

Cryptophoranthus vulturiceps Luer, sp. nov.

Planta mediocris caespitosa, caulibus secundariis erectis vaginis inflatis obliquis imbricatis obtectis quam foliis ellipticis leviter brevioribus, ovario alato, flore singulari niveo glabro, tubo sepalorum curvato apice uncinato supra medium dilatato cum fenestris parvis, synsepalo intus rugoso, petalis oblongis breviter obtusis, labello anguste sagittato apice acuto, lobis laterali-bus infra medium oblongis retrorsis.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems erect, unifoliate, 5-7.5 cm long, concealed by 4-5 imbricating, inflated, oblique, brown sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, elliptical, 7-12 cm long, 2-3 cm wide, the apex acute, tridenticulate, the base cuneate into a channeled petiole 1-2 cm long. Inflorescence a single, snow-white, waxy, glabrous flower borne in succession from the apex of the secondary stem, the peduncles 12-15 mm long; floral bract 5-8 mm long; pedicel 7-8 mm long; ovary green, 6-winged, 3 mm long, 2.5 mm wide; sepals connate into a curved sepaline tube, dilated above the middle with a 3.5 mm long window on each side 7 mm from the acute, uncinata apex, the dorsal sepal linear, concave, acute, 33 mm long, 5 mm wide, connate to the synsepal except for the windows, the lateral sepals connate into an elliptical synsepal 20 mm long, 7 mm wide unspread, convex, creamy white and rugose between the erect sides, the apex acute, decurved; petals yellowish white, obovate-oblong, 4 mm long, 2 mm wide, the apex obtusely acuminate, rounded, slightly dilated on the labellar margin; lip yellowish white, sagittate, 4.5 mm long, 1 mm wide, the apex narrowly oblong, acute, the lateral lobes below the middle, retrorse, oblong, with rounded apices, with a pair of converging, broadly rounded lamellae extending forward onto the middle lobe, the oblong base thickened, shortly unguiculate; column yellowish white, semi-terete, 3 mm long, with a thick foot 1 mm long.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *vultur*, "a vulture," and *-iceps*, "-headed," in allusion to the appearance of the flower.

TYPE: *COSTA RICA*: without locality, collected by Janet Kuhn in 1972, cultivated at J & L Orchids, Easton, Ct., flowered in cult. 11 Nov. 1977, *C. Luer 2164* (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Costa Rica.

This species is easily identified by the snow-white flowers that look like the naked head of a vulture complete with beady eyes and hooked beak.