

PLANTAE MEXICANAE III

BY

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A SIGNIFICANT VARIETY OF LIPARIS VEXILLIFERA FROM OAXACA

A LARGE COLLECTION of an interesting orchid made in Oaxaca proves to be *Sturmia arnoglossophylla* Reichb.f.

An examination of a drawing by Blanche Ames (in Herb. Ames) of the type of *Sturmia arnoglossophylla* (in Herb. Reichenbach Orch. No. 89783) together with the original description convinces me that this species falls within the range of floral variation exhibited by *Liparis vexillifera* (La Llave & Lex.) Cogn. Furthermore, this species is comparable to the specimens collected by Schultes and Reko in Oaxaca in having two broadly elliptic leaves and similar floral structure. Reichenbach's specimen, however, differs from the Oaxacan collection in being only about half as large and in having the sepals narrower and more linear. It is probably a young plant, for the inflorescence is immature at the apex.

The reduction of Reichenbach's species to varietal rank is based on the study of Mrs. Ames' drawing of the Reichenbach sheet in Vienna and on a comparison of this drawing with the Oaxacan collection of Schultes and Reko.

***Liparis vexillifera* (La Llave & Lex.) Cogniaux**
var. ***arnoglossophylla* (Reichb.f.) R.E. Schultes comb. nov.**

Sturmia arnoglossophylla Reichenbach filius in Bonplandia 4 (1856) 217.

Liparis arnoglossophylla "Reichb.f." ex Hemsley in Godman & Salvin Biol. Centr.-Am. Bot. 3 (1883) 212.

Plant similar to *Liparis vevillifera*, but bifoliate. Leaves subequal, large, broadly elliptic, acuminate, very membranaceous, 9–11 cm. long, 5–7 cm. wide. Inflorescence a loose raceme. Floral bracts 5–7 mm. long, much shorter than the ovary. Sepals similar. Dorsal sepal 10 mm. long and 2 mm. wide. Lateral sepals 12 mm. long, 2 mm. wide. Petals linear, 10 mm. long, shorter than the lateral sepals. Labellum more or less acute, 14 mm. long, 8 mm. wide.

Whereas *Liparis vevillifera* appears always to have a single more or less coriaceous leaf, the variety is strikingly different in having two large, extremely membranaceous and much broader leaves. The leaves of the variety are always of slightly different size. *Liparis vevillifera* occurs commonly, but not exclusively, in somewhat dry open habitats, while *L. vevillifera* var. *arnoglossophylla* inhabits the rich, damp floor of cool dark rain-forests at high altitudes. The difference in number, texture and size of leaves of the two plants may be correlated with the usual habitat differences.

Florally, there are minor differences shown by the variety. The inflorescence appears to be more loosely racemose, while the relative size of the sepals and petals is slightly different. The lip is acute.

In *Liparis vevillifera* var. *arnoglossophylla* the lip is more or less translucent, of a pale green color. The sepals and petals are predominantly of the same color, but become a bluish-black toward the centre of the flower. The column is bright orange.

MEXICO: "New Spain," Herb. Pavon (TYPE); terrestrial, on rich damp floor of a cool dark rain-forest, slopes of Cerro del Fraile, Huautla de Jiménez, Oaxaca, at about 7500 feet altitude, August 8, 1938, Richard Evans Schultes and Blas Pablo Reko 394 (in Herb. Ames No. 55479).