

Lepanthes pholeter Luer, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Greek *pholeter*, "a cave-dweller," in allusion to the petals, lip and column deep within the sepaline cup.

Inter species subgeneris *Brachycladii* Luer, foliis glabris, pedunculis brevissimis fasciculatis, sepalis dorsali elliptico acuto, sepalis ad apicem in synsepalum profunde concavum connatis, petalis parvissimis linear-triangularibus, et labello hippocrepiformi apice rotundo distinguitur.

Plant average in size for the subgenus, epiphytic, repent or pendent, up to 20 cm long or longer, the rhizome slender, 4-5 mm long between ramicauls, enclosed by 2 spiculate, imbricating, lepanthiform sheaths; roots slender, from nodes near the base. Ramicauls 1 mm long, concealed by 1 ciliate, lepanthiform sheath. **Leaf** prostrate, coriaceous, glabrous, broadly elliptical, obtuse to rounded at the apex, 8-10 mm long, 6-8 mm wide, the base contracted into a petiole ca. 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a fascicle of successive flowers borne by peduncles ca. 1 mm long from near the apex of a ramicaul; floral bract spiculate, 1-1.5 mm long; pedicel 1.5-2 mm long; ovary 0.75 mm long; **sepals** stated by the collector to be yellowish orange, membranous, the dorsal sepal suberect, broadly elliptical-ovate, obtusely acuminate, 2.5 mm long, 1.75 mm wide, connate to the lateral sepals nearly 1 mm, the lateral sepals connate to the apex into a deeply concave, suborbicular synsepal, 2 mm long, 3 mm wide expanded; **petals** narrowly linear-triangular, acute, 1 mm long, 0.2 mm wide; **lip** horse shoe-shaped, with the apex broadly rounded, the basal lobes obtuse, encircling the column, 0.5 mm long centrally, 1 mm long from basal lobes, 1 mm wide, the disc with an obscure, central, circular thickening, the base connate to the base of the column; column 1 mm long, with the anther and the transversely bilobed stigma apical.

PERU: Dept. of Amazonas: Bagua, east of La Peca, epiphytic on the top branches of a canopy tree, alt. 1700 m, 29 June 1978, P. Barbour 2576 (Holotype: MO; Isotype: SEL), C. Luer illustr. 8701.

This species, indistinguishable from many of the other medium-sized members of the subgenus with glabrous leaves, was collected in the top branches of a canopy-tree about 26 meters high. Under this collection number at MO at least two species are included. One is *L. pholeter* described here, another is *L. nummularia*, and I suspect that still another species is present, but unfortunately no flowers are present. This last species is distinguished by peduncles up to 8 mm long and pedicels up to 4 mm long.

Lepanthes pholeter is distinguished from all others in the subgenus by the deeply concave synsepal, similar to that of *Stelis* section *Humboldtia*; tiny, linear petals; and a horse shoe-shaped lip surrounding the column.

