

Pleurothallis operculata Luer, sp. nov.

Species haec *P. orbicularis* (Lindl.) Lindl. affinis sed statura majore, folio orbiculari convexo plusminusve horizontali, sepalis ciliatis et labello glabro distinguitur.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots fine, flexuous. Secondary stems ascending to erect, stout, 5-11 cm long, unifoliate, concealed by a series of 5-10 brown, ribbed, imbricating sheaths, inflated above, the ostia oblique with the margins and ribs ciliate. Leaf dark purplish green above, dark purple beneath, coriaceous, orbicular, convex, spreading to horizontal, shortly petiolate, 3.5-4.2 cm long, 2.6-3.3 cm wide, the rounded apex shallowly notched with a mucro in the sinus, the rounded base produced into a 1.5-2 mm long petiole. Inflorescence a fascicle of successive peduncles from a node within the uppermost sheath and appearing beneath the concave surface of the leaf, each peduncle ca. 15 mm long including the short 2- to 3-flowered raceme; floral bract and pedicel white, each 1.5 mm long; ovary yellow-white, 1 mm long; sepals translucent yellow-white suffused with rose, ciliate, the dorsal sepal narrowly ovate, acute, 6 mm long, 1.6 mm wide, the lateral sepals connate to near the middle, ovate, the apices narrowly obtuse, thickened, recurved, 6 mm long, 2.5 mm wide expanded together; petals translucent white, obovate, acute, 3 mm long, 0.8 mm wide, finely fimbriate above the middle; lip yellow-white, suffused with rose centrally, glabrous, ovate, narrowly acute, the margins glandular-cellular at most, 3.25 mm long, 1 mm wide, the truncate base bilobulate, delicately hinged to the column-foot, the disc slightly thickened, especially toward the base; column white, winged and bidentate at the apex, 1.75 mm long, the foot short, thick.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *operculatus*, "with a lid," in allusion to the appearance of the leaf over the inflorescence.

TYPE: PANAMA. COCLE: epiphytic in cloud forest, El Cope, R. L. Dressler s.n., cultivated at SEL, 78-480, flowered 18 July 1979, *C. Luer 4075* (HOLOTYPE; SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Panama.

This species is closely allied to the widespread *P. orbicularis*, but *P. operculata* may be recognized by the large, round, convex leaves held more or less horizontally covering the fascicle of peduncles. The flowers of the latter differ in possessing ciliated sepals and a glabrous lip.