

NOVELTIES IN THE ORCHID FLORA OF VENEZUELA  
V. CRANICHIDEAE II. VEYRETIA SZLACHETKOANA  
(ORCHIDACEAE, SPIRANTHEAE)<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract.** We document an orchid species not previously reported or illustrated for the flora of Venezuela, *Veyretia szlachetkoana*, collected in the context of the project “Flora de orquídeas de los estados Amazonas y Bolívar, Venezuela.” The genus *Veyretia* is briefly discussed, herbarium specimens of *V. szlachetkoana* are cited, and field diagnostic characters are provided. We also include a key to distinguish *Sarcoglottis* from *Veyretia* and one to identify the three species of *Veyretia* so far reported for the flora of Venezuela.

**Resumen.** Documentamos una especie de orquídea no previamente reportada o ilustrada para la flora de Venezuela, *Veyretia szlachetkoana*, colectada en el contexto del proyecto “Flora de orquídeas de los estados Amazonas y Bolívar, Venezuela”. El género *Veyretia* es brevemente discutido y se citan ejemplares de *V. szlachetkoana* y así mismo se presentan caracteres para identificarla en el campo. También incluimos una clave para distinguir *Sarcoglottis* de *Veyretia* y otra para identificar las tres especies de *Veyretia* hasta ahora reportadas para la flora de Venezuela.

**Keywords:** Colombia, Cranichideae, Orchidaceae, Venezuela, *Veyretia*

Following the four previous publications in this series, here we present a novelty never reported or illustrated before for the orchid flora of Venezuela, *Veyretia szlachetkoana* Mytnik, collected in the context of the project “Flora de orquídeas de los estados Amazonas y Bolívar, Venezuela.”

The genus *Veyretia* Szlach. originally encompassed 10 species and two varieties previously referred to *Sarcoglottis* Presl. section *Aphylla* Burns-Bal. and only in one instance to *Pelexia* Poit. ex Lindl. (*V. lindmaniana* (Kraenzl.) Szlach.; Szlachetko, 1995). A recent account (Rutkowski et al., 2008) listed eleven species in two subgenera. Plants of the species referred to subgenus *Saccostigma* Szlach., Mytnik & Rutk., according to its authors (in Rutkowski

et al., 2008: 220), differ from those in *Veyretia* subgenus *Veyretia* in having flowers with sacs in the lateral lobes of the stigma (absent in the latter). One of us (Toscano de Brito, 1995), reduced considerably the number of species when referring many of them to the synonymy of what is now considered *Veyretia simplex* (Griseb.) Szlach.

Foldats treated three species of *Veyretia* in his treatment of Orchidaceae for the flora of Venezuela: the first one as *Spiranthes aphylla* (Ridl.) Cogn., of which he did not examine any material (he reported im Thurn’s type, but the species was not illustrated; Foldats, 1969: 306–308); the second as *S. longiauriculata* C. Schweinf., with a figure (Foldats 1969: 333, Fig. 121) and citing only the type (this species

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<sup>1</sup> Previous articles in this series were Romero-González and Batista (2009), Romero-González, Carnevali Fernández-Concha, and Ormerod (2010), Romero-González, Gómez, and Carnevali Fernández-Concha (2010), and Romero-González and Meneguzzo (2012).

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is currently referred to the synonymy of *Veyretia simplex*); the third as *Spiranthes neuroptera* Rchb.f. & Warm., without citing any specimens (Foldvats, 1969: 337). Dunsterville apparently never saw plants of this genus.

Two species were reported in the treatment of Orchidaceae for the *Flora of the Venezuelan Guayana*, *V. aphylla* (Ridl.) Szlach. and *V. simplex* (Griseb.) Szlach., where *Veyretia* was referred to the synonymy of *Sarcoglottis* Presl (Carnevali et al., 2003; also in Carnevali et al., 2007).

#### SYSTEMATICS

*Veyretia* Szlach., *Fragm. Florist. Geobot. Suppl.* 3: 115. 1995.

Type species: *Veyretia hassleri* (Cogn.) Szlach.  
*Veyretia* Subgenus *Veyretia*.

See Salazar (2003) for an overview of the genus.

*Veyretia szlachetkoana* Mytnik, *Richardiana* 7 (1): 5. 2006. TYPE: COLOMBIA. Departamento Casanare: about 60 km south-east of Orocué, 150 m, “terrestrial, among grass on open Llanos, no foliage at present, flowers light green”, 19 April 1939, *O. Haught* 2773 (Holotype: COL; Isotypes: AMES, US). Fig. 1–2.

