

Pleurothallis cyripedioides Luer, sp. nov.

Herba epiphytica parva caespitosa, *Pleurothallidi amparoanae* affinis, caulibus secundariis abbreviatis, folio late elliptico acuto tridenticulato petiolato, racemo filiformi fractiflexo paucifloro successivo, flori guttulato purpurato subgloboso *Cypripedii* simili, sepalis glabris exter sed villosissimis interne, sepalis lateralibus cohaerentibus saccatis, petalis obovatis vel spatulatis, labello cordato unguiculato acuto carinis marginatis.

Plant epiphytic, small, caespitose; roots very slender, flexuous. Secondary stem abbreviated, 8-12 mm long, with 2-3 short tubular sheaths, unifoliolate. Leaf elliptical, apex acute to acuminate, tridenticulate, base cuneate, petiolate, 3-7 cm long (including the petiole) and 15-18 mm wide. Inflorescence an arching raceme, shorter than to about twice as long as the leaf, flowering singly and successively, rachis filiform, fractiflex, peduncle from the base of the leaf-petiole within a sheath. Flower flecked with purple, subglobose; floral bract about 1.5 mm long; pedicel slender, 4 mm long; ovary 3 mm long; sepals glabrous externally, densely villous internally, the hairs bright purple; dorsal sepal elliptical, acute, 8 × 4 mm, carinate, margins recurved; lateral sepals broadly obovate, oblique, obtuse, the apex cucullate, each 9 × 6 mm, lightly coherent into a deeply saccate pouch; petals obovate and acute, 2.5 × 1 mm to broadly spatulate and obtuse, 2 × 1.5 mm, fleshy 3-nerved; lip cordate, deflexed near the middle, with rounded basal lobes curved up in the natural position, 3 × 2.5 mm, apex acute, base distinctly clawed, disc purple-papillose near the base, with intramarginal keels above the middle; column arcuate, 4 mm long, clinandrium long-denticulate, keeled dorsally, column-foot short.

ETYMOLOGY: Named for the superficial similarity of the flower to those of the genus *Cypripedium*.

ECUADOR: NAPO: Epiphytic near Rio Payamino, 60 km west of Coca, alt. 350 m, flowered in cultivation 5 Nov. 1974. *Fuchs s.n.* HOLOTYPE in SEL, #26-74-126.

