NEW SPECIES OF AA AND NEW COMBINATIONS IN MYROSMODES (ORCHIDACEAE: CRANICHIINA) FROM BOLIVIA AND PERU

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ABSTRACT. A new species of Aa from northern Peru is described: Aa aurantiaca, which has highly atypical orange flowers for the genus. Furthermore, two new combinations of Myrosmodes are proposed: M. inaequalis and M. gymnandra, with illustrations and diagnostic features of the new species.

RESUMEN. Se describe una nueva especie de Aa del norte del Perú: Aa aurantiaca; la cual tiene las flores de color naranja, siendo éste un color inusual para el género. Se proponen además dos nuevas combinaciones de Myrosmodes: M. inaequalis y M. gymnandra; se presentan ilustraciones y se discuten rasgos diagnósticos de las nuevas especies.

KEY WORDS. : Orchidaceae, Cranichideae, Peru, Bolivia, Aa, Myrosmodes

The genera Aa Rchb.f. and Myrosmodes Rchb.f. consist of terrestrial orchids possessing tiny, white to greenish-white, non-resupinate flowers. Although there are some records of Aa paleacea (Kunth) Rchb.f. in the mountains of Costa Rica (Dressler 1993), the species of Aa and Myrosmodes are mostly restricted to the South American Andean mountain range at high elevations.

The taxonomic status of the representatives of these genera has remained unclear for many years. The genera Aa and Myrosmodes were first described by Reichenbach filius in 1854. He distinguished Aa from Altensteinia Kunth and transferred Altensteinia paleacea (Kunth) Kunth to Aa [Aa paleacea (Kunth) Rchb.f.]. However, in a subsequent work Reichenbach (1878) reassessed his criteria and placed both Aa and Myrosmodes as synonyms of Altensteinia, and described nine new species, among them Altensteinia gymnandra Rchb.f. and Altensteinia inaequalis Rchb.f.. Later, Schlechter (1912, 1920a, 1920b) distinguished Aa from Altensteinia again but considered Myrosmodes as a synonym of Aa and combined it with that genus (e.g., Aa gymnandra (Rchb.f.) Schltr., Aa inaequalis (Rchb.f.) Schltr.). Subsequent taxonomists, for instance Schweinfurth (1958), recognized only Altensteinia as a valid genus and considered the other two genera as synonyms.

Garay (1978), as part of his work in Flora of Ecuador, revalidated the genera Aa and Myrosmodes and transferred some species of Aa and Altensteinia to Myrosmodes. Since then, the three genera have been widely accepted as distinct taxa. Further revision of Myrosmodes in Peru and Colombia led to the transfer of more species to this genus (Vargas 1995, Ortiz 1995, respectively). Up to the point of this publication, Myrosmodes comprised about 10 species.

Morphologically, Altensteinia is distinguished from Aa and Myrosmodes by having a terminal inflorescence, pubescent column, lobulate clinandrium, small stigma and anthesis occurring after the full development of leaves (Garay 1978). Conversely, Aa and Myrosmodes possess a lateral inflorescence and glabrous column, and anthesis occurs before the full development of leaves. Aa has an elongate peduncle enveloped by tubular hyaline-diaphanous sheaths, with dorsal sepal and petals free from the column, lip calceolate with involute and lacerate margins, and in many species, a pilose ovary. Myrosmodes has at least 6 morphological and ecological characters that distinguish this genus from Aa and Altensteinia and the rest of Prescottiinae: (1) a short peduncle with infundibuliform, scarious sheaths, (2) a cucullate lip that is tubular or flared, with fimbriolate margins with moniliforms hairs (Garay 1978, Vargas 1997), (3) an accrescent peduncle (after
anthesis, the inflorescence peduncle elongates twice or more its original size, evident even in herbarium specimens), (4) basipetal floral development (with flowers growing from the inflorescence apex to its base), (5) andromonoecious inflorescence (with male flowers distinctly smaller (up to 300%) than hermaphrodite flower (Berry & Calvo 1991, Vargas 1997, and Trujillo pers. obs.), and (6) growing between 3300 to almost 5000 m.a.s.l and mostly in wet puna/paramo high-andean bogs from Venezuela to Argentina/Chile (world’s record by Myrosmodes pumilio (Schltr.) C. Vargas, observed in Peruvian Andes and in bogs from Chile, Novoa, Vargas & Cisternas, in prep.).

