

*Stelis sarcophylla* Luer, sp. nov.

Planta mediocris caespitosa, foliis strictis carnosissimis anguste linearibus apice obtusis retusis caulibus secundariis longioribus, racemo multifloro disticho folios leviter superanti, floribus purpureis perparvis, sepalis similibus patentibus late ovatis obtusis, petalis transverse rhomboideis, labello oblongo apice rotundato basi crasso calloso, columna brevi lobis stigmatis confluentibus.

Plant medium-sized, epiphytic, caespitose; roots coarse, flexuous. Secondary stems erect, unifoliate, 5-10 cm long, mostly enclosed by a tubular sheath from below the middle and 1-2 other sheaths near the base. Leaf erect, thickly coriaceous, rigid, narrowly linear-oblong, wedge-shaped in cross-section, 11-16 cm long, 1.2-1.4 cm wide, the obtuse apex retuse, the base cuneate to the subsessile base. Inflorescence an erect, distichous, many-flowered raceme, crowded above, distantly-flowered below, 12-18 cm long including the 5-7 cm long peduncle, from a spathe 5-9 mm long near the apex of the secondary stem, the flowers purple, small, short-pedicellate; floral bracts oblique, 0.5-1.5 mm long; pedicel 1 mm long, ovary 0.75 mm long; sepals similar, widespread, glabrous, broadly ovate, obtuse, 1.5 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, connate basally; petals transversely rhomboid, 0.75 mm long, 1.1 mm wide, the apical margin thickened, broadly obtuse; lip oblong-ligulate, 0.75 mm long, 0.75 mm wide, the anterior surface more or less flat, non-concave, the apex rounded, the disc callous-thickened below the middle with a low, glandular callus on top toward the base and continued forward on the anterior surface as the glenion; column stout, 0.5 mm long, 0.5 mm wide, the stigmatic lobes confluent.

ETYMOLOGY : From the Greek *sarx*, *sarkos* (σὰρξ), "flesh," and *phyllon* (φύλλον), "leaf," referring to the thick, fleshy leaves.

TYPE: PANAMA: CHIRIQUI: epiphytic in scrubby trees on the Llanos del Volcán, alt. 1500 m, 10 Sept. 1976, cult. at SEL, flowered in cult. 15 Oct. 1976 *C. Luer & H. Butcher 1245* (HOLOTYPE : SEL).

DISTRIBUTION : Western Panama.

This species is most remarkable in the long, narrow, thick, fleshy leaves, longer than the secondary stems. The small, purple flowers are short-pedicellate; the sepals are similar, ovate, obtuse, widespread; the ligulate lip is rounded; and the stigmatic lobes are confluent.