



Eria by Peggy Alrich and Wesley Higgins

An Asian Genus



THIS GENUS NAME is from the Greek for woolly (*erion*) and refers to the hairy flowers and inflorescences found on some of the species.

It is a large genus with 237 creeping sympodial epiphytes, lithophytes or accidental terrestrial species often found in humid low to upper elevations, coastal mangroves, shady hill scrub, peaty swamps and montane evergreen forests. These species range from northeastern India through southern China (Yunnan to Hainan), to Vietnam, Malaysia and the Philippines, with the greatest diversity occurring in Indonesia and New Guinea.

These diverse plants range from small, tufted, creeping plants to large, robust plants. The underdescribed and problematic plants have pseudobulbous or cane-like short to long stems with a tapering base, each with two (rarely one) to numerous leaves. The usually erect inflorescence is glabrous or pubescent, often subtended by

two or three overlapping sterile bracts originating opposite a leaf base, and the axis is sometimes covered by brown stellate hairs. The several long or short, solitary to numerous-flowered inflorescences sometimes have large, conspicuously colored bracts. The small to tiny, pale brown, creamy, yellow-green, green to rosy, sometimes fragrant flowers have a rather distinctive shape but are short-lived and usually open widely. In some species there are purple veins or purple markings on the column, column foot and even the lip. Some species have flowers densely covered in soft hairs, in

some just the inflorescence has hairs and in still other species the entire plant is covered in soft hairs.

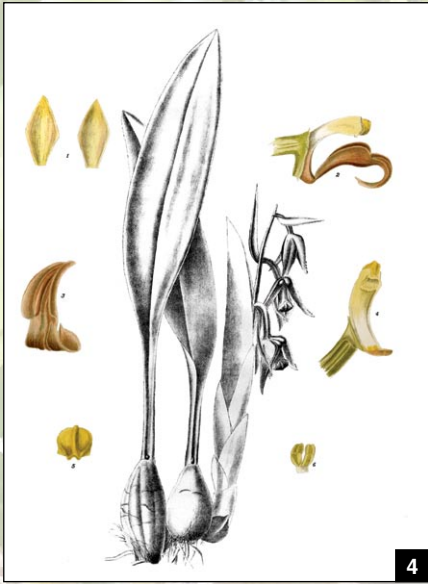
The simple or usually trilobed lip is hinged but not stalked on the prominent column foot, and this foot forms a long to short, spur-like pouch or even a roundish protuberance. The lip often has basal calli or ridges. The flowers have a short, broad to stout, incurved column with a fleshy anther cap. There are eight equally sized, laterally compressed pollinia, in two groups of four, each contained within a distinct four-chambered pouch at the base of the anther cap.

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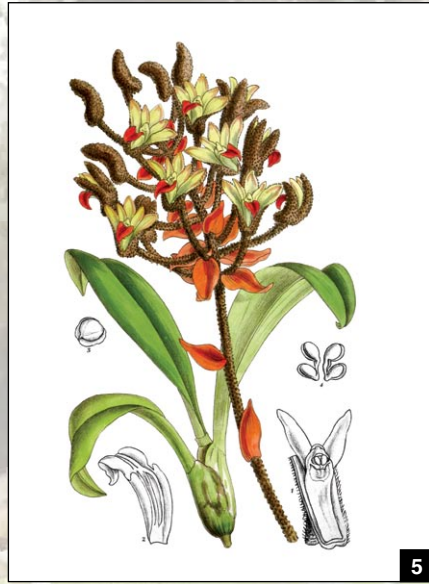
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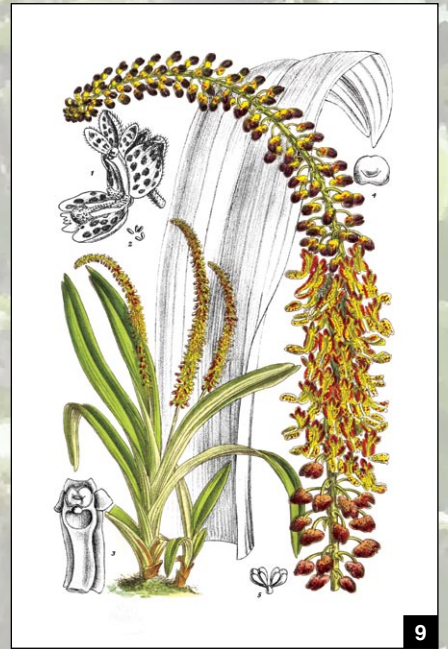
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Antique Plates – Eria

- [1] *Eria armeniaca* (*Eria ornata*), *Botanical Register*, 27: t42 (1841).
- [2] *Eria latibracteata* (*Eria rolfei*), *Botanical Magazine*, 124: t7605 (1898).
- [3] *Trichosma suavis* (*Eria coronaria*), *Orchid Album*, 3: t114 (1884).
- [4] *Eria carinata*, *Annals of the Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta*, 8(3): t179 (1891).
- [5] *Dendrobium macranthum* (*Eria mucronata*), *Flora des Serres*, 8: t757 (1853).
- [6] *Eria tomentosa*, *Botanical Magazine*, 142: t8662 (1916).
- [7] *Eria marginata*, *Botanical Magazine*, 118: t7238 (1892).
- [8] *Eria striolata* (*Eria javanica*), *l' Illustration Horticole*, 35: t48 (1888).
- [9] *Eria longispica*, *Botanical Magazine*, 133: t8171 (1907).
- [10] *Eria ignea* (*Eria cinnabarina*), *Lindenia*, 8: t448 (1894).
- [11] *Dendrobium pubescens* (*Eria lasiopetala*), *Exotic Flora*, 2: t124 (1825).



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