

*Masdevallia pelecanceps* C. Luer, sp. nov.

Planta mediocris epiphytica caespitosa, caulibus secundariis foliis breioribus teretibus gracilibus vagina laxa tubulosa obtegitis unifoliatis, foliis oriaceis ellipticis subacutis base anguste cuneatis indistincte petiolatis, flore olitario erecto longipedicellato carnosio rigido rubro, sepalis ovatis acuminatis epalis lateralibus supra medium connatis sepalo dorsali prope basim connato utus flavis purpureo guttatis multicristatis, petalis crassis oblongis obtusis xtus bicarinatis, labello carnosio elliptico obtuso infra medium lobis uncinatis urpureo punctato.

Plant medium-sized, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stem slender, terete, 2-7 cm long, mostly covered by a loose, inflated sheath, with 1-2 smaller ones at the base, unifoliate. Leaf coriaceous, elliptical, subacute to obtuse, tridenticulate, the base narrowly cuneate, gradually and indistinctly petiolate, 7-13 mm long, including the petiole (1-2 cm), .75-3.5 cm wide. Inflorescence a solitary flower produced by an erect peduncle, 6-10.5 cm long, from a spathe about 5 mm long at a node on the secondary stem; flower large, red, rigid, box-like; floral bract tubular, 5 mm long; pedicel 7 mm long; ovary curved, 6 mm long; dorsal sepal thick, fleshy, red externally, yellow with purple spots and 7 irregular elevated ribs internally, the blade ovate, shortly acuminate, acute, the basal fourth united to the synsepal, 20 X 8 mm; lateral sepals united to above the middle into a deeply concave, bivalved synsepal, the texture and color similar to the dorsal sepal, each with 6-7 irregular, longitudinal crests, 20 X 18 mm together and spread; petals oblong, obtuse to rounded, thick, glistening, with 2 low, parallel calli externally, orange with a few purple spots, 4 X 2 mm; lip fleshy, cream with purple flecks, elliptical, with a pair of small, erect, forward pointing, uncinately lobes just below the middle, ovate, acuminate and obtuse above the middle, with low, thick, intramarginal keels, the base cuneate with curved margins, 5 X 2 mm; column yellow, curved, 4 mm long, with a curved foot 1.5 mm long; pollinia 2, free, compressed, with short caudicles.

**ETYMOLOGY:** From the Latin *pelecanus*, "a pelican," and *-ceps*, "-headed" (comb. form of *caput*), in allusion to the fancied appearance of the flower.

**TYPE:** PANAMA: PANAMA: epiphytic in the cloud forest of Cerro Jefe, alt. 1000 m, 19 Aug. 1967, R. L. Dressler 3028 (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

**ADDITIONAL MATERIAL EXAMINED:** PANAMA: PANAMA: same area, 2 March 1976, C. Luer, J. Luer & P. Taylor 700 (SEL).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Panama.

The genus to which this species should be assigned is not clear, nor are the vague boundaries between *Masdevallia* and *Pleurothallis*. The species as characters which suggest its placement in either genus. Although in habit it "looks like" a *Masdevallia*, the hard, rigid sepals are not at all attenuate. The deep corrugations of the inner surfaces of the sepals are distinctive, but perhaps not sufficient to warrant the creation of a monotypic genus. The lower margins of the dorsal sepal are connate to the synsepal as they are in *Masdevallia* and in many good species of *Pleurothallis*. The fleshy petals have a pair of low carinae on the external surface, not internally as in many species of *Masdevallia*.

This species, possibly endemic in the region of Cerro Jefe, has well developed secondary stems, although they are shorter than the leaves. The long-pedicellate flower emerges from a node 1-2 centimeters below the junction.

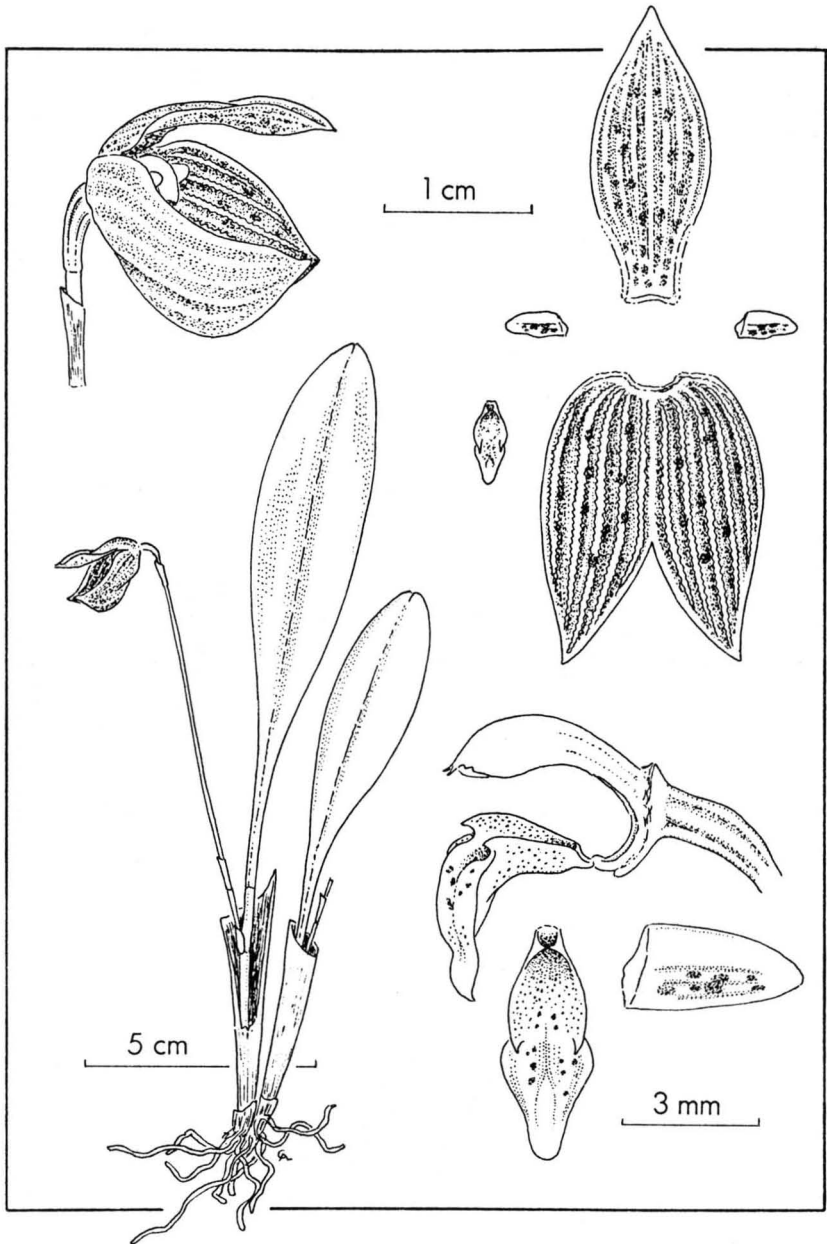


Figure 114. MASDEVALLIA PELECANICEPS C. A. Luer