A Data Book To The Natural Orchid Of Sri Lanka

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Jayantha Hettiarachchi

It is the Paradise of orchids
Malaxis densiflora

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Microstylis versicolor auct. non Lindl.: Wight, Ic. Pl. Ind. Or. 9. t. 901. 1844-45.

Distribution: Submontane zone.

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MicrostylisDensiflora.jpg

Description

English: Microstylis densiflora, from Manjur, Nilgiris, India

http://orchidspecies.com/malmacrostachya.htm
Malaxis macrostachya (Lex.) Kuntze 1891 Photo by © Guillermo Ibarra Manríquez and the CONABIO Orchid Page

**Common Name** The Long Spiked Malaxis

**Flower Size** .1" [2.5 mm]

Found in Arizona, Texas, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and Venezuela in cloud forests at elevations around 1500 meters as a miniature sized, warm to cool growing terrestrial with a globose pseudobulbous growth giving rise to a single, elliptic-ovate, cordate base, abruptly narrowing into the conduplicate, subquadrate, thin, elongate, petiolate base leaf that blooms in the later summer on an erect, 5" [12.5 cm] long, densely many [300 to 400] flowered inflorescence

**Synonyms** Achroanthes montana (Engelm. ex Rothr.) Greene 1891; Malaxis densiflora A.Rich. & Galeotti ex Ridl. 1888; Malaxis montana (Engelm. ex Rothr.) Kuntze 1891; Malaxis soulei L.O.Williams 1934; Microstylis macrostachya (Lex.) Lindl. 1830; Microstylis montana Engelm. ex Rothr. 1879; *Ophrys macrostachya Lex. 1825

**References** [W3 Tropicos](http://www.tropicos.org), [Kew Monocot list](http://www.kew.org.plants/tree.html), [IPNI](http://www.ipni.org); Las Orquedias De El Salvador Vol 2 Hamer 1974 as M soulei drawing/photo ok; Las Orquedias de El Salvador Vol 3 Hamer 1981 as M soulei drawing hmm; Icones Planetarum Tropicarum Plate 838 Hamer 1984 as M soulei drawing ok; Orchids of Costa Rica Vol 1 Morales 2009 as M soulei photo ok;
Malaxis densiflora growing in a tree crevice.

**Malaxis densiflora**

http://enchantingkerala.org/kerala-orchids/kerala-orchids-seidenfia.php


*Microstylis luteola* Wight, Ic. pl. Ind. Or. 5 (1) : 4 . t. 1632.1851.

*Microstylis versicolor* auct.non . Lindl. : wight 1844-45: 9.t. 901.;; J.D. Hook. 1890: 691 (incl. var. luteola )


This species was originally described by A . Richard based on a collection by Perrottet from Nilgiris .
Occurrence: Idukki District.

Distribution: Southern India (Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu) and Sri Lanka.

http://wapedia.mobi/commons/Malaxis

Malaxis discolor (Lindl.) Kuntze, Revis. Gen. Pl. 2:


Samantha Suranj Lan Fernando and Paul Ormerod:

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Malaxis discolor (as syn. Microstylis discolor) Illustration in: "Curtis's Botanical magazine", vol. 89 pl. 5403 (1863)

Malaxis latifolia
**Malaxis latifolia** Sm. 1812 *SECTION Gastroglottis* Photo by © Lourens Grobler

http://www.orchidspecies.com/mallatifolia.htm

**Plant** Photo courtesy of Donald Tan

**Common Name or Meaning** The Broad-Leaf Malaxis - In Australia - The Common Snout Orchid

**Flower Size** 1/4" [.6 cm]
Found in the Chinese Himalayas, Assam, Bangladesh, eastern Himalayas, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Sri Lanka, Andaman Islands, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Malaysia, Lesser Sunda Islands, the Moluccas, Sulawesi, Philippines, New Guinea, Queensland Australia, New Caledonia and Taiwan in open places in montane, mixed and coniferous forests at 600 to 1500 meters in elevation as a deciduous, medium sized, cool to hot growing terrestrial with 4" to 6" tall, tapered pseudobulbs carrying 3 to 5 spade-shaped, plicate, brilliant green leaves and blooms on a single 12" spike that produces a dense raceme made up of hundreds of 1/4" purplish red long-lasting flowers, plants are deciduous in winter, and is a late spring and summer bloomer.

