

Anacheilium - a new species from Ecuador

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- Texto mantido no seu original, em Inglês -

The cover of the book *The Cattleyas and their Relatives: the Debatable Epidendrum*, Withner and Harding, 2004, features a lovely find from the greenhouses of Ecuagenera, Cuenca, Ecuador. The plant was photographed by Eric Christenson during a visit there, in December 2002. The next day, when he went back to collect specimen material, he couldn't find the plant. Ecuagenera is a maze of 19 very large greenhouses that are filled floor to ceiling with orchids; not surprising one could "lose" a specific plant. Eric returned to the US and shared his photograph with Patricia Harding, who included it in the book as an undescribed new species.

Ecuagenera sells orchids all over the world, with a web site <http://www.ecuagenera.com>. Patricia had seen a picture of a plant they called *Encyclia abbreviata* on their web site. It didn't look like *Anacheilium abbreviatum*, but willing to try it anyway, she ordered it in February of 2003. It came, she put it in a wooden basket, didn't even label it knowing it was not going to be correct, and pretty much forgot about it.

Patricia did visit Ecuagenera in 2004,

knowing the plant Eric had photographed should have been there. She bought every *Anacheilium* plant she could recognize and find in the Ecuagenera greenhouses. As each one of those bloomed they have turned out to be *Anacheilium aemulum*.

This September 2005, the *Encyclia abbreviata* obtained from Ecuagenera in 2003 put up an inflorescence and bloomed, and indeed it is a new species. What a delight to have found this species in her greenhouse by pure accident. Does Ecuagenera still have this plant? This the author doesn't know, as the web site lists no *E. abbreviata* at present.

This species belongs to the *Osmophytum* group of *Encyclia* Dressler, 1961. Withner and Harding, 2004, separated a portion of *Encyclia* (the *Prosthechea sensu* Higgins) into further divisions, but in developing their key, they kept the *Osmophytum* group together. The flowers have concave lips, and the column and lip seem to become one basally, the junction has a margin that wraps somewhat around the column. See the key below for a list species included in the *Osmophytum* group.

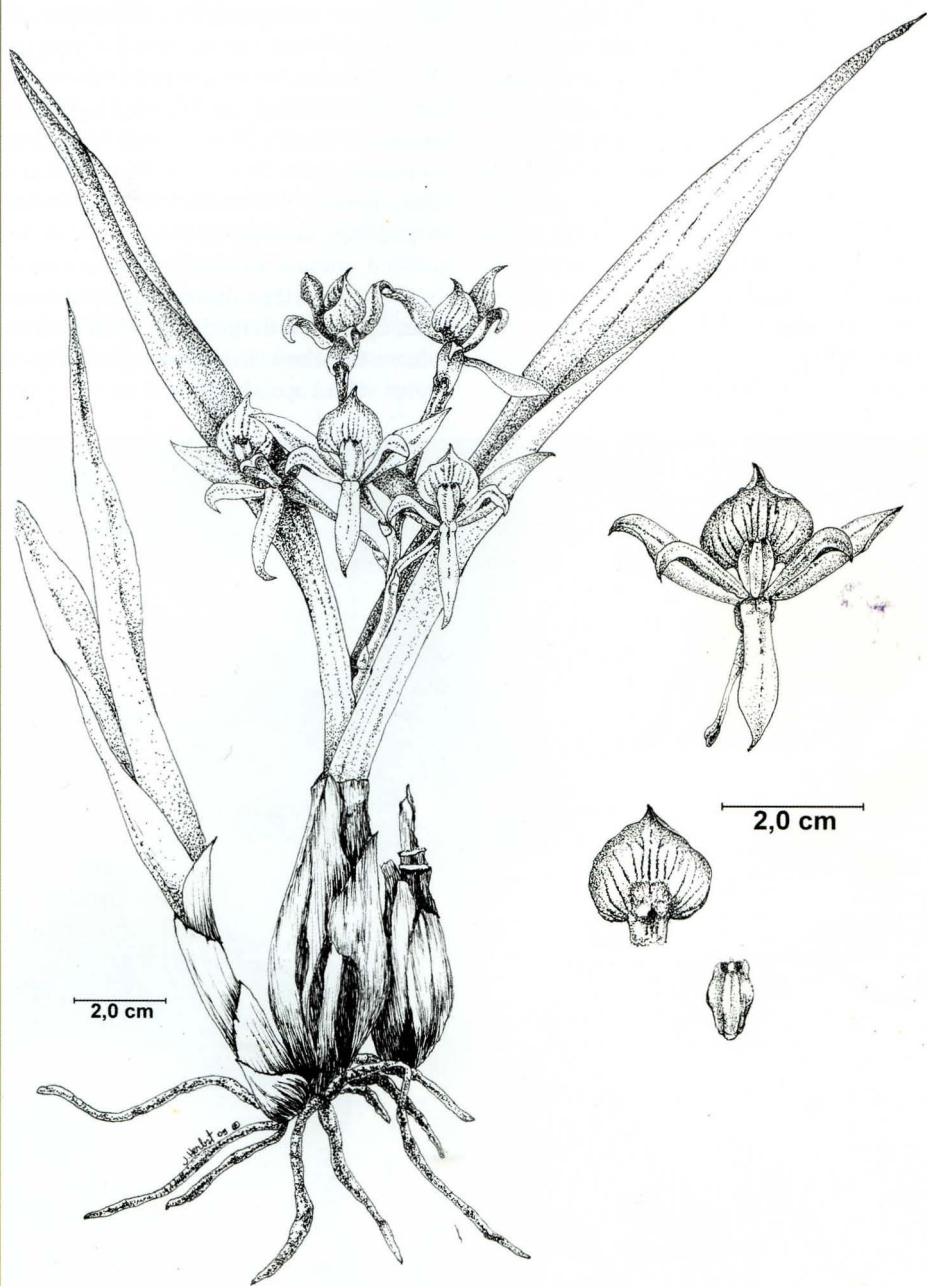
Anacheilium christensonii Harding, *sp. nov.*

