

Lepanthes flaccida Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Fig. 96.

Ety.: From the Latin *flaccidus*, "flabby, weak," referring the blades of the lip.

Planta mediocris debilis, inflorescentia cum racemo congesto disticho folio anguste ovato acuminato brevior, sepalis late ovatis denticulatis, petalis glabris transverse bilobis, lobis plus minusve oblongis obtusis, labelli lamina tenuis debilis ciliatis, connectivis angustissimis ab basibus, corpore suborbiculari, appendice ciliata transverse convoluta cardinata.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, weak, erect to suberect, 5-6 cm long, enclosed by 6-8 minutely ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. **Leaf** suberect, coriaceous, narrowly ovate, acute, acuminate, 3.5 cm long, 1 cm wide, the base cuneate into a petiole 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, distichous, successively several-flowered raceme up to x mm long, borne on top of the leaf by a slender peduncle 10 mm long; floral bract muriculate, 1.5 mm long; pedicel 1 mm long; ovary 2 mm long; **sepals** dark brown, denticulate, carinate, ovate, acute, lightly acuminate, the dorsal sepal 4 mm long, 3.5 mm wide, 3-veined, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.75 mm, the lateral sepals oblique, 4 mm long, 2 mm wide, 2-veined, connate 1.5 mm; **petals** orange, glabrous, transversely bilobed, 1.25 mm long, 4.5 mm wide, the lobes oblong, oblique, obtuse, the upper lobe with an obtuse angle on the inner margin, larger than the lower lobe; **lip** orange, bilaminar, the laminae obliquely oblong, obtuse, 1.25 mm long, minutely ciliate, thin, weak, membranous, held above the column by narrow connectives from the bases of the blades, the body suborbicular, connate to the base of the column, the appendix pubescent, transversely hinged the anterior surface of the body, convex below the middle, concave across the middle, with a terminal segment; **column** 1 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Pastaza: north of Topo, epiphytic in forest along Río Zuñag, alt. 2200 m, 23 Feb. 1990, A. Hirtz, S. Dalström, L. Årnby, J. Del Hierro, E. Astorga, S. Ortega & J. Cabezas 4647 (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 14722.

This species from the eastern slopes of the Andes of central Ecuador has features reminiscent of several distantly related concepts of *Lepanthes*. The habit is weak with slender stems bearing more or less spreading, acuminate leaves and a short inflorescence lying on top. The sepals are ovate and minutely denticulate. The petals are transverse with more or less oblong, oblique, obtuse lobes. The lip blades of the lip are thin and membranous, held above the column by slender, weak connectives from the base. The connectives form a suborbicular body connate to the base of the column. The large, pubescent appendix, similar to that of *L. camptica*, is broadly hinged to the anterior margin. The appendix is convex below the middle, concave across the middle with a solid apical segment.

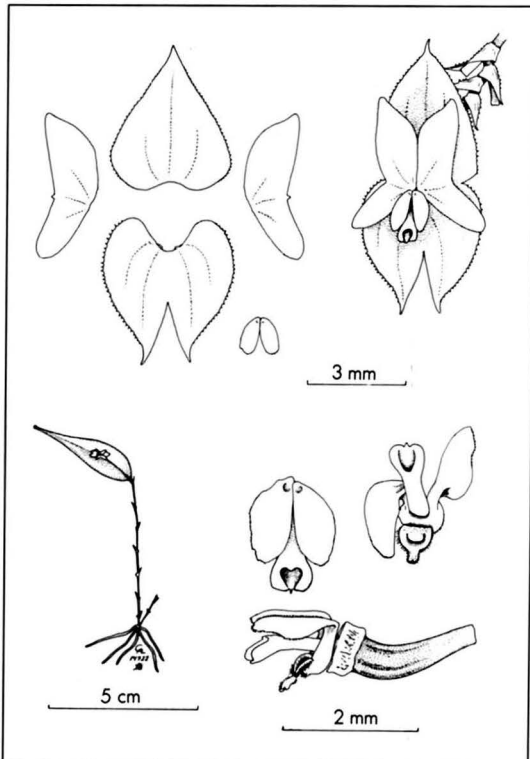


Fig. 96. *Lepanthes flaccida*