This species correct name is most likely Malaxis ophrydis as its basionym is Epidendrum ophrydis and it was published in 1791 beating out Malaxis latifolia by 28 years, but M latifolia is the name that all commercial vendors use.

**Synonyms** Anaphora liparioides Gagnep. 1932; Crepidium ophrydis (J.König) M.A.Clem. & D.L.Jones 1996; Dienia congesta Lindl. 1825; Dienia currании (Ames) M.A.Clem. & D.L.Jones 1996; Dienia fusca Lindl. 1830; Dienia latifolia (Sm.) M.A.Clem. & D.L.Jones 1996; Dienia montana (Blume) M.A.Clem. & D.L.Jones 1996; Dienia ophrydis (J.König) Seidenf. 1997; Epidendrum ophrydis J.König 1791; Gastroglottis latifolia (Sm.) Szlach. 1995; Glossochilopsis carnosula (Rolfe ex Downie) Szlach. & Marg. 2001; Glossochilopsis finetii (Gagnep.) Szlach. 1995; Gyrostachys plantaginea (Spreng.) Kuntze 1891; Liparis bernaysii (F.Muell.) F.M.Bailey 1883; Liparis krempfii Gagnep. 1929; Liparis turfosa Gagnep. 1929; Malaxis carnosula (Rolfe ex Downie) Seidenf. & Smitinand 1959; Malaxis congesta (Lindl.) Deb 1962; Malaxis currании Ames 1911; Malaxis finetii (Gagnep.) Tang & F.T.Wang 1951; Malaxis kizanensis (Masam.) S.Y.Hu 1974; Malaxis latifolia var. nana S.S.Ying 1985; Malaxis ophrydis (J.König) Ormerod 1995; Malaxis parvissima S.Y.Hu & Barretto 1976; Malaxis plicata Roxb. 1832; Malaxis shuicae S.S.Ying 1987; Malaxis vietnamensis T.B.Nguyen & D.H.Duong 1984; Microstylis bernaysii F.Muell. 1878; Microstylis carnosula Rolfe ex Downie 1925; Microstylis congesta Rchb. f. 1861; Microstylis dalatensis Guillaumin 1955 ; Microstylis finetii Gagnep 1932; Microstylis fusca (Lindl.) Rchb.f. 1861; Microstylis ishigakensis Ohwi 1937; Microstylis kizanensis Masam. 1933; Microstylis latifolia J.J. Sm. 1905; Microstylis trilobulata Kurz 1870; Neottia plantaginea D.Don 1825 ; Spiranthes plantaginea Spreng. 1826
David Jones and Mark Clements renamed *Malaxis latifolia* as *Dienia montana*, and it appears in David’s latest book under that name. But the Kew checklist says that this name is “nomen superfluum” (name superfluous) and that a prior name has precedence. The accepted name for this
species is now *Dienia ophrydis*. It is widespread across tropical and subtropical Asia from southern China in the West through to PNG, Queensland and New Caledonia in the Pacific.

*Dienia ophrydis* (syn *Dienia latifolia*; *Malaxis latifolia*) 2010
Malaxis Latifolia in its natural habitat

Malaxis Latifolia
This broad leaved terrestrial orchid is found in the kakoi Reserve Forest of Lakhimpur District, Chinese Himalayas, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Borneo, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Java, Sumatra, Malaysia, Sikkim, Sri Lanka, Andaman Islands, Myanmar, Philippines, New Guinea and Queensland Australia in the tropical evergreen forest at an elevation of 300 to 1200 meters. The flower produces a dense raceme made up of hundreds of purplish red long-lasting flowers with pale yellow lip.

