

Luisia teretifolia Gaud.

SAMOAN NAME: none

ENGLISH NAME: none

STATUS: rare indigenous

REASON FOR LISTING: rarity of collections

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. The most likely place to find this is the A'opo and Āsau area, especially on the lava flow at A'opo.

Indigenous to Samoa, ranging westward to the Himalayan foothills. In Samoa it occurs in lowland and lavaflow scrub forest on Savai'i, as well as a single recent record from Tutuila in American Samoa in ridge forest, reported from about 50 to 300 m elevation. No Samoan names or uses have been reported.

Medium-sized epiphytic herb 15–35 cm in height, with rigid stems rigid up to 4 mm in diameter. **Leaves** simple, alternate; blade suberect, cylindrical, longitudinally striate, 4–20 x ca. 0.3 cm, scarcely narrowing at the base, gradually tapering at the tip; surfaces glabrous; margins entire; sessile, attached to a conspicuous sheath.

Inflorescence a few-flowered raceme 0.5–1 cm long, bearing 1–2 mm long bracts; flowers with green or yellowish green sepals and petals and a reddish brown to dark maroon lip, ovary and pedicel length not recorded. Sepals unequal, dorsal sepal elliptic, 5–5.5 x ca. 3 mm, subacute to obtuse at the tip; lateral sepals lanceolate, 7–8 x ca. 2.5 mm, fleshy at the tip, slightly keeled dorsally. **Petals** linear-oblong, 3–7 x 3.5–4 mm, obtuse at the tip. Lip 2-lobed, 6.5–7.5 cm long, basal part subquadrate, with small elliptic-falcate side lobes; apical part broadly cordate, obtuse; column ca. 2 mm long. **Fruit** a ribbed, fusiform capsule 3.3–5 cm long. **Flowering** times not known, fruits reported in September and October in Fiji and Samoa, but both processes probably of longer duration.

Distinguishable by its medium-sized epiphytic orchid habit; cylindrical, stems lacking leaves; and short racemes of green or yellowish green flowers marked with reddish brown to maroon.

SAVAII:

Vaupel 650—Specimen lost, no data recorded.

Whistler 948—Lowland forest east of the old Potlatch timber mill at ca. 50 m elevation.

Whistler 8271—Lava flow scrub northeast of Ā'opo, north of the main road.

OTHER SAMOAN COLLECTIONS: Tutuila (1, observed, not collected).

