

Lepanthes ophioglossa Luer, sp. nov.

Planta parva caespitosa, racemo laxo fractiflexo folio elliptico multilongiore, sepalo dorsali concavo caudato, synsepalo oblongo longiore bicaudato, petalis transverse bilobatis, labelli laminis anguste ovatis connectivis brevibus ex basibus, appendice sigmoidea apice pubescenti.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Secondary stems slender, erect, 2.5-4.5 cm long, enclosed by 4-6 close, microscopically scabrous lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, elliptical, obtuse, 2-2.5 cm long, 1 cm wide, the base cuneate into a 2-4 mm long petiole. Inflorescence a loose, successively flowered, flexuous raceme up to 7 cm long including the filiform peduncle; floral bract 1.5-2 mm long; pedicel 2-2.5 mm long; ovary 1.25 mm long; sepals light brown with darker brown veins, the dorsal sepal essentially free from the lateral sepals, ovate, concave, 5.5 mm long, 3.5 mm wide unexpanded, the acute apex contracted into a filiform tail 4 mm long, the lateral sepals connate into a more or less flat lamina 7 mm long, 3.25 mm wide, minutely ciliate, the approximate apices acute, contracted into tails 2 mm long; petals red-brown, transversely bilobed, 1 mm long, 3.5 mm wide, the upper lobe oblong, obtuse, the lower lobe smaller, narrowly oblong, incurved; lip red-brown, the laminae narrowly ovate, 2.25 mm long, glabrous, longitudinally channeled, the apices narrowly obtuse, the bases continuous with the short connectives, connate to the under surface of the column above the base, the appendix straplike, folded upon itself, with a pubescent apical gland; column 1 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Etymology: From the Greek *ophis*, "snake," and *glossa*, "tongue," in reference to the bilabiate flower with the forked apex of the synsepal resembling the tongue of a serpent.

Type: *ECUADOR*: CARCHI: epiphytic in cloud forest above Maldonado, alt. ca. 2000 m, 25 Aug. 1978, C. Luer, J. Luer & A. Hirtz 3400 (Holotype: SEL).

This species with a loose raceme much longer than the leaf is characterized by the bilabiate flowers with an oblong "lower lip" ending in a pair of adjacent tails. The lobes of the lip are continuous at the base with the short connectives.