

Pleurothallis scitula Luer, sp. nov.

Habitu *P. phyllocardiae* Rchb. f. similis, sed floribus pubescentibus nondeflexis, synsepalo latiore quam sepalo dorsali, disco labelli sine depressionibus differt.

Plant medium to large, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems slender, terete, erect, 8-25 cm long, with a closely fitting tubular sheath below the middle and 1-2 others at the base, unifoliolate. Leaf coriaceous, deflexed, ovate, concave, shortly acuminate, acute, tridenticulate, the base sessile, deeply cordate with overlapping auricles, dark green often suffused or spotted with purple, especially beneath, 6-13 cm long, 4.5-7.5 cm wide spread out. Inflorescence fasciculate, the flowers produced singly and successively from a conduplicate spathe, 1.5-2 cm long, 1-1.8 cm broad, erect from the base of the leaf; floral bract and pedicel each about 1 cm long, enclosed within the spathe; ovary 5-6 mm long; flowers shortly pubescent, yellow marked with purple; dorsal sepal ovate, obtuse, 11 mm long, 8-9 mm wide, 3(5)-veined; lateral sepals connate into a broadly ovate-cordate, obtuse, retuse, synsepal, 11-13 mm long, 10-13 mm wide, 4-veined; petals narrowly ovate-oblong, obtuse, denticulate, 9-10 mm long, 2.5 mm wide; lip red, ovate, subacute to obtuse, the base shallowly concave with rounded angles, the disc minutely papillose centrally adjacent to the glenion, the remainder of the surface shallowly rugose, 4-5 mm long, 3.5-4 mm wide; column stout, 1.5 mm long, 2 mm wide, with a short, broad foot.

ETYMOLOGY: From the Latin *scitulus*, "pretty, handsome," in allusion to the appearance of the flowering plant.

TYPE: PANAMA: CHIRIQUI: epiphytic in cloud forest on Cerro Hornito, alt. ca. 1700 m, 15 Dec. 1976. *C. Luer, A. Luer, R. L. Dressler, N. H. Williams & F. L. Stevenson 1361* (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Panama.

Vegetatively this species is similar to *Pleurothallis phyllocardia* Rchb. f., but the pretty yellow, purple-striped flowers face straight outward, not downward and inward. The flowers of both species emerge from a broad, erect spathe from the base of a deeply cordate, concave leaf. The broad sepals and petals of *P. scitula* are covered with a dense, short pubescence, and the synsepal is wider than the dorsal sepal. The lip is of similar size and shape to that of *P. phyllocardia*, but it is far less papillose and it lacks the concavities to either side of the glenion.

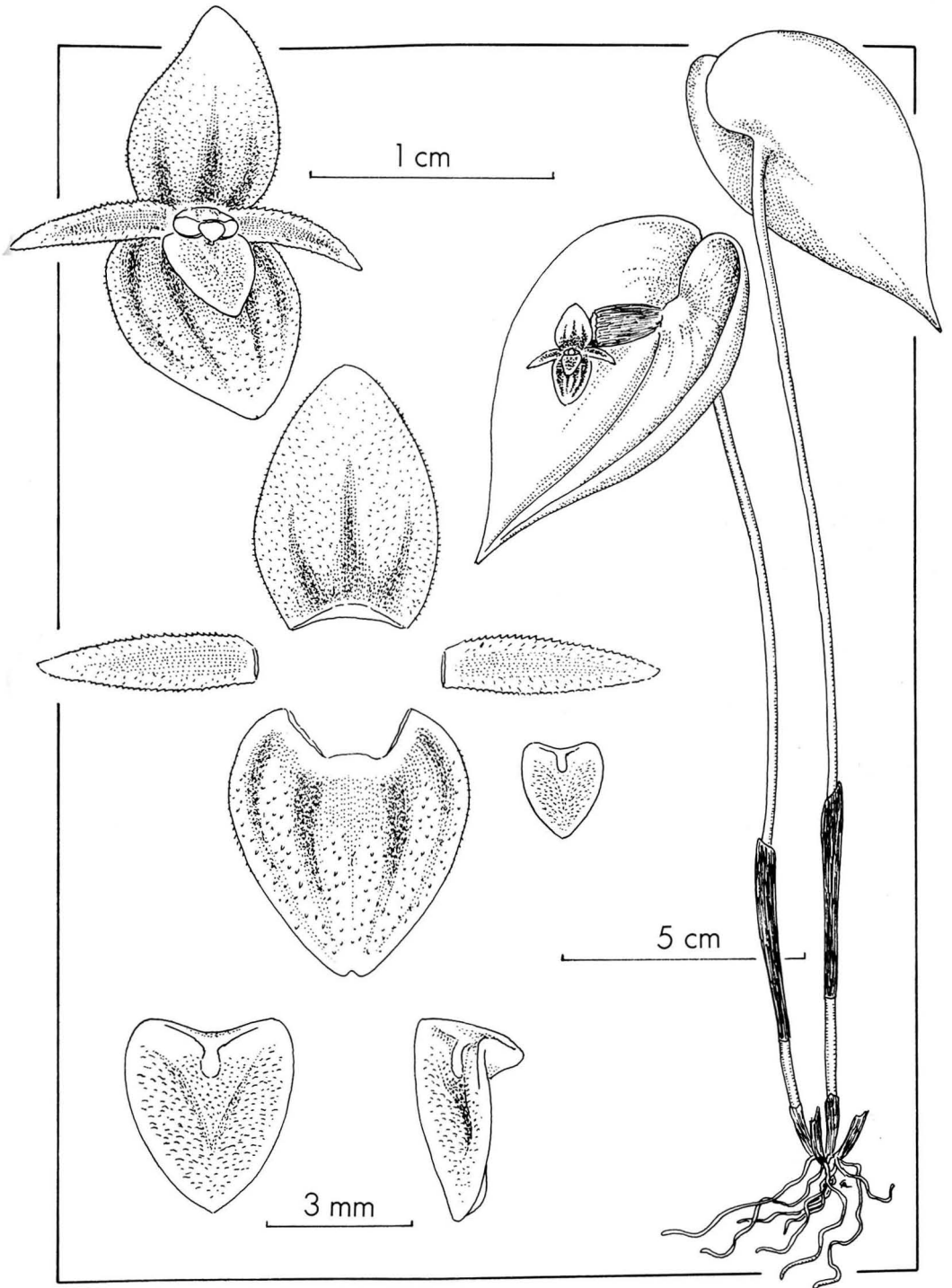


Figure 292. *PLEUROTHALLIS SCITULA* Luer