

**Lepanthes hydrae** Luer & Jost, sp. nov.

Ety.: Named for a *Hydra*, a genus of minute, hydrozoan polyps.

Planta parva, racemo disticho congesto folio elliptico acuminato brevior, sepalis sparsim denticulatis acutis, petalis transverse bilobis, lobo superiore acuto triangulari, lobo inferiore obtuso triangulari, cum apiculo inter lobos minuto marginali, labelli lamina ovatis, acutis, corpore lato cum appendice minuta hydraformi distinguitur.

Plant small to medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender. Ramicauls slender, erect, 4-5 cm long, enclosed by 6-7 minutely ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths. Leaf erect, coriaceous, elliptical, petiolate, acute, acuminate, 30 mm long, 15 mm wide, the base cuneate into a petiole 5 mm long. Inflorescence a distichous, congested, successively many-flowered raceme, up to 25 mm long, borne behind the leaf by a slender peduncle 10 mm long; floral bracts 1 mm long; pedicels 1.25 mm long; ovary 1 mm long; sepals white, sparsely denticulate, carinate, the dorsal sepal triangular, acute, 4 mm long, 2 mm wide, 3-veined, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.5 mm, the lateral sepals oblong, oblique, acute, 4 mm long, 1.75 mm wide, 2-veined, connate 0.5 mm; petals white with magenta edges, microscopically pubescent, transversely bilobed, 0.9 mm long, 2.5 mm wide, 1-veined, the upper lobe triangular, acute, the lower lobe triangular, obtuse, with a minute, marginal apiculum between the lobes; lip magenta, bilaminate, the blades microscopically pubescent, ovate, acute at the apex, rounded at the base, 1.5 mm long, flanking the column, the connectives broadly cuneate, forming a broad, thick body, connate to the base of the column, the appendix minute, slender, pedunculated, ciliate; column 1.5 mm long, the anther dorsal, the stigma ventral.

**ECUADOR: Tungurahua: Cerro Anangu near Baños, alt. 2700 m, 21 Jan. 1999, L. Jost & R. Kunstaetter 1320 (Holotype: MO), C. Luer illustr. 19234.**

**This little species is characterized by a small, acuminate leaf with a distinct petiole, and longer than the congested raceme. The sepals are acute with the laterals barely connate basally. The lobes of the petals are triangular, the upper acute, the lower obtuse. The blades of the lip are ovate with acute tips curving beneath the column. The appendix is a minute, ciliated, pedunculated structure that resembles a freshwater hydra.**

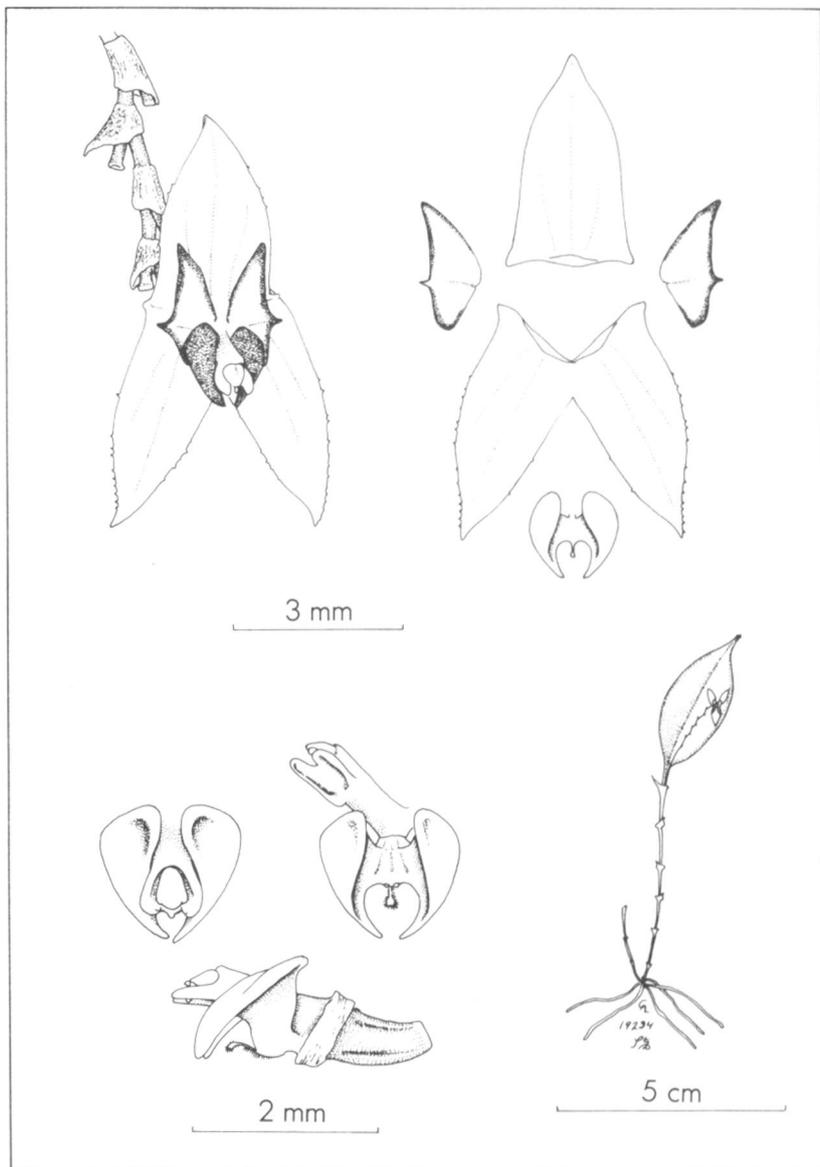


Fig. 298. *Lepanthes hydrae*