

Brachionidium piuntzae Luer, sp. nov.

Ety.: Named for Río Piuntzae in southeastern Ecuador where this species was discovered.

Planta mediocris erecta rhizomate crasso vaginis glabris longi-mucronatis, foliis ellipticis 7-nervatis, flore translucenti flavescenti ecaudato, sepalò mediano ovato acuto, synsepalò late elliptico obtuso, petalis falcatis acutis, labello transverse ovato, angulis lateralibus obtusis, apice late rotundo breviter apiculato, callo bifurcato pubescenti.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, erect to suberect, up to 20 cm tall, the rhizome relatively stout, occasionally branching, 6-9 mm long between ramicauls, enclosed by 2-3 tubular, long-mucronate sheaths; roots coarse, fleshy, from near the base. Ramicauls suberect, 4-5 mm long, enclosed by 2 tubular, long-mucronate sheaths. **Leaf** erect or suberect, coriaceous, elliptical, acute, 20-25 mm long including a petiole 2-3 mm long, 7-10 mm wide, 7-veined, cuneate below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** a large, solitary, non-resupinate, translucent yellow-green flower borne by a slender, erect peduncle 20-25 mm long, with a bract near the middle, from near the apex of the ramicaul; floral bract inflated, acute, mucronate, 4 mm long, enclosing the pedicel and part of the ovary; pedicel 1.5 mm long, with a filament 3 mm long; ovary 2-4 mm long; **sepals** glabrous, the middle sepal ovate, acute, 15 mm long, 7.5 mm wide, the lateral sepals connate into a broadly ovate synsepal, 17 mm long, 11 mm wide, 4-veined, the apex obtuse, contracted into an apiculum less than 1 mm long; **petals** microscopically ciliate, falcate, oblique, acute, 15 mm long, 4 mm wide, 3-veined; **lip** yellow-green, transversely ovate, 3 mm long, 5 mm wide, the lateral angles obtuse, the apex broadly rounded, with a minute apiculum, with carinae behind and parallel to the margin, the disc with a flat, ovate, bifid, pubescent callus; **column** stout, 2 mm long, 6 pollinia.

ECUADOR: Prov. of Morona-Santiago: Cordillera del Condor, epiphytic in forest at the headwaters of Río Piuntza, alt. 1850 m, 5 Jan. 1972, *B. MacBryde* 975 (Holotype: AMES), C. Luer illustr. 14725.

This species is known only from the type-collection made by Bruce MacBryde in the Cordillera del Condor before any roads penetrated the area. However, even though the Condor is now penetrated by several roads that have permitted extensive collecting, this species has not been rediscovered.

Restrepia piuntzae is distinguished by the erect habit; large, tailless, translucent yellow-green flowers; falcate petals; and a transversely ovate lip not unlike that seen in many other species. Perhaps the most closely allied species is the Ecuadorian *B. andreetae*, from which it is distinguished by the obtuse, non-cucullate synsepal, and sigmoid-shaped petals.



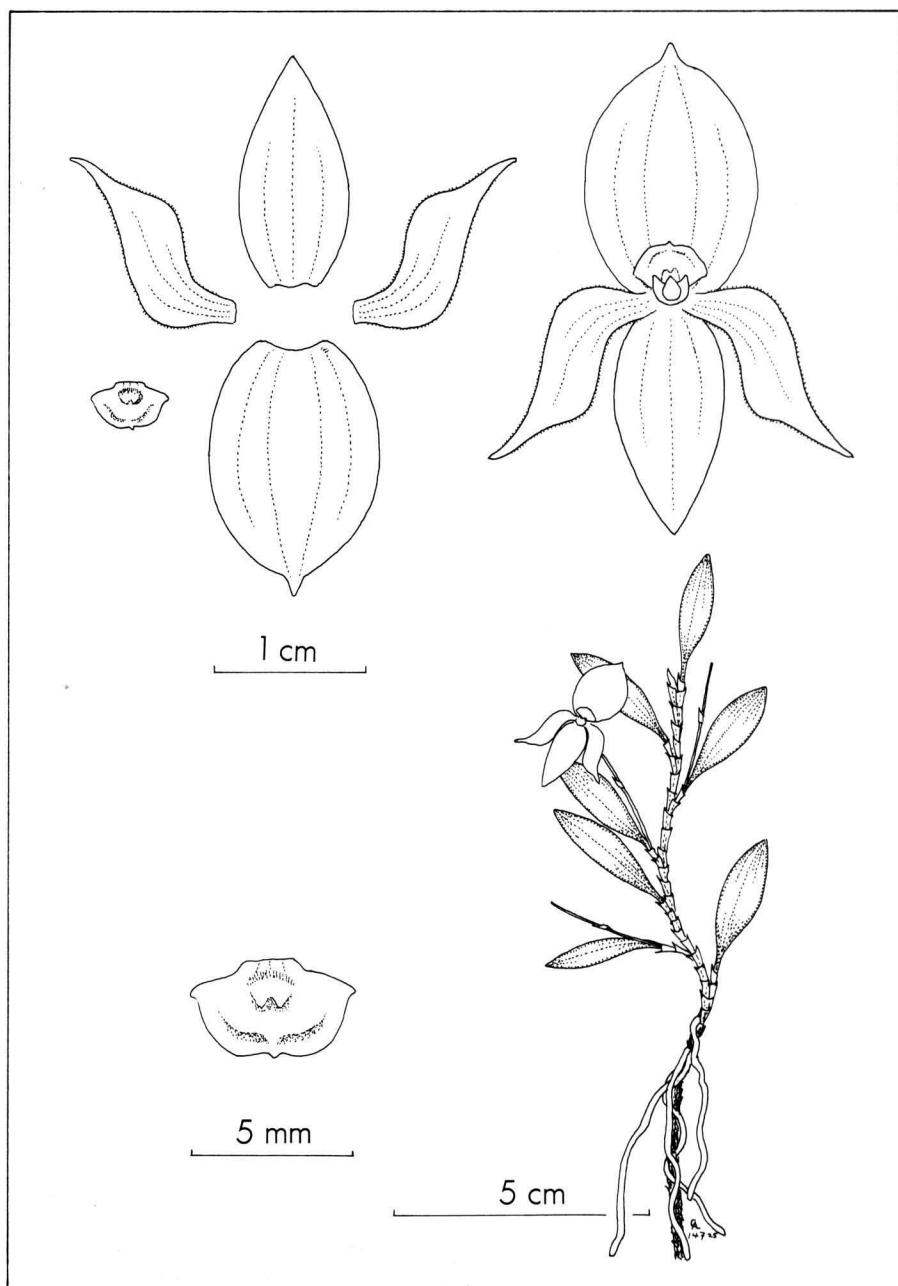


Plate 43. *Brachionidium piuntzae* Luer