

Lepanthes ursula Luer & Escobar, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Latin *ursula*, "a cub bear," in allusion to the large "wooly" leaves and dorsal sepal.

Species haec *Lepanthis pilosellae* Rchb.f. affinis, sed foliis floribusque majoribus et sepalis pubescentibus extus differt.

Plant large for the subgenus, epiphytic, pendent, with branches up to 50 cm long or longer, the rhizomes slender, 3-4 mm long between ramicauls, enclosed by 2 ciliate, imbricating, lepanthiform sheaths; roots slender, from nodes near the base of the branches. Ramicauls 1 mm long, concealed by 1 similar, lepanthiform sheath. **Leaf** pendent in the natural position, coriaceous, densely villous, elliptical, acute to subacute, 12-20 mm long, 4-6 mm wide, 5-veined, the base contracted into a petiole less than 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, successively few-flowered raceme, borne by an ascending peduncle 0.5-1 mm long from near the apex of a ramicaul; floral bract ciliate, 0.5-1 mm long; pedicel 0.5-1 mm long; ovary shortly ciliate, 1 mm long; **sepals** long-pubescent externally, the dorsal sepal light yellow, veined in purple, with a broad band of purple above the base, concave, broadly obovate to orbicular, obtuse, 9 mm long, 7 mm wide, 7-veined, connate to the lateral sepals for 1 mm, the lateral sepals yellow-orange, suffused with purple, connate into an ovate, acute, shortly bifid lamina, 7.5 mm long, 6.25 mm wide, 4-veined; **petals** white, glabrous, elliptical, acute, 2 mm long, 0.5 mm wide; **lip** yellow, glabrous, subquadrate, 1.75 mm long, 2 mm wide expanded, with obtuse basal angles, the sides encircling the column, the apex broadly obtuse, the base connate to the base of the column; column 2 mm long, the anther and the stigma apical.

COLOMBIA: Dept. of Boyacá: epiphytic in scrub forest between Duitama and Virolín, alt. 2600 m, 1 June 1982, C. Luer, J. Luer, R. Escobar & D. Portillo 8034 (Holotype: SEL).

This species is known from only one collection in the Eastern Cordillera of Colombia where it was found growing with two other species of the subgenus: *L. dactyla* and *L. monilia*. Related to *L. pilosella*, *L. ursula* is also distinguished by villous leaves, and they are the largest known in the subgenus. The flowers are also large, and long-pubescent externally. A prominent purple band is present above the base of the orbicular, deeply concave, seven-veined dorsal sepal. The petals are two millimeters long, but sometimes petals this large are also seen in *L. pilosella*. Although a little larger, the lip is not significantly different.

