

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

Fig. 267.

Ety.: From the Latin *caudiger*, "tail bearing," referring to the projecting column and lip.

Planta parva, racemo brevissimo congesto folio late ovato obtuso brevior, sepalis longiacuminatis caudatis sparsim minute ciliatis, petalis transverse bilobis, lobis anguste oblique late triangularibus minute pubescentibus, lobis aequalibus, labelli laminis oblongis pubescentibus, connectivis basalibus ad columnam supra medium connatis, appendice vomeriformi.

**Plant** small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, 1.5-2.5 cm long, enclosed by 6-7 minutely ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, broadly ovate, obtuse, margined, 8-12 mm long, 7-9 mm wide, the base broadly cuneate or rounded, contracted into a petiole 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, distichous, successively few-flowered raceme up to 3 mm long, borne behind the leaf by a slender peduncle 2-3 mm long; floral bracts 0.75 mm long, glabrous; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 1.75 mm long; **sepals** light yellow, sparsely minutely ciliate, the dorsal sepal broadly ovate, acute, long-acuminate, 6.5 mm long, 2 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.5 mm, the lateral sepals ovate, oblique, acute, long-acuminate, 8 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, connate 1.5 mm; **petals** red with yellow border, minutely pubescent, transversely bilobed, 1 mm long, 2 mm wide, the lobes obliquely and broadly triangular, subacute, the lobes equal; **lip** red, bilaminar, the laminae oblong, convex, 1.25 mm long, pubescent, with the bases and apices rounded, the connectives short, from the bases of the blades, connate to the column above the middle, the appendix plow-shaped along the undersurface of the column, ciliate; **column** 1.5 mm long, the anther subapical and the stigma ventral.

ECUADOR: **Carchi**: south of Chical, Cerro Oscuro, alt. 2100 m, May 1997, A. Hirtz 6562 (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 18687.

This species, apparently endemic in northwestern Ecuador, is distinguished by the short inflorescence, much shorter than the small, broadly ovate leaf. The sepals are long-acuminate or with slender tails. The lobes of the petals are broadly and obliquely triangular and about equal in size and shape. The blades of the lip are attached at the bases to the column near the middle. The appendix is plow-shaped along the undersurface of the column. The above characters place this species in subsection *Lepanthes* series *Lepanthes*.

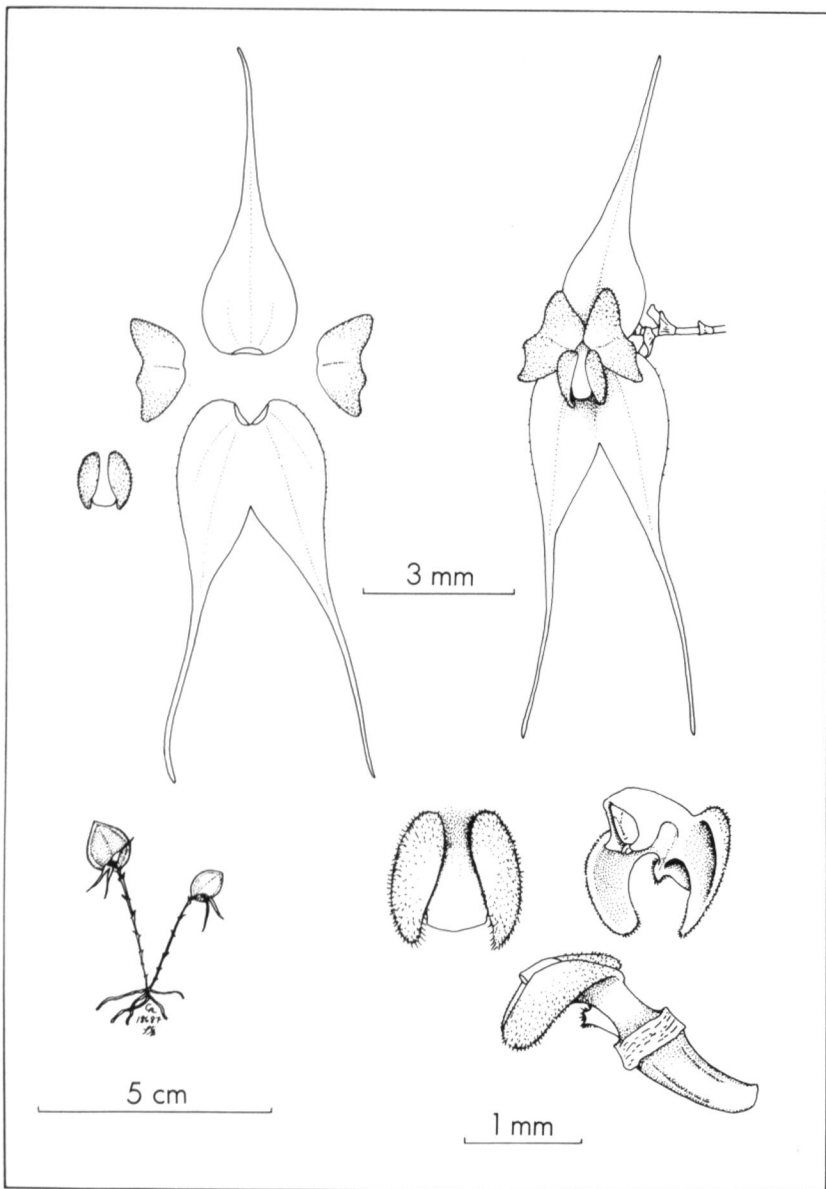


Fig. 267. *Lepanthes caudigera*