

*Masdevallia xanthina*

RCHB.F.

GARD. CHRON. 13(1): 681. 1880

**Synonyms:** *Masdevallia estradae* Rchb.f. var. *xanthina* (Rchb.f.) Veitch, Man. Orch. Pl. 5: 42. 1889.**Type:** Colombia, without collection data, cultivated Apr. 1880 by Veitch 165 (holotype: W).**Illustrated specimen:** Colombia. Tolima: Municipality of Villahermosa, vereda Samaria, 3020 m, pluvial mountain forest. 23 July 2019. M. A. Sierra-Ariza & A. Albino-Bohórquez 176 (TOLI; LCDP voucher).

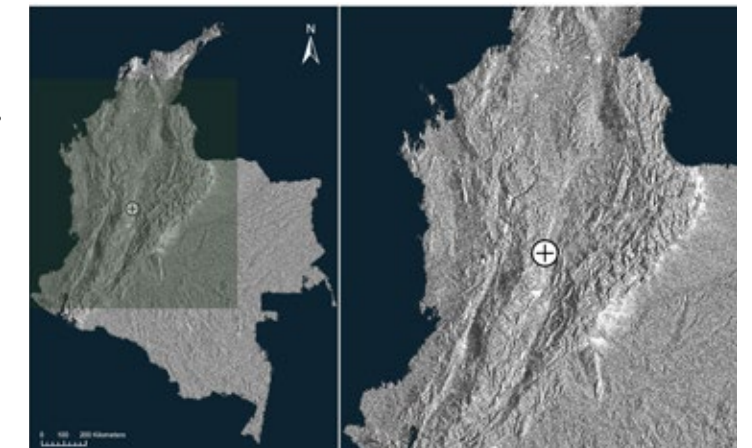
*Plant* epiphytic, caespitose, 6-10 cm tall. *Roots* white, slender. *Ramicauls* blackish, erect, slender, enclosed by 2-3 loose, fibrous, tubular sheaths. *Leaf* erect, coriaceous, oblong to elliptical, rounded at the apex, minutely tridentate, blade 5-9 × 2-2.5 cm, base cuneate into a slender, channelled petiole. *Inflorescence* a solitary flower borne from the base of the ramicaul, on an erect, slender, terete peduncle 6-7 cm long, with a blackish bract on the base. Subtending *floral bract*, tubular, acute, whitish. *Pedicle* terete. *Ovary* smooth, terete, ribbed, 5 mm long. *Flowers* resupinate. *Dorsal sepal* pale yellow, erect, obovate, concave, 5-veined, 19 × 12 mm, slightly connate to the lateral sepals, rounded at the apex, contracted into a yellow, erect, slender tail 4-5 cm long. *Lateral sepals* white, pale yellow at base, with two small dark purple dots, elliptic, oblique, 15 × 10 mm, 3-veined, connate at base, the obtuse apices contracted into tails similar to that of the dorsal sepal, 5-6 cm long. *Petals* white, asymmetric, smooth, cartilaginous, 6 × 3 mm, the apex tridenticulate, the labellar margin thickened, forming a winglike callus basally incurved. *Lip* erect, oblong, white, suffused with light purple, smooth, membranous, the apex obtuse, with a dark purple apical lobule, with a pair of low longitudinal calli, the base rounded, hinged to the column foot. *Column* white, marked with purple, 5 × 3 mm, longitudinally winged, apically denticulate, column foot stout, with an incurved extension. *Pollinia* not seen.

**Etymology:** From the Greek *xanthós*, “yellow”, in reference to the color of the flower.

*Masdevallia xanthina* belongs to a group of morphologically similar taxa belonging to *Masdevallia* Ruiz & Pav. subsect. *Caudatae* H.J. Veitch. Members of the species complex are distributed across the northern Andes and are characterized by the blackish ramicauls, large flowers, elongate, slender, yellow tails, white petals with a marginal callus curved basally and simple, erect lip with a dark apical callus. Individuals of *Masdevallia xanthina* and *M. klabochorum* Rchb.f. from different populations show variation in the shape and proportion of the floral parts; differing essentially in the flower color and presence or absence of “eye-spots” at the base of the lateral sepals.

**References:**

Luer, CA. 2002. Icones Pleurothallidarum XXIII. Systematics of *Masdevallia*, Part Four. *Monogr. Syst. Bot. Missouri Bot. Gard.* 87: 911-914.



**LCDP:** *Masdevallia xanthina* Rchb. f. A. Habit. B. Flower. C. Dissected perianth. D. Ovary, column and lip. E. Lip, adaxial view. F. Column, side and ventral view. G. Petals.

