

Pleurothallis sempergemmata Luer, sp. nov.

Habitu et floribus *P. uncinatae* Fawc. similis, sed differt floribus cleistogamis, apice labelli conduplicato, disco labelli rugoso.

Plant medium to large in size, epiphytic, shortly repent to caespitose; rhizome thick; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems stout, terete, moderately compressed above, 18-30 cm long, provided with 4-5 loose, scarios sheaths, commonly shredded or shed, unifoliate. Leaf erect, thick, coriaceous, dark green, ovate, the margins more or less revolute, the apex acute, tridentate, the base rounded, conduplicate, sessile, 14-22 cm long, 4-5 cm wide. Inflorescence fasciculate, the flowers fleshy, cleistogamous, ovoid, brownish, shortly pubescent, produced singly and successively from a spathe, 2-3.5 cm long, fugacious, deep in the cleft of the base of the leaf; peduncle pubescent, 2-4 cm long; floral bract shortly scabrous, oblique, close-fitting, about 1 cm long; pedicel enclosed by the floral bract, about 8 mm long; ovary pubescent, about 7 mm long when the flower may be considered mature but unfertilized; sepals entirely united, densely pubescent in tufts, smooth and glabrous within, concave, the dorsal sepal ovate, obtuse, 15 mm long, 7 mm wide, the lateral sepals together similar to the dorsal sepal, 14 mm long, 9 mm wide; petals fleshy, yellow, dotted in rows of purple, elliptical, subacute, 10 mm long, 3 mm wide; lip ovate-oblong, red, 3-lobed, 8 mm long, 4 mm wide, lateral lobes uncinata, just below the middle, directed forward, cannot be spread, the apex conduplicate, retuse, verrucose, the base broadly hinged to the column-foot, with indistinct auricles, the disc with a broad, basal, curved callus, transversely rugose, extending toward the apex between a pair of thickened, verrucose calli extending forward from the lateral lobes; column curved, terete, 7 mm long, the anther with a few bristles along the upper margin.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *semper*, "forever," and *gemmatus*, "with buds" (*gemma*, "bud"), in reference to the cleistogamous flowers.

TYPE: PANAMA: CHIRIQUI: epiphytic in valley of cloud forest above Guadalupe, alt. ca. 2200 m, 17 Dec. 1976, C. Luer, A. Luer, R. L. Dressler, N. H. Williams & F. L. Stevenson 1360 (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL EXAMINED: PANAMA: CHIRIQUI: epiphytic in cloud forest above Boquete, 20 Dec. 1976, C. Luer, A. Luer & R. L. Dressler 1353 (SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Panama.

Vegetatively, this robust species is similar to *Pleurothallis uncinata* Fawc. and its relatives (*P. alexandrae* Schltr. and *P. pastacensis* Luer). The thick, dark green leaf with revolute margins is conduplicate basally. One to three brown, shortly pubescent, ovoid buds are produced simultaneously on comparatively long peduncles. The sepals, which never part, reach about 15 mm in length before the ovary begins to swell. The plant is scarcely more than a cleistogamous form of *P. uncinata*, but the differences seem sufficient to recognize it specifically.

Flowers were dissected at all stages of maturity, from immature buds to flowers on swollen ovaries. The sepals, petals and column grew thicker with the enlargement of the ovary, but the red lip was found to remain unchanged. Perhaps because the lip never obtains room for expansion, the apex is more or less bilobed with erect sides. The uncinata lateral lobes cannot be spread because of the thick substance of the lip, and the intervening disc is transversely rugose, not smooth as in *P. uncinata*.

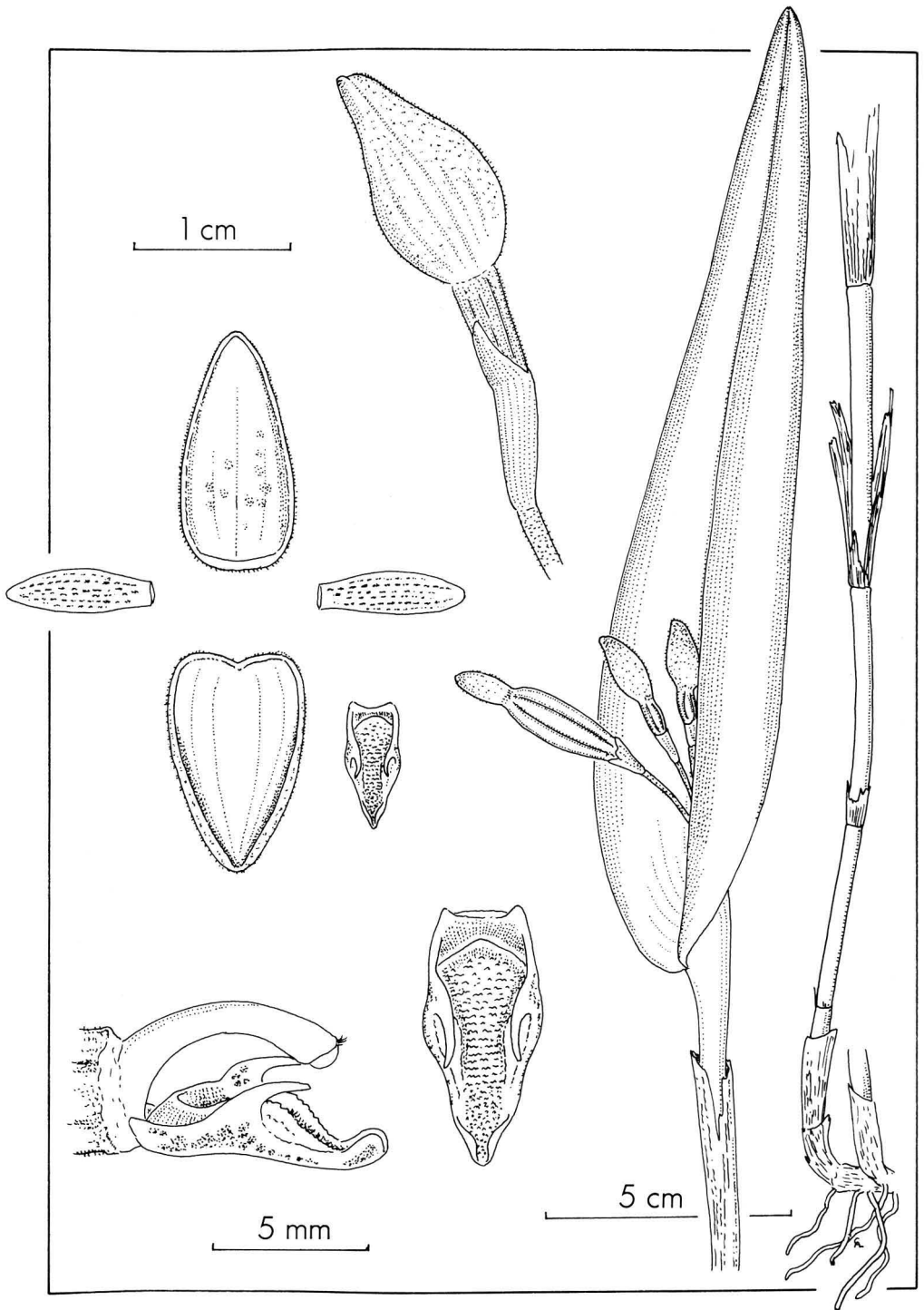


Figure 293. *PLEUROTHALLIS SEMPERGEMMATA* Luer