

Lepanthes megalcephala Luer & Vásquez, sp. nov.

Planta perpusilla, racemo grandifloro congesto folio ovato reticulato brevior, sepalis ovatis ciliatis, petalorum lobis anguste triangularibus pubescentibus, labelli laminis anguste ovatis longiciliatis, connectivis anguste cuneatis, corpore nullo, appendice oblonga pubescenti.

Plant very small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Secondary stems slender, erect, 5-10 mm long, enclosed by 4-5 microscopically scabrous lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, purple beneath, reticulated, ovate, subacute, 8-10 mm long, 6-7 mm wide, the rounded base contracted into a petiole 1 mm long. Inflorescence a congested, distichous, successively large-flowered raceme up to 5 mm long, borne behind the leaf by a filiform peduncle 3-5 mm long; floral bract ciliate, 0.75 mm long; pedicel 0.75 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long; sepals red with yellow margins, triangular-ovate, acute, densely ciliate and carinate ciliate, the dorsal sepal 4.5 mm long, 3 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals for 1 mm, the lateral sepals 4.5 mm long, 2 mm wide, connate for 1.5 mm, minutely pubescent above the middle; petals red-orange, pubescent, transversely bilobed, 3.75 mm wide, 1 mm long, the lobes narrowly triangular, acute, the upper larger; lip yellow, suffused with red-orange, the blades linear-ovate, 2 mm long, long-ciliate, the ends narrowly obtuse, the connectives narrowly cuneate, originating from the base of the column without forming a body, the sinus acute, with an oblong, truncate, pubescent appendix; column slender, 2 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Etymology: From the Latinized Greek megalcephalus, "with a large head," referring to the comparatively large flower for the plant.

Type: Bolivia: Prov. of Chapare: epiphytic in cloud forest between Cochabamba and Villa Tunari, alt. 1850 m, 29 Jan. 1984, C. Luer, J. Luer & R. Vásquez 9470 (Holotype: SEL).

This tiny species, found by Roberto Vásquez, produces on a short peduncle a brightly colored flower as large as the reticulated leaf. The sepals are densely ciliate, the narrowly triangular lobes of the petals are pubescent, the linear blades of the lip are long-ciliate, and the connectives do not form a body.