

Pleurothallis cutucuensis Luer, sp. nov.

Planta epiphytica mediocris caespitosa, caulibus secundariis erectis teretibus gracilibus unifoliatis, foliis coriaceis ovatis acuminatis acutis basi profunde cordatis, floribus glabris bilabiatis singularibus fasciculatis, sepalo dorsali ellipticis subacutis quinquevenoso vinaceo, synsepal similari albo roseo suffuso, petalis subulatis glabris, labello oblongo obtuso albo cellulis vinaceis.

Plant epiphytic, medium in size, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems erect, slender, terete, 10-22 cm long, with a close-fitting tubular sheath below the middle and 1-2 others at the base, unifoliolate. Leaf coriaceous, ovate, acuminate, acute, tridenticulate, the base deeply cordate, sessile, 6-9.5 cm long, 3.5-6 cm wide. Inflorescence fasciculate, the flowers bilabiate, glabrous, produced 1-4 at a time, from a narrow spathe 12-15 mm long at the base of the leaf; pedicel about 10 mm long; floral bract 5-8 mm long; ovary 5-6 mm long; dorsal sepal elliptical, subacute, wine-red, 13-14 mm long, 7-8 mm wide, 5-veined; lateral sepals connate into an ovate synsepal, subacute, white, suffused with rose, 12-14 mm long, 7-9 mm wide, 6-veined; petals narrowly triangular, oblique, acute, glabrous, deep wine-red, 6.5-7 mm long, 1-1.3 mm wide; lip oblong, obtuse, the base shallowly concave on the end, the margins microscopically denticulate with prominent cells, the disc white, studded with wine-red cells, the glenion well formed, 5.5-6 mm long, 3.5 mm wide; column red, stout, 1 mm long, 2 mm wide, with a short, thick foot.

ETYMOLOGY : Named for the Cordillera de Cutucú where the species was discovered.

TYPE: *ECUADOR*: MORONA-SANTIAGO: epiphytic in wet montane forest, Cordillera de Cutucú, 25 km SE. of Longrono, alt. 1000 m, Jan. 1976, *M. Madison 3130* (HOLOTYPE: SEL), greenhouse acc. no. 23-76-16, flowered in cult. 28 April 1976, 15 Jan. 1977; same area, Nov. 1976, *M. Madison 3640* (SEL).

DISTRIBUTION : Eastern Ecuador.

The long-stemmed, deeply cordate, ovate leaves of this very pretty species are indistinguishable from those of a host of others in this perplexing section. A description of the medium-sized flowers also is not impressively distinct from those of many other closely related species. However, a combination of several features sets this species apart. The elliptical, deep wine-red dorsal sepal is 5-veined, and the similarly shaped synsepal is white, suffused with rose. The subulate, glabrous petals are deep wine-red and widely spread. The oblong lip is basically white, but generously dotted with deep red cells.

This species is apparently endemic in the isolated Cordillera de Cutucú, just east of the eastern slopes of the Andes.

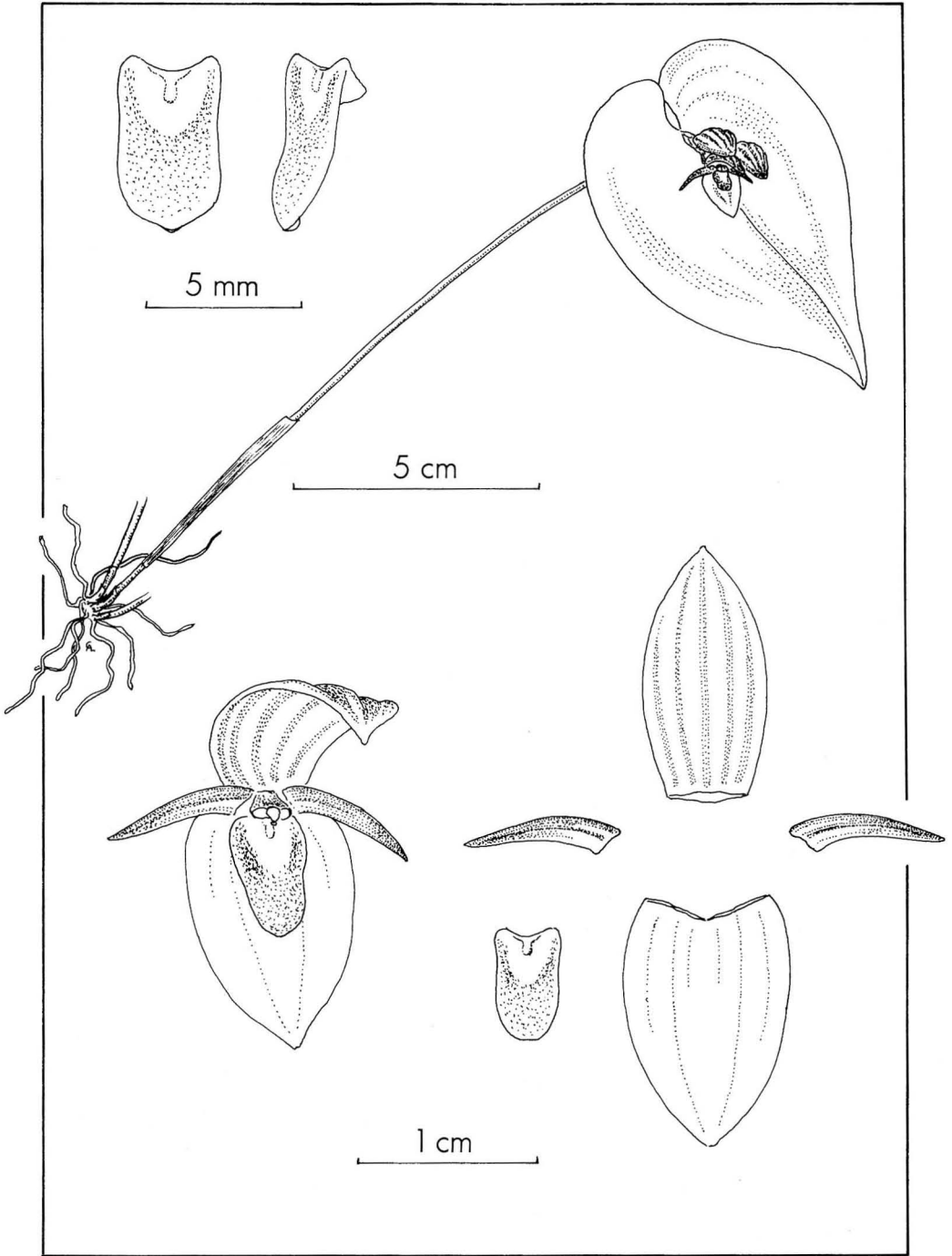


Figure 242. *PLEUROTHALLIS CUTUCUENSIS* Luer