

156. **Stelis gemmulosa** Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Latin *gemmulosus*, "full of little gems," referring to the raceme.

Planta perparva caespitosa, racemo elongato flexuoso multifloro foliis ellipticis multilongiore, sepalis ovatis obtusis longiciliatis, petalis tenuibus transveris uninervis latiore quam longiore, et labello oblique subquadrato callo crasso superne pubescenti distinguitur.

Plant very small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls erect, slender, 4-5 mm long, enclosed by 2 tubular sheaths. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, elliptical, subacute to acute, indistinctly petiolate, 10-15 mm long, 3-4.5 mm wide, cuneate below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** an erect, flexuous, successively many-flowered raceme to 6 cm long including the peduncle 1-1.5 cm long, with a few flowers open simultaneously; floral bracts oblique, acute, 1 mm long; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 0.5 mm long; flowers minute, red-purple; **sepals** glabrous externally, long-ciliate-pubescent on the margins, ovate, obtuse, 3-veined, connate basally, the dorsal sepal 1.6 mm long, 1.4 mm wide, the lateral sepals 1.2 mm long, 1.3 mm wide; **petals** purple, thin, suborbicular, shallowly concave, broadly rounded at the slightly thickened apex, 0.5 mm long, 0.6 mm wide, 1-veined; **lip** purple, obliquely subquadrate, 0.4 mm long, 0.5 mm wide, 0.4 mm deep, convex anteriorly with the apex broadly obtuse, the bar protruding with a shallow glenion, the dorsum with a round, pubescent callus, the base truncate, hinged to the obsolescent column-foot; **column** stout, 0.5 mm long, 0.75 mm wide, with the anther and bilobed stigma apical.

Esmeraldas: forest west of Lita, alt. 300 m, 12 Jan. 1992, C. Luer, J. Luer, A. Hirtz, A. & P. Jesup 15577 (Holotype: MO).

This tiny species, apparently endemic in lowland, western Ecuador, is characterized by a caespitose habit, and an elongating, successively many-flowered raceme of tiny, purple flowers. The sepals are broadly ovate and long ciliate-pubescent on the margins; the petals are thin and single-veined; and the lip is subquadrate with a protuberant, convex callus on the anterior surface.

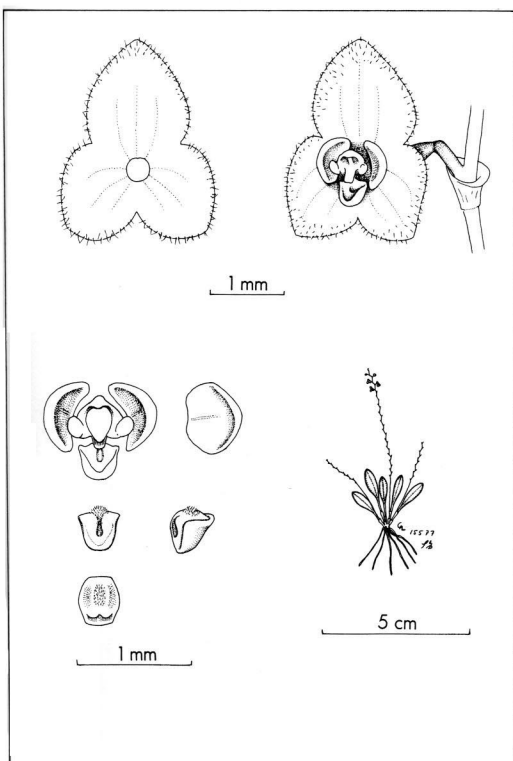


Fig. 156. *Stelis gemmulosa*