

*Stelis gratiosa* Luer, sp. nov.

Species haec *S. ciliaris* Lindl. affinis sed racemo pendulo flaccido dense multifloro floribus majoribus differt.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems unifoliate, terete, stout, 1.5-3 cm long, invested by 2-3 imbricating, tubular sheaths. Leaf erect, thickly coriaceous, shortly and indistinctly petiolate, narrowly obovate, 10-15 cm long including the 2-3 cm long petiole, 2-4 cm wide, the apex subacute, tridenticulate, narrowly cuneate below into the channeled petiole. Inflorescence a drooping, flaccid, many-flowered, cylindrical raceme, 8-15 cm long including the 2 cm long peduncle which rises more or less erectly before arching; floral bract infundibular, red-brown, 2 mm long; pedicel 2 mm long; ovary 2.5 mm long; sepals similar, red-purple, broadly ovate with rounded apices, 5 mm long, 4.5 mm wide, connate basally, the margins densely long-ciliate, the hairs white; petals cream, faintly mottled with rose, flabellate with the apex rounded, 1.25 mm long, 1.5 mm wide; lip colored similarly, suborbicular, nearly flat, 2 mm long, 1.75 mm wide, the base concave with a small glenion; column stout, 1 mm long and wide, broadly tridentate at the apex.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *gratiosus*, "favorite, lovely," referring to pleasing qualities of the plant.

TYPE: PANAMA: PANAMA: epiphytic in cloud forest on Cerro Jefe, alt. 1000 m, 2 March 1976, cult. at SEL, greenhouse acc. no. 43-76-155, flowered in cult. 8 May 1977, C. Luer, J. Luer & P. Taylor 1619 (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

DISTRIBUTION. Eastern Panama.

This charming species is related to the smaller-flowered, widely distributed *S. ciliaris*, but *S. gratiosa* is readily recognized by the dense, flaccid, cylindrical raceme of red-purple flowers with long, white hairs. The drooping habit of the raceme is reminiscent of that of the small-flowered *S. pendulispica* Ames from Costa Rica.