

Brachionidium polypodium Luer, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Greek *polypodion*, "many-footed," and the creeping ferns that resemble this species.

Planta parva longirepens rhizomate crasso, foliis parvis late ellipticis pedunculo brevioribus, sepalo impari synsepalo petalisque minute ciliatis ovatis acutis longicaudatis, petalis obliquis et labello transverse trapeziformi margine antico rotundato tenui.

Plant small, epiphytic, long-repent, the rhizome comparatively stout, occasionally branching, up to 30 cm long or longer, 7-10 mm long between ramicauls, each segment with 3 loose, mucronate sheaths; roots produced singly from a node along the rhizome. Ramicauls suberect, 2-3 mm long, enclosed by 2 similar sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, broadly elliptical, subacute to obtuse, apiculate, 7-13 mm long, 5-9 mm wide, 7-veined, cuneate below to a petiole 1-2 mm long. Inflorescence a solitary, small, non-resupinate flower, borne by an erect, filiform peduncle 14-16 mm long, with a bract below the middle and at the base, from near the apex of the ramicaul; floral bract infundibular, mucronate, 3 mm long, enclosing the pedicel and ovary; pedicel 0.5 mm long, with a filament 3 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long; sepals translucent maroon, shortly ciliate, the middle sepal ovate, acute, acuminate, caudate, 12 mm long including the filiform tail 6 mm long, 3.5 mm wide, barely 3-veined, the lateral sepals connate into an ovate, concave, acute, acuminate, caudate synsepal, 11 mm long including the forked, filiform tail 5 mm long, 4 mm wide expanded, 2-veined; petals translucent maroon, shortly ciliate, ovate, oblique, acute, acuminate, caudate, 8.5 mm long including the filiform tail 4 mm long, 2.75 mm wide, 1(2)-veined; lip transversely trapeziform, 1.25 mm long, 2.25 mm wide, the lateral angles subacute, the apex broadly rounded with thin margins, shortly obtusely apiculate, the disc with an ovoid, minutely pubescent callus, with a small glenion; column stout, 0.5 mm long, bidentate; pollinia 6.

PANAMA: Prov. of Chiriquí: Cerro Colorado, alt. 1400 m, growing in dense moss on side of tree, 25 July 1979, *T. Antonio 1413* (Holotype: MO), *C. Luer* illustr. 14376; Cerro Colorado, alt. 1300 m, 19 Aug. 1975, *R. L. Dressler 5128* (MO); Camp Hornito, Fortuna dam site, alt. 1200-1500 m, 16 Aug. 1976, *R. L. Dressler 5412* (MO). Prov. of Bocas del Toro: trail bordering Chiriquí near the Fortuna dam, alt. 1200-1300 m, 23 Dec. 1986, *G. McPherson & J. Aranda 10066* (MO).

COSTA RICA: Prov. of Heredia: Atlantic slope of Volcán Barva, primary forest along Río San Rafael, alt. 1500 m, 9 Nov. 1986, *M. H. Grayum, C. Haufler & M. Roos 7759* (MO).

Vegetatively this little species resembles very much one of the tiny, creeping, round-leaved ferns so often encountered in similar, mossy habitats in the tropics. It also resembles some species of peperomias. It is apparently endemic in Costa Rica and western Panama where it was first collected by Dressler.

Among the other long-repent, very small species, *B. polypodium* is distinguished by the relatively stout, creeping rhizome that produces evenly spaced, short ramicauls with a little, elliptical leaf. The flowers are small with minutely ciliate sepals and petals that are slender-caudate. The lip is transverse with a broadly rounded, entire margin.



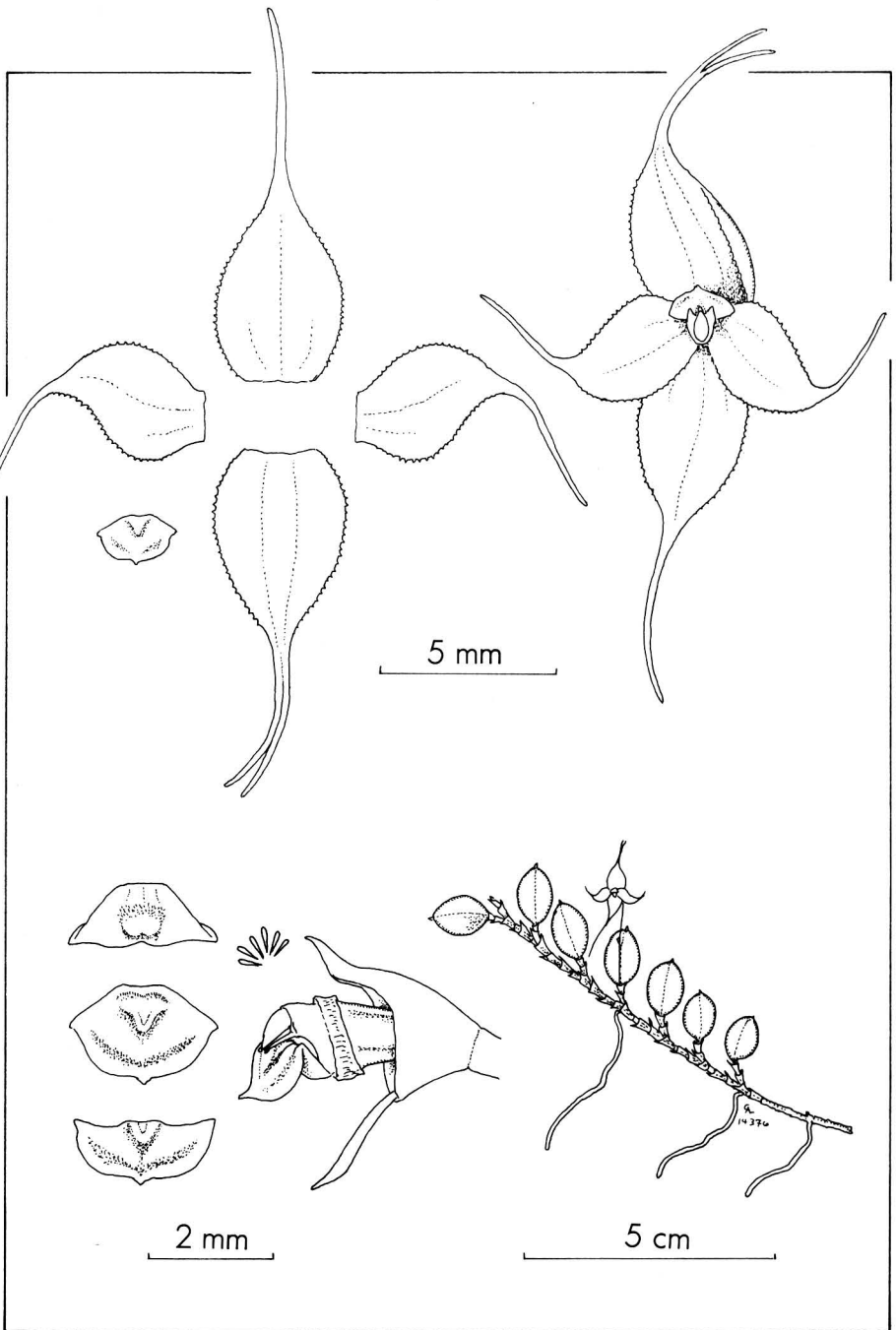


Plate 44. *Brachionidium polypodium* Luer