

**Lepanthes benzingii** Luer, sp. nov.

Planta mediocris caespitosa, inflorescentia folio suborbiculari breviter acuminato brevior, racemo congestissimo disticho, sepalis acutis glabris, petalis transverse bilobatis sepalis longioribus, labelli lamina oblongis super columnam, appendice quadrilobata pubescenti, stigmatе hippocrepiformi.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Secondary stems slender, erect, 6-9 cm long, enclosed by 7-8 close, microscopically ciliate lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, broadly elliptical, 3.5-4.5 cm long, 2.2-3 cm wide, the apex shortly acuminate, abruptly acute, the base cuneate into a 2 mm long petiole. Inflorescence an extremely congested, distichous, successively flowered raceme up to 8 mm long, borne by a filiform peduncle 7-15 mm long, usually behind the leaf; floral bract 1 mm long, pubescent; pedicel 2 mm long; ovary 3.5 mm long; sepals yellow-orange, glabrous, the dorsal sepal ovate, acute, 3 mm long, 1.9 mm wide, the lateral sepals ovate, oblique, subacute, connate 1 mm, 2 mm long, 2.25 mm wide together; petals yellow, suffused with red, microscopically pubescent, transversely bilobed, 1.3 mm long, 3.2 mm wide, the lobes ovate, obtuse, the lower lobe smaller; lip red, the lobes oblong with rounded ends, 1.66 mm long, microscopically ciliate, in apposition over the column, the connectives cuneate, connate to the base of the column, the appendix pedunculate, 4-lobed, ciliate; column 1 mm long, the anther apical, the stigma subapical, horseshoe-shaped.

**Etymology:** Named in honor of Dr. David Benzing, professor of botany, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio, co-discoverer of this species.

**Type:** *ECUADOR*: NAPO: epiphytic in wet forest north of Tena, "Cotundo," alt. 1130 m, 19 June 1983, C. H. Dodson, D. Benzing & A. Hirtz 14120A (Holotype: SEL), C. Luer illustr. 9091.

This species is closely related to the concept presently called *L. rotundifolia* L. O. Wms. which is common on the western declivity of the Andes of Ecuador. *Lepanthes benzingii* is apparently rare at relatively low altitudes on the eastern declivity. The apices of the round leaves of *L. benzingii* are shortly acuminate instead of obtuse, and the bases are broadly cuneate instead of rounded. The oblong blades of the lip lie in apposition over the column. The anther is apical with the horseshoe-shaped stigma subapical, in close association with the appendix. In *L. rotundifolia* the anther and apical stigma protrude between the blades of the lip, a considerable distance from the appendix.