

EPIDENDRUM WITHERSPOONIORUM Hágsater & Dressler
THE GENUS EPIDENDRUM PART 4

EPIDENDRUM WITHERSPOONIORUM Hágsater et Dressler, *sp. nov.*

Type: PANAMA: Prov. Panamá, Cerro Jefe, trail leading W from summit, 24 September 1975, *J. T. & F. Witherspoon 8489*. Holotype: MO 2480912! (Illustration voucher).

Epidendro duro Lindl. simile sed sepalis brevioribus et latioribus, labello carnosiore et compatiore recedens.

Hierba epífita, cespitosa, de 20 cm de alto. **Raíces** carnosas, de la base del tallo principal, ca. 2-3 mm de grosor. **Tallos** ramificados cerca del ápice cuando maduros, erectos, tipo caña, teretes, el principal ca. 1.6 x 0.4-0.5 cm, las ramificaciones de ca. 5 x 0.3-0.4 cm. **Hojas** 4-7, distribuidas hacia la mitad apical de los tallos; vaina tubular, rugosa, 1-2 cm de largo; lámina elíptica, bilobada; 1.7-3.5 x 0.8-1.2 cm. **Bráctea espátacea** ausente. **Inflorescencia** apical, del tallo maduro, florece una sola vez, racemosa, dística, erecta, flexuosa, 3-5 cm de largo. **Brácteas florales** más largas que el ovario, progresivamente más cortas, perpendiculares al raquis, ovadas, algo carinadas hacia el ápice, 3-6 mm de largo. **Flores** 3-5, sucesivas, varias abiertas a la vez, no resupinadas, carnosas, "blanco verdoso"; fragancia no registrada. **Ovario** corto, grueso, terete, no inflado, no ornamentado, 2-4 mm de largo. **Sépalos** entreabiertos, ovado elípticos, obtusos, glabros, 7-nervados, con 2 nervaduras secundarias a los lados del principal y 2 más en los extremos, margen entero; el **dorsal** 10 x 5 mm; los **laterales** oblicuos, 12 x 7 mm. **Pétalos** entreabiertos, angostamente elíptico romboides, agudos, 3-nervados, margen entero, 10 x 2 mm. **Labelo** unido a la columna, trilobado, muy carnoso, no se puede extender una vez rehidratado, en posición natural los lados abrazando la columna y ocultándola totalmente, lóbulos laterales semiovalados, redondeados, lóbulo medio triangular, agudo; callo un disco bajo, corto y cóncavo, emarginado, sin quillas, 10 x ca 10 mm. **Columna** corta, recurvada, gruesa, con dientes apicales laterales recurvados, 5 mm de largo. **Clinandrio** reducido, entero. **Rostelo** subapical, hendido. **Antera** ovoidea, aguda, carnosa, 4-locular. **Polinios** 4, obovoides, lateralmente comprimidos; caudículas suaves y granuladas. **Lóbulos laterales del estigma** prominentes, de 1/2 del largo de la cavidad estigmática. **Nectario** sin penetrar el ovario, con pilosidades pequeñas frente a la cavidad estigmática. **Cápsula** no vista.

Caespitose, epiphytic **herb**. **Roots** fleshy, from the base of the main stem. **Stems** cane-like, straight, terete, branching near the apex when mature, the branches somewhat smaller. **Leaves** 4-7, distributed throughout the apical half of the stems; sheaths tubular, rugose, blade elliptic, bilobed. **Inflorescence** racemose, distichous, apical from mature stems, flowers only once, erect, flexuosus. **Floral bracts** longer than the ovary, progressively shorter, perpendicular to the rachis, ovate, somewhat carinate towards the apex. **Ovary** short, thick, smooth. **Flowers** 3-5, successive, non-resupinate, fleshy, greenish white. **Sepals** ovate-elliptic, obtuse, the laterals somewhat oblique, 7-veined, with 2 secondary veins on the side of the main vein, and 2 more at each edge. **Petals** narrowly elliptic-rhombic, acute, 3-veined. **Lip** 3-lobed, very fleshy, the sides upturned and embracing the column and completely hiding it, lateral lobes semiovalate, rounded, midlobe triangular, acute; callus a low, short, concave, emarginate disc, without keels. **Column** short, recurved, with lateral apical recurved teeth. **Clinandrium** hood reduced, entire. **Rostelo** subapical, slit. **Anther** ovoid, acute, thick, 4-celled. **Pollinia** 4, obovoid, laterally compressed. **Nectary** without trespassing the perianth, pilose in front of the stigmatic cavity.

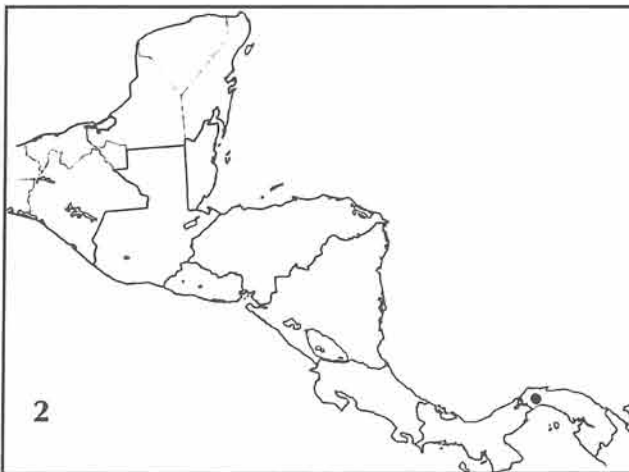
OTHER SPECIMENS: None seen.

DISTRIBUTION AND ECOLOGY: Known only from the type, near the summit of Cerro Jefe, in Central Panama, at around 900 m altitude. Flowering in August-September

RECOGNITION: *Epidendrum witherspooniorum* belongs to the Aquaticum Subgroup of the Macrostachyum Group, which is characterized by the branching stems, distichous inflorescences, with a relatively thick peduncle, small, fleshy flowers, the lip 3-lobed and pubescent nectaries. The new species is recognized by the very fleshy, 3-lobed lip, the midlobe being very short, and the narrowly elliptic-rhombic, 3-veined petals. It is closely related to *Epidendrum durum* which has thinner flowers, the lateral lobes of the lip semiorbicular, and the midlobe narrowly triangular. *Epidendrum carnosillorum* C. Schweinf. and *Epidendrum lindae* Hágsater & Dodson, also have thinner flowers, linear, 1-veined petals, and the former has a paniculate inflorescence.

CONSERVATION STATUS: DD. Data Deficient. Though the locality where the type was collected has been often searched by numerous collectors, we have no record of any other specimen.

ETYMOLOGY: In honor of the collectors of the type, John T. & F. Witherspoon. John T. Witherspoon collected briefly in Panama for the Missouri Botanical Garden, and then went on to work for Water Treatment and Supply in Springfield, Missouri, eventually becoming the Chairman of the Missouri Safe Drinking Water Commission.



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