

139. *Stelis capitata* Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Latin *capitatus*, "capitate," referring to the pubescence.

Planta perparva caespitosa, racemo subflexuoso multifloro foliis anguste ellipticis multilongiore, sepalis ovatis obtusis breviter pubescentibus trichomatibus capitatis, petalis tenuibus uninervis subquadratis, et labello subquadrato distinguitur.

Plant very small, epiphytic, densely caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls erect, slender, 5-8 mm long, enclosed by 2 tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, narrowly elliptical, subacute to acute, petiolate, 15-23 mm long including the petiole ca. 5 mm long, 3-4 mm wide, cuneate below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** an erect, lax, subflexuous, simultaneously several- to many-flowered raceme to 5 cm long including the peduncle 1.5-2 cm long, from an annulus below the apex of the ramicaul; floral bracts oblique, acute, 1 mm long; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 1 mm long; flowers minute, yellow-green; **sepals** glabrous externally, densely and shortly pubescent with the hairs capitate, ovate, obtuse, incompletely 3-veined, connate basally, the dorsal sepal 1.3 mm long, 1.3 mm wide, the lateral sepals 1.2 mm long, 1.2 mm wide; **petals** thin, subquadrate, shallowly concave, broadly truncate at the slightly thickened apex, 1 mm long, 1 mm wide, 1-veined; **lip** thick, subquadrate, 0.8 mm long, 1 mm wide, 0.8 mm deep, very shallowly concave anteriorly within the broadly obtuse, apical margin, the bar with a narrow glenion, extending into a long-pubescent callus on the dorsum, the base truncate, hinged to the obsolescent column-foot; **column** stout, 1 mm long, 1 mm wide, with the anther and bilobed stigma apical.

Morona-Santiago: Valle de Calagras, alt. 1500 m, 17 May 1988, C. Luer, A. Hirtz, A. Andreetta & W. Teague 13410 (Holotype: MO).

This tiny species, apparently endemic in southern Ecuador, is characterized by a densely caespitose habit, and narrowly elliptical leaves surpassed by a simultaneously many-flowered raceme of minute, yellow-green flowers. The sepals are broadly ovate with a dense pubescence of short, capitate hairs. The petals are thin and single-veined, and the lip is subquadrate with a tuft of long hairs on the dorsum.

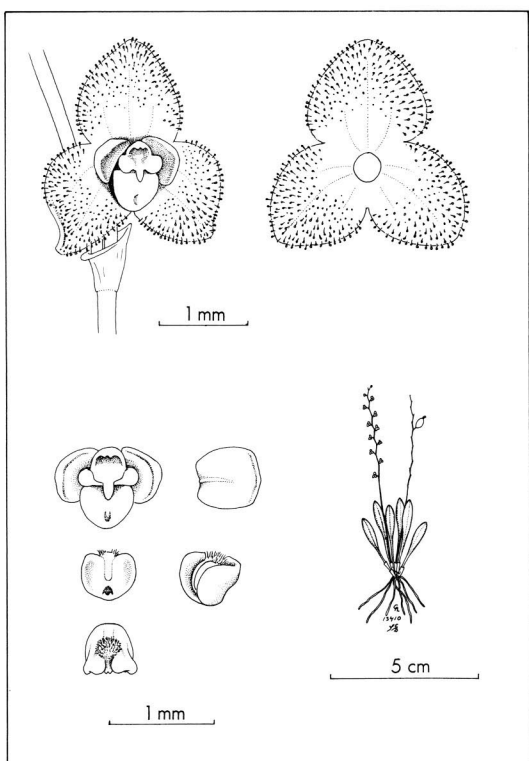


Fig. 139. *Stelis capitata*