

***Lepanthes aurita* Luer & Escobar, sp. nov.**

Planta perparva caespitosa, inflorescentia folio ovato obtuso brevior, racimo congestissimo, sepalis glabris ovatis acutis, petalis grandibus transverse oblongis, labello laminis anguste oblongis, appendice late oblonga cum glande terminali parva.

Plant very small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Secondary stems slender, erect, 15-20 mm long, enclosed by 3-4 close, microscopically scabrous lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, convex, elliptical-ovate, obtuse, 10-12 mm long, 6-9 mm wide, the base broadly cuneate into a petiole 1 mm long. Inflorescence a congested, distichous, successively flowered raceme up to 4 mm long by a filiform peduncle up to 4 mm long behind the leaf; floral bract 0.5 mm long, minutely spiculate; pedicel 0.3 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long; sepals yellow-orange, glabrous, ovate, acute, 3.2 mm long, 1.8 mm wide, the lateral sepals ovate, acute, 3 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, connate only at the base; petals orange, transversely oblong, 1.2 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, the apices rounded, with a minute apiculum on the outer margin at the midvein; lip rose, the blades narrowly oblong, 2 mm long, the apex acute incurved with a few hairs, the base rounded, the connectives short, connate to the base of the column, the appendix broadly oblong, pubescent, with a small, terminal gland; column 1.5 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Etymology: From the Latin *auritus*, "a rabbit, or one with large ears," referring to the petals.

Type: *ECUADOR*: LOJA: epiphytic in cloud forest south of Yangana, alt. 2400 m, 1 Nov. 1982, *C. Luer & R. Escobar 8254* (Holotype: SEL).

Distribution: Southern Ecuador.

This little species with congested racemes shorter than the ovate leaf is distinguished by the proportionately large petals with broad, rounded apices, narrow blades of the lip, and a broadly oblong appendix with a small apical gland.