

Pleurothallis ibex Luer, sp. nov.

Planta pusilla caespitosa, caulibus secundariis brevissimis, foliis ellipticis brevipetiolatis, racemo laxe paucifloro folio longiore, floribus minutis successivis flavovirescentibus purpureo vittatis, ovario papilloso, sepalis patentibus ovatis acuminatis, petalis linearibus, labello trilobato bicalloso infra medium deflexo marginibus supra basim late erectis irregularibus lobis lateralibus anguste acuminatis.

Plant very small, epiphytic, shortly repent and ascending to caespitose; roots comparatively thick, flexuous. Secondary stems unifoliate, 2-3 mm long, contained within 1-2 thin, tubular sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, elliptical, petiolate, 10-18 mm long including the 2-3 mm long petiole, 4-5 mm wide, the acute apex tridenticulate, the base cuneate into the sulcate petiole. Inflorescence a weak, erect, 2- to 4-flowered, loose raceme 2-3.5 cm long of successive, tiny, widespread flowers, the peduncle filiform, from the apex of the secondary stem; floral bract 0.5 mm long; pedicel 2 mm long; ovary 1 mm long, densely papillose; dorsal sepal translucent yellowish white, edged and veined in dark purple, erect, ovate, 3 mm long, 1 mm wide, the apex acuminate, acute; lateral sepals yellow, veined in purple, ovate, curved, recurved, acute, 3 mm long, 1 mm wide, connate basally for 1 mm, the surfaces minutely, lightly verrucose; petals red-purple, linear, acute, 2.5 mm long, 0.2 mm wide; lip white dotted with purple, oblong-3-lobed, 1 mm long, 2 mm wide spread, the apex terminated by a recurved, acuminate tail, the lateral lobes near the middle, widely spread, narrowly acuminate, the disc with a pair of minute calli below the apex, deflexed below the middle with broad, erect, irregular margins, the base hinged to the column-foot; column purple, 1.5 mm long, cucullate, slender below the middle, with an obsolescent foot.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *ibex*, "a wild goat," in allusion to the three lobes of the lip that resemble the horns and beard of a goat.

TYPE: ECUADOR: IMBABURA: epiphytic in cloud forest near the edge of the paramo west of Otovalo, alt. ca. 3000 m. 17 Feb. 1978, C. Luer, J. Luer & A. Hirtz 2597 (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Western Ecuador.

The tiny flowers of this very small species are spectacular when examined through a strong lens. The colorfully striped sepals and petals are gracefully spread while the three-pronged lip is held closely beneath the purple column.