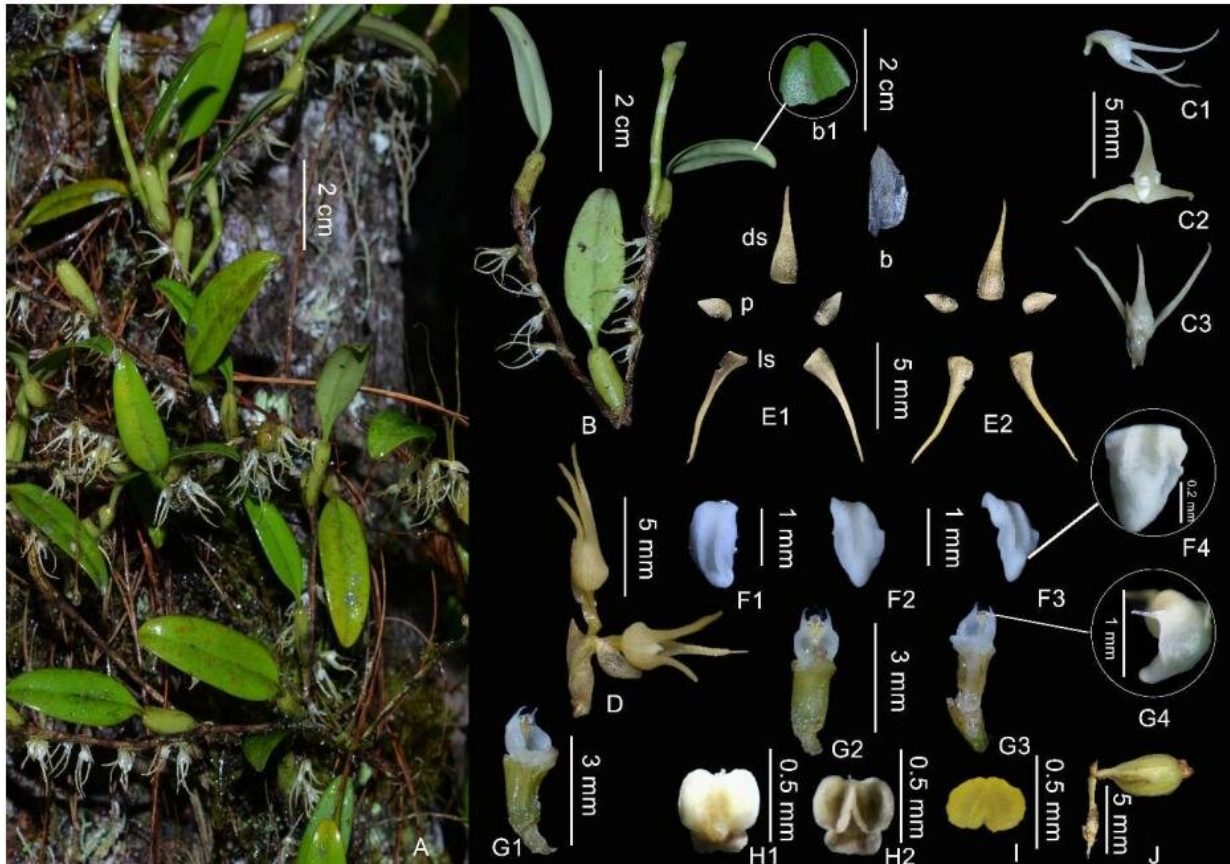


# New orchid species found in Tibet

May 23 2023, by Zhang Nannan



*Bulbophyllum basiflorum*. Credit: Li Mengkai

*Bulbophyllum* is one of the largest genera in the orchid family, with about 2,200 species, and is widely distributed in the tropics and subtropics. In the course of botanical exploration in southeastern Xizang in 2020–2022, researchers collected several *Bulbophyllum* specimens

with similar habits and floral characteristics and transplanted them to the orchid conservation center of Tibet Agriculture and Animal Husbandry University.

The researchers from the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden (XTBG) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Tibet Agriculture & Animal Husbandry University conducted a thorough examination of the morphology and further [comparative study](#) with the specimens in herbaria, and a survey of the literature.

They found that these specimens belong to *B.* sect. *Desmosanthes* and could be divided into three entities, one identified as *B. stenobulbon*, the other identified as *B. cauliflorum*, but the third was apparently different from these two [species](#) and belonged to a previously undescribed species.

After careful morphological studies, the researchers confirmed it as a species new to science. They named it as *Bulbophyllum basiflorum* to refer to the racemes that adhere to the rhizomes of this species. Their study was published in *Taiwania*.

*Bulbophyllum basiflorum* is morphologically similar to *B. cauliflorum* and *B. stenobulbon*, but can be clearly distinguished from them by having shorter scapes attached to rhizomes and pseudobulbs, dense raceme with one or two flowers, petals ovate, lip white with two longitudinal ridges, and very short column foot.

*Bulbophyllum basiflorum* is collected from Dexing and Beibeng village of Mêdog, Xizang, China. It was found growing epiphytically on [tree trunks](#) in evergreen broad-leaved forest at an elevation range of 730–1,579 m.

"During our [field surveys](#), *B. basiflorum* is currently known only from

Mêdog Cuntý, where four populations of about 20 individual plants were found. We consider its status as data deficient according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature guidelines," said Luo Yan of XTBG.

**More information:** Meng-Kai Li et al, *Bulbophyllum basiflorum* (Orchidaceae), a new species from southeastern Xizang, China, *Taiwania* (2023). [DOI: 10.6165/tai.2023.68.143](https://doi.org/10.6165/tai.2023.68.143)

Provided by Chinese Academy of Sciences

Citation: New orchid species found in Tibet (2023, May 23) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2023-05-orchid-species-tibet.html>

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