

Dendrobium scirpoides Schltr.

Aporum scirpoides (Schltr.) S. Rauschert

SAMOAN NAME: none

ENGLISH NAME: none

STATUS: rare Samoa endemic

REASON FOR LISTING: rarity of collections, possibly extinct

SUGGESTED ACTION: Not much can be done for this orchid, since epiphytic orchids are hard to locate because they are often high up in the forest canopy. It was collected only once without locality on 'Upolu, and could be extinct now because of the loss of lowland forest on the island since its date of collection in ca. 1880. Recommended for the Red List of Samoan plants.

Endemic to Samoa, where it is restricted to 'Upolu. No elevational or ecological is included on the one known specimen collected in ca. 1880, which has now been lost (destroyed in the bombing of Berlin in WW II). No Samoan names or uses have been reported.

Small epiphytic orchid 15–20 cm in height, with an abbreviated, many-rooted rhizome, the stem with the second node above the base swollen, fusiform and sulcate, slender above, laxly 5–8-leafed. **Leaves** simple, alternate; blade erect-spreading, somewhat subfalcate, 3.5–8 x 0.1 x 0.15 cm; surfaces glabrous margins subundulate; petiole articulated to the sheathing bases and somewhat shorter than the nodes. **Inflorescence** a solitary scapose flower produced in the manner of *D. crumentatum* Sw.; flowers similar in size to those of *D. clavipes* Hook. f. (two species that are not native to the region), with the glabrous pedicel and ovary ca. 7 mm long. Sepals unequal, dorsal sepal ovate-lanceolate, acuminate at the tip, ca. 5 mm long; lateral sepals oblique, forming a conical obtuse mentum ca. 5 mm long. **Petals** oblique, linear, acute at the tip, lightly dilated towards the base, ca. 5 mm long. Lip cuneate at the base, entire, elliptic, shortly acuminate at the tip, glabrous, ca. 9 x 4 mm, front margins undulate; callus of 2 parallel lamellae from the base to above the middle; column short, tridentate at the tip; foot ca. 5 mm long. **Fruit** unknown. (Description somewhat abbreviated due to lack of a specimen.) **Flowering** and flowering times unknown.

Distinguishable by small epiphytic orchid habit; stems bearing 5 to 8 leaves 3.5–8 cm long; solitary scapose, dendrobium-like flowers ca. 5 mm long.

UPOLU: Betche s.n. ("lost")—Without further locality.

NOTE: The only specimen of *Dendrobium scirpoides* has been lost, probably destroyed in the Berlin Museum during World War II, so no photo is available.



Dendrobium crumentatum, a related species.