

***Pleurothallis mystax* C. A. Luer, sp. nov.**

Planta parva epiphytica caespitosa, caulibus secundariis costatis vaginatis unifoliatis, foliis late ellipticis vel suborbiculatis, racemo folio longiore bifloro floribus successivis grandibus ringentibus late vittatis purpureo et albo, sepalo dorsali ovato acuminato carinato, sepalis lateralibus linearibus acutis basi connatis carinatis prope medium divergentibus, petalis ovatis unguiculatis, labello rubiginoso spatulato supra medium ovoideo infra medium unguiculato marginibus involutis.

Plant small, epiphytic, caespitose; roots filiform, flexuous. Secondary stems slender, ribbed, 1-2.5 cm long, with a loose tubular sheath extending above the middle and 1-2 others basally, unifoliolate. Leaf broadly elliptical, suborbicular, obtuse, tridenticulate, base rounded, sessile, 16-21 × 12-15 mm. Inflorescence racemose, single, few (2)-flowered, sessive, the flowers large, gaping, broadly striped with purple and white; peduncle capillary, about 2.5 cm long, from a 2 mm spathe at the base of the leaf; floral bract 2-3 mm long; pedicel 5-8 mm long; ovary 2-3 mm long; dorsal sepal ovate, acuminate to acute, 14 × 4 mm, 3-veined, unicarinate, the carina 0.5 mm high; lateral sepals linear, acute, united for the basal 3-4 mm, then abruptly angled and diverging, 14 × 3.5 mm together, each unicarinate, the carinae 1 mm high; petals brown, ovate, with a short claw, subacute, 4 × 2 mm, 3-veined; lip red-brown, spatulate, 8 × 2.75 mm, above the middle ovoid, convex, rounded, below the middle unguiculate, the claw 4 mm long, tubular, the margins involute, with a small transverse callus at the base; column stout, 1.5 mm long, anther cap nearly as large, red and yellow, the foot obsolescent.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Greek *mystax*, "moustache," in allusion to the fancied resemblance of the diverging sepals to a moustache.

TYPE: PANAMA: VERAGUAS: epiphytic in cloud forest near the continental divide above Santa Fe, alt. 650-750 m, 5 Sept. 1976, C. Luer & R. L. Dressler 1261 (HOLOTYPE: SEL); Dec. 1974, R. L. Dressler 4835, cultivated by F. L. Stevenson 9575-3 (SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Panama.

Pleurothallis mystax is apparently endemic in the mountains of central Panama where it is quite frequent. It is without any near allies.

The little secondary stems are longitudinally ribbed, but more than half the length is covered by a loose sheath which originates near the base. The little leaf is nearly circular, and from a minute spathe at the base the fine peduncle emerges to bear an oversized flower. The flowers are dark purple with a broad white stripe down the center of the keeled sepals. The petals overlap above the long, channeled claw of the lip, and the rounded apical half of the lip protrudes from the center of the flower. At this point the underlying lateral sepals suddenly diverge in opposite directions like a handle-bar moustache beneath a bulbous nose.

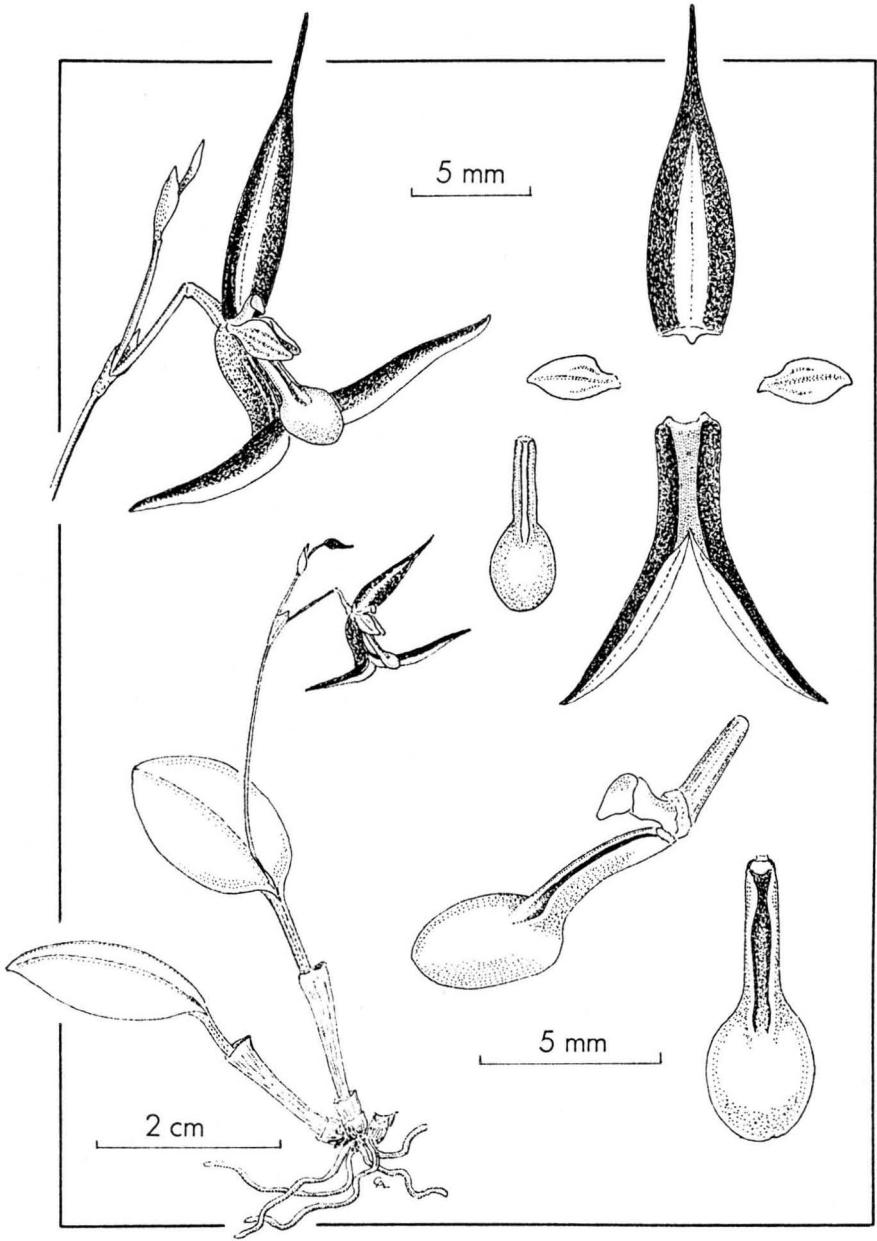


Figure 176. PLEUROTHALLIS MYSTAX C. A. Luer