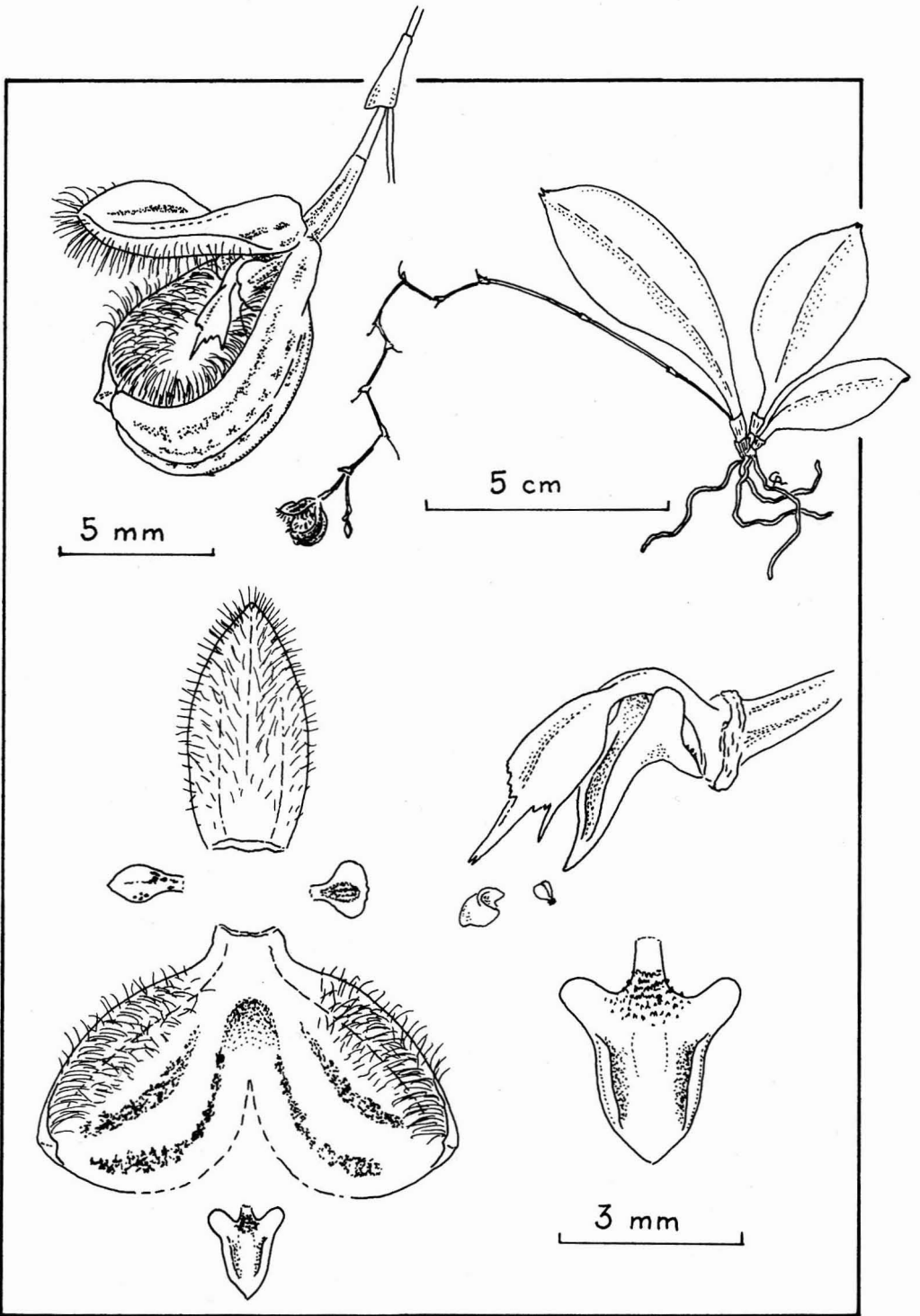
Fred Fuchs, Jr. first collected this fascinating little species in Ecuador in 1973. Except for their purple color, the flowers are very similar to those of *Pleurothallis amparoana* Schlechter from Costa Rica, but the habit of the plant is more readily distinctive. The secondary stems of *P. amparoana* are described as being 3 to 4 cm long with narrowly obovate, obtuse leaves 6 to 9 cm long and 9 to 11 mm wide. The stems of this species are at most 1.5 cm long with elliptical, acute leaves only 3 to 6 cm long and proportionately much wider (15 to 18 mm).

The inflorescence of *P. amparoana* is a densely-flowered distichous raceme. As many as 25 flowers are described as occurring at once. The inflorescence of *P. cyripedioides* is a fractiflex raceme which produces flowers singly and successively over a long period of time. The flowers of *P. amparoana* are creamy white with long white hairs within. The flowers of this species are richly marked with purple with long bright purple hairs within. The cordate lip of *P. amparoana* is described as being 3-veined, the center one thickened and ornate. The lip of this species has no central ornate thickening, but it has instead a pair of intramarginal lamellae.

The flower is reminiscent of a minute *Cypripedium*. The lid-like dorsal sepal rises above an inflated pouch created by the lateral sepals and lined by long, incurved hairs. Instead of a staminode, the bristly column itself

seems to act also as a deterrent to a pollinator's exit before passing by the stigma and anther.

Fuchs describes two colonies of this species within 100 meters of each other. The flowers of one are heavily pigmented with purple; the others appear pink due to lighter pigmentation on a yellow-green background. The petals of the purple flowers are obovate and acute, and the petals of the pink flowers are broadly spatulate with a truncate apex.



PLEUROTHALLIS CYRIPEDIOIDES Luer