

***Platystele dressleri* C. Luer, sp. nov.**

Planta perparva epiphytica caespitosa, caulibus secundariis brevissimis vaginis costatis obtectis unifoliatis, foliis parvis coriaceis obovatis obtusis tridenticulatis base cuneatis petiolatis canaliculatis, racemo multifloro compacto folio brevioris, floribus successivis, sepalis flavis ovatis obtusis, petalis lavis oblongis acutis marginibus breviter ciliolatis, labello nigro purpureo ovato obtuso minute ciliolato.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems abbreviated, 2-4 mm long, mostly concealed by 2 thin, ribbed sheaths, unifoliolate. Leaf light green, thick, coriaceous, obovate, obtuse tridenticulate, the base cuneate, conduplicate, channeled, indistinctly petiolate, 13-23 × 4-6 mm. Inflorescence a contracted, many-flowered raceme, 10-13 mm long, the flowers produced singly and successively, wide-spreading, light yellow with a purple-black lip; peduncle capillary, from a node on the secondary stem; bract translucent, tubular, 0.5 mm long; pedicel about 2 mm long; ovary 0.75 mm long; sepals ovate, obtuse to very shortly acuminate, the angle vein prominent externally, 1.25-1.75 × 1 mm, the lateral sepals free, slightly oblique; petals narrowly ovate to oblong, acute, the margins minutely ciliate, 1-1.25 × 0.3-0.4 mm; lip fleshy, ovate, obtuse to rounded, minutely ciliate; column short, cucullate.

ETYMOLOGY: Named in honor of Robert L. Dressler of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, who first discovered this species.

TYPE: PANAMA: PANAMA: epiphytic along the Altos de Pacora road, alt. ca. 650 m, collected 4 March 1976, C. Luer, J. Luer, P. Taylor & R. L. Dressler 963 (HOLOTYPE: SEL), flowered in cult. 22 July 1976.

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL EXAMINED: PANAMA: R. L. Dressler 4684 (SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Panama.

Vegetatively this species is similar to that of *Platystele stenostachya* (Rchb. f.) Garay, to which it is closely related. The flowers of both species are borne in short, compact racemes. The color of the densely papillose lip of *P. stenostachya* varies from yellow, orange, and red to deep purple or maroon. The purple-black lip of this species is not papillose, although the margin is finely ciliate. The petals of *P. stenostachya* are glabrous, while those of *P. dressleri* are finely short-ciliate. The margins of the sepals are sparsely ciliate in one of the collections examined. Most plants of *P. stenostachya* are much larger.

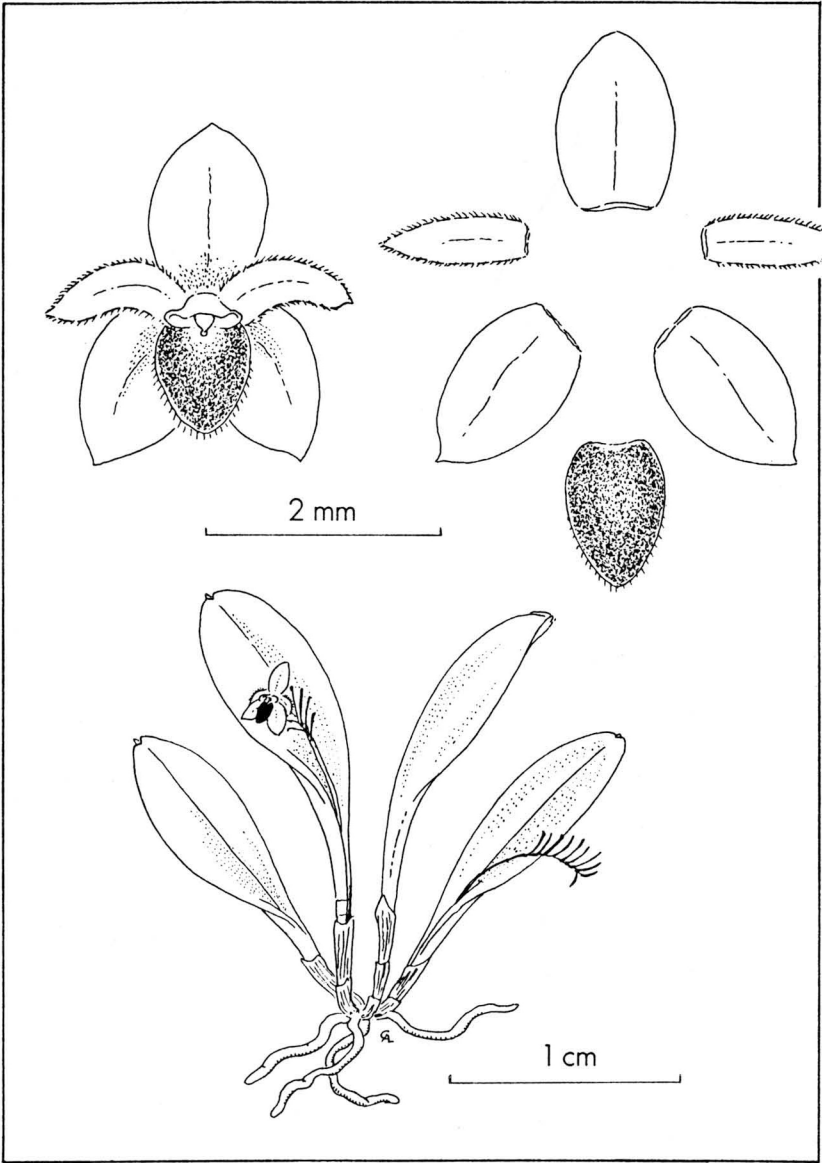


Figure 116. PLATYSTELE DRESSLERI C. A. Luer