

Lepanthes microtica Luer & Escobar, sp. nov.

Planta parva, foliis ovatis inflorescentia longioribus, racemo congesto, sepalis ellipticis lateralibus alte connatis, petalis perparvis transverse oblongis, labelli laminis minute pubescentibus anguste ovatis columna brevioribus, appendice minuta triangulari.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Secondary stems slender, erect, 1.5-5 cm long, enclosed by 4-7 microscopic ciliate-scabrous lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, ovate, subacute to obtuse, 10-15 mm long, 6-9 mm wide, the rounded base contracted into a petiole 1 mm long. Inflorescence a congested raceme up to 4 mm long, borne on top of the leaf by a filiform peduncle up to 6 mm long; floral bract 0.75 mm long, lightly echinate; pedicel 0.5 mm long; ovary 1 mm long; sepals elliptical, subacute, the dorsal sepal translucent rose, minutely apiculate, tricarinate, 2.75 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, the lateral sepals light orange, connate 1.5 mm into a suborbicular, bifid lamina 2.5 mm long, 2.25 mm wide; petals orange, suffused with purple, transversely oblong, 0.3 mm long, 1 mm wide, microscopically cellular-glandular, the lobes subequal, oblong-triangular with rounded apices; lip light purple, minutely pubescent, the blades narrowly ovate, 1 mm long with rounded ends, the connectives cuneate, connate to the column above the base, the obtuse sinus with a small, triangular appendix; column 1.3 mm long, the anther and stigma apical.

Etymology: From the Greek micro-, "little," and otikos, "pertaining to ears," in reference to the small petals.

Type: Costa Rica: Prov. of San José: road to Santa Maria de Dota, alt. 2240 m, 23 July 1983, R. Escobar 3070 (Holotype: SEL), C. Luer illustr. 9132; Prov. of Cartago: La Chonta, along the Pan American highway, alt. 2450, 6 Aug. 1983, R. Escobar 3158 (SEL).

This species may be recognized by the little ovate leaves with a short, congested raceme. The lateral sepals are connate to near the apices, the transversely oblong petals are minute, and the lobes of the lip are smaller than the column.