

Lepanthes epibator Luer & Vásquez, sp. nov.

Herba mediocris debilis scandens, inflorescentia racemosa subdensa folio anguste ovato brevior, petalis minutis transverse oblongis, labelli laminis oblongis pubescentibus, appendice oblonga longi-pubescenti.

Plant small to medium in size, epiphytic, scandent; roots from the apices of secondary stems, slender. Secondary stems slender, proliferating from the apices of other secondary stems, 4-8 cm long, enclosed by 5-8 close, minutely ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, narrowly ovate, acute, 2.5-4.5 cm long, 0.6-0.9 cm wide, the base cuneate into a petiole 2-3 mm long. Inflorescence a subdense, successively flowered raceme up to 20 mm long, produced on top of the leaf by a filiform peduncle 4-6 mm long; floral bract 1 mm long; pedicel 1.25 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long; sepals white, ovate, acute, shortly acuminate into narrow apices, the dorsal sepal 3.2 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, connate 1 mm to the lateral sepals, the lateral sepals oblique, connate 1 mm, 3 mm long, 2.8 mm wide together; petals red-purple, pubescent, transversely oblong, 0.4 mm long, 1 mm wide, the lobes subequal, oblong, rounded; lip red-purple, the blades oblong with rounded ends, 1.2 mm long, the connectives broadly cuneate, the body connected to the column above the base, the sinus narrow with a comparatively large, oblong, long-pubescent appendix; column red-purple, 1 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

Etymology: From the Greek epibator, "a climber," referring to the scandent habit.

Type; Bolivia: Dept. of La Paz: Prov. of Sud Yungas: epiphytic in cloud forest east of Unduavi, alt. 3100 m, 22 Jan. 1984, C. Luer, J. Luer & R. Vásquez 9409 (Holotype: SEL).

This species may be distinguished from the other two scandent species of Lepanthes with racemes shorter than the leaves by the weak habit, the very small flowers, and the comparatively large, long-pubescent appendix.