What is the Difference Between Brassavola *appendiculata* and Brassavola *cucullata*?

Robert Brown described Brassavola *cucullata* in 1813. Henri Galeotti and Achille Richard described Brassavola *appendiculata* in 1845. Brassavola *appendiculata* was considered a synonym of Brassavolia *cucullata*. In May of 2020, taxonomist Eliana Noguera-Savelli, Ph.D. published a paper in which she proposed separating Brassavola *appendiculata* and Brassavolia *cucullata* into two distinct valid species of Brassavola. She provided specific reasons why there should be two distinct species. Please see the table below for specific details.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Factor | Brassavola *appendiculata* | Brassavola *cucullata* |
| Lip length | 6 – 7.5 cm | 4.5 – 5.5 cm |
| Number of pollinia | 12 | 8 |
| Flowering period | May – October | September – May |
| Geographic distribution | A map of the united states  Description automatically generated  El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico Gulf, Mexico Northeast, Mexico Northwest, Mexico Southeast, Mexico Southwest, and Nicaragua | A map of the world  Description automatically generated  Colombia, Dominican Republic, Leeward Is., Puerto Rico, Trinidad-Tobago, Venezuela, Venezuelan Antilles, and Windward Islands. |

Information From B. Martin American Orchid Society Webinar

Between 2020 and 2021, Kew agreed with Dr. Noguera-Savelli acknowledging both species as distinct valid species. The Royal Horticultural Society changed all hybrids listed as made with Brassavola cucullata to having been made with Brassavola appendiculata. In October 2021, the American Orchid Society changed references to Brassavola cucullata to Brassavola appendiculata. Claude Hamilton and Thomas Mirenda published an article in the American Orchid Society Magazine, “Will the real Brassavola cucullata please stand up.”

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