

Pleurothallis rubroinversa Luer, sp. nov.

Planta parva caespitosa, caulibus secundariis gracilibus teretibus unifoliatis, folio anguste cordato acuto, floribus solitariis successivis fasciculatis atropurpureis non-resupinatis, sepalo mediano et synsepalo late ovatis subacutis extra puberulis, petalis ellipticis acuminatis verruculosi marginibus dentatis, labello latissime ovate apice rotundato verruculoso margine denticulato.

Plant small, epiphytic to terrestrial, caespitose; roots filamentous, flexuous. Secondary stems terete, slender, 7-10 cm long, with a tubular sheath below the middle and 1-2 others at the base, unifoliate. Leaf deep green coriaceous, rigid, narrowly ovate, acute to acuminate, base cordate, sessile, 4-6 × 1.5-2 cm. Inflorescence fasciculate, flowers maroon, nonresupinate, produced singly and successively, from a spathe 10-16 mm long at the base of the leaf; floral bract about 5 mm long; pedicel about 8 mm long; ovary 5 mm long; middle sepal broadly ovate, subacute, 8 × 6 mm, finely pubescent externally, 3-veined; lateral sepals united into a synsepal, similar to the dorsal sepal, 4-veined, uppermost; petals elliptical, acuminate, slightly oblique, 6 × 2.25 mm, margin dentate, surface verruculose; lip uppermost, very broadly ovate, apex rounded, base shortly concave just above the attachment to the column-foot, disc with a circular patch opposite the rostellum flanked by a pair of broad shallowly concave yellow areas, the remainder of the lip purple-red and verrucose, margins denticulate, 3 × 3.5 mm; column short, 1 × 1.5 mm.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *ruber*, *rubris*, "red," and *inversus*, "turned upside down, or non-resupinate," referring to the red inverted flowers.

TYPE: *ECUADOR*: PICHINCHA: terrestrial on road cut near km 55 between Quito and Santo Domingo, alt. 1800 m, 10 March 1975, C. Luer & R. Kent 226 (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Ecuador.

This species was discovered growing terrestrially on a steep road cut, undoubtedly a waif from the surrounding rain forest. The stems held their leaves perpendicular from the bank and each comparatively large inverted maroon flower faced outward with its middle sepal resting in the sulcus of the stiff, deep green leaf.

The habit of presenting flowers with the lip uppermost is not common in the section *Macrophyllae-Fasciculatae* of *Pleurothallis*. Other species in the section with inverted flowers are *P. cardiostola* Rchb.f., *P. chanchamayoensis* Schltr., *P. conicostigma* Luer, and *P. semiscabra* Lindl.

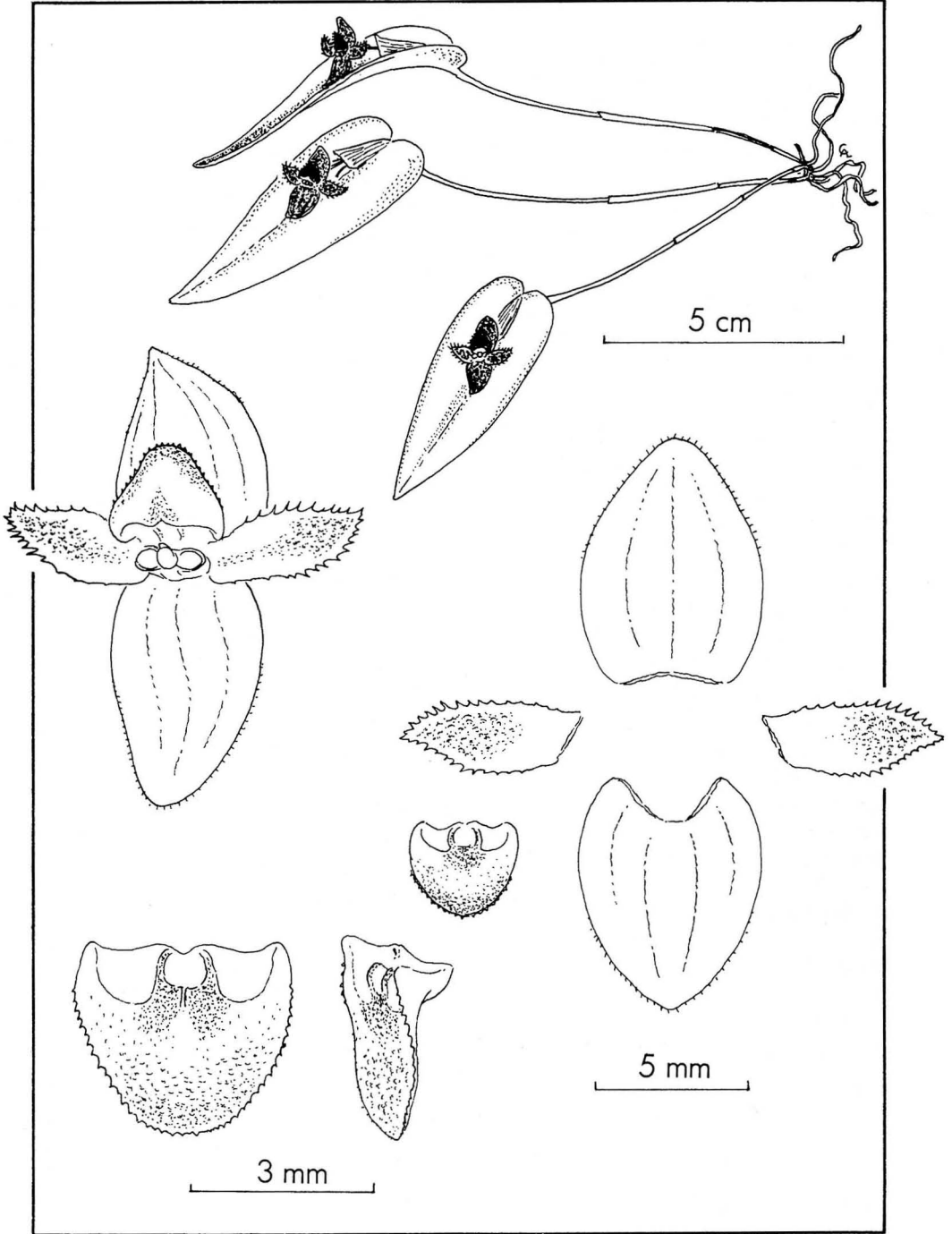


Figure 73. *PLEUROTHALLIS RUBROINVERSA* Luer