

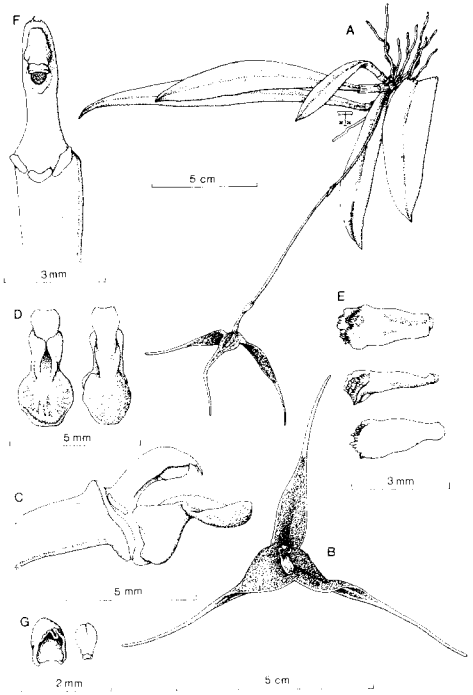
Dracula inexperata Pupulin, *sp. nov.*

Species *Draculae platycrateri* (Rchb.f.) Luer similis, ovario laevi, sepalis triangularibus interne papilloso-pubescentibus, labello subpandurato non lamellato concavo recedit.

Plant epiphytic, caespitose, suberect, to about 15 cm tall. **Roots** coarse, glabrous. **Ramicauls** short, stout, 1.1–1.3 cm long, enclosed by two to three tubular, somewhat loose sheaths. **Leaves** elliptical, thinly coriaceous, carinate, acute, lightly acuminate, to 13.5 cm long x 2.2 cm wide,

decurring toward the base into an indistinct, conduplicate petiole about 1.5 cm long. **Inflorescence** a pendent, successively flowered raceme up to 14 cm long, produced from the base of the ramicaul; peduncle terete, to 13 cm long, with two to three distant, tubular bracts; floral bract ovate, cucullate, acute, 7 mm long; pedicel terete, 15 mm long. **Ovary** articulate with the pedicel, subclavate, smooth, round in cross-section, 5.5 mm long. **Flowers** large, spreading, flat, the sepals white tinged with yellow toward the base, densely spotted and blotched with purple red, the caudate apices bright yellow; the petals white marked with purple-brown; the lip solid magenta; the column yellow. **Sepals** subsimilar, triangular-oblong, dorsally carinate, the inner surface densely covered with minute papillae, the margins sparsely ciliate, 51 mm long, 8–10 mm wide, connate at the base for about 5 mm to form a short, open cup, the acute apices contracted into slender tails 23–28 mm long, the lateral sepals twisted toward the end of the lamina. **Petals** cartilaginous, oblong, 2.8 mm long, 1.3 mm wide, rounded, bivalvate at apex, papillose between the laminae, the inner lamina with papillose apical margin. **Lip** articulate with the base of the column foot, subpandurate-spathulate, 4.5 mm long, 2.1 mm wide, the epichyle ovate to orbicular, the concave apex rounded to subtruncate, irregularly serrulate, with three central raised veins and multiple, irregular, less raised veins radiating toward the margins, obscurely verrucose externally; the hypochyle subquadrate-oblong, 1.5 mm long, 1.2 mm wide, with erect, obtuse margins, provided with two fleshy keels decurring toward the epichyle, cleft centrally, concave at the base. **Column** elongate, semiterete, irregularly dentate, 3.5 mm long, with a stout foot about 3 mm long. **Anther cap** cucullate, ovate one-celled. **Pollinia** two, linear-oblong, partially fused, on very short, pulvulent caudicles.

TYPE: COSTA RICA. Cartago: Orosi,



Above *Dracula inexperata* Pupulin. A. Habit.

B. Flower. C. Column and lip, lateral view. D. Lip: adaxial and abaxial view. E. Petal (from the top): adaxial, lateral and abaxial view. F. Column, abaxial view. G. Anther cap and pollinarium.

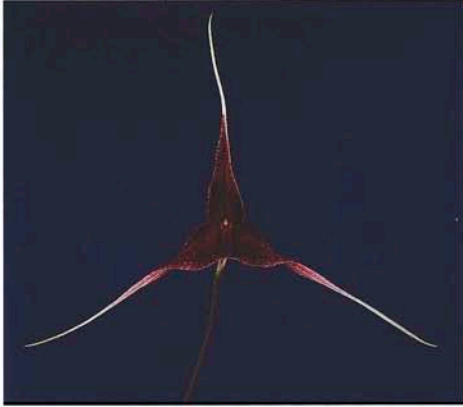
Illustration voucher: *F. Pupulin 2584*. Drawn from the holotype.

Parque Nacional Tapantí, sendero Oropendula, along the Río Grande de Orosi, 1,160 m, epiphytic on branchlet in shade, 19 Nov. 2000, *F. Pupulin, R. Chacón and Curso de Orquideología 2584* (holotype: US!).

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *inexperatus*, "unexpected," in reference to the unexpected finding of this showy species along one of the most visited paths of Parque Nacional Tapantí, a protected area intensely explored by many botanists and students over the years.

DISTRIBUTION: Costa Rica, known only from the type locality.

ECOLOGY: Epiphytic on branchlets in



dense shade in disturbed primary vegetation, the species is known only from the lower montane wet forest of the Caribbean watershed of Cordillera de Talamanca at 3,600 to 3,940 feet (1,100 to 1,200 m) elevation.

DISCUSSION: *Dracula inexperata* pertains to the Series *Grandiflorae-Parvilabiatae* Luer (Subgenus *Dracula*, Section *Dracula*, Subsection *Dracula*), a group characterized by large-flowered species with small lips and a smooth or verrucose ovary (Luer, 1993). The group is eminently South American, with two main centers of distribution in the Cauca department in Colombian Andes and in Ecuador (Prov. of Carchí), and extends southward to southern Ecuador. Although *D. platycrater* (Rchb.f.) Luer has been recorded from such low altitudes as 4,920 feet (1,500 m), the group shows its highest diversity at altitudes of 6,560 to 8,200 feet (2,000 to 2,500 m; Luer, 1993). *Dracula inexperata* is the first species of the group to be found in Central America, although other species of the genus (i.e., *Dracula vespertilio* [Rchb.f.] Luer) are known to have continuous distribution from Nicaragua to Ecuador. From its only close relative, *D. platycrater*, *D. inexperata* can be easily recognized by the integument of the sepals, which, in the latter species, are covered by dense, minute to coarse papillae. Moreover, *D. inexperata* has a smooth ovary (vs. subverrucose), triangular vs.

oblong sepals, and the scallose lip is concave toward the apex vs. the convex epichyle provided with a verrucose callus of *D. platycrater*.

Dracula inexperata is so far known from a single locality and one specimen. A preliminary survey of other branches of the same tree where the plant was collected and of other trees in the area failed to reveal more plants of the new *Dracula*, which should be considered a rare species in the field. Part of the type specimen is now in cultivation at Jardín Botánico Lankester, where it will be reproduced from seed for public distribution. □