

Lepanthes didyma Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Fig. 73.

Ety.: From the Greek *didymus*, "divided into two equal parts," referring to the shape of the petals.

Planta mediocris, inflorescentia cum racemo congestissimo disticho longipedicellata folio late elliptico obtuso brevior, sepalis ovatis subacutis, petalis grandibus transverse bilobis, lobis triangularibus divergentibus, labello bilobo laminis tantum infra medium oblongis columnam cingentibus ad apices appositis, connectivis nullis, appendice extus elongata sigmoidea pubescenti.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, presumably caespitose. Ramicauls lacking a short distance below the leaf, lepanthiform sheaths minutely ciliate. **Leaf** presumably erect, coriaceous, broadly elliptical, obtuse, 2.5-3.5 cm long, 1.5-2.2 cm wide, the base cuneate into a petiole 1.5 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, distichous, successively several-flowered raceme up to 5 mm long, borne behind the leaf by a slender peduncle 13-18 mm long; floral bracts imbricating, 1 mm long, muriculate; pedicel 2.5-3 mm long; ovary 3 mm long; **sepals** glabrous, the dorsal sepal ovate, acute, 3 mm long, 1.8 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.5 mm, the lateral sepals ovate, oblique, obtuse, 2.5 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, connate 0.4 mm, each 2-veined; **petals** microscopically pubescent, transversely bilobed, 1 mm long, 3 mm wide, the lobes nearly equal, triangular, diverging; **lip** bilobed with poorly formed laminae below the middle, cellular pubescent, elliptical-oblong, 1.8 mm long, with the apices and bases rounded, the apices in apposition below and in front of the column, the connectives lacking, the body broad, connate to the base of the column, the sinus closed with the appendix external, the appendix elongated, sigmoid, pubescent; **column** 1 mm long, the anther and stigma apical.

Pichincha: Río Toachi, alt. 1000 m, Feb. 1987, A. Hirtz 3189 (Holotype, MO), C. Luer illustr. 14724.

This species is apparently rare in an area that has been intensively collected, especially during the recent years, but it has been found but once by Hirtz. Unfortunately, only a leaf with inflorescence is preserved, the dried plant having disappeared. With the broadly elliptical, obtuse leaves and a very congested, long-pedicellate inflorescence, this species is superficially similar to the sympatric *L. pecunialis*. *Lepanthes didyma* is distinguished by the large petals with forked, diverging lobes, and a suborbicular lip that embraces the column and is cleft anteriorly. The appendix is long, sigmoid in profile, and pubescent.

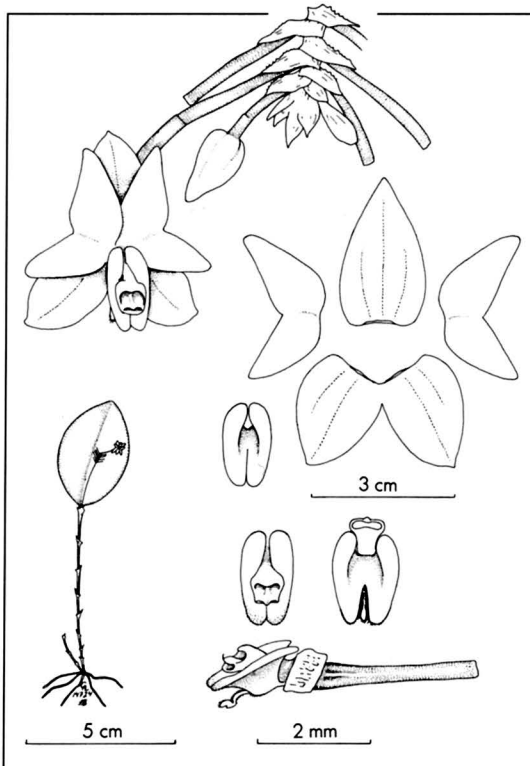


Fig. 73. *Lepanthes didyma*