Synonyms: Malaxis ophrydis; Epidendrum ophrydis; Liparis bernaysii; Liparis krempfii; Liparis turfosa; Malaxis congesta; Malaxis curranii; Malaxis finetii; Malaxis kizanensis; Malaxis latifolia var. nana; Malaxis plicata Roxb.; Microstylis bernaysii; Microstylis carnosula; Microstylis congesta; Microstylis kizanensis; Spiranthes plantaginea

Flowering Time: June July

Microstylis congesta

Stem 2-6 in., stout, base tuberous. Leaves 3-10 in., sessile or petioled, ovate elliptic or lanceolate. Scape with raceme 2-8 in., stout or slender; pedicel 1/8 in.; ovary trigonous and grooved; flowers 1/8-1/10 in., yellow green to pale brown or purplish. Capsules 1/8 in., crowded, erect.

**Malaxis rheedii** *(Seidenfia rheedii)*

![Enchanting Kerala.org](http://enchantingkerala.org/kerala-orhids/kerala-orhids-seidenfia.php)


This was first described and illustrated from Kerala by Van Rheede as *Basaala Poulou Maravara*, the basis for establishment of the genus *Malaxis* by Swartz.


![Microstylis Rheedii](http://www.orchids.co.in/orchid-species/microstylis-rheedii.shtm)

**Microstylis Rheedii**


The DECCAN PENINSULA, common in the Western Ghats. acuminate, 5-7 nerved, base equal or not; petiole ½-3 in., rarely 0. Scape with raceme 4-12 in., stout or slender; flowers very variable in size and colour, greenish yellow or purplish, sweet-scented; sepals obtuse, dorsal often the longest and
narrowest – This is unquestionably Rheede’s plant, to which the Javan and Pacific M. plantaginea has been erroneously referred. Rheede describes the abundant spiral vessels, which are so conspicuous in this genus and in Liparis.

Malaxis Rheedii - Matheran wild orchid

G R Rao  Energy & Wetlands Research Group,  Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore - 560 012.

Malaxis rheedii Sw

M. versicolor (Lindl.) Abeywick.

Microstylis versicolor Lindl.

M. rheedii Wt.

These exquisite terrestrial orchids seen in semievergreen to scrub forests in shady places have a swollen stem base, and membranous sheath around with attractive tinges of purple and red. However populations with green stem are also observed. Leaves grow to 10 x 3
cm, elliptic-lanceolate, base narrowed into a sheath, 7-nerved. Flowers are maroon
coloured, terminal racemes. Petals lip yellow, crowning the flower.

**Habitat:** Nagodi, Halkar etc., in semievergreen to scrub.

**Fl. & Fr:** May-Oct  **Distribution:** India and **Sri Lanka**

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**Malaxis versicolor**

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**Distribution:** Lowland wet zone to montane forests.

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**Enchanting Kerala.Org**


**Microstylis versicolor** Lindl. , Gen. Sp. Orch. 21 . 1830; Fischer in Gamble 1928 : 1408 ; J.D. Hook. 1890: 690


Till recently this was merged under **Seidenfia rheedii** from which it differs in having midtooth shorter than the nearest teeth .

**Occurrence:** Wayanad District.

**Distribution:** Southern India (Karnataka , Kerala, Tamil Nadu) and **Sri Lanka** .
Microstylis vesicolor

http://www.orchids.co.in/orchid-species/microstylis-versicolor.shtm


The DECCAN PENINSULA; ; on the hills from the Nilghiris southwards. CEYLON; at Ratnapoora, Thwaites.

Nearly allied to M. Rheedii, but always small and pseudobulbous, with sessile or subsessile leaves and smaller flowers in denser spikes. The lip accords well, as does the column. Flowers yellow or purple. Thwaites, and, following him, Ridley, refer Thwaites’ 2743 to M. Rheedii, but its habit and pseudobulbs are entirely those of versicolor; on the ticket Thwaites names it M. luteola, to which species also Ridley refers it (by oversight in one or the other case.)

