

# *Acineta superba*

(KUNTH) RCHB.F.

ANN. BOT. SYST. 6: 609. 1863

**Synonyms:** *Anguloa superba* Kunth in F.W.H. von Humboldt, A.J.A. Bonpland & C.S. Kunth, Nov. Gen. Sp. 1: 343. 1816.

**Type:** Ecuador. Province of Loja: "Loxa", F.W.H. von Humboldt & A.J.A. Bonpland 3385 (holotype: P).

**Illustrated specimen:** Colombia. Tolima: Municipality of Villahermosa. 1979 m. 24 June 2017. M. Sierra-Ariza 01 (TOLI; LCDP voucher).

Epiphytic caespitose herb, up to 70-118 cm tall without inflorescence. Roots glabrous, thick. Pseudobulbs ovoid, lightly compressed, sulcate, 14-15 × 5.0-6.0 cm. Leaves 2-4, elliptic to lanceolate, plicate, acuminate, subpetiolate, 50-90 × 5.0-6.0 cm. Inflorescence, thick racemose, pendulous, lax 25-30 cm long, multiflowered; peduncle terete, green, bracts oblong, obtuse, concave. Ovary subterete, sulcate, with dark brown scales, 3.5-3.8 cm long. Flowers resupinate, subglobose, fleshy, dotted wine red on a cream-colored background; with intense and pleasant fragrance. Dorsal sepal elliptic-ovate, concave, obtuse, spotted with purplish red dots, 4.2 × 2.5 cm. Lateral sepals connate at the base, elliptic-ovate, concave, obtuse, spotted with purplish red dots, these bigger and denser at the base, 4.6-4.8 cm × 3.2-3.3 cm. Petals elliptic-ovate, slightly concave, obtuse, also purplish red spotted, 3.7-3.9 × 2.0-2.2 cm. Lip fleshy, concave, hypochile yellowish brown internally, with purple-red dots, the side lobes of the mesochile purplish red spotted, the epichile yellow; hypochile entire, canaliculate, pubescent on the abaxial surface, velutinous on the adaxial surface with a very pronounced osmophore, in the form of a thick curved horn, brownish, spotted with purplish red dots, 0.8-0.9 cm long; mesochile with two carinae, erect, dolabrilform, transversely sub-reniform lateral lobes, and a saddle shaped central callus with rectangular surface; callus in dorsal view with two emergences forward and two backward, surface with the apical and distal parts elevated, with intense wine red color, 1.0-1.3 × 0.6-0.7 cm; the epichile oblong spatulate, concave, acute, with a basal hump, 1.6-2.0 × 0.5-0.6 cm. Column thick, clavate, lightly compressed, apically winged, slightly hairy, stigma in the form of a transverse cleft, rostellum linguiform, 1.7-2.0 × 0.5-1.1 cm. Anther cap white, dorsoventrally compressed, 0.6-0.7 cm long.

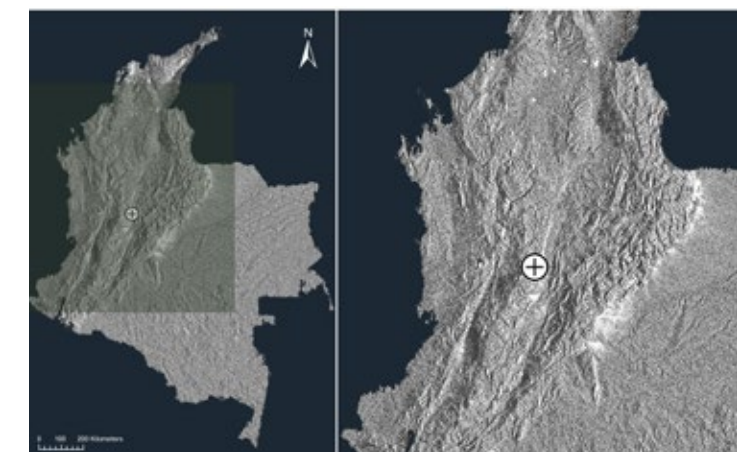
**Pollinarium** with a semilunar viscidium, a ligulate stipe and two yellow, flattened pollinia.

**Etymology:** From the Latin *superbus*, meaning "magnificent" or "splendid", probably referring to the large size of the plants and the descending inflorescences with very fragrant flowers.

*Acineta superba* is recognized by the saddle shaped central callus with the basal and distal parts elevated, of intense vinaceous color. The lip has dolabrilform (axe shaped) lateral lobes and near the apex of hypochile, the osmophore, a very pronounced structure in the form of a thick curved horn. The pollinarium is characterized by a bi-pointed or semilunar viscidium and a ligulate stipe. This species is variable in its morphology and coloration and has the widest distribution in the genus, ranging from Colombia to Peru. *Acineta superba* has a very strong pleasant fragrance of cinnamon, dominated by methyl cinnamate and has been observed to attract male bees of the genus *Eufriesea* (tribe Euglossini).

## References:

Gerlach, G. 2020. Notes on the genus *Acineta* in the Andes (Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador and Peru) and a list including its species. *Orquideologia* 37(1): 85-95.



**LCDP:** *Acineta superba* (Kunth) Rchb.f. A. Habit. B. Flower. C. Dissected perianth. D. Column, side and ventral view. E. Ovary, column and lip, lateral view. F. Dissected lip, hypochile and epichile. G. Lip, transversal cut. H. Anther cap and pollinarium.

