

***Pleurothallis areldii* Luer, sp. nov.**

Habitu *P. acrisepalae* Ames & Schweinf. similis, sed foliis floribusque diplomajoribus et pedunculo brevior non-erecto.

Plant medium in size, epiphytic, caespitose; roots slender, flexuous. Secondary stems abbreviated, 12-15 mm long, clothed by a thin, tubular sheath and shorter ones at the base, unifoliate. Leaf erect, coriaceous, narrowly obovate, acute at the apex, tridenticulate, the base gradually acuminate into a grooved petiole, 8-13 cm long, 15-20 mm wide. Inflorescence a horizontal or creeping peduncle, 5-8.5 cm long, bearing at the apex successive flowers in a fascicle or extremely contracted raceme, the single flower nodding, bilabiate, heavily spotted with purple; floral bract 3-5 mm long, pedicel 10-12 mm long; ovary yellow, dotted with brown, 2 mm long; dorsal sepal ovate, acuminate, acute, dull yellow, spotted with purple, 15 mm long, 4.5 mm wide; lateral sepals united to near their acuminate apices into an ovate synsepal similar to the dorsal sepal, 15 mm long, 7 mm wide, subpapillose within, bicarinate without; petals obovate, obtusely acuminate, oblique, the labellar margin dilated, maroon, 5 mm long, 3 mm wide; lip fleshy, maroon, oblong, the apex obtuse, recurved, tuberculate, with small, erect, obtuse lateral lobes below the middle with verrucose calli extending forward onto the apical lobe, the base with a pair of thin auricles, 4.5-5 mm long, 2 mm wide; column 3 mm long, denticulate, winged, with a prominent foot.

ETYMOLOGY: Named in honor of its discoverer, Dr. Robert L. Dressler (RLD) of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Balboa, Canal Zone.

TYPE: PANAMA: CHIRIQUI: epiphytic in cloud forest at the Fortuna dam site, alt. ca. 750 m, Feb. 1977, *R. L. Dressler s.n.*, greenhouse acc. no. 77-1787, flowered in cult. 9 Aug. 1977, *C. Luer 1653* (HOLOTYPE: SEL).

DISTRIBUTION: Panama.

This fleshy-leaved plant appears very much like a *Masdevallia*, and the inflorescence creeps along the substrate, very much like many *Masdevallias*, to produce a relatively large, more or less pendent, gaping flower. The flower, however, is very similar to that of *Pleurothallis acrisepala*, except that it is twice as large. The flower of *P. acrisepala* is borne on a long erect peduncle from leaves half the size of those of this species. The sepals and petals of these two species are similar in shape and color. The lip of *P. areldii* is larger with thicker calli near the middle.