

Brachionidium ballatrix Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Latin *ballatrix*, "a ballet dancer," referring to the graceful appearance of the flower.

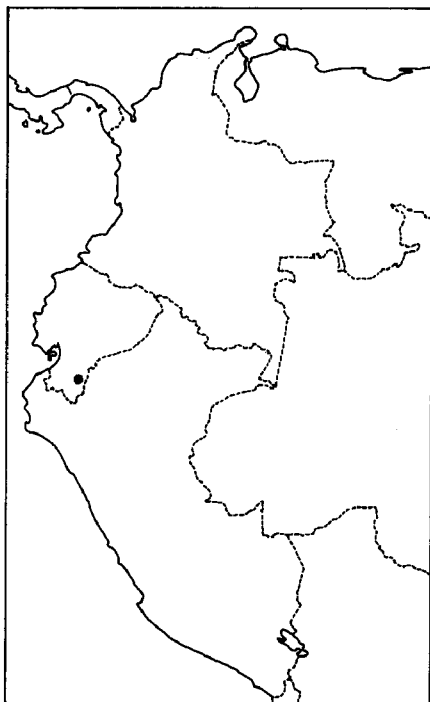
Planta parva rhizomate crasso erecto vel suberecto, pedunculo gracili folio elliptico longiore, sepalo mediano synsepaloque flavis eciliatis longicaudatis, synsepalo concavo, suborbiculato, petalis ciliatis ovatis obliquis acuminatis longicaudatis, labello transverse ovato, angulis lateralibus breviter uncinatis, apice rotundato calloso minute apiculato, disco cum callo ovoideo pubescenti centrali.

