

121. **Stelis surrogatilabia** Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Latin *surrogatilabia*, "with surrogate lip," referring to the adaptation of the synsepal.

Inter species sect. *Humboldtiae*, planta mediocris, racemo laxefloro folio elliptico petiolato longiore, sepalo dorsali anguste ovato, synsepalo cum area ad basim infra labellum convexa papillosa, petalis transversis planis, et labello minutissimo distinguitur.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls erect, slender, 3-4 cm long, with a tubular sheath from below the middle and another 2 sheaths at the base. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, elliptical, subacute, long-petiolate, 6-8 cm long including the petiole 1.5-2 cm long, the blade 1.3-1.5 cm wide, cuneate below into the petiole. **Inflorescence** an erect, loose, distichous, many-flowered raceme with several flowers open simultaneously, to 18 cm long including the peduncle 6-7 cm long, with a thin spathe ca. 5 mm long, at an annulus below the apex of the ramicaul; floral bracts infundibular, oblique, acute, 4-5 mm long; pedicels 3 mm long; ovary 3 mm long; **sepals** light yellow-green, the dorsal sepal narrowly ovate, subacute, 11 mm long, 4 mm wide, 5-veined, connate to the synsepal for 1 mm, the lateral sepals connate into a shallowly concave, ovate, obtuse, shortly bifid synsepal, 9 mm long, 7 mm wide, 8-veined, with a triangular, convex, papillose area marked with red-purple, toward the base below the lip; **petals** light yellow-green, transversely oblong, shallowly concave, broadly rounded on the margin, minimally thickened, 0.75 mm long, 1.25 mm wide, 3-veined; **lip** light yellow-green, shallowly oblong, the apex broadly rounded, 0.6 mm long, 0.6 mm wide, 0.3 mm deep, the bar protuberant, bilobed with a proportionately large glenion, the dorsum slightly convex, the base truncate, hinged to the base of the column; **column** stout, 1 mm long, 1.25 mm wide, the foot obsolescent, the anther and the bilobed stigma apical.

Zamora-Chinchipe: Zamora, alt. 1200 m, cultivated by Ecuagenera, Gualaceo, 2 Feb. 2002, A. Hirtz 8032 (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 20212.

This species of section *Humboldtia* is known from the orchid-rich region surrounding Zamora in southeastern Ecuador. It is medium in size and characterized

by a loose, distichous flowered raceme that surpasses a long-petiolate leaf. The flowers are gaping and light green, but a convex, triangular patch of red-purple papillae within the shallowly concave synsepal is conspicuous beneath the proportionately small, central apparatus. The lip is so small that it is not easily seen hidden beneath the rostellum unless it is searched for. It appears that this portion of the synsepal has taken over the role of enticing a pollinator.

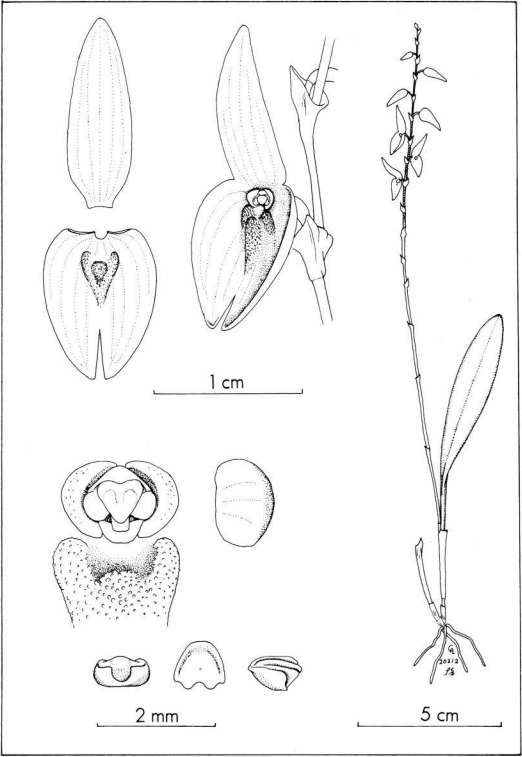


Fig. 121. *Stelis surrogatilabia*