

Masdevallia stratoniana Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

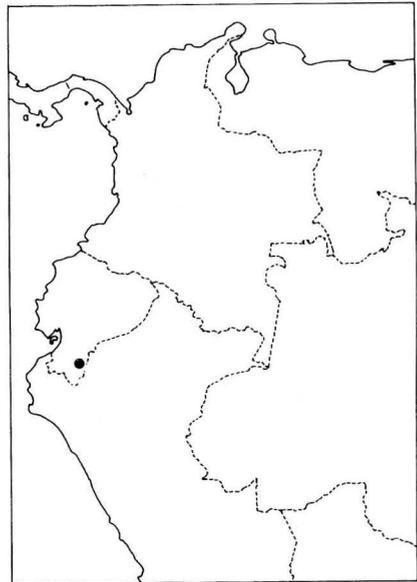
Ety.: Named in honor of Charles S. Stratton (1838-1883), General Tom Thumb, who was exhibited by P.T. Barnum as the world's smallest man.

Species haec *M. hoeijeri* Luer & Hirtz affinis, sed sepalis acutis incrassatis ecaudatis, et labello pandurato apice rotundo dense minute spiculato differt.

Plant very small, epiphytic, densely caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, suberect to erect, 3-7 mm long, enclosed by 2-3 thin, tubular sheaths, **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, narrowly obovate, subacute, petiolate, 12-25 mm long including a petiole 5-10 mm long, 2.5-3.5 mm wide, gradually narrowed below to the petiole. **Inflorescence** a solitary flower borne by a prostrate or pendent peduncle, 15 mm long, with a bract near the middle and at the base, from low on the ramicaul; floral bract thin, infundibular, 3 mm long, enclosing pedicel, vestigial bud, and lower half of the ovary; pedicel 1.5 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long, 1.25 mm wide, with 3 low crests; **sepals** fleshy, cream colored, widely flecked with purple-brown, glabrous, the dorsal sepal elliptical-obovate, 9 mm long, 4 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 5 mm to form a broad, cylindrical sepaline tube, the free portion triangular with the acute apex thickened, the lateral sepals each connate 4 mm to the column-foot to form a deep mentum, connate to each other 6 mm into a subquadrate lamina 9 mm wide when expanded, 9.5 long, the free portions triangular, acute, thickened; **petals** white with a purple midvein, suboblong, the apex obtuse, apiculate, 4.5 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, the labellar margin dilated above the basal third with a callous margin; **lip** red, subpandurate, 6.5 mm long, 2 mm wide, 3 mm wide at the apex, the disc shallowly sulcate between a pair of acute calli above the middle, the apex rounded, densely and minutely spiculate, the base truncate, hinged beneath; **column** green, semiterete, without teeth, 4 mm long, the foot 4 mm long, with an incurved extension.

ECUADOR: **Zamora-Chinchipe**: epiphytic in forest, Parque Nacional Podocarpus, alt. 1500 m, cultivated at Ecuagenera, Gualaceo, 2 Feb. 2002, A. Hirtz 8102 (Holotype: MO).

This little species, known only from southeastern Ecuador, is similar to *M. hoeijeri* and its relatives. It is distinguished from them by the creeping or pendent peduncle that bears one proportionately large flower, but with a bud within the floral bract. The purple-speckled sepals are deeply connate to an elongated column-foot and to each other and to form a broad tube terminated by three, acute, tailless apices. The broad petals are callous along the lower, dilated margin. The apex of the lip is broadly rounded, and diffusely and minutely spiculate.



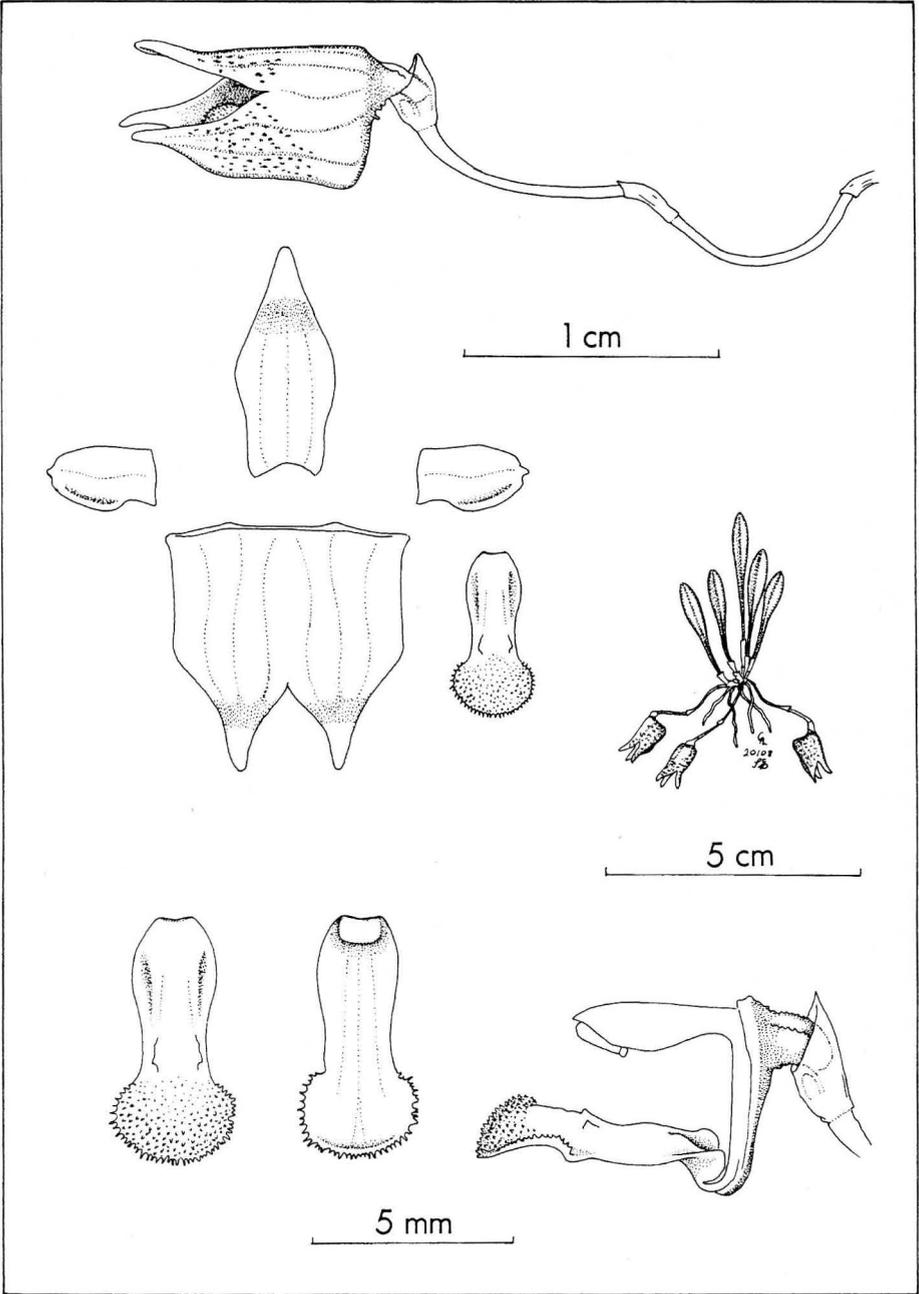


Plate 537. *Masdevallia stratttoniana*