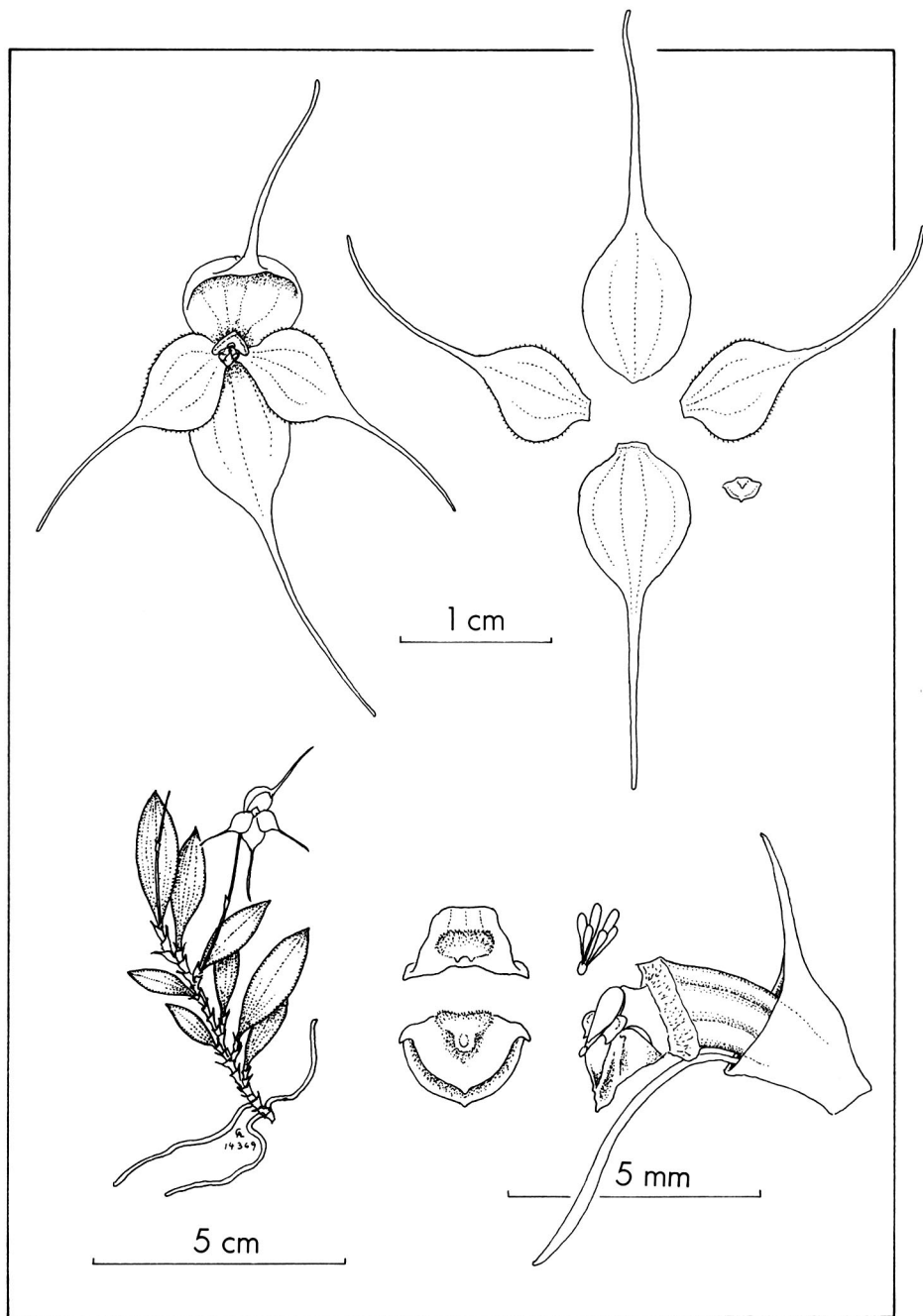
Plant small, terrestrial, suberect to erect, up to 8 cm tall, the rhizomes stout, branching, 3-5 mm long between ramicauls, enclosed by 3 imbricating, long-mucronate sheaths; roots slender from nodes near the base. Ramicauls suberect, 3-5 mm long, enclosed by 2 mucronate sheaths. Leaf erect to suberect, thinly coriaceous, elliptical, acute, apiculate, 15-30 mm long including the petiole 2-3 mm long, 6-12 mm wide, 7-veined, cuneate below into the petiole. Inflorescence a solitary, yellow, resupinate flower borne by an erect, slender peduncle 25-30 mm long, with a mucronate bract near the middle and another near the base; floral bract long-mucronate, 6 mm long, enclosing the pedicel and much of the ovary; pedicel 0.5 mm long, with a protruding filament 5-6 mm long; ovary 3 mm long; sepals eciliate, the middle sepal elliptical, acute, acuminate, long-caudate, 25 mm long including the tail 14 mm long, 7 mm wide, 3-veined, the lateral sepals connate into a broadly ovate-suborbicular, concave synsepal, 23 mm long including the tail 13 mm long, 8 mm wide expanded, 4-veined; petals ovate, oblique, subacute, long-acuminate, minutely ciliate, 23 mm long including the tail 14 mm long, 6 mm wide, 3-veined; lip transversely ovate, 1.75 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, with acute, minutely uncinately lateral angles, the apex rounded, marginally callous, minutely apiculate, the disc with a flat, minutely pubescent, ovoid callus with a small glenion, the base hinged to the column-foot; column stout, 1 mm long, bidentate; pollinia 6.

ECUADOR: Prov. of Zamora-Chinchiipe: terrestrial in cloud forest near Nambija, alt. 1300 m, Feb. 1987, A. Hirtz 3314 (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 14369.

This little species is known only from the original collection by Alexander Hirtz near the gold-mining community of Nambija in the Cordillera del Condor in southeastern Ecuador. It is a small, erect species characterized by broadly ovate sepals and petals abruptly contracted into slender tails. The sepals are eciliate; the petals are minutely ciliate; and the lip is bimarginate.

In habit, it is similar to the Central American *B. folsomii*, from which it is distinguished by the non-denticulate, bimarginate lip. It is also reminiscent of *B. sherringii* from the Lesser Antilles, from which it is distinguished by shorter peduncles and broader floral parts with a more deeply concave dorsal sepal.



Plate 4. *Brachionidium ballatrix* Luer & Hirtz