

ECUADOR – South America

Orchidaceae: Epidendreae: Subtribe: Pleurothallinidae: Genus *Dracula*

Luis Baquero Rivadeneira^{1,2}, Nayive Moncayo Cárdenas³

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Ecuador's unique geographical conditions—with the Pacific Ocean to the west, the Amazon Basin to the east, and the Andean range bisecting the country from north to south—make it an immensely biodiverse country, and orchids are no exception. One especially interesting genus of orchids that grows in Ecuador is *Dracula* Luer ('little dragon' in Latin), which is distributed from Central America to South America; in Ecuador 55 species have been described. *Dracula* orchids are epiphytic plants that grow preferably in cloud forests, where they can be found between 300 and 2800 meters in elevation. The flowers of *Dracula* are key for identifying species, because vegetative characters are typically too similar to be an aid in identification. Although it is not common to find *Dracula* plants flowering in the field, flowers are needed to identify most species.

This guide highlights the flowers of the species of *Dracula* described for Ecuador to date. *Dracula* species can be found in many Ecuadorian provinces. In the Andes, *Dracula* are found in Carchi, Imbabura, Pichincha, Cotopaxi, Bolivar, Azuay, and Loja. In the coastal region, a few species grow in Esmeraldas, Santo Domingo, and El Oro provinces. In the Amazonian provinces, *Dracula* can be found in Sucumbíos, Pastaza, Morona Santiago, and Zamora Chinchipe.



1 *Dracula alcithoe*
Luer & R. Escobar



2 *Dracula andreettae*
(Luer) Luer



3 *Dracula andreettae*
(Luer) Luer



4 *Dracula chiroptera*
Luer & Malo



5 *Dracula chiroptera*
Luer & Malo



6 *Dracula chiroptera*
Luer & Malo



7 *Dracula chiroptera*
Luer & Malo



8 *Dracula christineana*
Luer



9 *Dracula cordobae*
Luer



10 *Dracula dalessandroi*
Luer



11 *Dracula dalstroemii*
Luer



12 *Dracula deltoidea*
(Luer) Luer



13 *Dracula dodsonii*
(Luer) Luer



14 *Dracula erythrocodon*
(Luer & Dalstrom) O. Gruss & M. Wolff



15 *Dracula erythrocodon*
(Luer & Dalstrom) O. Gruss & M. Wolff

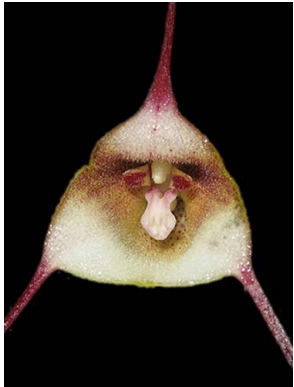
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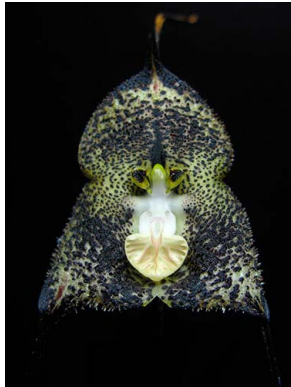
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16 *Dracula felix*
 (Luer) Luer



