

Masdevallia niesseniae Luer, sp. nov.

Plate 35.

Ety.: Named for Andrea Niessen de Uribe of Orquídeas del Valle, Cali, Colombia.

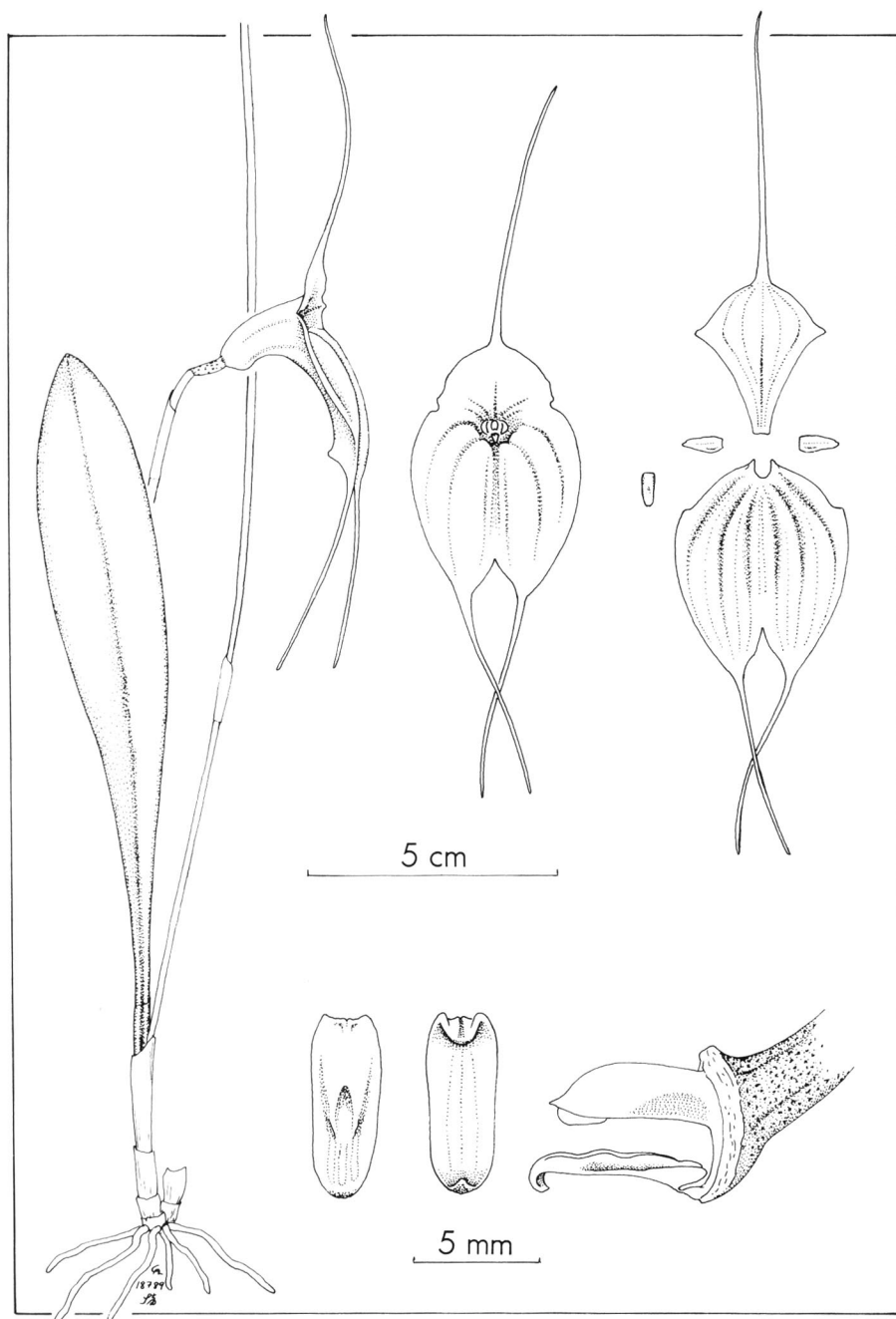
Inter species *Masdevalliae* subsect. *Coccineae* sepalis aureis longissime caudatis, lateralibus in synsepalum expansum sulcatum connatis, et labello oblongo leviter bicarinato distinguitur.

Plant medium in size, caespitose; roots coarse. Ramicauls erect, channeled, 3-5 cm long, enclosed by 2-3 white, loose, tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, 10-15 cm long including the petiole 2-3 cm long, the blade elliptical, subacute, 2-2.5 cm wide, gradually narrowed below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** a single flower, borne by a slender, erect peduncle up to 23 cm long, with a bract below the middle, from 1.5-3 cm above the base of the ramicaul; floral bract thin, tubular, 2.5 cm long; pedicel 3 cm long; ovary 7-8 mm long; **sepals** golden yellow, glabrous, the dorsal suffused with rose along the midvein, obovate, 30 mm long, 25 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 20 mm to form a funnel-shaped, sepaline tube, the apex broadly rounded, abruptly contracted into a slender tail 5.5 cm long, the lateral sepals 40 mm long, connate 30 mm into a broadly expanded synsepal 35 mm wide, longitudinally sulcate with the surface convex between grooves, with the apices acute, contracted into slender tails 4 cm long; **petals** white, cartilaginous, ovate-subtriangular, 7.5 mm long, 3.5 mm wide above the base, the apex obliquely obtuse, the labellar margin with a marginal callus ending in a broadly rounded margin above the base; **lip** white, suffused with rose, oblong, 7 mm long, 2.75 mm wide, with the margins thin, the apex obtuse, recurved, the disc thickened centrally with a pair of low calli near the middle, sulcate between, the base truncate, hinged beneath to the column-foot; **column** white, suffused with rose, thick, semiterete, 6 mm long, the foot 2 mm long, with a short, incurved extension.

COLOMBIA: **Valle del Cauca**: near Lago de Calima, alt. 1500-1600 m, collected by Ishmael Miranda, March 1997, cultivated by Orquídeas del Valle, Cali, by Andrea Niessen & Juan Carlos Uribe, *C. Luer 18789* (Holotype: MO).

The large, long-tailed, golden yellow flowers of this member of section *Masdevallia* subsection *Coccineae* are larger and more spectacular than the golden yellow flowers of coveted *M. davisii* Rchb.f. Some yellow color-forms of *M. coccinea* Linden ex Rchb.f. share the same intense color that is not approached by any other member of the subsection, except perhaps *M. veitchiana* Rchb.f.

Although coriaceous, the leaves are not as thick as those of many other species of the subsection. The erect peduncle bears the showy flower above the leaves. From a funnel-shaped, sepaline tube the rounded dorsal sepal curves upward while the broadly expanded, longitudinally sulcate synsepal arches below. Between depressed veins the surface is convex. The petals are white with the labellar margin callous. The lip is oblong as in other members of the subsection, but in the center there is a shallow concavity between a pair of low calli.

Plate 35. *Masdevallia niesseniae* Luer