VAR. luteola; flowers larger. M. luteola, wight Ic. t. 1632; Ridley l.c. 345 (excl. Hab. Ceylon). –Nilghiri Hills, Wight –I find no other difference than the size of the flower whereby to distinguish this from M. versicolor.
Malaxis versicolor (Lindl.) Abeyw. 1959 [Image] Photo by © Indianature and Travel Pod Website

**Common Name or Meaning** The Colorful Malaxis

Found in Assam, India and Sri Lanka as a terrestrial orchid that blooms in the summer.

**CAUTION** I have no way of verifying this determination so use with caution.


*Microstylis luteola* wight, Ic. pl. Ind. Or. 5 (1) : 4 .t. 1632.1851.

*Microstylis versicolor* auct.non . Lindl. : wight 1844-45: 9.t. 901,; J.D. Hook . 1890: 691 (incl. var. luteola )


This species was originally described by A . Richard based on a collection by Perrottet from Nilgiris.

**Occurrence** : Idukki District.
**Distribution**: Southern India (Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu) and Sri Lanka.


**Microstylis versicolor** Lindl., Gen. Sp. Orch. 21. 1830; Fischer in Gamble 1928: 1408; J.D. Hook. 1890: 690


Till recently this was merged under *Seidenfia rheedii* from which it differs in having midtooth shorter than the nearest teeth.

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http://enchantingkerala.org/kerala-orchids/kerala-orchids-seidenfia.php

http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl/record/kew-128083

**Microstylis versicolor** Lindl. is a synonym of **Malaxis versicolor** (Lindl.) Abeyw.

This name is a synonym of **Malaxis versicolor** (Lindl.) Abeyw.

The record derives from WCSP which reports it as a synonym (record 128083) with original publication details: *Gen. Sp. Orchid. Pl.* 21 1830.

http://www.theplantlist.org/tpl/record/kew-128082

**Microstylis versicolor** Wight is synonym of **Malaxis densiflora** (A.Rich.) Kuntze

This name is a synonym of **Malaxis densiflora** (A.Rich.) Kuntze.

The record derives from WCSP which reports it as a synonym and as an illegitimate name (record 128082) with original publication details: *Icon. Pl. Ind. Orient.* 3: t. 901 1844.

http://www.flowersofindia.in/catalog/slides/Colorful%20Malaxis.html

**Common name**: Colorful Malaxis

**Botanical name**: ![Malaxis versicolor](https://example.com/malaxis.png) **Family**: **Orchidaceae** (Orchid family)

**Synonyms**: Microstylis versicolor, Seidenfia versicolor, Liparis priochilus
Colorful Malaxis is a terrestrial orchid with short stem, pseudobulb ovoid. Leaves are 2 rarely 3 stalkless or shortly stalked, ovate to lanceshaped. Flowers are borne in densely flowered raceme atop leafless stem. Bracts are lanceshaped, deflexed. Flowers are small, yellow or purple, lip is short wedge-shaped or kidney-shaped, with comb-like teeth. It appears similar to *M. Rheedei*, but always small, and pseudobulbous, with stalkless leaves and smaller flowers in denser spikes. Colorful Malaxis is found in India, up to Assam in the east, South India and Sri Lanka.

**Identification credit:** Jayesh Patil
Microstylis discolor

http://www.orchids.co.in/orchid-species/microstylis-dicolor.shtm


CEYLON; in the Central Province, Walker, Thwaites.

Stem stout below, base not tuberous. Leaves 2-3 in. long and broad subcaudately acuminate, dark vinous purple with a green crisped margin. Scape and receme, 2-3 in.; pedicels about 1/12 in.; flowers yellow in bud, then red; lip with a yellow margin –Wight represents the lip as obscurely 3-lobed.
MICROSTYLIS discolor (two-coloured).* fl. yellow, changing to orange, small, on short upright peduncles. I. deep reddish-purple, edged with green, plaited longitudinally, and much crisped at the margin. **Ceylon, 1863.** This species is characterised as among the most lovely of terrestrial orchids. The flowers, though minute, exhibit great singularity of structure when seen under the microscope. (B. M. 5403.)
**Microstylis lancifolia**

http://www.orchids.co.in/orchid-species/microstylis-lancifolia.shtm

thwaites Enum. 269 ; stemless , pseudobulb small or 0, leaves 5-8 rather long –petioled lanceolate acuminate , raceme dense-fld , bracts lanceolate suberect, flowers small , lip short almost semicircular with the convex margin to the column the other deeply 6-8 toothed , column , stout, arms suberect . Ridley in Journ . Linn . Soc. xxiv. 346; Hook. f. Ic. Plant .t. 1830.