17 *Dracula fuligifera*
 Luer



18 *Dracula fuliginosa*
 Luer



19 *Dracula gigas*
 (Luer & Andreetta) Luer



20 *Dracula x hawleyi*
 Luer



21 *Dracula hirsuta*
 Luer & Andreetta



22 *Dracula hirsuta* var. *xantina*
 Luer & Andreetta



23 *Dracula hirtzii*
 Luer



24 *Dracula hirtzii* var. *xantina*
 Luer



25 *Dracula iricolor*
 (Rchb.f.) Luer & R. Escobar



26 *Dracula x kareniae*
 Luer y Dalstrom



27 *Dracula lafleurii*
 Luer & Dalstrom



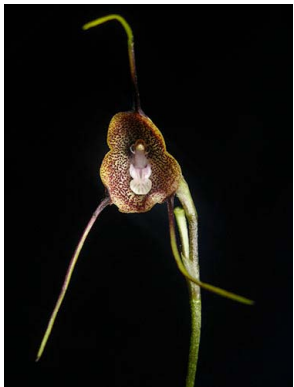
28 *Dracula lafleurii*
 Luer & Dalstrom



29 *Dracula lafleurii*
 Luer & Dalstrom



30 *Dracula levii*
 Luer



31 *Dracula lindstroemii*
 Luer & Dalstrom



32 *Dracula lotax*
 (Luer) Luer



33 *Dracula mantissa*
 Luer & R. Escobar



34 *Dracula marinii*
 Baquero



35 *Dracula marsupialis*
 Luer & Hirtz

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36 *Dracula marsupialis*
Luer & Hirtz



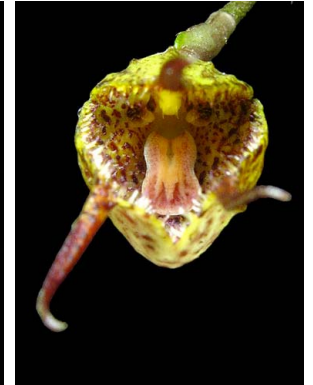
37 *Dracula marsupialis*
Luer & Hirtz



38 *Dracula marsupialis*
var. *xanthina* Luer & Hirtz



39 *Dracula mendozae*
Luer & V.N.M Rao



40 *Dracula mopsus*
(F. Lehm & Kraenzl.) Luer



41 *Dracula morleyi*
Luer & Dalstrom



42 *Dracula navaroorum*
Luer & Hirtz



43 *Dracula papillosa*
Luer y Dodson



44 *Dracula x pinasensis*
Zambrano & Solano



45 *Dracula polyphemus*
(Luer) Luer



46 *Dracula portillae*
Luer & Andreetta



47 *Dracula psyche*
(Luer & Andreetta) Luer



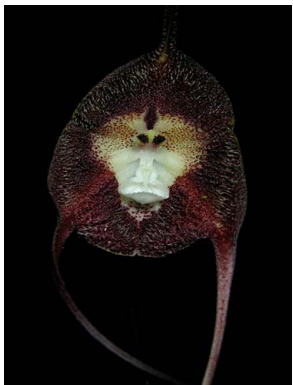
48 *Dracula rezeckiana*
Luer & Hawle



49 *Dracula sibundoyensis*
Luer & R. Escobar



50 *Dracula x sijmii*
Luer



51 *Dracula simia*
(Luer) Luer



52 *Dracula smaug*
Baquero & Gary Mey



53 *Dracula sodiroi*
(Schltr.) Luer



54 *Dracula sodiroi*
(Schltr.) Luer



55 *Dracula soennemarkii*
Luer & Dalst. Foto: G. Iturralde

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56 *Dracula terborchii*
Luer & Hirtz



57 *Dracula trigonopetala*
Gary Mey. & Baquero



58 *Dracula trinympharum*
Luer



59 *Dracula tubeana*
(Rchb.F) Luer



60 *Dracula ubangina*
Luer



61 *Dracula vampira*
(Luer) Luer



62 *Dracula venosa*
(Rolfe) Luer



63 *Dracula vespertilio*
(Rchb.f.) Luer



64 *Dracula woolwardiae*
(F. Lehm. ex Kraenzl.) Luer



65 *Dracula woolwardiae*
(F. Lehm. ex Kraenzl.) Luer



Dracula species mostly grow in cloud forests, where heavy fog covers the forests in the afternoons, even during the dry season. Most of the species in the genus are endemic to small areas and just a few like *Dracula vespertilio* or *Dracula felix* Luer, have large geographical ranges. *Dracula* species with broad leaves grow most commonly in dark and extremely wet cloud forests. Species with narrow leaves appear to adapt better to drier areas and to tolerate more intense sunlight.