

A New *Aerides* (Orchidaceae) species from the northern Philippines

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For a number of years a beautiful *Aerides* species has been in cultivation, both in the Philippines, and more recently in Australia. It has been known as *Aerides quinquevulnera* var. *calayanensis* HORT., or *Aerides calayana* HORT., neither of which names have ever been validly published. Interestingly no-one appears to have studied

the plant and flowers closely.

When plants, imported as *Aerides quinquevulnera* LINDLEY, bloomed in the collection of the first author, a study was made, and we have concluded that we have an undescribed species. Vegetative traits evoke that of a large *Aerides leana* REICHENBACH F. with closely spaced leaf bases, and quite

broad, arching leaves. The flower morphology seems to be an amalgam of various Philippine species. The sharply upturned spurs call to mind *Aerides odorata* LOUREIRO; in contrast the spurs of *Aerides quinquevulnera* are directed forwards. The sidelobes are semi-falcate like in *Aerides quinquevulnera*, but are diagonally truncated instead of broadening at the ends, and their upper margins meet over the spur, much like in *Aerides leana*. The fragrance of the flowers is more akin to the Philippine *Aerides odorata* than that of *Aerides quinquevulnera*, which is likened to cosmetics. We consider that the most noticeable traits of this species which sets it apart from known species are the pastel pink flower colouration, and the short columns which are hidden behind the hooded dorsal sepal and the rather large sidelobes. The midlobe of *Aerides magnifica* COOTES & W. SUAREZ, is often bilobed, with shallowly retuse frontal margins.

***Aerides magnifica* COOTES & W. SUAREZ sp. nov.**

Holotype: NSW821691 cultivated: Jim COOTES, Australia, NSW, Riverwood. 26 May 2014.

Type: Philippines, Luzon, Calayan island.

Plant Description:

Growth habit: epiphytic; upright; monopodial. Roots: appearing from the base of the stem, freely branching, 6.5 mm in diameter at the base. Stems: terete, reaching lengths of 40 cm by 1 cm





in diameter; enclosed by leaf sheaths; with many internodes. Leaves: linear to narrowly oblong, leathery, unequally bilobed at the apex, arching, to 30 cm long by 4 cm wide. Inflorescences: horizontal to gently arching, bearing 4 pointed bracts; longer than

the leaves, rachis bearing many flowers about 2.6 cm in diameter, which are sweetly perfumed. Flower colour: base colour is white, heavily spotted with pastel pink; labellum dark pink; tip of spur is green. Dorsal sepal: ovate, hooded, 1.1 cm long by 9 mm wide. Petals: obovate, 1.2 cm long by 8.5 mm wide. Lateral sepals: broadly ovate, 1.3 cm long by 1.1 cm wide. Labellum: three lobed; side lobes oblong, apices rounded, 8 mm long by 7 mm wide, edges wavy; midlobe curving back towards the column, apex hidden by overlapping side lobes, 9 mm long by 5 mm wide, apex unequally bilobed. Overall the labellum is 1.9 cm long by 7 mm wide. Spur: short, conical, pointing upwards. Pedicel and Ovary: 2 cm long by 2 mm in diameter; there is a short, pointed floral bract at the base. Column: 3.5 mm long by 3 mm wide. Column foot: 9 mm long.

Habitat and Distribution: *Aerides magnifica* is a Philippine endemic, and has been found on the island of Cala-

yan in the Babuyan Group of Islands, composed of five major islands, located north of Luzon. The Calayan group consists of the islands of Calayan, Camiguin del Norte, Dalupiri, and Babuyan Island, while the island of Fuga is a part of the municipality of Aparri on mainland Luzon. The highest peak on the island of Calayan is Mt. Calayan which stands at 543 m asl, and there are anecdotal reports that *A. magnifica* has been found here. However, the whole island is generally mountainous, with a central ridge that is still thickly forested, and it may be possible that this new species is rather widely spread on the island. Field observations are still lacking and we do not know yet the altitudinal preferences or the ecology of this attractive species.

Etymology: The specific name is Latin for “majestic”, and is a reference to the countenance of the flowers of this stunning species.