

Pleurothallis exilis C. Schweinfurth, sp. nov.

Herba perparva, calcicola, caespitosa. Rhizoma abbreviatum. Caules secundarii perparvi, approximati, apice unifoliati. Folium late spathulatum vel anguste oblanceolatum, apice rotundatum vel acutum, infra sensim angustatum. Inflorescentia abbreviatae, bi-vel quadriflorae, flos membranaceus. Sepalum dorsale valde concavum, oblongo-lanceolatum, acutum. Sepala lateralia in laminam concavam elliptico-ovatum connata. Petala breviora, late obovata, obliqua, abruptius acuta. Labellum quam petala paulo brevius, in positu naturali conduplicatum, expansum anguste ovatum, apice rotundatum, marginibus anterioribus denticulatis. Columna apice cum ala lacerata.

Plant very small, caespitose. Roots fibrous, glabrous, relatively stout. Rhizome abbreviated. Secondary stems numerous, approximate, filiform, 1-jointed, mostly concealed by 2 imbricating tubular evanescent sheaths, 1-leaved at the apex. Leaf erect or spreading, broadly spatulate to narrowly oblanceolate, acute to rounded with a minutely tridentate apex, gradually narrowed to an indistinct petiole, up to 2.5 cm. long and 7 mm. wide, marginate. Inflorescence abbreviated, with two to four flowers, the segments (in our specimen) on the summit of an ellipsoid ovary. Dorsal sepal strongly concave, oblong-lanceolate, acute, 3-nerved, membranaceous, about 3.7 mm. long and 2 mm. wide when expanded. Lateral sepals connate into a concave elliptic-ovate lamina which is 4-nerved, about as long as the dorsal sepal and 3.4 mm. wide when expanded. Petals broadly obovate, oblique, rather abruptly acute, 1-nerved, about 2.6 mm. long and 1.6 mm. wide. Lip conduplicate and gently recurved in natural position, simple, narrowly ovate when expanded, rounded at the apex with the anterior margins denticulate, about 2.5 mm. long, finely papillose especially on the inner surface. Column shorter than the lip, slightly arcuate, terminated by a lacerate wing (Fig. 33).

Type in herb. Chi. Nat. Hist. Mus., no. 1206448, isotype in Herb. Ames no. 64846, base of limestone bluffs, Cerro de la Cueva de Doña Anita, south of and bordering valley of Caripe, state of Monagas, alt. 1100-1200 m., April 7, 1945, *Julian A. Steyermark 61902*, "common in crevices of lime bluffs, leaves deep green above and gray green beneath".

This little species recalls *Pleurothallis barbulata* Lindl., but has very different petals and lip.

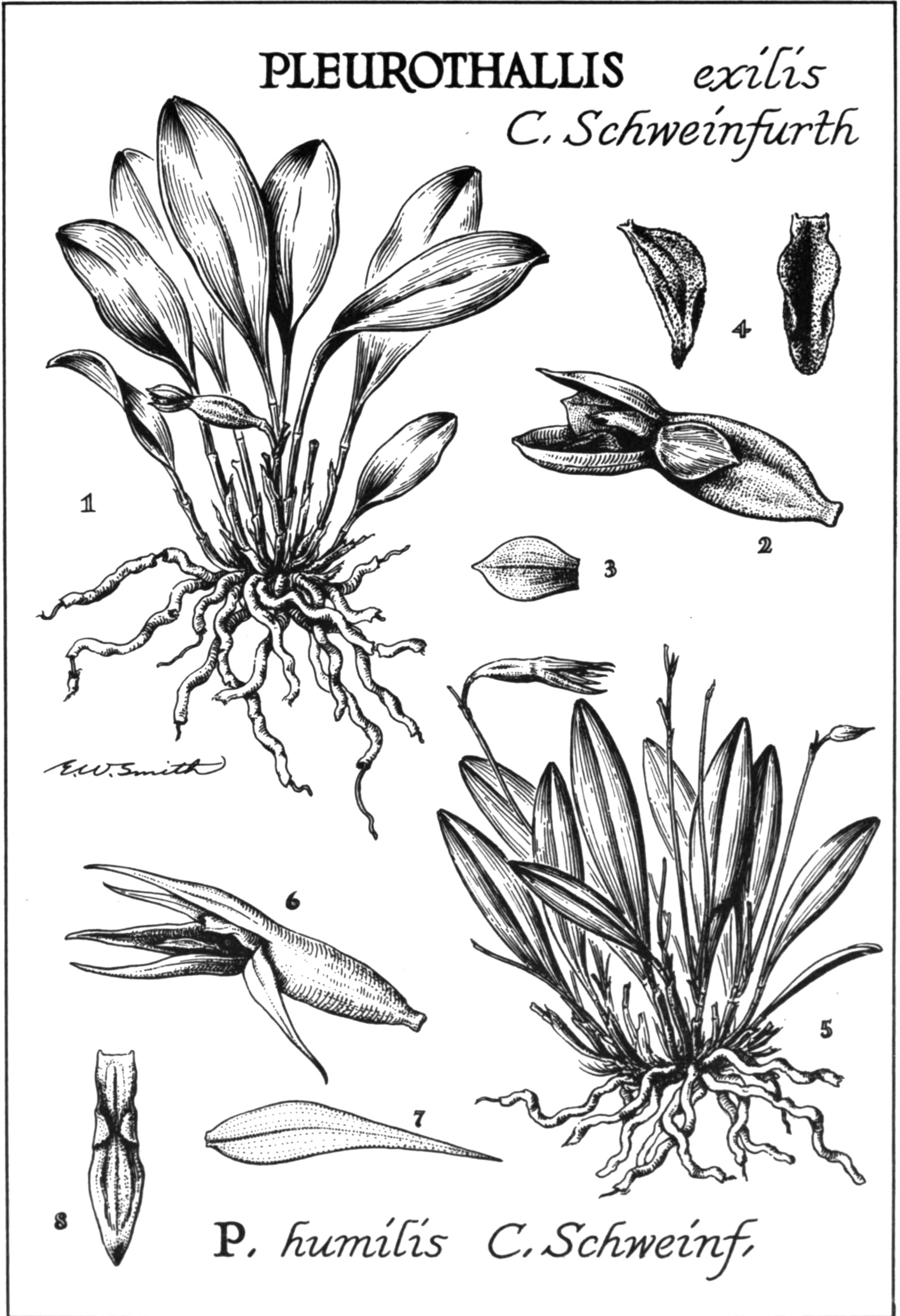


FIGURE 33

Pleurothallis exilis. 1, Plant (X 2); 2, Flower from the side, partially expanded (X 5); 3, Petal (X 5); 4, Lip, from the side and from above (X 8).

Pleurothallis humilis. 5, Plant (X 2); 6, Flower from the side, partially expanded (X 5); 7, Petal (X 8); 8, Lip from above (X 12).