A NEW AND DISTINCTIVE SPECIES
OF LEPANTHES (ORTHIDACEAE)
FROM COLOMBIA

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Abstract: Lepanthes dapaënsis P. Ortiz, O. Pérez & E. Parra, a new species from the western slope of the western Cordillera of the Andes of Colombia, is described and illustrated. This species is close to Lepanthes tomentosa Luer, from which it differs mainly by the red and yellow colors of the sepals, petals and lip, the shape of the synsepal (tails arching to the outside vs. apices of the lateral sepals approximate to overlapping), petals (upper lobe obtuse vs. acute) and by the presence of a foot-like appendix born from the stigmatic zone in the column (vs. absent). Information about its ecology and distribution is also presented.

Key words: Flora of Colombia, Orchidaceae, Lepanthes

Introduction

The genus Lepanthes Sw. consists of about more than 800 species distributed from Bolivia and Brazil to southern Mexico and Antilles. Most species of this genus are endemic or with limited distribution. On the other hand, species of Lepanthes are characterized by ramicauls clad in lepanthiform sheaths, racemose inflorescence commonly successive, petals commonly transversely bilobed and trilobed lip (Luer, 1996). In this paper a new species of this genus is presented, as a one of the results of the research project “Orchidologic Inventory of the Cloud Forest Relicts of Dapa” that the authors have been carrying during the last months in the Yumbo municipality, department of Valle del Cauca.

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**LEPANTHES DAPAÈNSIS** P. Ortiz, O. Pérez & E. Parra sp. nov

**Type:** Colombia, Valle del Cauca, Yumbo municipality, Dapa, 18-20°C, 2000 m approx. 9 May 2010. O. Pérez & E. Parra. 751 (fl) (Holotype CUVC)

Species Lepanthi tomentosae Luer similis, sed habitu pendenti, foliis apicibus tri-apiculatis instructis, petalis et labello colore flavo-rubro, sepalis lateralisibus caudatis, caudis extrorsum arcuantis, petalorum lobis superioribus obtisis, petalorum lobis inferioribus apice acutis, in parte extremum inferioribus columnae appendice pediforme instructa differt.

**Description:** Plant medium-sized, epiphytic, pendent, caespitose. Roots filiform, glabrous. Ramicaul medium-sized, 5.2-5.9 cm long, covered by 9-10 infundibuliform lepanthiform sheaths, strongly ciliate. Leaf erect, coriaceous, purplish, pubescent, ovate-lanceolate to elliptical-lanceolate, acuminate, apex triapiculately, margins slightly curved towards the underside, membranous at middle and apical part, 3.8-3.9 x 1.4-1.6 cm, petiole short, thickened, 1.5 mm long. Inflorescence a dense, successive raceme, born from the upperside of the leaf, 1/2 or less of the length of the leaf, pedicels short, 1.5 mm; dorsal sepal red with yellow margins, triangle, carinate, long acuminate, denticulate, 3-veined, ca. 8 x 4 mm; lateral sepals yellow with red tints, connate 2 mm, ovate, caudate, ca. 9 mm including the tails x 3 mm width, denticulate–ciliate, tails 3 mm, free, arching to the outside, apices slightly spaced; petals red with outer edge yellow, transversely bilobate, 1 mm long x 5 mm wide, slightly curved, lower lobes acute, upper lobes obtuse; lip red, glabrous, bilaminate, blades elliptical, basis of the blades slightly acute, apices obtuse, 3 x 1 mm, appendix minute, filiform, very short; column slender, ca. 2 mm long, with a foot-like appendix, bifurcate at the terminal part, born from the lower-terminal part of the column.

**Etymology:** The species is named after the place of collection, Dapa, Yumbo municipality, Valle del Cauca department, Colombia.

**Distribution:** Only known for the Yumbo municipality, Dapa, Valle del Cauca department, Colombia.

**Habitat and ecology:** This species is found in cloud forest relicts, between 2000-2100 m.a.s.l. Apparently, it is restricted to a one cloud forest relict in Dapa, where it is scarce within the forest, at the lower stratum. In addition, it grows with other new species like Lepanthes ortiziana O. Pérez, E. Parra & M. Kolanowska (Pérez et al., 2010), as well as together with other new species published recently, positioning this locality as a very important one for conservation, due to the great amount of taxonomical and chorological novelties of restricted distribution that it holds.
Commentary: *Lepanthes dapaënsis* is similar to *Lepanthes tomentosa*, but differs mainly in the plant habit (pendent vs. erect), the membranous margin at the middle and apical part of the leaves (vs. entire) the colors of the sepals (red with yellow margins vs. rose with green margins), petals (red with yellow outer edge vs. reddish-brown orange) and lip (red vs. brown with white toward the center of the blades), the shape of the synsepal (caudate, the tails arching to the outside, slightly spaced at the apices vs. apices of the lateral sepals approximate or overlapping, the apices of the petals (upper lobe obtuse vs. acute) and by the presence of a foot-like appendix in the basal part of the column (vs. absent).

According to these characteristics, especially the distinctive shape of the synsepal and the presence of the foot-like appendix, we propose that these two species be considered different. Those characteristics are summarized in table 1.

### Table 1.

**Main contrasting differences between *Lepanthes dapaënsis* P. Ortiz & E. Parra and *Lepanthes tomentosa* Luer.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphological characteristics</th>
<th><em>Lepanthes dapaënsis</em></th>
<th><em>Lepanthes tomentosa</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Growth habit</td>
<td>Pendent</td>
<td>Erect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margin of the leaves</td>
<td>Membranous at the middle and apical part</td>
<td>Entire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloration</td>
<td>Sepals red with yellow margins, petals red with the outer edge yellow, lip red</td>
<td>Sepals rose with green margins, petals reddish-brown orange, lip brown with white towards the center of blades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of the dorsal sepal</td>
<td>8 x 4 mm</td>
<td>6.5 x 3 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of the lateral sepals</td>
<td>9 x 3 mm</td>
<td>7 x 3.5 mm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petals</td>
<td>Upper lobe obtuse</td>
<td>Upper lobe acute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foot-like appendix in the basal part of the column</td>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Absent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Literature Cited**


