

119. **Stelis propagans** Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Latin *propagans*, "propagating," referring to the prolific ramicauls.

Inter species sect. *Humboldtiae*, planta grandis prolificans, racemo dense disticho folio longiore, synsepalis concavo cum mento profundo, et labello subquadrato humili apice triangulari acuto differt.

Plant medium in size to large, epiphytic, scandent; roots slender. Ramicauls stout, erect, prolific, 6-14 cm long, enclosed by a tubular sheath near the middle that is shed early, and another at the base. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, elliptical, petiolate, acute, 6-7 cm long including the petiole 1.5-2 cm long, the blade 1.5-2 cm wide, cuneate below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** an erect, distichous, densely many-flowered raceme with most flowers open simultaneously, 12-16 cm long including the peduncle 2-3 cm long, subtended by a spathe ca. 1 cm long, from an annulus below the apex of the ramicaul; floral bracts oblique, acute, 2 mm long; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 1 mm long; flowers bilabiate; **sepals** glabrous, the dorsal sepal purple, erect, elliptical, obtuse, 4 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, incompletely 5-veined, connate to the synsepal for 0.5 mm, the lateral sepals yellow-green, connate into a broadly ovate, deeply concave synsepal with a mentum below the lip, 2.5 mm long, 3 mm wide unexpanded, 6-veined; **petals** purple, transversely semilunate, 0.6 mm long, 1 mm wide, concave below the broadly rounded apex with the margin thickened and flattened, concave toward the base; **lip** purple, thick, subquadrate, 0.9 mm long, 0.8 mm wide, 0.4 mm deep, the apex triangular, acute, concave, the bar with a glenion, the dorsum with a low, lobed callus, the base truncate, hinged to the base of the column; **column** stout, 0.9 mm long, 0.8 mm wide, the foot obsolescent, the anther and the bilobed stigma apical.

Bolívar: west of Guaranda toward Balzapamba, alt. 2000 m, 26 Mar. 1984, C. Luer, A. Hirtz, S. Dalström, T. Höijer & J. Kuijt 9732 (Holotype: MO).

Vegetatively, this large, prolific species from the western slope of central Ecuador is similar to *S. bicornis*. The crowded, distichous, many-flowered racemes exceed the leaves. The dorsal sepal is longer than the synsepal, which is concave with a deep mentum. The petals are semilunate with a thickened margin. The body of the lip is shallowly subquadrate with a short, acute, triangular apex.

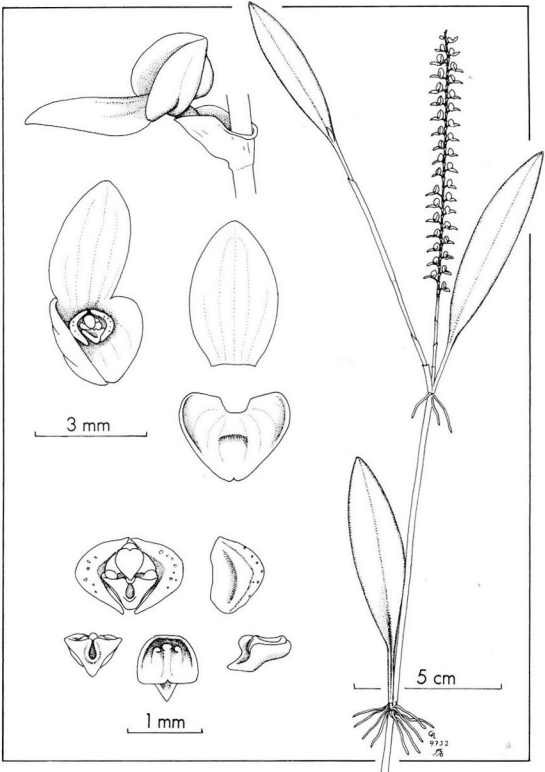


Fig. 119. *Stelis propagans*