

Masdevallia coriacea

LINDL.

ANN. MAG. NAT. HIST. 15: 257. 1845

Synonyms: *Byrsella coriacea* (Lindl.) Luer, Monogr. Syst. Bot. Missouri Bot. Gard. 105: 8. 2006.**Type:** Colombia. Cundinamarca: "on rocks, near Bogotá, at an elevation of 8,900 ft.". 1842. *Th. Hartweg s.n.* (holotype, K-L).**Illustrated specimen:** Colombia. Cundinamarca: Municipality of Chía, 2800 m. December 2014. K. Gil-Amaya 205 & P. Almanza de Ramírez (LCDP voucher).

Plant Lithophytic, rarely epiphytic, caespitose, up to 20 cm tall, roots fleshy coarse. **Ramicauls** erect, 4–5 cm long, enclosed by 2–3 loose, tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, thickly coriaceous, narrowly oblong, elliptic, 10–15 × 1.5–2.5 cm long. **Inflorescence** a solitary flower, suberect to erect peduncle 14–24 cm long, spotted with purple; floral bract white, 1.5–2 cm long; pedicel spotted with purple too, 3–5.5 cm long. **Ovary**, green, 9–10 mm long. **Sepals** rigidly fleshy, pubescent adaxially, cream-colored and dotted with purple along the veins, the blade of the *dorsal sepal* ovate, 20 × 14 mm, connate 10 mm to the lateral sepals to form a broad, cylindrical, sepaline tube, acute apex, contracted into a thick, yellowish tail, 13 mm long, the *lateral sepals* ovate, with acute apices, connate 10 mm into a bifid lamina, synsepalous 30 × 24 mm, including the thick tails 7 mm long. **Petals** white with a purple midvein, oblong, subacute to obtuse, 12 × 5 mm. **Lip** yellowish spotted with purple at the base, apex yellow, oblong-obovate, thick, 14 × 6 mm, shallowly channeled centrally between low, longitudinal calli, the apex obtuse to rounded, verrucose, the base subcordate, hinged beneath. **Column** white with purple margins, semiterete, 10 × 3 mm, the foot 8 mm long, with an incurved extension. **Anther cap** white, 2 × 8 mm. **Pollinarium** made of two yellow pollinia, and a pair of caudicles, giving it the characteristic whale tail shape, 1.7 mm long.

Etymology: From the Latin *coriaceus*, "leathery," in reference to the thickly coriaceous leaves.

Masdevallia coriacea Lindl. can be found on the hills surrounding Bogotá, especially in Usaquen, Guadalupe, Monserrate, Cota, Sub-