Although a recent DNA study indicates that Myrosmodes may be embedded within Aa and that the recognition of the genus Myrosmodes is tenuous (Álvarez-Molina & Cameron 2009), the morphological and ecological evidence still supports its separation from Aa.

Still, we are a long way from knowing all the species that constitutes the genera Aa and Myrosmodes. A careful examination of the floral features is necessary for the proper identification of the specimens, and this is only possible by dissecting the flowers under a stereomicroscope. For example, in most of the original descriptions and illustrations of Myrosmodes (as Aa or Altensteinia) the authors did not indicate or show the features of the column, mainly the anther (Reichenbach 1854, 1878, Schlechter 1912, 1920a, 1920b, Mansfeld 1929). The knowledge of these features in the other Myrosmodes species is required in order to have a clearer delimitation of the species that compose this genus.

Based on revisions of the type material from the Reichenbach Herbarium (W) as part of the identification of a new species of Aa from northern Peru, it has become evident that the following new combinations in Myrosmodes are necessary. They were also mentioned by Vargas in his work in Cranichideae and Prescottinae (unpublished thesis 1997).

*Aa aurantiaca* D. Trujillo, *sp.* nov.

**TYPE:** Peru. Dept. La Libertad: Prov. Santiago de Chuco, Quirovilca, Yanivilca, 3509 m, 22 May 2005, D. Trujillo 212 (holotype, HURP; isotypes, HAO, SEL, M) (Fig. 1, 2).

**Differt ab simili Aa rosea Ames flore aurantiaco, sepalis dorsalter pilosis, petalis trinervatis ovato-lanceolatis et foramine labelli angustiore.**

*Plant* small, terrestrial. *Roots* fleshy, fasciculate, pubescent. *Leaves* withered at flowering time. *Inflorescence* slender, erect, up 30 cm long, enclosed by up to 23 diaphanous sheaths, terminated in a densely many flowered cylindrical spike 2.2-5.0 cm long, rachis of the spike sparsely pilose. *Floral bracts* ovate, acute to obtuse, margins slightly erose, reflexed, 4-5 × 4 mm, somewhat surpassing the flowers. *Flowers* non-resupinate, orange to reddish orange. *Dorsal sepal* oblong to ovate, obtuse, 2.0 × 1.3-1.5 mm. *Lateral sepals* shortly connate at the base, obliquely oblong-lanceolate, obtuse, dorsally hairy, 1-nerved, 3.0 × 1.5 mm. *Petals* obliquely ovate lanceolate, obtuse, 3-nerved, reflexed, up to 2.3 × 1.1 mm. *Lip*
Figure 3. Single herbarium sheet at W-R bearing specimens of *Myrosmodes gymnandra* (Rchb.f.) C. Vargas composed of a mixed collection. A — Specimen Wilkes s.n. B — Specimens without collector information. C — Specimen Mandon s.n. (holotype).
calceolate (semiglobose), transversely elliptic, fleshy (except the margins), obscurely 3-lobed, with a narrow opening, the involute margins lacerate, base with two spherical calli, 2.0 x 2.5 mm (natural position). **Column** short, with an emarginate transverse rostellum, dilated above, 1.5 mm long, straight in young flowers and bent in old flowers. **Anther** erect, lateral margins lightly covered by the clinandrium. **Stigma** quadrate in young flowers and transversely elongate in old flowers. **Ovary** sessile, subcylindric, hairy, 2 mm long.

**Etymology:** From Latin *aurantiacus*, referring to the orange color of the flowers.

**Distribution:** Known only from the Department of La Libertad, Peru, between 3500 and 4000 m elevation.

**Phenology:** Flowering plants have been recorded between May and August.

**Habitat and ecology:** Plants of this species grow on grassy hillsides. Some populations grow sympatrically with other *Aa* species with white flowers; whose sepals and petals have light-green tones when young turning into light-cream to cream-brown when older (but never orange). Besides flower color, this *Aa* species can be distinguished from *Aa aurantiaca* by its wide opening lip, glabrous sepals and ovary, and acuminate floral bracts which notoriously surpass the flower (50% larger).