TYPE: ECUADOR. Exported by Ecuagenera, flowering in cultivation, P. Harding s. n. (holotype: US).

Species haec A. chacaoense (Reichenbach f.) Withner et Harding *similis sed floribus parvioribus coloribus, sepalis latioribus sepalis petalisque maculatis, labello breviacuminato, petalorum maculis lineolatis differt.*

Anacheilium christensonii Harding

(Drawing from the *typus*)



Drawing: Jane Herbst

Caespitose epiphytes on a stout woody rhizome, growths adpressed to previous growth. Pseudobulbs ellipsoid, compressed, to 7 x 3 cm, subtended at the base by thin, tightly clasping dry sheaths. Pseudobulbs and leaves olive green, without shine. Leaves two, elliptic-ovate, acute, to 26 x 2.4 cm. Inflorescence with sheath green, 1 cm long, hidden in leaves. Inflorescences on mature growth, short terminal racemes, the peduncle 5 cm long, the rachis 7 cm long, the floral bracts ovate, acute, much shorter than the ovaries, to 0.3 cm long. Pedicel terete, the ovaries trigonal, together to 2.8 cm long. Flowers non-resupinate, fragrant but not heavily, the sepals pale green with variable degrees of purple-maroon spotting, when

densely spotted the spots are aligned in longitudinal rows, the petals and lip green-white, the petals heavily purple-maroon spotted with the spots always arranged in longitudinal rows, lip with dark maroon veining, apical margin free of colored veins, the column pale yellow-green with purple markings, the 3 terminal teeth white, the anther deep yellow. Sepals lanceolate, acuminate, to 2 x 0.6 cm, lateral sepals 0.7 cm wide. Petals oblanceolate from a wedge-shaped base, acuminate, to 1.6 x 0.4 cm. Lip unlobed, cordate, short-acuminate, concave, to 1.7 x 1.4 cm, the callus two oval pubescent pads, appressed to the lower surface of the column. Column with ridge prominent on dorsal aspect, with 3 apical teeth, to 1.0 cm long.

Anacheilium christensonii Harding



This species is very different from *Anacheilium aemulum*, *A. fragrans*, and *A. radiatum*, in that the pseudobulbs, though flattened or compressed, at first glance appear more like the pseudobulb of an *Encyclia*, with a non shiny surface and pseudobulbs with short rhizome segments. If you were looking for a plant with growth like *A. fragrans* you would over look this plant.

This species is most similar to *A. chacaoense* but differs by having smaller flowers, proportionately broader sepals, a short-acuminate cordate lip, and densely spotted petals with the spots produced in longitudinal lines. Heavily marked clones also have sepals with markings similar to the petals. This species differs from *A. chimborazoense* in having

minimal rhizome segments between growths, a shorter inflorescence, the pale off green color and lack of shine to foliage and pseudobulbs, and the less pointed lip.

Culture requirements for this plant are a bit uncertain. Patricia has been growing it in an intermediate greenhouse under fairly dry conditions, because she thought it was an *Encyclia*. It has grown well under these conditions with the new growths being larger than the previous original growths. *Anacheilium chacaoense* requires moist warm conditions, as does *A. fragrans*. Should one change what is working? She has decided not to change anything until it is large enough to divide and then perhaps will grow the new half in wetter conditions.

Etymology: It is an honor to name this species for Eric Christenson, who first discovered it in the phenomenal collections of Ecuagenera in Gualaceo (Cuenca), Ecuador.