

Lepanthes empticia Luer & Béhar, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Latin *empticius*, "bought," referring to the manner of acquisition.

Planta mediocris debilis, ramicauli gracillimo folio ovato acuto tenuissimo longiore, racemo abbreviato floribus minutissimis, sepalis integris, petalis transverse bilobis glabris, laminis labelli oblongis glabris et appendice grandi cardinata ovata concava ciliata.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls very slender, suberect, 6-8 cm long, enclosed by 7-8 closely fitting, microscopically scabrous, lepanthiform sheaths with oblique ostia. Leaf spreading, thinly coriaceous, ovate, acute, acuminate, 3.5-4 cm long, 1.4-1.5 cm wide, the base cuneate into a subsessile base. Inflorescence a congested, few-flowered raceme, borne on top of the leaf by a filiform peduncle 6-7 mm long; floral bracts 0.5 mm long; pedicels 0.5 mm long; ovary 0.8 mm long; sepals yellow, glabrous, the dorsal sepal ovate, subacute, 1.8 mm long, 1 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.25 mm, the lateral sepals ovate, obtuse, oblique, 1.3 mm long, 0.8 mm wide, ciliate 0.6 mm; petals yellow, suffused with red toward ends, glabrous, transversely bilobed, 0.5 mm long, 1.6 mm wide, 1-veined, the lobes triangular, obtuse, subequal; lip red, bilaminate, the blades glabrous, oblong, 0.8 mm long, the ends rounded, the connectives oblong, below the middle, the body broad, connate to the base of the column, the appendix large, ovate, concave, ciliate, 0.5 mm long, hinged below the sinus; column stout, clavate, 0.8 mm long, the anther apical, the stigma ventral.

COSTA RICA: Without collection data, purchased from a collector in Costa Rica by M. Béhar, cultivated in Guatemala, Sept. 1995, *M. Béhar 135* (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 17753.

This species is without collection data, but its origin is without doubt Costa Rica. It is distinguished by the weak habit with extremely thin ramicauls and a thinly coriaceous, ovate leaf. The abbreviated raceme is borne on top of the leaf. The flowers are among the smallest of the genus, the sepals being less than two millimeters long. The sepals, transverse petals and lip are glabrous. The blades of the lip are oblong, less than one millimeter long, and the ovate, ciliate, external appendix is proportionately large.