*Aa aurantiaca* is similar to *Aa rosei* Ames, but it can be distinguished by the orange flowers, dorsally hairy sepals, ovate-lanceolate, 3-nerved petals, and narrower opening of the lip.

**Myrosmodes gymnandra** (Rchb.f.) C. Vargas, **comb. nov.**

Basionym: *Altensteinia gymnandra* Rchb.f., Xenia Orch. 3: 18. 1878. TYPE: Bolivia. Prov. Larecaya, Mandon s.n. (holotype: W) (Fig. 3, 4).


**Myrosmodes gymnandra** belongs to the subgenus *Myrosmodes*, i.e. it does not have a rostrate ovary (Vargas 1995). The inflorescence is 13 cm long. The dorsal sepal is oblong, obtuse, 4.4 x 2.0 mm. The lateral sepals are oblong, concave, obtuse, somewhat carinate, 6.0 x 2.6 mm. The petals are linear, subacute, with upper margin erose, 4.5 x 0.6 mm. The lip is obovate, subquadrate, involute, trilobate, middle lobe subquadrate, margin apical with moniliform hairs, two calli at the base, 4.5 x 3.6 mm. The column is erect, and 3 mm long. The anther exceeds the apex of the stigma, with a free filament, 1.1 mm long. The rostellum is triangular and obtuse. The ovary is ellipsoid, 3.5 mm long. The floral bracts are subcircular to obovate, 11.0 x 10.2 mm.

In the protologue of the description of *A. gymnandra*, Reichenbach indicates that the specimen used to describe the species was *Mandon s.n.* Bolivia, Provencia Larecaya, without referring to a specific locality. However, in the Reichenbach Herbarium in Vienna (W), there was no specimen of *A. gymnandra* bearing the characteristic printed label of G. Mandon (as most of Mandon’s herbarium specimens). There is a herbarium sheet that contains the flower illustration as well as notes from Reichenbach with the description of *A. gymnandra* and a mix of two specimens (Fig. 3). One specimen is mounted on the herbarium sheet, which could be Mandon’s specimen (holotype) and the other is in an envelope (top left of the herbarium sheet), that corresponds to Wilkes s.n., collected in Peru between Culinai and Obrajillo. The illustration showed here is based on the flower from the smallest envelope (middle) of the herbarium sheet (Fig. 3B), but it is not possible to precisely identify the specimen to which it belongs.

In the original description of *A. gymnandra*, Reichenbach (1878) did not mention two important features: the anther exceeds the apex of the stigma and the anther’s filament is free (Fig. 4D). In Reichenbach’s illustrations the free filament is also evident but the anther appears smaller (Fig. 3C). The free filament has been described as a distinct feature for *Myrosmodes filamentosum* (Mansf.) Garay. Even though *M. gymnandra* has some floral features similar to *M. filamentosum*, they can be distinguished because the latter has larger flowers, a short ovary neck and a slightly trilobate lip (Garay 1978).

**Myrosmodes inaequalis** (Rchb.f.) C. Vargas, **comb. nov.**


*Myromodes inaequalis* belongs to subgenus *Myrosmodus* (Vargas 1995). The inflorescence is up to 7 cm long. The dorsal sepal is oblong to oblong-ovate, obtuse to rounded, concave, 2.3 x 1.2 mm. The lateral sepals are oblong, obtuse, concave, carinate, 2.6 x 1.1 mm. The petals are linear-ligulate, falcate, subacute, with upper margin erose, 2.0 x 0.4 mm. The lip is cucullate, cuneate at base, obovate to elliptic when expanded, entire, margin of upper half with moniliform hairs, two calli at the base, 2.4 x 2.1
Myrosmodes inaequalis resembles Myrosmodes paludosa (Rchb.f.) P. Ortiz.; however, they can be distinguished because the latter has a shorter anther, column dilated above, longer spike with more flowers and thicker peduncle which is twice as long as the
spike (while in *M. inaequalis* the peduncle is up to three times longer than the spike).

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**Literature Cited**


