

Trichosalpinx fruticosa Luer, sp. nov.

Fig. 48.

Ety.: From the Latin *fruticosus*, "bushy," in reference to the habit.

Planta mediocris erectis ramificans, ramicaulibus proliferantibus, racemo plurifloro foliis ellipticis longiori, sepalis glabris anguste ovatis acuminatis, petalis anguste ovatis obliquis acutis, labello obscure trilobo disco longicarinato.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, erect, branching, up to 15 cm or more tall; roots slender at the base. Ramicauls slender, ascending, prolific, producing another ramical from near the apex, 0.5-7 cm long (the lower ramicauls much the longer), enclosed by 2-8 closely appressed, lepanthiform sheaths with the ostia microscopically scabrous. **Leaf** ascending to erect, thickly coriaceous, elliptical, obtuse, 10-17 mm long, 6-7 mm wide, contracted below into a petiole 1-2 mm long. **Inflorescence** a loose, simultaneously few-flowered raceme 2.5-3 cm long including the filiform peduncle ca. 0.5 cm long, from the apex of a ramicaul; floral bracts 2.5 mm long; pedicels 2.5-3 mm long; ovary 0.5 mm long; **sepals** white, glabrous, carinate, the dorsal sepal narrowly ovate, acute, attenuate, 9 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, 3-veined, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.25 mm, the lateral sepals free, narrowly triangular, oblique, 10 mm long, 1 mm wide, each 1-veined; **petals** membranous, narrowly ovate, oblique, acute, 3 mm long, 0.6 mm wide, 1-veined; **lip** white, oblong-trilobed, 3.25 mm long, 1.25 mm wide across the lobes expanded, the apical half thick, narrowly obtuse, cellular-glandular, the basal half with low, broadly rounded, erect margins difficult to expand, the disc with a longitudinal carina from the base to above the middle, the base subtruncate, hinged to the column-foot; **column** terete, 1.25 mm long, without wings, the anther subapical, the stigma ventral.

COSTA RICA: Prov. of San José: epiphytic on Cerro del Muerte, alt. 2400 m, 21 Mar. 1986, collected by W. Ballesteros, *C. Luer 12135* (Holotype: MO).

GUATEMALA: Prov. of Alta Vera Paz: collected near Cobán by O. Archilla, flowered in cultivation 29 Nov. 1990, *C. Luer 14876* (MO).

EL SALVADOR: Cerro Montecristo, alt. 2100 m, Aug. 1978, *F. Hamer 667* (MO).

Although apparently rare, this species has been found in Guatemala, Costa Rica and El Salvador. In habit, it is similar to *T. cedralensis*, and without doubt, it has been identified as such in many herbaria. The branching ramicauls bear elliptical, obtuse leaves, and a simultaneously flowered raceme of whitish flowers with long-attenuate sepals. *Trichosalpinx fruticosa*, however, is distinguished from all others by acute instead of obtuse petals, and a narrow lip with a distinctive, longitudinal carina down the center.

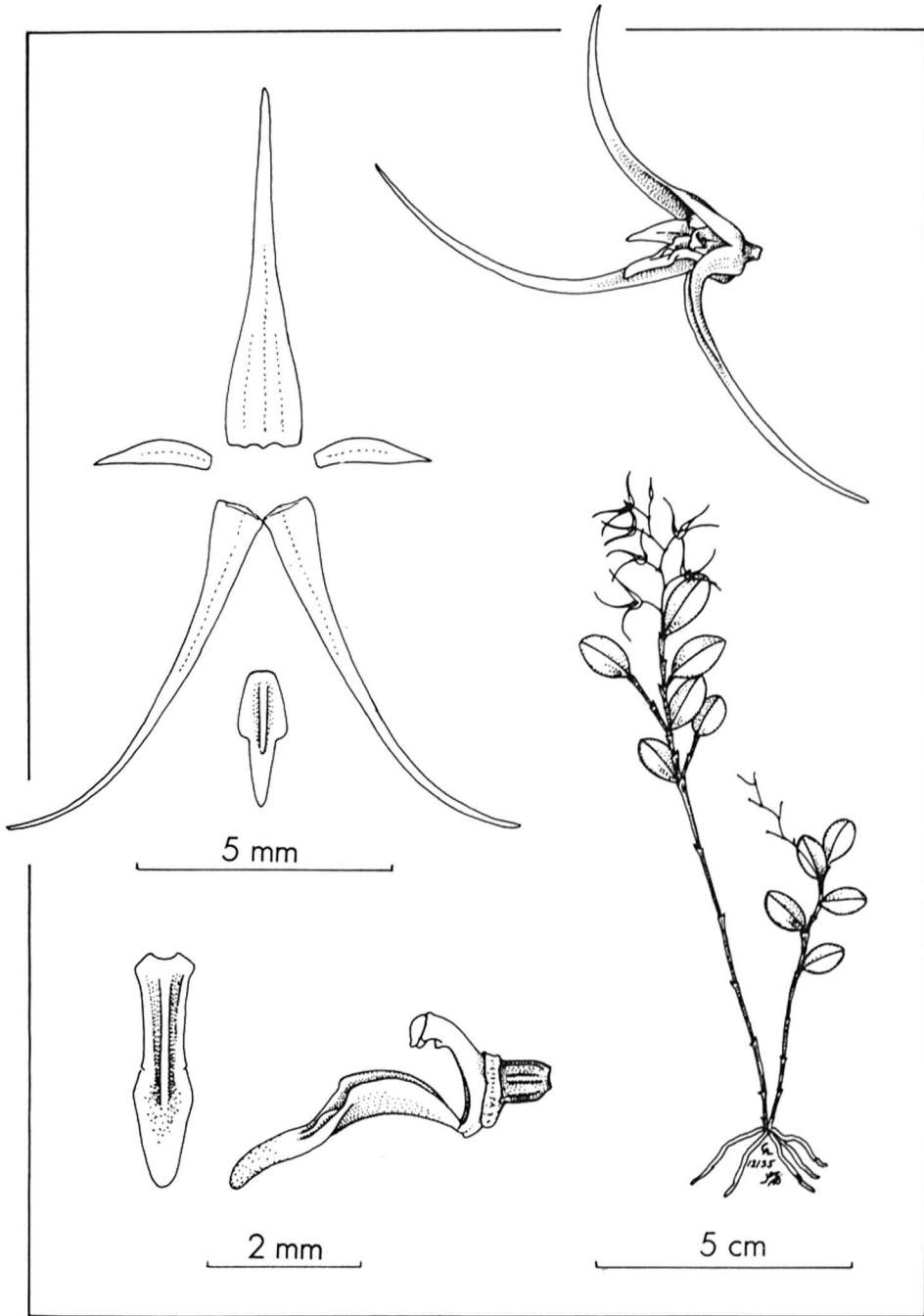


Fig. 48. *Trichosalpinx fruticosa*