

Lepanthes pelyx Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Fig. 183.

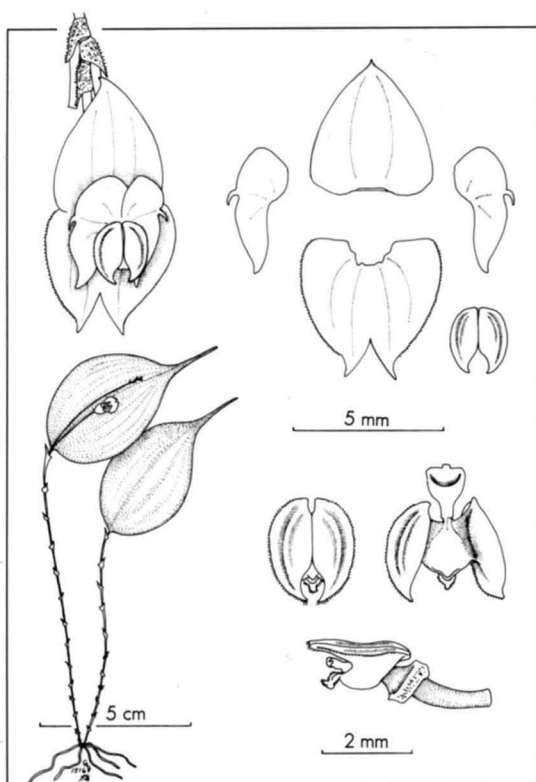
Ety.: From the Greek *pelyx*, "a basin," referring to the broadly concave body of the lip.

Species haec *L. cotyledonis* Luer affinis, sed pedicelis brevioribus, petalorum lobo superiore subquadrato non dolabriformi, labelli laminae minutissime ciliatis apicibus acutis incurvis et corpore late concavo distinguitur.

Plant medium in size to large, epiphytic, caespitose, roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, 7-15 cm long, enclosed by 13-15 ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. **Leaf** suberect to more or less horizontal, thinly coriaceous, suffused with purple, lightly reticulated, ovate, acute, long-acuminate, 5-7.5 cm long, 2-5 cm wide, the rounded base contracted into a petiole 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, successively several to many-flowered raceme, up to 10 mm long, borne beneath the leaf by a slender peduncle 1.5-3 cm long; floral bracts 1.5 mm long, minutely ciliate; pedicels 2.5-3 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long; **sepals** light brown, with minutely ciliate margins, the dorsal broadly ovate, obtuse, apiculate, 4.5 mm long, 4 mm wide 3-veined, connate to the lateral sepals for 1 mm, the lateral sepals connate 2.5 mm into an ovate, bifid lamina, 4.5 mm long, 4.5 mm wide, with the apices shortly acute; **petals** trilobed, green, microscopically pubescent, transversely bilobed, 1 mm long, 4 mm wide, the upper lobe subquadrate, subtruncate, the lower lobe longer, triangular, acute, the middle lobe uncinat, 1 mm long; **lip** rose, suffused with purple, suffused with rose, bilaminat, the laminae thin, membranous, minutely ciliate, lunat with apices acute and incurved, lightly adherent to each below the middle other over the column, 2 mm long, the body broadly concave, connate to the base of the column, the sinus protuberant with an obscurely 3-lobed, pubescent appendix; **column** terete, 1.5 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Imbabura: epiphytic in wet virgin forest southeast of Lita toward Santa Rosa de Cachaco, alt. 1250 m, 19 Jan. 1987, C. Luer, J. Luer, A. Hirtz, C. Dodson, D. Benzing & D. Bermudes 12431 (Holotype: MO); same area, alt. 1300 m, 19 Mar. 1991, C. Luer, J. Luer & A. Hirtz 15168, 15170 (MO); between Cachaco and Santa Rosa, alt. 1200-1500 m, 30 Dec. 1990, C. H. Dodson & T. Neudecker 18639 (MO).

This species is apparently endemic on the western slopes of the Andes of northern Ecuador. It is closely related to *L. cotyledon* from the eastern declivities. The two species are similar with thin, purplish, broad, long-acuminate leaves, but the ostia of the lepanthiform sheaths of *L. cotyledon* are much more dilated. *Lepanthes pelyx* is further distinguished by shorter pedicels, subquadrate instead of hatchet-shaped upper lobes of the petals, minutely ciliate blades of the lip with acute, incurved apices, and a broad, shallowly concave body. The body of *L. cotyledon* is similar, but the edges of the deeper cavity are well-defined.

Fig. 183. *Lepanthes pelyx*