



Lepanthes medusa Luer & Escobar

Lepanthes medusa Luer & Escobar, sp. nov.

Planta grandis caespitosa, inflorescentia racemosa congestissima folio ovato subter rugoso brevior, sepalo dorsali ovato acuto, sepalis lateralibus late ovatis breviter acuminatis, petalis pubescentibus transverse bilobatis, lobis elongatis filamentosis, labelli laminis anguste ovatis, appendice quadrilobata.

Plant large, epiphytic, caespitose; roots coarse. Ramicauls erect, stout, 14-18 cm long, enclosed by 11-12 minutely ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, ovate, acute, shortly acuminate, rugose between veins on the under surface, 8-10 cm long, 3.5-4 cm wide, the base rounded, contracted into a twisted petiole 3-4 mm long. Inflorescence a very congested, successively many-flowered raceme up to 10 mm long, borne along the back surface of the leaf by a slender peduncle 3.4-4 cm long; floral bracts 1.5 mm long; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 2 mm long; sepals light yellow, entire, subcarinate, the dorsal sepal ovate, acute, 10 mm long, 5 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 1 mm, the lateral sepals broadly ovate, oblique, obtuse, shortly acuminate, 9 mm long, 5 mm wide, connate 3.5 mm, 2-veined; petals yellow-orange, minutely pubescent, transversely bilobed, 1.5 mm long, 12 mm wide, the lobes narrowly tubular with revolute margins, the upper lobe yellow, 8 mm long, the lower lobe purple, 4.5 mm long; lip dark orange with purple margins, glabrous, bilaminar, the blades narrowly ovate, with the apices and bases narrowly rounded, 2.5 mm long, the connatives cuneate, the body connate to the base of the column, the sinus with a minute, 4-lobed appendix; column stout, 2 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Etymology: Named for the mythological Gorgon Medusa with

snakes for hair, in allusion to the long lobes of the petals.

COLOMBIA: Without locality, obtained from R. Escobar by J & L Orchids, 284-162, in 1984, flowered in cultivation at Colomborquídeas 5 Mar. 1989, *C. Luer 14098* (Holotype: MO, Isotype: JAUM).

This species was originally imported by J & L Orchids in Easton, CT, from Rodrigo Escobar in 1984, and subsequently a division of the plant was returned to Colombia and cultivated at Colomborquídeas. Unfortunately the collection data have been lost.

Vegetatively this robust species is very similar to most of the other species characterized by a large habit. The unusually large flowers are produced successively in a very congested raceme along the rough back surface of the leaf. Most remarkable are the conspicuous, elongated lobes of the petals.



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Photograph: Jorge Mario Múnera B.
Grower: Colomborquídeas.