

Masdevallia loui Luer & Dalström, sp. nov.

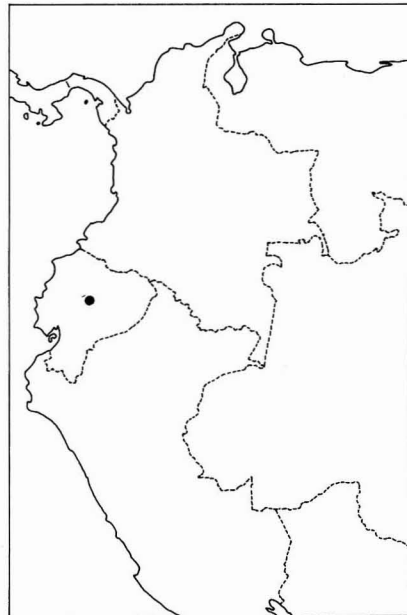
Ety.: Named for Louis (Lou) Jost, physicist, naturalist, ornithologist, orchidologist, artist, and free-lance author, presently living in Baños, Ecuador, co-collector of this species.

Planta parva, pedunculo pendenti triquetri successivifloro, sepalorum caudibus brevissimis crassissimus, petalis oblongis, et labello illis subgen. *Polyanthes* similis.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, less than 1 cm long, enclosed by 2 tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, thickly coriaceous, 2-5.5 cm long including a petiole 1-1.5 cm long, the blade narrowly elliptical, subacute to obtuse, 0.9-1.5 cm wide, gradually narrowed below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** a succession of single flowers, borne in a congested raceme by descending, triquetrous peduncle, 1-3 cm long, with a bract at the base, from the base of a ramicaul; floral bract tubular, oblique, 5-7 mm long; pedicel 5 mm long; ovary 3 mm long; **sepals** pale brown with numerous purple specks, fleshy, glabrous externally, minutely tubercular within, the dorsal sepal obovate, 9 mm long, 5 mm wide, 3-veined, connate 7 mm into a short, cylindrical tube, the apex obtuse, contracted into an erect, stout tail 10 mm long, the lateral sepals connate 14 mm into a broad, ovate, obtuse synsepal with a secondary mentum below the middle, 10 mm wide beyond the tube, 18 mm long including thick tails ca. 1.5 mm long; **petals** cartilagenous, translucent white with purple specks, oblong, 4.5 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, the apex truncate, minutely apiculate, the labellar half with a low, longitudinal callus; **lip** lip yellow with purple specks, subpanduriform, 5.5 mm long, 2 mm wide, with a pair of oblique, marginal folds above the middle that form an ovate epichile 2 mm long, and an oblong hypochile 3 mm long, the apex rounded, minutely apiculate, minutely verrucose, the disc shallowly channeled centrally, the base truncate, hinged beneath; **column** semiterete, 3.5 mm long, the foot 2 mm long with a very short, incurved extension.

ECUADOR: **Pastaza**: humid forest, Río Anzu, alt. 1400 m, collected by S. Dalström and L. Jost, 23 Dec. 2002, *S. Dalström 2746* (Holotype: QCA), C. Luer illustr. 20427.

This little species is one of only a few known species in subgenus *Polyanthes* section *Alaticaulis* with a descending, triquetrous peduncle. It is characterized by an unusually, small, caespitose habit and a short, strictly pendent peduncle. Superficially, it resembles *M. zahlbuckneri*. The pattern of the small flower is basically similar to many other members of the subgenus *Polyanthes*. The three sepals are connate into a short, cylindrical tube beyond which the synsepal expands, with the obtuse tips terminated by very short, thick tails. A secondary mentum accommodates the lip.



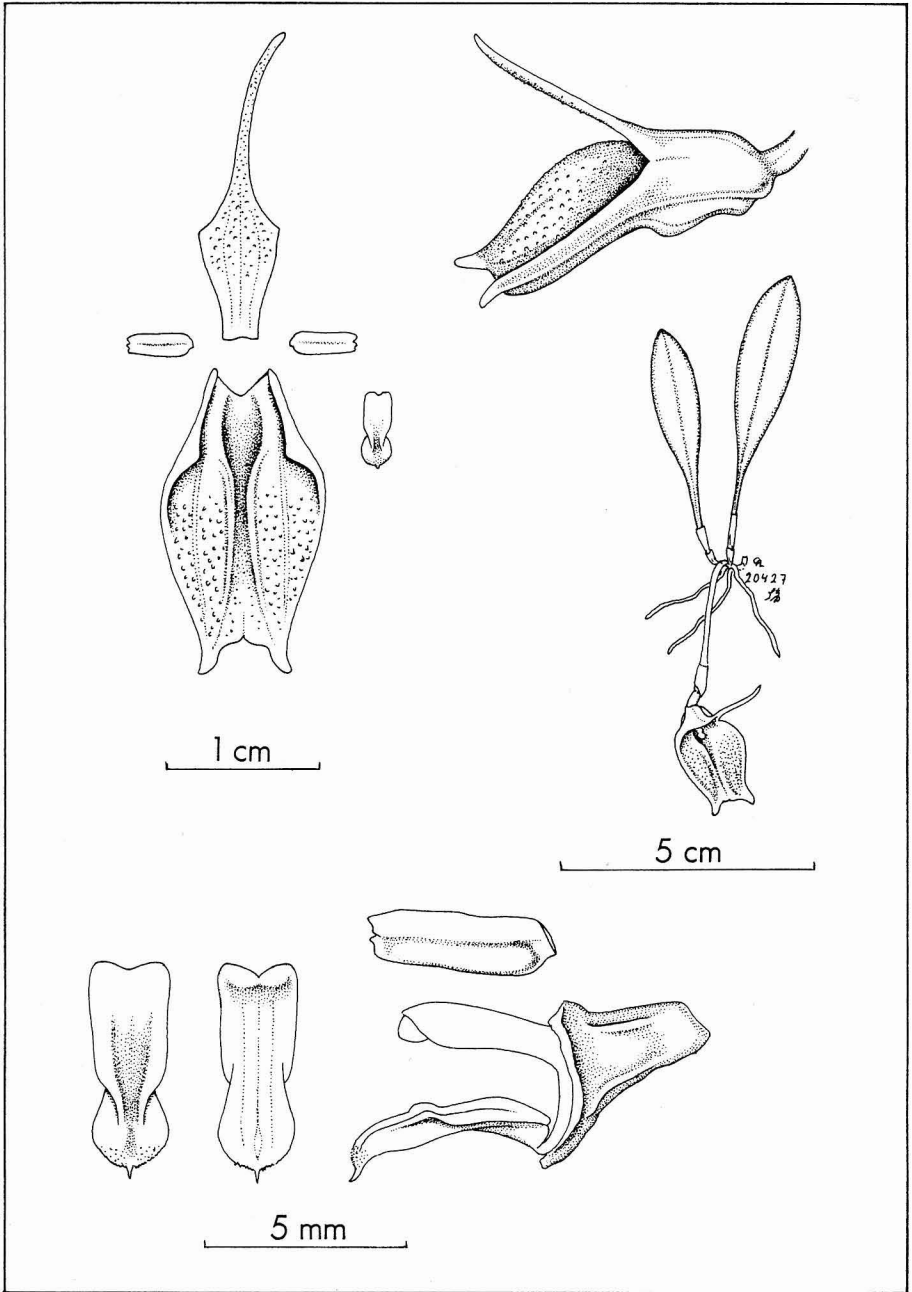


Plate 650. *Masdevallia loui*