

Platystele oblecta Luer, sp. nov.

Éty.: From the Latin *oblectus*, "covered," or "hidden," referring to the inflorescence.

Planta parva foliis ellipticis petiolatis, racemo brevissimo paucifloro in vagina ramicaulis oblecto, pedunculo subnullo, sepalis brevibus concavis, petalis oblongis acutis, labello elliptico glanduloso.

Plant small, epiphytic, densely caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls erect, abbreviated, slender, 2-6 mm long, enclosed by 2-3 loose, ribbed, tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, margined, elliptical, petiolate, 10-20 mm long including a petiole 1.5-3 mm long, 3-7 mm wide, rounded at the apex, cuneate below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** a congested, simultaneously 2 to 3-flowered raceme ca. 2 mm long including the peduncle, emerging laterally from the ramicaul within the sheath; floral bracts thin, 0.3 mm long; pedicels 0.3 mm long; ovary tricarinate, 0.5 mm long; **sepals** thick, concave, glabrous, the dorsal sepal ovate, 1.3 mm long, 0.9 mm wide, 1-veined, with the apex rounded, minutely apiculate, the lateral sepals ovate-triangular, oblique, subacute, subapiculate, 1.3 mm long, 0.7 mm wide, 1-veined, connate at the base; **petals** elliptical-oblong, acute, 2 mm long, 0.5 mm wide; **lip** fleshy, elliptical, 1.2 mm long, 0.6 mm wide, densely cellular papillose, the disc shallowly sulcate, the base subtruncate with a glenion, firmly hinged to the rudimentary column-foot; **column** proportionately large, cucullate, 0.5 mm long and broad, the foot rudimentary.

COSTA RICA: Dept. of Guanacaste: Parque Nacional Guanacaste, Estación Maritza, primary forest, Volcán Orosi, alt. 600 m, 2 July 1989, "INBIO" 149 (Holotype: CR), C. Luer illustr. 16511.

This species is related to the frequent and widely distributed *P. stenostachya* with similarly minute flowers and an elliptical, diffusely glandular lip. *Platystele oblecta* is distinguished by the broader, petiolate leaves, and an extremely abbreviated inflorescence that produces tiny racemes of what appear to have been dark purple flowers. The racemes are hidden within the loose sheaths of the ramicauls that will not be found unless a careful search is carried out.

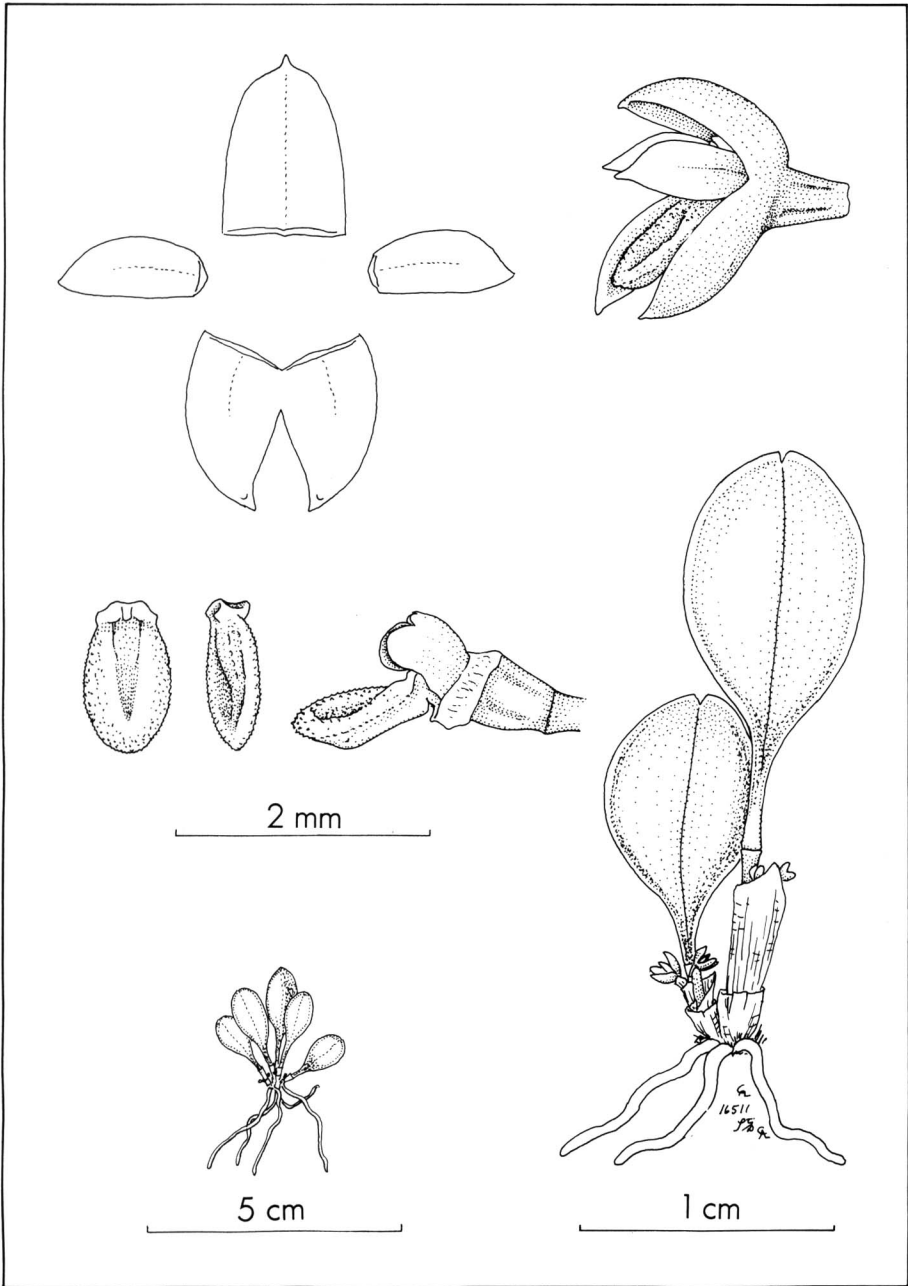


Plate 86. *Platystele obtecta* Luer