

***Pleurothallis jupiter* Luer, sp. nov.**

Herba terrestris et probabiliter epiphytica caespitosa, tereticaulis secundariis gracilibus, folio oblongo acuminato cordato, flore grandissimo pro genere *Pleurothallidi* flavovirenti suffuso rubiginoso, sepalo dorsali ovato acuminato concavo 34 mm longo, synsepalo anguste ovato marginibus revolutis, petalis oblongis piloso-ciliatis, labello subquadrato lateribus deflexis verrucoso-ciliato.

Plant medium sized, terrestrial, caespitose; roots coarse, flexuous. Secondary stem slender, terete, to 35 cm long, with a long tubular sheath near the middle and another 1 or 2 at the base, monophyllous. Leaf oblong, acuminate, tridentate, base cordate, sessile, 10-14 × 2.5-4 cm. Inflorescence fasciculate, a flower, very large for the genus, appearing singly from a narrow spathe up to 15 mm long in the axil of the leaf; floral bract tubular 6-7 mm long; pedicel 20 mm long; ovary sigmoid, 7-8 mm long; dorsal sepal ovate, acuminate, concave below the middle, 34 × 16 mm spread out, 7-veined, the veins prominent dorsally, yellow-green suffused with red-brown; lateral sepals united into a narrowly ovate synsepal, apex acute and bidentate, lateral margins revolute, 30 × 10 mm spread out, 4-veined, bicarinate externally, similar to the dorsal sepal in color; petals oblong, obtuse, subfalcate and curved to meet below the lip, 10 × 3 mm, greenish brown, pilose-ciliate; lip purple-brown, subquadrate, 6 × 5 mm, verrucose and ciliate above the middle, lateral halves abruptly deflexed above the middle, apex convex and apiculate with a conical projection beneath, concave basally at the attachment to the column-foot; column short, 1 × 1.5 mm with a bulbous column-foot.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *Jupiter*, the mythological god of the gods, and the largest planet, in allusion to the immense size of the flower.

TYPE: *ECUADOR*: COTOPAXI: Terrestrial along the roadside above Pilalo between Latacunga and Quevedo, alt. 3200 m near the paramo, 5 March 1975. *C. Luer & R. Kent 291*, HOLOTYPE in SEL; terrestrial, km 95-100 between Quevedo and Latacunga, alt. 2800-3200 m, 14 Feb. 1963. *Dodson & Thien 2258* SEL.

DISTRIBUTION: Ecuador.

This very large-flowered species occurs terrestrially at an altitude of 3200 meters (about 10,000 ft.). Possibly it grows epiphytically in an undetected area nearby. This region, not far from the treeless paramo, is nearly perpetually bathed in a cold mist.

Vegetatively the plant is similar to many others in the section *Macrophyllae-Fasciculatae* Lindl., but the flower is one of the largest in the genus *Pleurothallis*. The reddish yellow dorsal sepal and the synsepal measure 34 and 30 mm in length respectively. Over twenty flowers of *P. jupiter* were examined and all were essentially of the same dimensions. Occasional flowers of *P. ruberrima* Lindl. attain the same size.

The dorsal sepal is deeply concave with an elongated apex turned upward. The synsepal appears very narrow because its edges are rolled under longitudinally; the apex is bifid. The broad pilose petals are curved so that they touch below the lip which is more or less elevated. The sides of the warty lip are sharply deflexed from the middle to either flank of a tubercle under the convex apex. The deflected sides of the lip are similar to those in *P. deflexa*, also described in this issue.

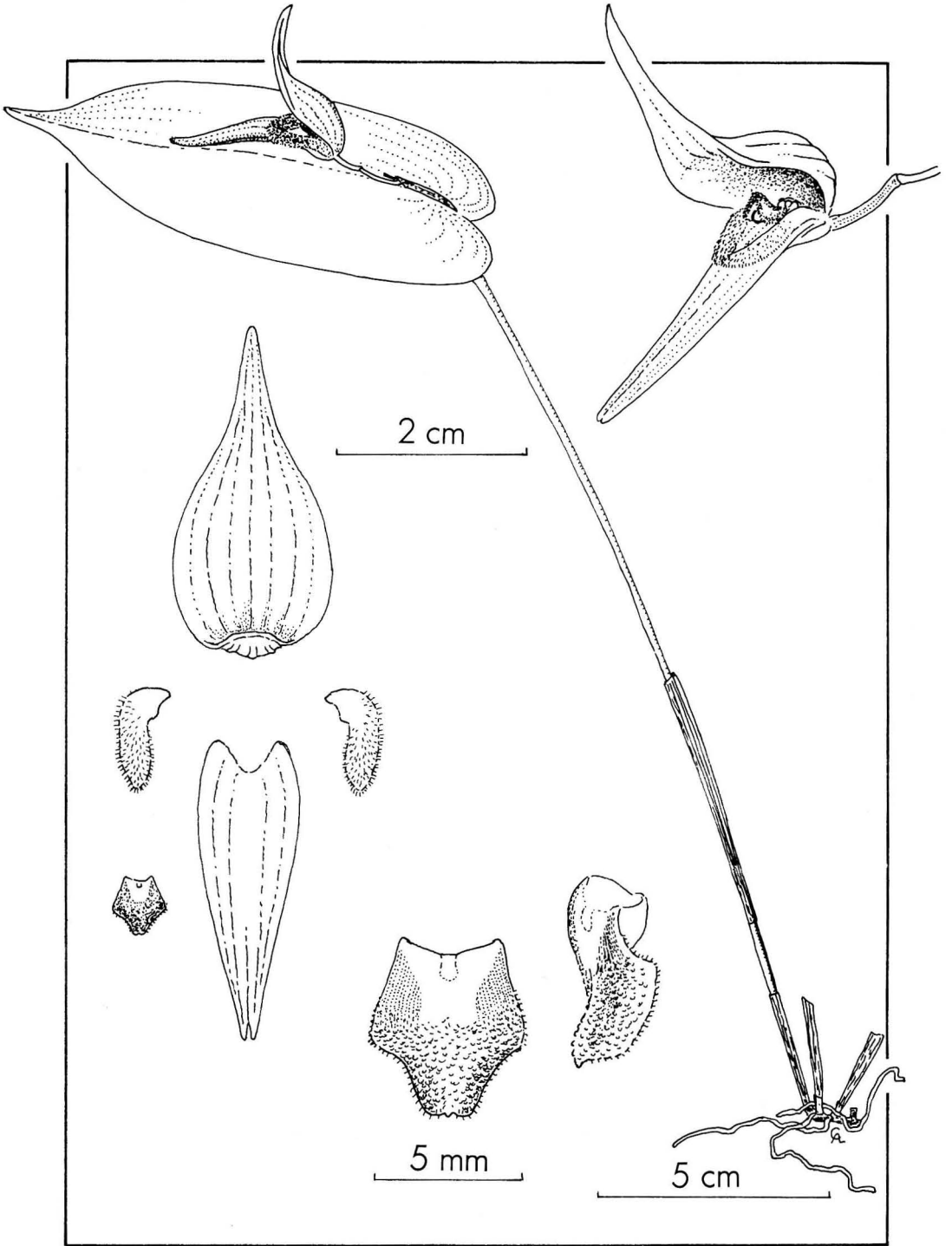


Figure 31. *PLEUROTHALLIS JUPITER* Luer