

Lepanthes clarkii Luer, sp. nov.

Fig. 50.

Ety.: Named in honor of John L. Clark who discovered this species.

Species haec *Lepanthes ilensi* Dodson affinis, sed labello carnosio lamellae glabris supra columnam adherentibus, connectivis corpore latissimis et appendice oblonga pubescenti differt.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, 2.5-5 cm long, enclosed by 6-7 long-ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. **Leaf** erect, thinly coriaceous, elliptical-ovate, acute, slightly acuminate, 3-4 cm long, 1-1.7 cm wide, the base cuneate into a petiole 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, successively many-flowered raceme up to 10 mm long, borne by a slender peduncle ca. 18 mm long, along the back of the leaf; floral bracts echinate, 3 mm long; pedicels 2 mm long; ovary 1.3 mm long, winged; **sepals** colors not stated, carinate, margins microscopically cellular, broadly ovate, acute, acuminate, the dorsal sepal broadly ovate-triangular, 4 mm long, 3.5 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 1 mm, the lateral sepals oblique with the apices diverging, 4 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, connate 1 mm; **petals** microscopically pubescent, transversely oblong, 1.1 mm long, 2.2 mm wide, with a minute process from the outer margin at the midvein, the lobes oblong with rounded apices, the lower lobe smaller; **lip** bilaminate, the blades lunate, 1 mm long, fleshy, glabrous, adherent medially over the column, the connectives broad from apex to base, the body broad, fleshy, connate to the base of the column, the sinus broad with an oblong, pubescent appendix; **column** 1 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Esmeraldas: Bilsa Biological Station, Mache Mountains, west of Santa Isabel, alt. 400-600 m, 14 Nov. 1994, *J. L. Clark & N. Pitman 254* (Holotype: MO; Isotype: QCNE), C. Luer illustr. 17996.

This species is apparently endemic in lowland western Ecuador. It is related to *L. ilensis*, also from the lowland western forests. *Lepanthes clarkii* is distinguished by the small habit; long-ciliate sheaths of the ramicauls; elliptical-ovate leaves; a congested raceme shorter than the leaf; broad, acuminate sepals; oblong petals; and a small, fleshy lip with the glabrous blades adherent over the column.

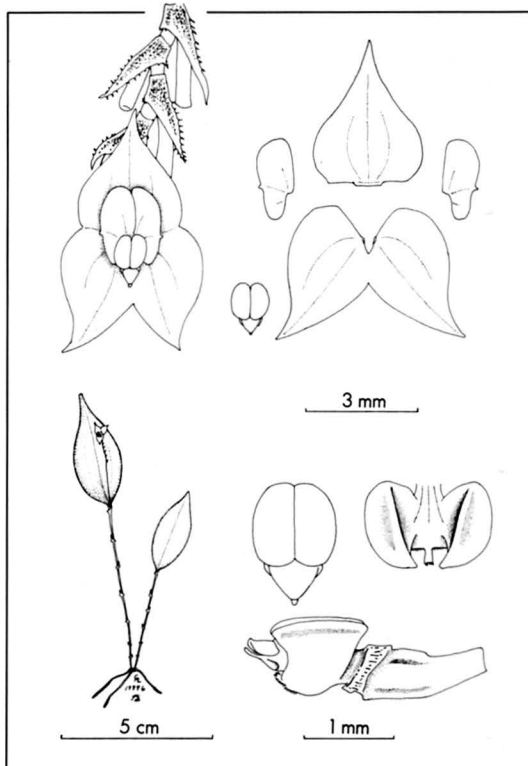


Fig. 50. *Lepanthes clarkii*