

Masdevallia elegans Luer & Escobar, sp. nov.

Herba mediocris caespitosa elegans, flore specioso solitario, pedunculo suberecto quam folio obovato petiolato brevior, sepalis albis roseo suffusis in tubum cylindricum connatis, sepalis lateralibus oblongis sepalo dorsali longioribus caudis plus minusve aequilongis, petalis oblongis unguiculatis truncatis apiculatis cum dente brevi supra umguem, labello grandi ligulato purpureo punctato.

Plant medium in size, presumably epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems terete, becoming blackish with age, unifoliate, 4-6 cm long, enclosed by 2-3 loose, tubular sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, obovate, petiolate, 7-15 cm long including the 2.5-5 cm long petiole, 1.8-3.8 cm wide, the apex obtuse to rounded, tridenticulate, cuneate below into the slender, channeled petiole. Inflorescence a solitary, showy flower borne by a suberect peduncle 8-12 cm long, with a tubular sheath below the middle, from a node on the secondary stem; floral bract 12-14 mm long; pedicel 16-28 mm long; ovary olive green, 6-8 mm long; dorsal sepal white, lightly suffused with rose, obovate, 18 mm long, 14 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 11 mm to form a cylindrical sepaline tube, the free portion triangular, the subacute apex produced into a slender, forwardly directed yellow-green tail ca. 3 cm long; lateral sepals white, generously suffused and dotted with rose, cellular-glandular to minutely pubescent within, oblong, 27 mm long, 10 mm wide, connate 9 mm, forming a broad mentum with the column-foot, the apices obliquely contracted into slender tails ca. 2.5 cm long; petals white, oblong, broadly unguiculate, 9.5 mm long, 5 mm wide, the truncate apex shortly apiculate, obtusely angled on the upper margin, with a marginal callus along the lower margin ending in a short, retrorse tooth above the claw; lip rose, speckled with purple, oblong-ligulate, 13 mm long, 6 mm wide, the apex slightly dilated, obtuse to rounded, minutely irregular, with a dark purple callus just inside the margin, the disc shallowly sulcate between the thickened halves, the base subcordate, hinged beneath; column white, semiterete, 9 mm long, the foot 4 mm long with an incurved extension.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *elegans*, "elegant," referring to the qualities of the plant.

TYPE: PERU: CAJAMARCA: San Ignacio, exported by R. Stumpfle 974/5, cultivated by M. & O. Robledo at La Ceja, Colombia, flowered in cult. 21 Oct. 1979, C. Luer 4083 (HOLOTYPE: SEL; ISOTYPE: JAUM).

DISTRIBUTION: Northern Peru.

This species is characterized by a large, showy, rosy flower borne by a peduncle a little shorter than the obtuse, obovate leaves with blackish petioles. From the sepaline tube the oblong lateral sepals spread and twist, the apices of all three sepals continued forward in slender, greenish tails.