

Lepanthes comet-halleyi Luer, sp. nov.

Species haec *L. infundibulo* Luer affinis, sed habitu minore, lobis petalorum anguste subfalcatis divergentibus, et laminis labelli quam columna longioribus differt.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls stout, erect, 1.5-2 cm long, enclosed by 5 or 6 blackish, lepanthiform sheaths, coarsely ciliate on the margins of the ostia. Leaf erect, thickly coriaceous, suborbicular, 12 mm long and broad expanded, to 15 mm long and broad expanded, the apex obtuse to rounded, the sides revolute to form a tube, the rounded base contracted into a petiole 1 mm long. Inflorescence a congested, distichous, successively several-flowered raceme up to 3 mm long, borne within the tube on the back or underside of the leaf by a filiform peduncle 5-6 mm long; floral bracts 1 mm long, echinate; pedicels 0.75 mm long; ovary 0.75 mm long; sepals yellow, ovate, acute, the dorsal sepal 2.6 mm long, 1.7 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.5 mm, the lateral sepals oblique, 2.75 mm long, 1.3 mm wide, connate 0.5 mm; petals yellow, microscopically pubescent, transversely bilobed, 0.5 mm long, 3 mm wide, the lobes narrowly subfalcate, diverging, incurved, subacute, the lower lobe acute, half the length of the upper lobe; lip yellow, microscopically pubescent, bilaminate, the blades narrowly ovate-falcate, the narrow apices acute, incurved, surpassing the column, 1.25 mm long, the connectives cuneate, forming a narrow body, connate to the base of the column, the sinus sub-

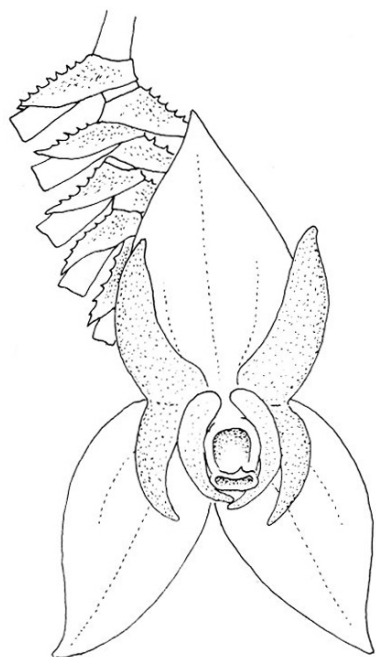
acute with the appendix small, oblong, pubescent; column 1 mm long, the anther and the stigma apical.

ETYMOLOGY: Named for Comet Halley which was so clearly visible at the time of discovery during the early morning hours at Monteverde.

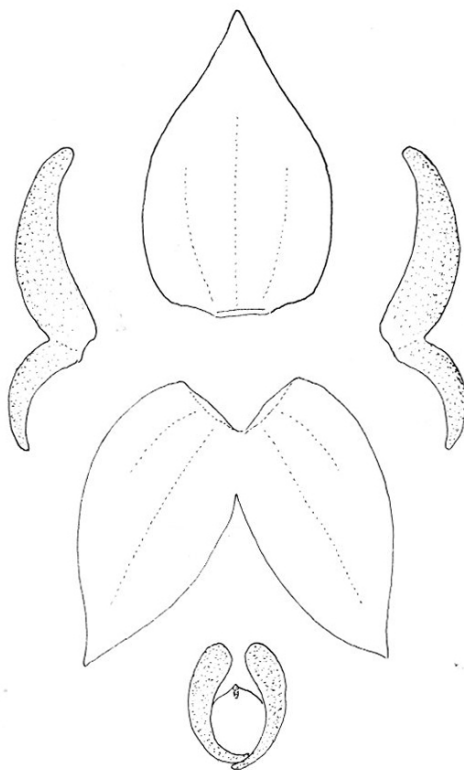
TYPE: COSTA RICA: Prov. of Puntarenas: epiphytic in cloud forest along the approach to the forest preserve, alt. 1500 m, 18 March 1986, C. Luer & J. Luer 12098 (Holotype: MO).

This little species is closely allied to the larger *L. infundibulum* of western Panama and central Costa Rica where it recently has been discovered. In both species the sides of the round, thickly coriaceous leaves roll down to create a tube, and the flowers are borne within this tube along the back side of the leaf. The flowers of the two concepts are similar in size and color, but the petals are distinctly different. The upper lobes of the petals of *L. infundibulum* are broadly ovate and overlapping. The narrowly falcate, upper lobes of *L. comet-halleyi* are only a third as wide, widespread and incurved. The blades of the lip of *L. comet-halleyi* are slender and falcate, the slender apices surpassing the column. The ovate blades of the lip of *L. infundibulum* are shorter than the column with the incurved apices behind the stigma.

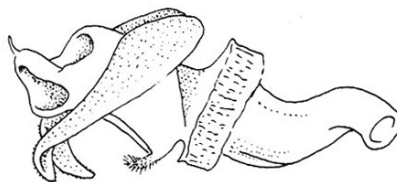
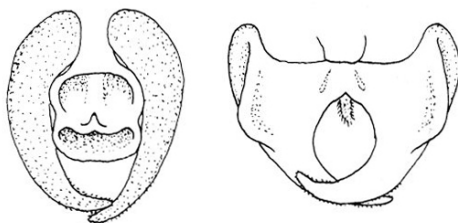
Several plants of *L. comet-halleyi* were discovered by Jane Luer on branches of a felled tree along the approach to the Monteverde Forest Preserve.



2 mm



5 cm



1 mm

Lepanthes comet-halleyi Luer