

Lepanthes cauda-avis Luer, sp. nov.

Fig. 41.

Ety.: From the Latin *cauda-avis*, "a bird tail," in reference to the appearance of the appendix.

Planta parva caespitosa, folio ovato acuminato racemo congesto longiore, sepalis late ovatis obtusis lateralibus supra medium connatis, petalis parvis transverse bilobis obtusis, lobo superiore minore, labello bilaminato, lamina ovatis pubescentibus, appendice concavo apice flabelliformi pubescenti.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, 3-4 cm long, enclosed by 6-8 lepanthiform sheaths minutely ciliate on the margins of the ostia. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, suffused with purple, ovate, acute, slightly acuminate, 16-25 mm long, 7-12 mm wide, the obtusely cuneate base contracted into a petiole ca. 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, more or less secund, successively several-flowered raceme up to 4 or more mm long, borne behind the leaf by a filiform peduncle 5-12 mm long; floral bracts oblique, 1-1.5 mm long; pedicels 2-2.5 mm long; ovary 1-2 mm long; **sepals** rose or light yellow, suffused with rose, glabrous, carinate, the dorsal sepal broadly ovate, obtuse, convex below the middle, concave below the middle, 3.5-4.5 mm long, 3-3.5 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.75 mm, the lateral sepals 3.5-4.5 mm long, connate 2.5-3 mm into an ovate, bifid lamina 3.5 mm wide, with obtuse apices; **petals** yellow, microscopically pubescent, transversely bilobed, 0.5-0.8 mm long, 1.2-2.2 mm wide, the lobes oblong, with rounded apices, the lower lobe larger than the upper lobe; **lip** rose, bilaminar, the laminae oblong-ovate with rounded ends, lightly convex, minutely pubescent, 1.5 mm long, the connectives broadly cuneate, the broad body broad, connate to the column at the base, the obtuse sinus filled with a triangular, concave, pubescent appendix with a tuft of long hairs at the apex; **column** stout, 2 mm long, the anther apical, the stigma ventral.

Zamora-Chinchipe: Quebrada Honda, south of pass south of Yangana, alt. 1800 m, flowered in cultivation at Predesur, Vilcabamba, 18 Mar. 1984, *D. D' Alessandro 239* (MO), C. Luer illustr. 9561; Cordillera del Condor, Patchicutza, alt. 1200-1500 m, June 1991, *A. Hirtz 5528* (MO); same area, alt. 1450 m, 1992, *A. Hirtz 5766* (MO).

This small species, endemic in southeastern Ecuador, is characterized by a congested inflorescence shorter than the ovate, acuminate leaf. The sepals are obtuse with the laterals connate above the middle; and the petals are small, transversely oblong with the lower lobe larger than the upper lobe. The blades of the lip are ovate, and the appendix is large with a tuft of long hairs at the tip.

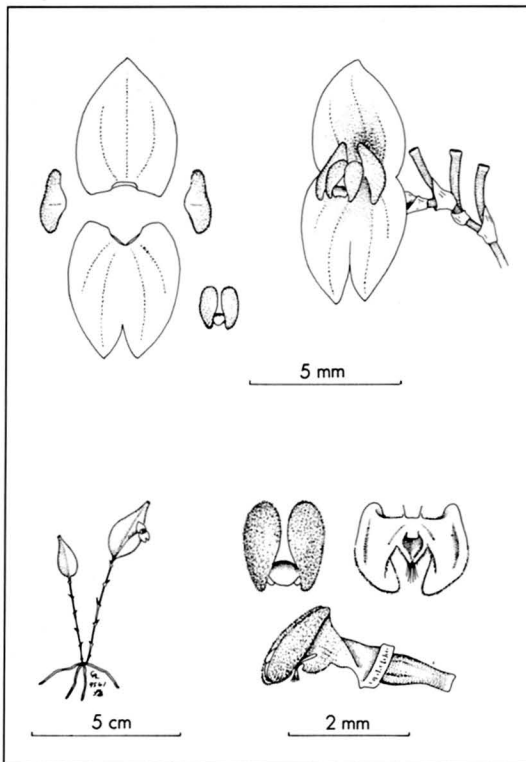


Fig. 41. *Lepanthes cauda-avis*