

Masdevallia agaster Luer, sp. nov.

Planta parva caespitosa, foliis coriaceis anguste ellipticis, flore solitario horizontali flavescenti, tubo sepalorum cylindrico leviter arcuato non ventriculoso intus pubescenti partibus libris obtusis caulis recurvatis, pedunculo abbreviato, petalis albis supra basin unguiculatam uncinatis, labello ligulato obtuso.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems slender, unifoliate, 1.5-2 cm long, enclosed by 2-3 loose, tubular sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, narrowly elliptical, 7-9 cm long, 1.3-1.6 cm wide, the acute apex tridenticulate, narrowly cuneate below into an indistinct petiole 1-2.5 cm long. Inflorescence a solitary flower borne by a suberect to ascending, slender peduncle 1.5-2.5 cm long, with a bract near the base, from a node low on the secondary stem; floral bract tubular, 8-9 mm long; pedicel 9-10 mm long; ovary green, pitted, 6 mm long; sepals deeply connate to form a horizontal, dorsally curved, cylindrical tube without a ventricose dilatation, with only a small mentum below the column-foot, yellow, becoming whitish above the middle, glabrous without, glandular pubescent within on the free surfaces, the 3 tails terete, yellow, recurved, the dorsal sepal narrowly oblong-obovate, 25 mm long, 11 mm wide at the widest, connate to the lateral sepals for 21 mm, the free portion rounded, the obtuse apex contracted into the tail, the lateral sepals 23 mm long, connate for 18 mm, 18 mm across spread out above the sepaline tube, the free portions broadly ovate, oblique, each 10 mm wide, the subacute apices contracted into the tails; petals white, oblong, 7 mm long, 2.75 mm wide, the obtuse apex bilobed-apiculate, with a longitudinal callus along the lower margin ending in an incurved, hook-like appendage just above the shortly unguiculate base; lip white, suffused with purple along the margins, oblong-ligulate, 7 mm long, 2.75 mm wide, the apex obtusely rounded, the disc with a pair of low, longitudinal calli near the middle, the truncate base hinged beneath; column white with purple margins, semiterete, 5 mm long, the foot 3 mm long with an incurved extension.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Greek a-, "without," and gaster, "belly," in reference to the sepaline tube free of any ventricose swelling.

TYPE: ECUADOR: ZAMORA-CHINCHIPE: epiphytic in cloud forest between Loja and Zamora, alt. ca. 1500 m, collected by Walter Teague s.n. cultivated in San Francisco, Calif., flowered in cult. 12 Dec. 1978, C. Luer 3644 (Holotype: SEL).