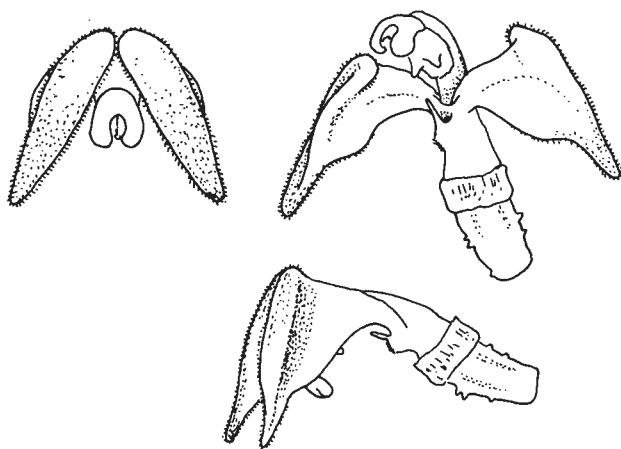
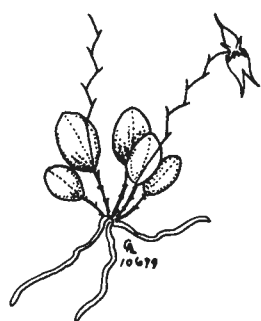
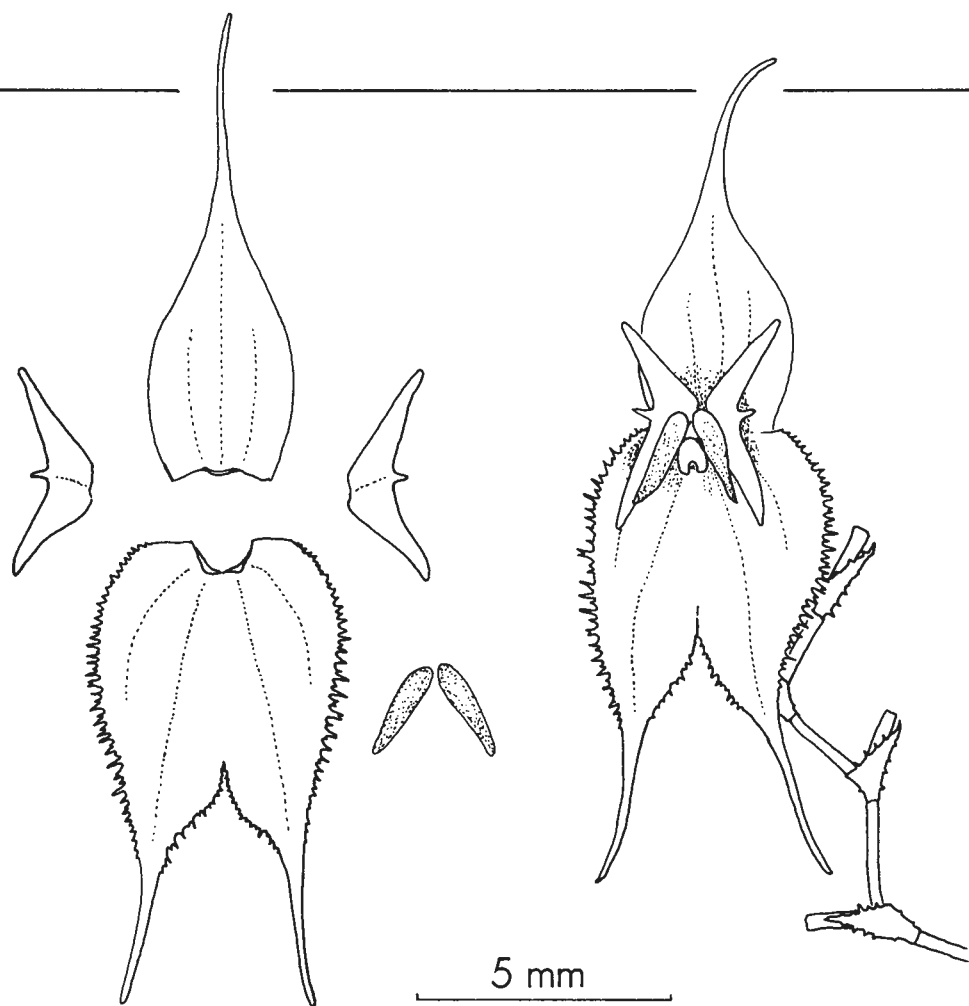


***Lepanthes avicularia* Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.**

Planta perparva caespitosa, racemis grandifloris laxae fractiflexis foliis late ellipticis longioribus, sepalis ovatis longicaudatis lateralibus fimbriatis, petalis bilobis cum apiculo mediano, lobis aequalibus anguste triangularibus obliquis, labello bilaminato, laminis anguste ovatis, connectivis cuneatis sine corpore, appendice filiformi.

Plant very small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots proportionately thick. Ramicauls erect, 3-7 mm long, enclosed by 2-4 minutely ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, thickly coriaceous, elliptical to suborbicular, 6-9 mm long, 4-6.5 mm wide, the apex obtuse to rounded, the cuneate or rounded base contracted into a petiole ca. 1 mm long. Inflorescence a loose, flexuous, successively several-flowered raceme up to 35 mm long including the filiform peduncle 8-11 mm long; floral bracts 1.5 mm long, muriculate; pedicel 1.5 mm long; ovary 1 mm long, lightly muriculate; sepals bright rose with white margins, carinate, ovate, acute, acuminate, long-caudate, the dorsal sepal entire, 9 mm long including the tail 3 mm long, 3 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 1 mm, the lateral sepals fimbriate, oblique, 9 mm long including the tails 3 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, connate 3.5 mm; petals bright rose, glandular-cellular, transversely bilobed, 1 mm long, 4.5 mm wide, with a small apiculum at the middle, the lobes equal, narrowly triangular, acute, oblique; lip bright rose, glandular-cellular, bilaminate, the blades diverging, narrowly ovate with narrowly obtuse ends, 2 mm long, the connectives broadly cuneate from the basal two-thirds of the blades, connate to the column above the base without forming a body, the appendix minute, filiform, arising from the undersurface of the lower portion of the column; column 2 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *avicularius*, "of small birds," referring to the winglike petals and lobes of the lip.



Lepanthes avicularia Luer & Hirtz

TYPE: *ECUADOR*: Prov. of Zamora-Chinchipe: epiphytic in dwarf cloud forest between Loja and Zamora, alt. 2750 m, 21 Mar. 1985, *C. Luer, J. Luer, A. Hirtz & W. Flores 10699* (Holotype: MO); epiphytic in cloud forest south of the pass south of Jimbura, alt. 3050 m, 21 Feb. 1986, *C. Luer, J. Luer, A. Embree, A. Hirtz & W. Flores 11998* (MO).

This tiny species is locally abundant on twigs and small branches of dwarf trees in cloud forest where several species of *Lepanthes* grow intermixed. The lateral sepals are fimbriate while the margins of the dorsal sepal are smooth. All three sepals are long-caudate. A minute apiculum is present on the central margin of the petals. Most unusual are the cuneate connectives of the blades of the lip that are connate directly to the column without forming a body. The tiny, filiform appendix appears to emerge from the undersurface of the column above the base.