

Lepanthes minutissima Endres ex Luer, *sp. nov.* TYPE: COSTA RICA. Without locality, ca. 1867, A. Endres 10 (Holotype: W). Fig. 17.

Planta minutissima, racemo folio brevior, flore bilabiato, sepalis lateralibus omnino in synsepalum triangulari connatis sepalo dorsali simili, petalis microscopicis subtribobis et labello microscopico trilobo columna minore.

Plant very small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, 10–17 mm long, enclosed by 3–5 microscopically ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. **Leaf** purple-brown, more or less spreading, coriaceous, ovate, obtuse, more or less conduplicate, 7–11 mm long, 4–6 mm wide, the base cuneate into a 1 mm long petiole. **Inflorescence** a congested, successively few-flowered raceme up to 7 mm long including the peduncle 4 mm long, borne on the dorsum of the leaf; floral bracts 0.5 mm long, microscopically scabrous; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 0.3 mm long; **sepals** red, purple or flesh-colored, glabrous, the dorsal sepal narrowly triangular, acute, concave toward the base, 1.6 mm long, 0.8 mm wide, obscurely 3-veined, barely connate to the lateral sepals, the lateral sepals completely connate into a synsepal similar in shape and size of the dorsal sepal; **petals** brown, glabrous, transversely subtrilobed with the angles obtuse, 0.15 mm long, 0.3 mm wide; **lip** black, bilaminar, the blades glabrous, ovoid, rounded at both ends, 0.3 mm long, clasping the column with broad, triangular connectives, the body broad, connate to the base of the column, the sinus occupied by a proportionately large, oblong, recurving appendix; **column** stout, semiterete, 0.6 mm long, the anther pure white, apical, the stigma ventral.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *minutissimus*, “extremely small,” referring to the minute size of the species.

This minute species appears to have been collected about five times as represented by five separate descriptions, all as *Endres 10*, and with the apt, intended name *L. microscopica*. The latter epithet is occupied by an Andean species. The accompanying illustration was made from a flower rehydrated in concentrated ammonia.

Lepanthes minutissima is distinguished by the minute habit with a few-flowered raceme borne on the dorsum of a thick, little, more or less spreading leaf. The bilabiate flowers are unusual with the lateral sepals connate into a triangular synsepal similar to the dorsal sepal. The sepals are only about 1.6 mm long. The petals are extremely minute, transversely trilobed, 0.3 mm

wide. The equally minute lip is trilobed, the lateral lobes forming vestigial, ovoid blades to either side of the much larger column. The oblong appendix is the third lobe curving under the column.

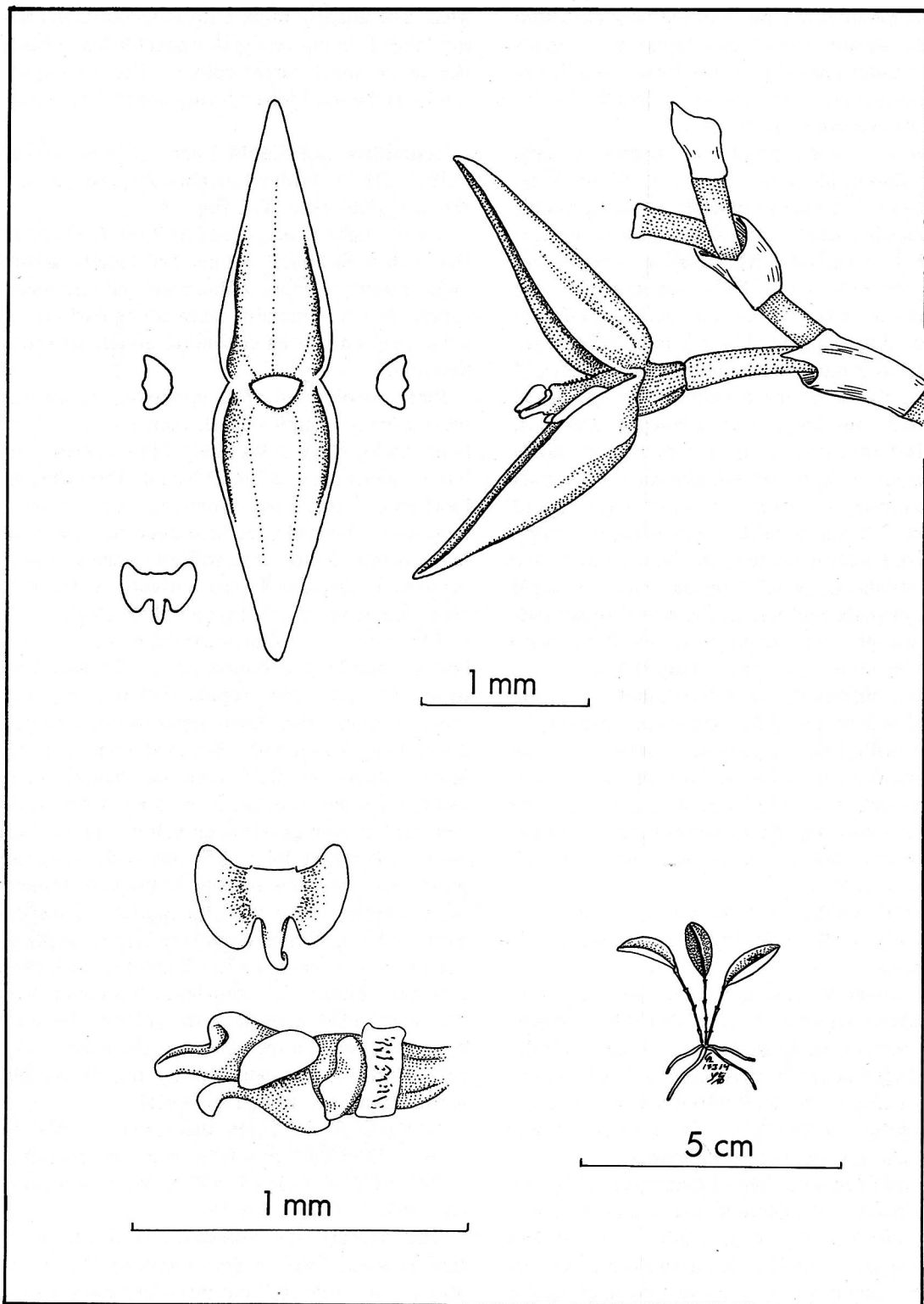


Fig. 17. *Lepanthes minutissima* Endres ex Luer.