

Section **STELIS****128. *Stelis acaroi* Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.**

Ety.: Named for Ivan Acaro of Gualaceo, Ecuador, co-collector of this species and many others.

Planta grandis, racemo disticho sublaxe multifloro, spatha grandi, sepalis ovatis obtusis supra medium papillois marginibus recurvis, petalis semiorbicularibus, labello subdiscoideo leviter concavo.

**Plant** large, epiphytic, presumably caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls erect, stout, 7-15 cm long, enclosed by a loose, tubular sheath from below the middle, and another 2-3 sheaths at the base. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, elliptical, sessile, subacute, 8-11 cm long, 2.5 cm wide, narrowly cuneate below to the base. **Inflorescence** an erect, sublax, secund, many-flowered raceme, 15 cm or more long including the peduncle ca. 8 cm long, with a spathe 2 cm long, at the base of the leaf; floral bracts short, obtuse, 1.5 mm long; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 3 mm long; **sepals** expanded, light green, suffused with purple leaving the apices green, papillose above the middle, ovate with recurved sides, obtuse, the dorsal sepal 6 mm long, 3.25 mm wide unexpanded, 6-veined, connate basally to the laterals, the lateral sepals 6 mm long, 3 mm wide, 4-veined; **petals** dark purple, transversely semicircular, thin, thickened along the rounded margin, shallowly concave, 1 mm long, 1.75 mm wide, 3-veined; **lip** dark purple, subdiscoid, broadly rounded at the apex, 0.5 mm long, 1.3 mm wide, 1.3 mm deep, the bar minutely notched, shallowly concave below on the anterior surface, the dorsum shallowly concave with an obscure callous, the base truncate, hinged to the base of the column; **column** stout, 0.5 mm long, 1.3 mm wide, the foot obsolescent, the anther and the bilobed stigma apical.

**Zamora-Chinchi**: Zamora, alt. 1200 m, cultivated by Ecuagenera, Gualaceo, 2 Feb. 2002, A. Hirtz 8029 (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 20211; between Mendez and Morona, alt. <1000 m, 19 Jan. 1989, A. Hirtz, A. Andreetta & S. Ortega 4127 (MO).

Vegetatively, this large species resembles many species of *Pleurothallis*. No doubt a part of their DNA analyses will be similar. It is known from the orchid-rich region surrounding Zamora in southeastern Ecuador. It is characterized by stout ramicauls, a sessile, elliptical leaf with a two-centimeter-long spathe at its base. The sublax, secund raceme surpasses the leaf. The pedicels and floral bracts are remarkably short. The sepals are papillose above the middle with recurved margins; the petals are smooth and semiorbicular; and the lip is shallowly suborbicular.

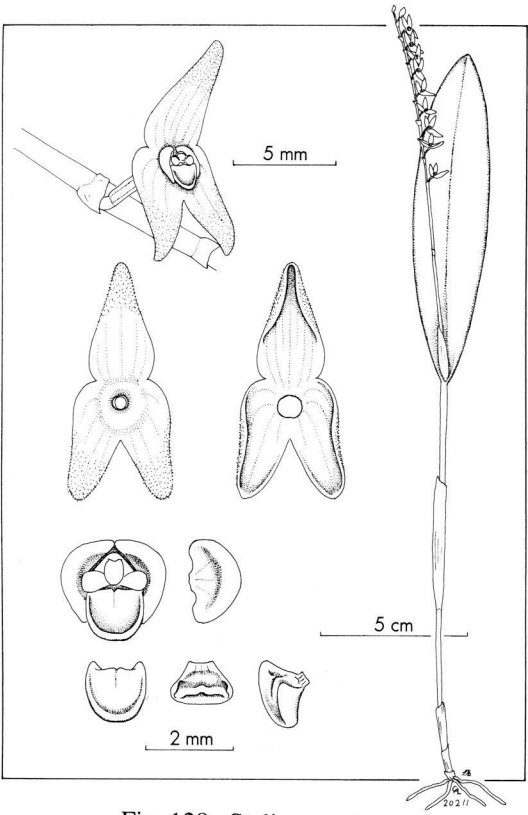


Fig. 128. *Stelis acaroi*