**Additional iconography:** Mytnik-Ejsmont (2007: Fig. 1).

**Additional reference:** Carnevali et al. (2003: 553, *pro parte*); (Rutkowski et al. (2008: 222).

**Eponymy:** Dedicated to Dariusz L. Szlachetko, a dedicated student of Spiranthaceae.

**Distribution:** Colombia (type locality) and Venezuela.

**Additional specimens examined:** VENEZUELA. Amazonas: Municipio Autónomo

*Veyretia* was later accepted in the Orchidaceae for the *Nuevo Catálogo de la Flora Vascular de Venezuela* (Carnevali et al., 2008: 785) that listed the same two species.

The species illustrated here was recently described based on material collected in Colombia. A re-examination of available herbarium material, including an isotype of *Veyretia szlachetkoana* housed at AMES, clearly shows that it also occurs in Venezuela.

Atures, 8 km S of Puerto Ayacucho, 13–15 April 1978, *G. Davidse* & *O. Huber* 15030 (MO); aeropuerto de Puerto Ayacucho, 19 April 1975, *O. Huber* 689 (VEN); región de Rincones de Chacorro, a unos 30 km al N de Puerto Ayacucho y a unos 5 km al NE de Galipero, 09 May 1980, *O. Huber* 5217 (NY, VEN); 5 km al sur de Puerto Ayacucho, al este de la carretera, 01 May 2002, *G. A. Romero* & *C. Gómez* 3332 (AMES [fragment], TFAV, VEN).

**Field diagnostic characters:** Terrestrial, inconspicuous plants in grassy savannas, leafless when in flower, 15–25 cm tall, bearing 5–15 flowers; sepals light green at the base, white toward the apex with a light green, narrow line along the middle (particularly discernable on the abaxial side); petals greenish white at the base, white at the apex; labellum white with a light green spot on the tuberculate disc.

The herbarium material from Colombia and Venezuela cited above had been previously referred to *Veyretia simplex* (Griseb.) Szlach. (Carnevali et al., 2003, 2007, 2008; Dueñas G. and Fernández A., 2009). The two species can be told apart using the key provided below.

In Venezuela,<sup>6</sup> plants of *Veyretia* can be easily distinguished from those of *Sarcoglottis* using the following key (based largely on Carnevali et al., 2003):

- 1a. Plants without leaves during anthesis (hysteranthous), usually growing in open, sunny habitats (e.g., savannas) . . . . . 2 (*Veyretia*)
- 1b. Plants leaf-bearing during anthesis (synanthous), usually growing in closed-canopy, shaded habitats (e.g., the edge and understory of forests) . . . . . 3 (*Sarcoglottis*)

The three species of *Veyretia* found in Venezuela can be distinguished using the following key:

- 2a. Stem and bracts apparently pubescent (*vide* Ridley, 1887: t. 48B, Fig. 7–11); labellum apically truncate and 3-lobed . . . . . *V. aphylla* (Uei-tepui, Bolívar)
- 2b. Stem and bracts glabrous; labellum apically contracted into a rhombic-ovate apical lobe . . . . . 3
- 3a. Plants generally pauciflorous, flowers erect, condensed at the apex of an abbreviated rachis, lateral sepals pubescent . . . . . *V. simplex* (Gran Sabana, Bolívar).
- 3b. Plant generally multiflorous, flowers porrect, distributed along a relatively long rachis, lateral sepals glabrous . . . . . *V. szlachetkoana* (Amazonas).

<sup>6</sup>According to Salazar (2003) and Toscano de Brito and Cribb (2005), plants of some species of *Sarcoglottis*, not found in Venezuela, may flower when plants do not bear leaves.



FIGURE 1. *Veyretia szlachetkoana* Mytnik. **A**, habit; **B**, inflorescence; **C**, lateral view of flower and floral bract; **D**, views of the flower; **E**, sepals and petals; **F**, sagittal view of labellum and column; **G**, labellum; **H**, column and pollinarium. Drawing by B. Angell based on Romero & Gómez 3332 (AMES).



FIGURE 2. *Veyretia szlachetkoana* Mytnik. **A**, habit; **B**, close-up of an inflorescence. Photographs *in-situ* by G. A. Romero-González based on *Romero & Gómez 3332*. For scale, see Figure 1.

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