**CEYLO** ; in the Saffragam and Ambagamowa districts , Thwaites.

Root fibrous . Leaves 2-4 by ½ - 2/3 in , 3 –nerved ; petiole ½ - 1 ¼ in , rather slender . Scape and raceme 4-6 in.; flowers about 1/6 in .across , yellow ? –Resembles a narrow leaved M. versicolor with long pетioles. The suberect bract is an excellent character indicated by Thwaites.

http://apps.kew.org/wcsp/namedetail.do?name_id=127840

**Microstylis lancifolia Thwaites, Enum. Pl. Zeyl.: 297 (1861).**

This name is a synonym.

**Homotypic Synonyms:**


**Malaxis thwaitesii** Bennet, Indian J. Forest. 5:


Suppl. 3:122. 1995. **Distribution:** Lowland wet zone.

**Note:** The name *M. lancifolia* (Thwaites) Kuntze 1891. is a homonym of *M. lancifolia* J. E. Sm. 1812. Therefore, we use the name proposed by Bennett.

**An Annotated Checklist of the Orchids of Sri Lanka**

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Malaxis thwaitesii

**Synonyms:** Malaxis lancifolia; Microstylis lancifolia; Seidenfia lancifolia

**Distribution:** Sri Lanka;

[Link to this page: http://plantillustrations.org/species.php?id_species=636168](http://plantillustrations.org/species.php?id_species=636168)
Microstylis purpurea

Lindl. Gen. & Sp. Orchid. 20; leaves 4-6 petioled base very unequal, bracts equaling or shorter than the ovary, auricles of the concave lip dilating towards and then narrowing to the obtusely 2-fid tip., column very short, arms obscure. Ridley in Journ. Linn. Soc. Xxiv. 340.

CEYLON, MACRAE; near Galle, alt. 1000 ft. Thwaites.
Leaves 4-5 by 2-2½ in., on a stout sheathed stem 3-4 in. high. Scape 6-10 in. Flowers dark purple, ½ in. from tip of broad flat 3–nerved dorsal sepal to tip of lip; lip rather fleshy and very concave, auricles obtuse, broad sides of blade almost like lobes.

http://www.orchids.co.in/orchid-species/microstylis-purpurea.shtm


= Malaxis purpurea


紫花軟葉蘭

- Malaxis biloba auct. non Ames: C. S. Leou
- Malaxis rizalensis Ames
- Microstylis purpurea Lindl.
- Microstylis wallichii var. biloba King & Pantling

Terrestrial. Stems elongate ovoid to clavate, fleshy, 2.5-4 cm tall, 8-17 mm in diam., surrounded by sheath-like petiole. Leaves 3 or 4, green, more or less lustrous, elliptic-oblong, 9-14 cm long, 3.5-5.5 cm wide, apex acute, base slightly oblique, continuous into sheathing petiole 3-8 cm long. Peduncle terminal, green or purplish, 5-10 cm long, 4-ridged; flower bearing portion of racemes 7-12 cm long; bracts linear-lanceolate, 6-7 mm long, 1.5 mm wide; pedicel and ovary ca. 6-10 mm long, with raised sharp, wavy ridges. Flowers 20-30, purple or yellowish green; dorsal sepal ovate-lanceolate, 5-6 mm long, 2-2.5 mm wide, strongly revolute; lateral sepal broadly ovate or elliptic, 4-5 mm long, 2.5-4 mm wide, central concave, margin revolute; petals linear, 5-5.5 mm long, 0.8-1.3 mm wide, revolute; lip sagittate, 6 mm long, base extending into 2 falcate-triangular auricles ca. 2.5 mm long, apex usually bent forward, deeply 2-lobulate for 4/5 its length, lobules parallel, oblong; base of disc with a depression or cavity surrounded by fleshy raised wall; column 1.5 mm long, with fleshy lateral arms apically; anther nearly white, oval-ovibcular, 0.5 mm long; pollinia waxy, obliquely ellipsoid; rostellum thin, shallowly 2lobed. Capsules fusiform, 1.5 cm long, pedicel 5 mm long.


