

Lepanthes orbella Luer, *sp. nov.* TYPE: COSTA RICA. Without locality, ca. 1867, A. Endres illustration 46 (Holotype: W). Fig. 7.

Species haec. *L. blepharistes* Rchb.f. affinis, sed habitu floribusque multiminoribus et foliis suborbicularibus differt.

Plant very small, epiphytic, densely caespitose; roots numerous, slender. Ramicauls erect, slender, 10–15 mm long, enclosed by 3–4 closely appressed, microscopically ciliate, lepanthiform sheaths with oblique, slightly dilated ostia. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, broadly elliptical to suborbicular, obtuse to rounded at the apex, 7–10 mm long, 5–10 mm wide, with the rounded base contracted into a petiole ca. 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, distichous, successively several-flowered raceme, up to 5 mm long, barely borne beyond the apex of the leaf by a slender peduncle 10–12 mm long; floral bracts ca. 1 mm long; pedicels ca. 1 mm long; ovary ca. 0.5 mm long; **sepals** yellow, minutely denticulate, the dorsal sepal triangular-ovate, acute, ca. 1.5 mm long, ca. 0.5 mm wide, 3-veined, connate to the lateral sepals for ca. 0.25 mm, the lateral sepals ovate, oblique, acute, ca. 1.5 mm long, ca. 0.5 mm wide, 2-veined, connate ca. 0.5 mm; **petals** deep yellow to chocolate brown, cellular-pubescent, transversely bilobed, ca. 0.2 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, the lobes subequal, narrowly oblong, obtuse or obliquely subtruncate at the apex; **lip** red, cellular-pubescent, bilaminar, with the blades ovate, narrowly rounded posteriorly, with the apices narrowly obtuse, ca. 0.4 mm long, with the connectives oblong, longer than broad, the body connate to the base of the column, with a minute appendix; **column** ca. 0.5 mm long, with the anther apical and large, and the stigma subapical.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *orbellus*, “round and small,” referring to the leaves.

This species was collected and illustrated by Endres around 1867, his intricately executed drawing apparently intended for publication. No

corresponding herbarium specimen was discovered among the hundreds of herbarium sheets of Endres’ collections. It is a very small, densely caespitose species that is closely allied to *L. blepharistes*. The habit differs with delicate, much shorter, mature ramicauls, about one centimeter long, with small, suborbicular leaves, instead of ovate, acute leaves borne by mature ramicauls up to ten centimeters long.

The flowers, borne in a congested raceme just beyond the leaf, are described as being one-eighth of an inch long, agreeing with his illustration of the plant in natural size. Therefore, the sepals are about one and a half millimeters long. Except for the size of half the dimensions, the flowers are similar to those of *L. blepharistes*. Apparently because of the extremely small size, the lip was not illustrated further than a front and side view.

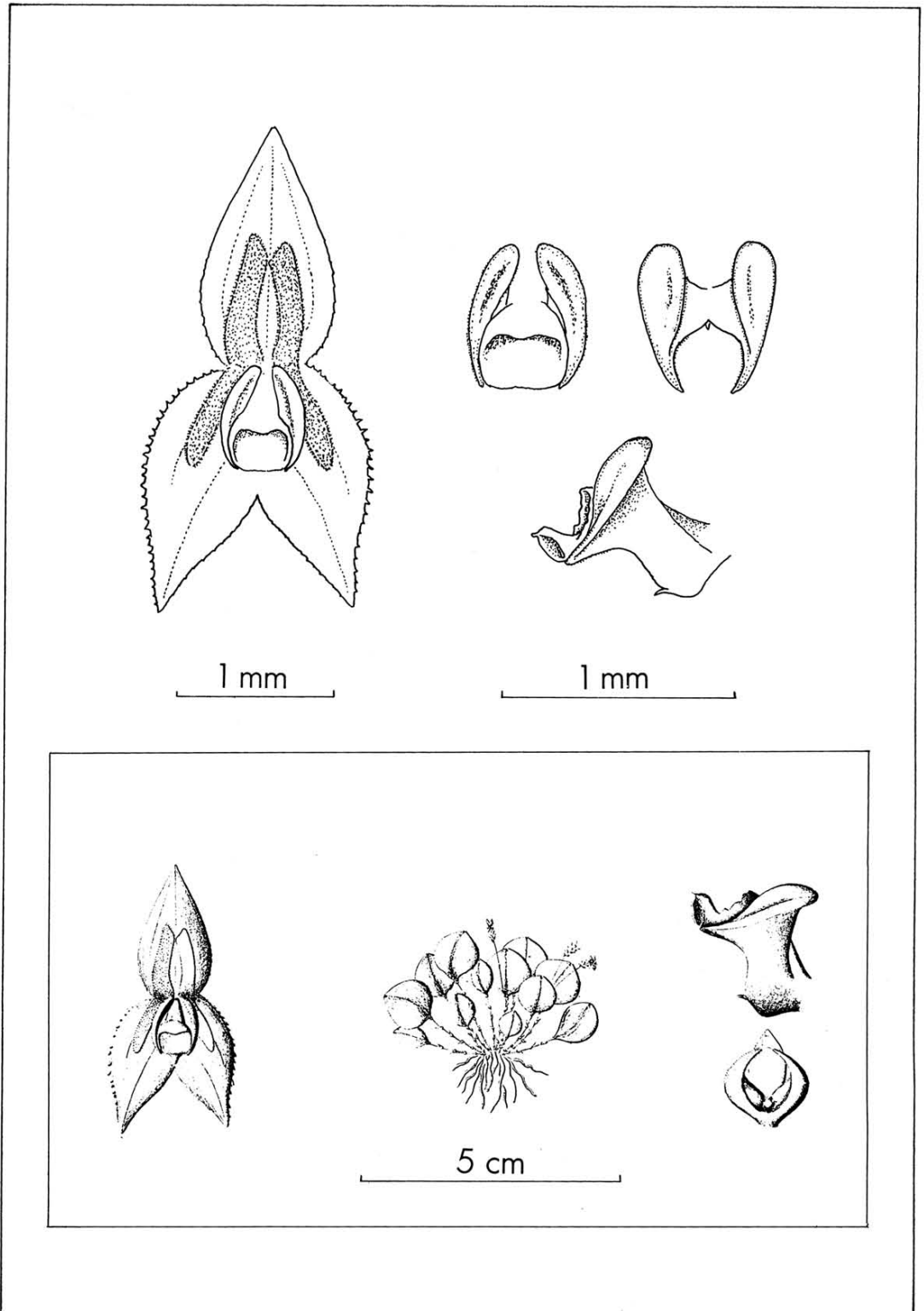


Fig. 7. *Lepanthes orbella*