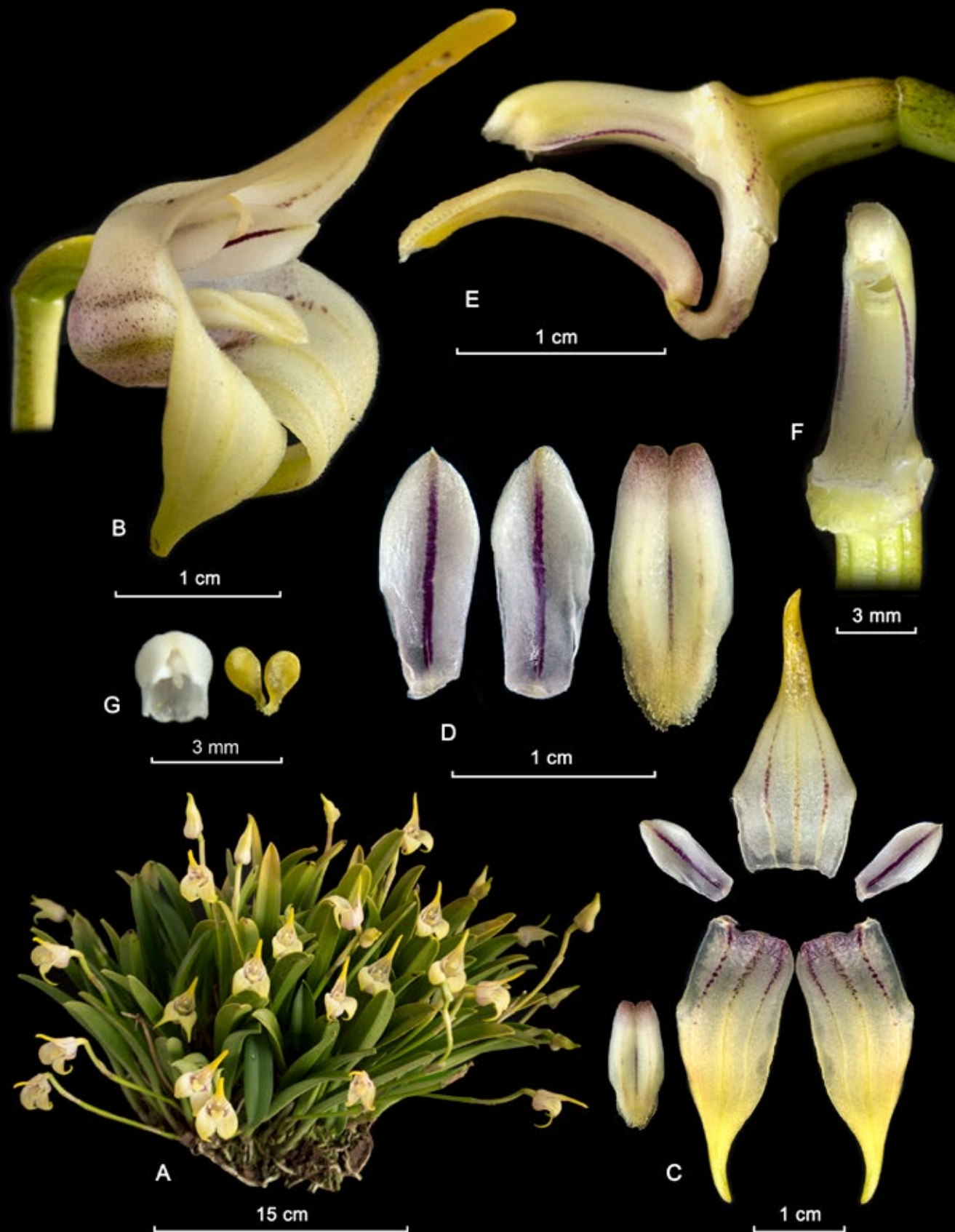
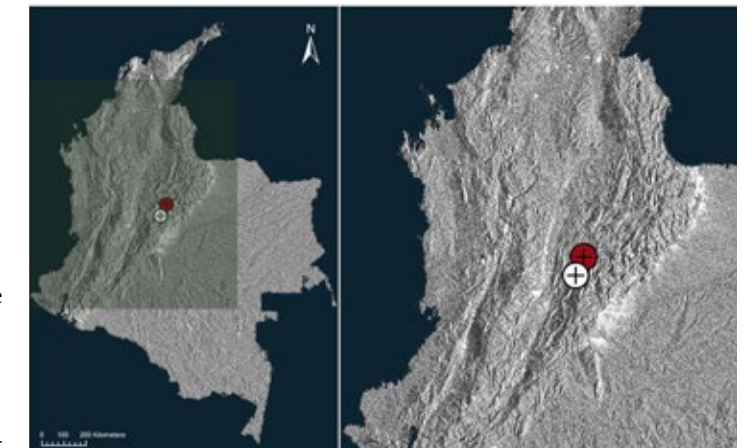
achoque, Facatativa and Boyaca, at elevation from 2200 to 3700 m, mostly it is growing terrestrially or lithophytically. This species is recognized by the thick texture of its coriaceous, leather-like leaves. The lip's verrucose apex is another identifying morphological feature, also characteristic is the broad sepaline tube, with a chin that is usually upwards at an angle of 45 degrees. *Masdevallia coriacea* has a very strong unpleasant fragrance, decomposed like a sewer, and has been seen to attract flies of the families Calliphoridae and Sarcophagidae.

References:

Fernández, A. & Sarmiento, F. 1972. Sinopsis sobre el género *Masdevallia* en Colombia. *Rev. Fac. Nac. Agron. Medellín*: 27(1): 31-42.

Luer, C. A. 2000. Icones pleurothallidarum. XXI. Systematics of *Masdevallia*, Part Two. *Monogr. Syst. Bot. Missouri Bot. Gard.* 82: 265-518.

Luer, C. A. 2006. Icones Pleurothallidarum XXVIII: A reconsideration of *Masdevallia*, Systematics of *Specklinia* and vegetatively similar taxa. (Orchidaceae). *Monogr. Syst. Bot. Missouri Bot. Gard.* 105: 1-20.



LCDP: *Masdevallia coriacea* Lindl. **A.** Habit. **B.** Flower. **C.** Dissected perianth. **D.** Petals and lip, adaxial view. **E.** Ovary, column and lip, side view. **F.** Column, ventral view. **G.** Anther cap and pollinarium.