Sikkim, southern China, Indochina, Thailand, Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Taiwan, broadleaved forests, 300-800 meters in the central and southern mountainous regions.
(NO COMMON NAME) Malaxis porphyria

Phenology: flowering from mid July until early September.


Synonyms: Microstylis porphyrea Ridley; Microstylis purpurea S. Watson; Malaxis purpurea (S. Watson) Kuntze.

Similar Species: none in Arizona; differs from Malaxis tenuis by color and shape of flowers. M. porphyrea has purple flowers while those of M. tenuis are green. Shape of lip and lateral sepals, and general appearance of inflorescence is also different. Notes: most plants do not set fruit. Catalinas site has not been verified since 1917. In the Chiricahua Mountains, grows in a meadow with M. tenuis where both are subject to destruction by campers and vehicles. References: Kuntze, 1891. Todsen, 1997.

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**Nervilia juliana**

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1832.

**Distribution:** Intermediate zone.

**Note:** There is no confirmed specimen of this species at PDA. Therefore, the occurrence of this species is doubtful. Yet at PDA, several sheets with differing foliar morphologies from different localities are found. This has also been stated by J.D. Hooker (1898)
Nervilia juliana (Roxb.) Schltr. is an accepted name

This name is the accepted name of a species in the genus Nervilia (family Orchidaceae).

The record derives from WCSP which reports it as an accepted name (record 135305) with original publication details: Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 45: 402 1911.

Nervilia juliana (Roxb.) Schltr.1911

Common Name Julia's Nervilia  Flower Size 1.5” to 2.5” [3.75 to 6.25 cm]

Found in eastern Himalayas, Assam, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Myanmar as a mini-miniature sized terrestrial with a round tuber giving rise to a short stem carrying a single, at a right angle to the stem, cordate, acute, abruptly narrowing below into the petiolate base leaf that blooms without the leaf on an erect, 2 to 6” [5 to 15 cm] long, single flowered inflorescence with a large bract below the leaf and 2, below the middle, small, acuminate, above the middle 2, larger tubular, acuminate bracts above.

Synonyms *Epipactis juliana Roxb. 1832; Pogonia juliana (Roxb.) Wall. ex Trimen 1898
Nervilia plicata

- From: viateur.boutot@xxxxxxxxxxxxx, To: orchids@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx Date: Sat, 23 Jul 2011 16:02:58 -0400

- "species never reported in the country. The orchid identified as Nervillia[Nervilla] plicata is used as a medicinal plant in several other countries. More than 100 different species of Nervilia plicata [of the genus Nervilia] had been found in Africa, India, China, Malaysia, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Indonesia, Myanmar, and Thailand but not in Sri Lanka. In 1898 British botanist, J D Hooker who conducted research in the Sri Lankan forests had found several species of Nervilia genera [genus] but not a single specimen of the Nervilia plicata. Another botanist, D Muilar Bomboise had found another species of Nervilla which he named as Nervilia J[j]uliana during research in the Yala National Park in 1968 [the name Nervilia juliana (Roxb.) Schltr., was published in 1911 / Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 45: 402]. The first time that the species of Nervilia plicata was found in Sri Lanka. A team of researchers conducted research in the Belihuloya area in Balangoda at an elevation of 800 metres above mean sea level collected several specimens of Nervilia. The first time found this species in Koslanda at an elevation between 700-1000 metres above sea level. collected more specimens from Rawana Ella and Balangoda areas as well. The number of species of orchids found in Sri Lanka has increased to 189 with the new addition."