

Lepanthes conchilabia Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Fig. 268.

Ety.: From the Latin *conchilabia*, "with shell-like lip," referring to the labellum.

Planta parva, inflorescentia cum racemo laxo folio anguste elliptico brevior, sepalis acutis lateralibus uninervis, petalis glabris transverse panduriformibus, labelli lamina glabris oblongis arcuatis concavis, appendice nulla.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, 3-7 cm long, enclosed by 6-7 closely fitting, lepanthiform sheaths with microscopically scabrous ribs. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, narrowly elliptical, acute, 20-35 mm long, 7-8 mm wide, the base narrowly cuneate into a petiole ca. 1.5 mm long. **Inflorescence** a lax, successively several-flowered raceme up to 25 mm long including the slender peduncle 5-7 mm long; floral bracts 1.5 mm long; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long; **sepals** pale yellow, glabrous, the dorsal sepal concave above the base, ovate, acute, 4.75 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, 3-veined, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.75 mm, the lateral sepals tall-carinate, ovate-triangular, oblique, acute, 4.25 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, each 1-veined, connate 0.75 mm; **petals** glabrous, white with purple margin, transversely bilobed-panduriform, 0.75 mm long, 2.8 mm wide, the upper lobe broadly oblong, 1.5 mm long, 1.2 mm wide, the lower lobe triangular, narrowly obtuse, with the outer margin dilated, 1.3 mm long, 1 mm wide; **lip** glabrous, white with purple margins, bilobed, sublimate, the lobes oblong, arcuate, convex, concave beneath, with the apices narrowly obtuse, the bases rounded, 1.2 mm long, enclosing the column, without connectives, arising directly from a transverse body without an appendix, the body thick, connate to the column about midway to the base; **column** 2 mm long, the anther dorsal and the stigma apical.

ECUADOR: **Imbabura**: Mariano Acosta, El Tambo Reserve, alt. 3500 m, 21 Feb. 1998, A. Hirtz & J. del Hierro s.n. (Holotype: MO), C. Luer 18762.

This species, apparently endemic in northern Ecuador, is distinguished by the small habit with narrow, elliptical leaves; a shorter, lax, few-flowered raceme; and single-veined lateral sepals. In the key it would appear among those in section *Lepanthes* subsection *Breves* series *Breves*. The sepals are ovate, acute and glabrous. The petals are transversely pandurate. The lobes of the lip are arcuate and convex with a lateral groove that suggests an attempt to form a blade. The concave inner surfaces enclose the long, arcuate column and the transverse body is connate to the mid-portion of the column. The lobes arise from the body without connectives, and there is no appendix.

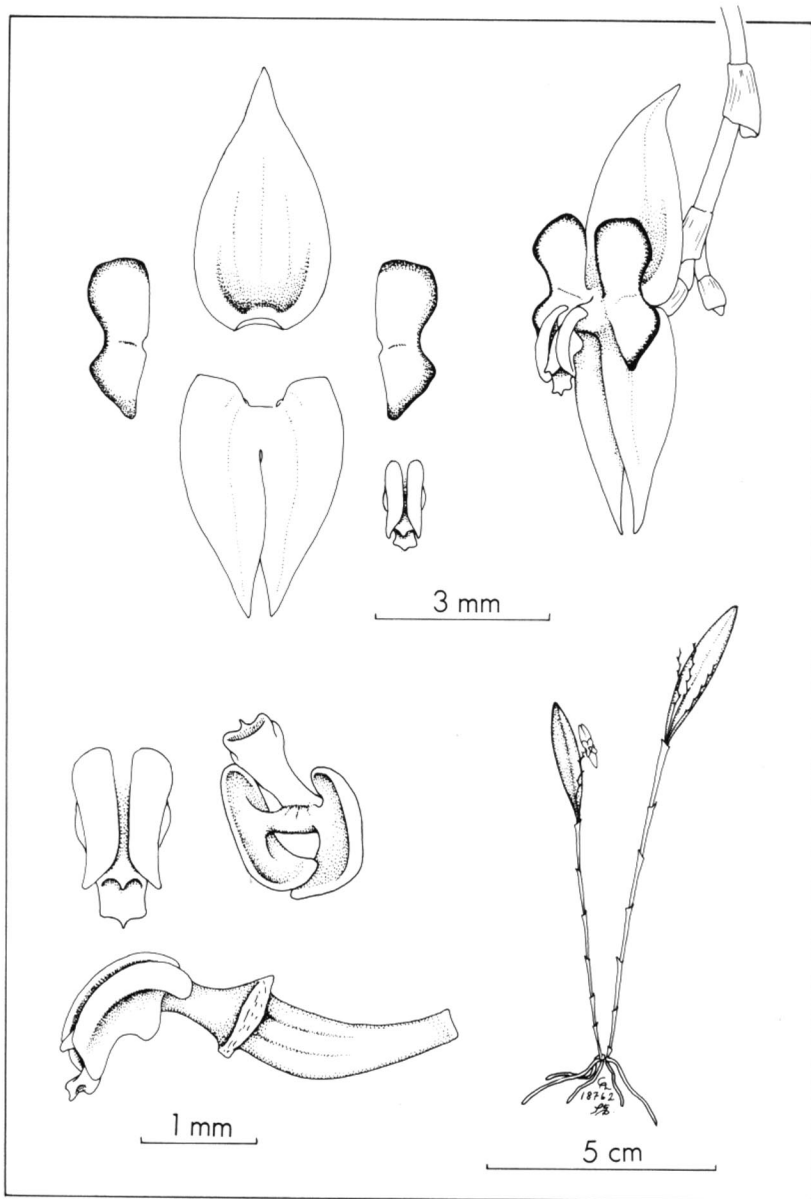


Fig. 268. *Lepanthes conchilabia*