: *Epidendrum caesaris* belongs to the *Diothonea* Group characterized by the branching habit, linear-lanceolate to lanceolate, bilobed leaves, arching-nutant, racemose inflorescence, membranaceous or rarely fleshy flowers, entire to 3-lobed lip, with an erose margin, ecallose, with 1-10 thin, glabrous to erose keels, the column united to the lip from totally or obliquely to free, and the reniform anther. This species is recognized by the simultaneous, small, translucent, pale pink flowers with the base of the sepals and petals yellowish, the flowers on a short, compact inflorescence, an arching column, subacute tepals, and a subentire, straight, subcordiform lip with 3-5 keels on the disc of the lip. It is similar to *Epidendrum restrepoanum* which grows in the same general area and has scarlet red flowers with a yellow lip and column, externally warty, pustulate sepals, an arching, nearly completely free column, deeply cordate, three-lobed lip, shallowly emarginate and 5-7 keeled. *Epidendrum oxysepalum* Hágsater & E.Santiago has very similar purple-pink flowers, but with narrower, acute floral segments.



CONSERVATION STATUS: DD. Data deficient.

ETYMOLOGY: In honor of César Fernández, Agronomical Engineer of San Cristobal, Táchira, Venezuela who has worked on the orchids of the state of Táchira, and has provided numerous digital photographs, including those of this species.

REFERENCES: Fernández, C., 2003. *Orquídeas nativas del Táchira*. Editorial Litolila, San Cristobal, Táchira, Venezuela. Romero G., G. A. & G. Carnevali F. C., 2000. *Orchids of Venezuela, An Illustrated Field Guide*, 2 ed. Armitano Editores, pg. 289. Caracas, Venezuela.

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