

*Microstylis taurina* Rchb. f.

*Malaxis taurina* (Rchb. f.) Kuntze

*Microstylis* sp. of Yuncker

**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, which in independent Samoa appears to be restricted to the eastern end of 'Upolu. It is much more common on Ta'ū in American Samoa, so relatively it is not too vulnerable in the archipelago as a whole.

Indigenous to Samoa, ranging westward to New Caledonia. In Samoa it occurs in montane forest on 'Upolu, and on Ta'ū in American Samoa, reported from 430 to 800 m elevation. Strangely, it was not collected in independent Samoa before 1996, and now three times since then. No Samoan names or uses have been reported.

**Small terrestrial orchid** with short erect stems 3–15 cm in height. **Leaves** simple, alternate, 5–10; blade ovate, 6–9 x 1.8–3.5 cm, acute to attenuate at the base, acute at the tip; surfaces glabrous; margins entire; petiole slender, up to 5 cm long, sheathing at the base. **Inflorescence** a subdensely many-flowered raceme 12–20 cm long, bearing reflexed, linear, acuminate-tipped bracts 4–6 mm long; flowers small, purple or rarely dull yellowish; pedicel and ovary 3–4 cm long. Sepals unequal; dorsal sepal ovate, obtuse, ca. 3 mm x 2 mm; lateral sepals oblong, obtuse, ca. 3 x 1.5 mm. **Petals** linear-oblong, obtuse, ca. 3 x 1 mm. Lip 3-lobed, ca. 4 x 3.5–4 mm; side lobes hatchet-shaped, acute in front; midlobe oblong-elliptic or tapering, emarginated; column short. **Fruit** a broadly fusiform capsule 7–9 mm long. **Flowering** and fruiting probably occur throughout the year.

**Distinguishable** by its small terrestrial orchid habit; leaves 5–10 cm long; racemes 12–20 cm long pink flowers subtended by small, reflexed, acute-tipped bracts; and toothed corolla lip.

**UPOLU:**

Whistler 10138—Epiphytic in foothill forest behind Sāuniatu at 430 m elevation.

Whistler 10148—Epiphytic in foothill forest near Olomaga Crater at the eastern end of the island at 430 m elevation.

Whistler 11317—Lowland forest behind Uafato.

**OTHER SAMOAN COLLECTIONS:** Ta'ū (6).

