

TROPICAL AMERICAN ORCHIDS

***Stelis carnosiflora* A. & S. sp. nov.** Herba omnino crassa. Caulis subteres, unifolius. Folium carnosum, ellipticum, apice basique rotundatum, superne obliquissime bilobatum. Inflorescentia singula, folium multo superans. Racemus multiflorus, superne densiflorus. Flores carnosi. Sepala reniformi-ovata, quinque- vel sex-nervia, sub medio connata. Petala minuta, cuneato-semiorbicularia, superne multo incrassata. Labellum et columna generis.

Plant remarkable for its dense fleshy flowers and large floral bracts. Stem stout, monophyllous, subterete, over 14.5 cm. long, about 4 mm. in diameter (lower portion missing in our specimen), with several distant close tubular sheaths. Leaf fleshy, elliptic, petioled, erect; petiole about 1.5 cm. long, stout, channelled, clasping the peduncle; lamina about 9.2 cm. long, 4.1 cm. wide, rounded both at base and apex, very unequally bilobed above. Inflorescence solitary, more than twice as long as the leaf, 21.5 cm. long. Peduncle below the inflorescence short, stout, with a basal fleshy conduplicate sheath which is about 1.75 cm. long, and above this one smaller infundibuliform sheath. Rachis about 17 cm. long, the greater portion very densely many-flowered (very loosely flowered near the base). Floral bracts conspicuous, surpassing the pedicellate ovary, distichous, ovate-triangular, amplexicaul, the lowest one 9 mm. long. Flowers secund. Sepals very fleshy, connate below the middle, entirely glabrous, nearly regular, 5-6-nerved, thicker near the anterior margins. Lateral sepals reniform-ovate, about 3.5 mm. long, 4-4.2 mm. wide, subobtuse, 6-nerved. Dorsal sepal

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similar, slightly larger, 5-nerved. Petals minute, cuneate-semiorbicular, concave, 1.5 mm. long, 2 mm. wide, much thickened above, 5-nerved. Labellum typical of the genus, 1.1–1.5 mm. long, about 1.8 mm. wide, semiorbicular in outline, very fleshy, appearing hemispherical in natural position, with a flattened excavated anterior face, sides erect, a fleshy subbilobed thickening across the middle. Column minute, abruptly dilated and 3-lobed above.

The nearest allies of *Stelis carnosiflora* appear to be *S. curvata* Schltr., *S. Bourgeavii* Schltr., and *S. Purpusii* Schltr.; from all three it differs in its fleshy flowers, very broad sepals, large floral bracts, and 5-nerved petals.

COSTA RICA, Navarrito, C. H. Lankester s. n., December 1923. "Sepals green at margin, rest dull purplish." (TYPE in Herb. Ames No. 28775.)