

Lepanthes platysepala Luer & Escobar, sp. nov.

Ety.: From the Greek *platysepalon*, "a flat sepal," in reference to the pubescent leaves.

Species haec *L. pilosellae* Rchb.f. affinis, sed sepalò dorsali erecto obovato subplano plus minusve maculato differt.

Plant small to large for the subgenus, epiphytic, pendent, with branches up to 50 cm long or longer, the rhizomes slender, 2.5-5 mm long between ramicauls, enclosed by 2 ciliate, imbricating, lepanthiform sheaths; roots slender, from nodes near the base of the branches. Ramicauls 1-2 mm long, concealed by 1 similar, lepanthiform sheath. **Leaf** pendent in the natural position, coriaceous, pubescent, elliptical, subacute to obtuse, 6-9 mm long, 4-5 mm wide, 3-veined, the base contracted into a petiole less than 1 mm long. **Inflorescence** a congested, successively few-flowered raceme, borne by an ascending peduncle 1-2 mm long from near the apex of a ramicaul; floral bract ciliate, 1-2 mm long; pedicel 1-2 mm long; ovary lightly verrucose to lightly spiculate, 0.5-1 mm long; **sepals** glabrous, the dorsal sepal erect, orange, more or less mottled or suffused with brown or purple, broadly obovate, obtuse, shallowly concave, 6-8 mm long, 5 mm wide, 5-(7-)veined, connate to the lateral sepals for 0.25-0.5 mm, the lateral sepals connate into an ovate, bifid lamina, 4-5 mm long, 3.75-4.5 mm wide, 4-veined, with the apices acute; **petals** white to yellow, more or less suffused with purple, glabrous, triangular to linear-oblong, 1.75-2 mm long, 0.25-0.5 mm wide; **lip** white, yellow to purple, glabrous, subquadrate to transversely subcordate, 1-1.25 mm long, 1.5 mm wide expanded, with the apex broadly rounded to subtruncate, with the basal angles rounded, with the sides encircling the column, the base connate to the base of the column; column 1.5 mm long, the anther and the stigma apical.

COLOMBIA: Dept. of Antioquia: epiphytic in forest remnant east of Santo Domingo, alt. 1920 m, 12 May 1985, C. Luer, R. Escobar & E. Valencia 11354 (Holotype: MO); La Aldea west of Santo Domingo, alt. 2130 m, 10 May 1985, C. Luer, R. Escobar & E. Valencia 11323 (MO); northeast of Santa Rosa above the Miraflores Dam, alt. 2050 m, 15 May 1985, C. Luer, R. Escobar & E. Valencia 11370 (MO); Concepción, between Barbosa and Concepción, alt. 2380 m, 10 Apr. 1988, C. Luer, J. Luer & R. Escobar 13175B (MO); Urrao, Pabón, Las Cruces, alt. 2400 m, collected by E. Valencia, flowered in cultivation at Colomborquídeas, 11 May 1985, C. Luer 11333 (MO).

Closely related to the widely distributed *L. pilosella*, this species is frequent in the department of Antioquia, Colombia. It is indistinguishable from *L. pilosella* vegetatively, but *L. platysepala* is readily recognized by the usually spotted, erect, obovate dorsal sepal that is only shallowly concave or sometimes nearly flat. Usually five veins are present, but often there is a vestigial pair of veins between well-developed veins, so that five or seven veins can occur intermixed. Instead of being held within a deeply concave, striped dorsal sepal as in *L. pilosella*, the petals, lip and column are more or less exposed. The petals, lip and column of the two taxa are indistinguishable. As with *L. pilosella*, the shape of the lip is inconstant. This species could be treated as a geographical form of *L. pilosella*, but the very different appearance of the widely spread flower with the erect, more or less spotted, obovate, dorsal sepal is distinct. In *Native Colombian Orchids* volume 2, two photographs of this species are identified as *L. pilosella* and *L. peperomioides*,

