

Stelis megapetala Luer, sp. nov. TYPE: Panama.
Coclé: El Valle, alt. ca. 1000 m, Sept. 1976,
C. Luer & H. Butcher 1264 (Holotype:
SEL). FIGURE 18.

Species haec *S. parvulae* Lindl. similis, sed foliis late ellipticis latioribus, bracteis floralis parvis cucullatis, sepalis subaequalis obtusis minute papillois, petalis crassis lunatis proportionate magnis distinguitur.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. ***Ramicauls*** erect, slender, 1–1.5 cm long, enclosed by a loose, tubular sheath and another at

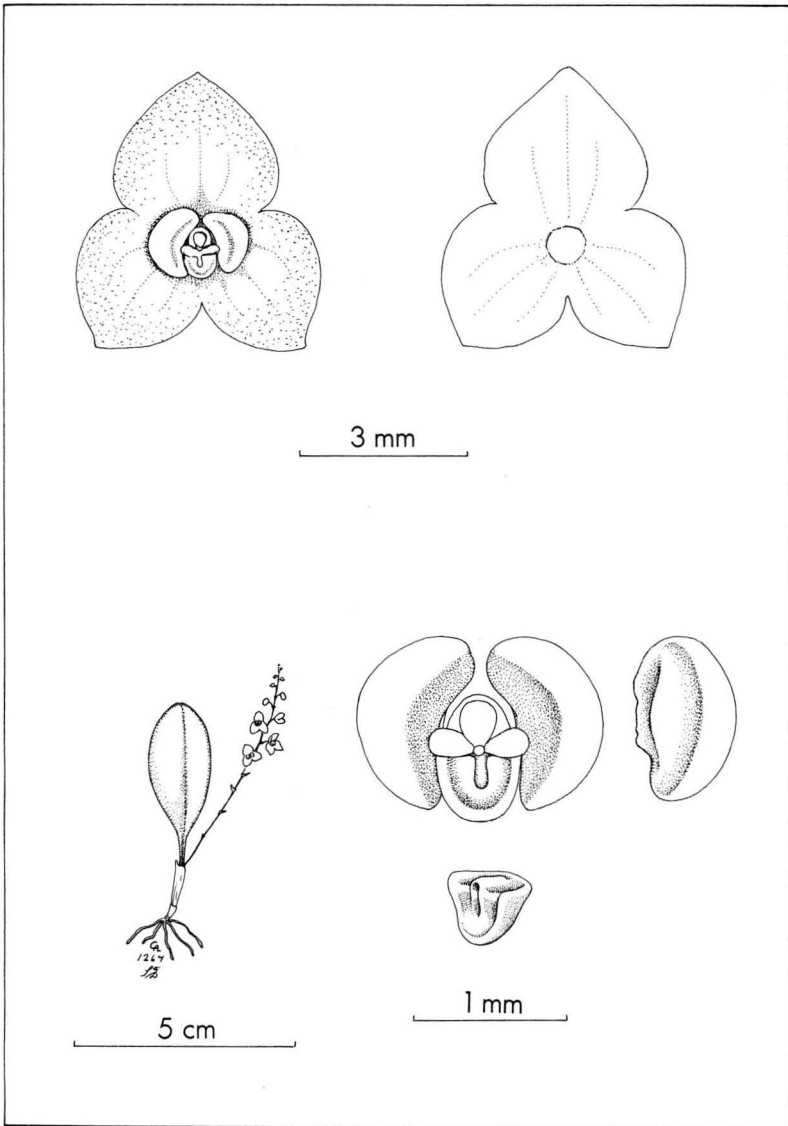


FIGURE 18. *Stelis megapetala* Luer.

the base. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, broadly elliptical, obtuse, petiolate, 2–4 cm long, 1–1.7 cm wide, cuneate below into the petiole ca. 1 cm long. **Inflorescence** an erect, distichous, subsensely several-flowered raceme, 4–6 cm long including the peduncle 2–4 cm long, from an annulus below the apex of the ramicaul; floral bracts inflated, acute, 2 mm long; pedicels 1 mm long; ovary 0.5 mm long. **Sepals** dark grayish purple, spread, cellular-papillose within, connate basally, subequal in size, broadly ovate, obtuse, the dorsal sepal 2.5 mm long, 3 mm wide, 3-veined, the lateral sepals oblique, 2 mm long,

2.5 mm wide. **Petals** transversely elliptical, broadly rounded and broadly thickened along the apical margins, 1 mm long, 1.5 mm wide. **Lip** oblong, subquadrate, triangular in side-view, 0.6 mm long, 0.5 mm wide, 0.5 mm deep, the apical margin rounded and thickened, the central callus with a glenion on the shallowly concave anterior surface, the dorsum with a low, oblong callus, the base truncate, hinged to the base of the column. **Column** 0.5 mm long, 0.6 mm wide, with the foot obsolescent, the anther and the bilobed stigma apical.

Etymology. From the Greek *megapetalon*,

“with large petals.” referring to the size of the petals.

This species, known only from central Panama, is similar to *Stelis parvula*, but it differs in significant details. *Stelis megapetala* is characterized by a small habit with short ramicauls; broadly elliptical leaves more than 1 cm wide; cucullate floral bracts; broadly obtuse sepals densely cellular-papillose within; proportionately large, thick, transversely elliptical petals; and a proportionately small, subquadrate lip.