

**Pleurothallis acanthodes** Luer, sp. nov.

Planta pusilla caespitosa epiphytica, caulibus secundariis abbreviatis unifoliatis, foliis late ellipticis marginatis obtusis tridenticulatis breviter petiolatis, pedunculo capillari folio longiore, floribus fasciculatis successivis, sepalis translucidis flavovirentibus purpureo variegatis carinis aculeatis, sepalo dorsali late oblongo apice subacuto crasso, sepalis lateralibus supra medium connatis marginibus crassis inflexis, petalis spatulatis subacutis, labello oblongo apice rotundato denticulato base auriculata, lobis lateralibus parvis late triangularibus, disco canaliculato.

Plant very small, caespitose, epiphytic; roots filiform, flexuous. Secondary stems abbreviated, terete, 2-3 mm long, clothed by 1-2 loose, thin, ribbed sheaths, unifoliate. Leaf broadly elliptical to semi-orbicular, marginate, apex obtuse to rounded, tridentate, base broadly cuneate into a short petiole, 6-10 mm long including the petiole, 4-6 mm wide. Inflorescence a fascicle of singly produced flowers from the apex of a filiform, glabrous peduncle, about 2 cm long, from a node on the secondary stem; floral bract about 3 mm long, glabrous; pedicel 3-4 mm long glabrous; ovary red, verruculose, 2 mm long; sepals fleshy, translucent yellow-green with purple markings, glabrous within, verruculose externally, the margins scabrous, carinate, the carinae erose or prickly; dorsal sepal oblong, subacute, 4 × 2 mm, tricarinate; lateral sepals connate to above the middle, oblong, subacute, 3.5 × 2 mm together, bicarinate, the lateral margins lightly pubescent, thickened and grooved above the middle; petals translucent yellow-brown, spatulate, the labellar margin ventricose, 2 × 1 mm; lip fleshy, red to orange, microscopically verruculose, oblong, 2.5 × 1 mm, apex rounded, convex, the margins denticulate, with a pair of small, broadly triangular lateral lobes just below the middle, base membranous with a minute auricle to either side of the attachment to the column-foot, disc channeled with the sides more or less folded inward; column orange, terete, 2 mm long, clinandrium denticulate, with a prominent foot 1 mm long.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Greek *acanthodes*, "prickly," referring to the external appearance of the flowers.

TYPE: ECUADOR: NAPO: epiphytic about 15 km west of Tena, alt. 600 m, 26 July 1975, C. Luer, G. Luer & Wilhelm 475 (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Ecuador.

This minute species was one of many which were collected from the mossy twigs near the tops of felled trees west of Tena. The hair-like peduncle bears a fascicle of old pedicels a short distance above the tuft of little rounded leaves. The flowers are produced singly at intervals. At a distance, the flowers appear reddish, but upon close inspection the sepals are found to be yellow-green marked with purple, and the red color of the lip can be seen shining through. Externally the flower appears prickly, not only due to the scabrous margins of the fleshy sepals and ovary, but also due to the erose edges of the prominent carinae. An unusual characteristic of the lateral sepals is the thickened, grooved sides above the middle, which, when held together in the natural position, create a central trough to accommodate the lip.

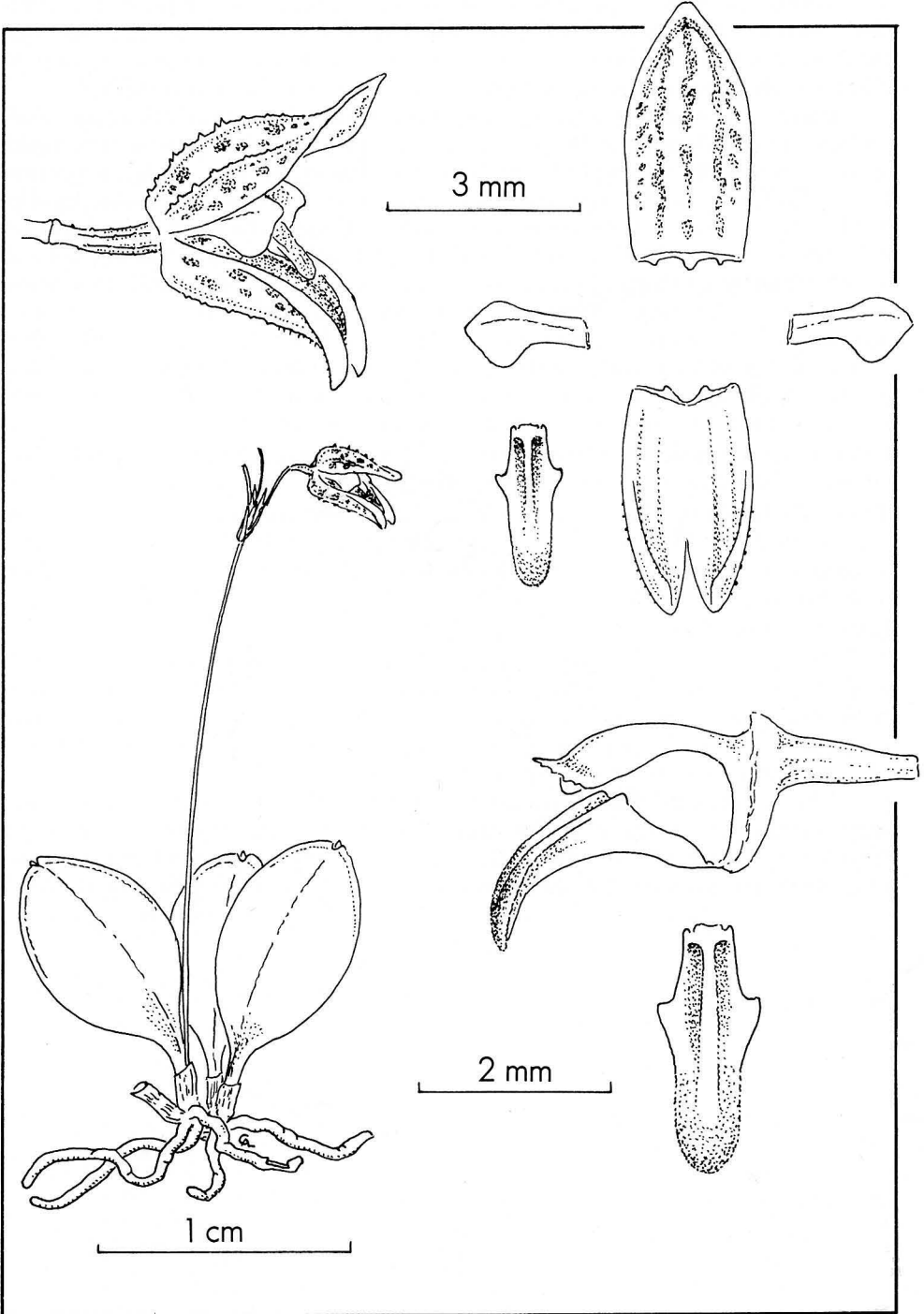


Figure 46. *PLEUROTHALLIS ACANTHODES* Luer