

***Pleurothallis dressleri* C. A. Luer, sp. nov.**

Planta minutissima epiphytica repens, caulibus primum et secundariis brevissimis vaginis costatis, foliis carnosissimis suborbicularibus minimis, pedunculo filiformi folio longiore, racemo paucifloro, floribus successivis grandibus pro planta, sepalo dorsali ovato acuminato acuto purpureo vittato, sepalis lateralibus ovatis obliquis acuminatis purpureis ad medium connatis, petalis spatulatis obtusis, labello orbiculari laciniato bicristato base appendicula erecta tuberculata digitiformi.

Plant extremely small, epiphytic, creeping, the primary stem 1-3 mm long; roots comparatively thick, velamentous. Secondary stem stout, 1-2 mm long, concealed by 1-2 thin, infundibular, ribbed sheaths, unifoliate. Leaf more or less prostrate, fleshy, light green veined in dark green, the surface pustulate, suborbicular, apex emarginate with a mucro in the sinus, 2-4 × 2-3.5 mm, with the petiole 0.5 mm long. Inflorescence a few-flowered (1-3), compact raceme; flowers large for the plant, single, successive; peduncle filiform, 5-7 mm long, from a node on the secondary stem; floral bract infundibular, 1 mm long; pedicel 2 mm long; ovary 1 mm long; dorsal sepal translucent yellow-brown striped with purple, ovate, concave, apex caudate-acuminate, tricarinate, 7.5 × 3.5 mm, the lowest 1 mm united to the lateral sepals; lateral sepals purple, ovate, oblique, short caudate-acuminate, each bicarinate, 7.5 × 3 mm, united to near the middle; petals yellow, obovate-spatulate, obtuse, the apical margin minutely irregular, 3.5 × 2 mm, 1-veined; lip red-brown, suborbicular, 2.5 × 2.5 mm, apex rounded, margin denticulate-lacinate, disc with a pair of fringed crests from the base to above the middle, with an erect, tuberculate, finger-like appendage from the center of the base, the base cordate, shortly hinged to an extension from the column-foot; column broadly winged, 2.5 mm long, the foot bilobed and concave between the lobes, with a central ligulate extension to articulate with the lip.

**ETYMOLOGY:** Name in honor of Robert L. Dressler, renowned botanist of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Station in Balboa, Canal Zone, who first discovered the species.

**TYPE:** PANAMA: PANAMA: epiphytic on mossy limbs, Cerro Jefe, alt. 1000 m, 20 Aug. 1967, R. L. Dressler 3033 (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

**ADDITIONAL MATERIAL EXAMINED:** Same locality, 8 Jan. 1969, R. L. Dressler 3600 (SEL); F. L. Stevenson 1-476-6 (SEL), flowered in cult. 15 Jan. 1976; epiphytic along the Altos de Pacora road, alt. 650 m, 4 March 1976, C. Luer, J. Luer & P. Taylor 731 (SEL).

**DISTRIBUTION:** Panama.

This tiny species grows on mossy branches of wet rain forests in eastern Panama. The habit suggests other minute creeping species with round leaves such as *Pleurothallis nummularia* Rchb. f. and *P. peperomioides* Ames.

The minute orbicular leaves of *P. dressleri* are light green with darker green central and circular veins plainly visible through the thick, semitransparent substance of the blade. The hair-like peduncle lifts the comparatively huge flower well above the mat of nearly microscopic leaves. The dimensions of the flower are about twice those of the leaf. The dorsal sepal is

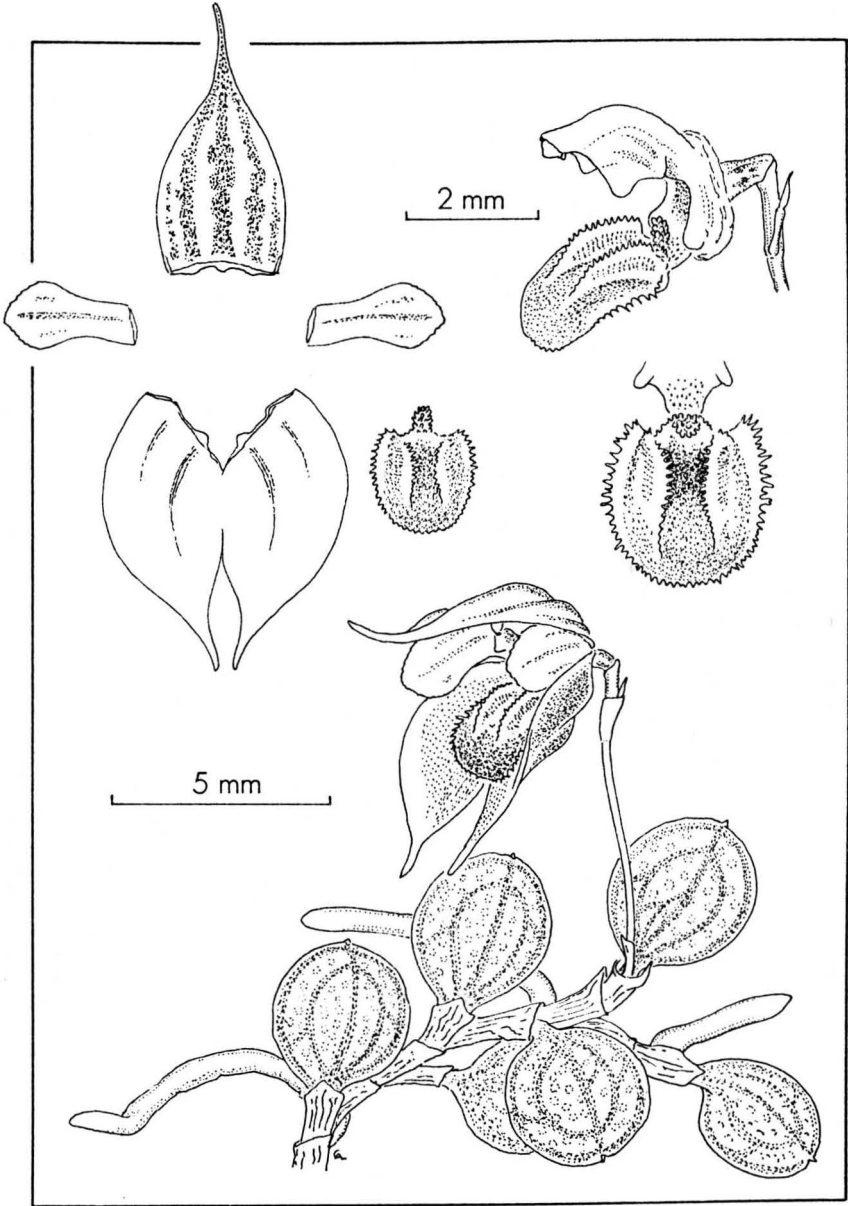


Figure 152. PLEUROTHALLIS DRESSLERI C. A. Luer