

***Pleurothallis laevis* Luer & Hirtz, sp. nov.**

Fig. 32.

Ety.: From the Latin *laevis*, "smooth," referring to the glabrous sepals and smooth lip

Species haec *P. elegantis* (H.B.K.) Lindl. affinis, sed sepals glabris lateralibus non deflexis et labello majore subplano ecalloso differt.

Plant large, epiphytic, densely caespitose; roots numerous, slender. Ramicauls fasciculate, stout, erect, 10-22 cm long, with a loose, tubular sheath near the middle and 2-3 loose, imbricating sheaths about the base. **Leaf** erect, coriaceous, elliptical, obtuse, the blade 12-14 cm long, 3.5-6 cm wide, cuneate below into a subpetiolate base. **Inflorescence** racemose, the racemes 3 to 6, simultaneous, slender, more or less secund, densely and simultaneously many-flowered, 20-25 cm long including the slender peduncle ca. 6 cm long, subtended by a spathe 3-4 cm long, from an annulus 2-3 mm below the abscission layer; floral bracts inflated, 4-5 mm long, enclosing pedicel and ovary; pedicels 1.5 mm long; ovary 1.5 mm long; **sepals** cream-colored with purple dots, especially along the veins, subcarinate, glabrous, the dorsal sepal elliptical-ovate, subacute, concave, 7-9 mm long, 6 mm wide unexpanded, 3-veined, the lateral sepals ovate, oblique, subacute, 7-9 mm long, 4 mm wide, 3-veined, connate 1.5 mm; **petals** translucent, veined in purple, elliptical-obovate, 5.5 mm long, 3.5 mm wide, 3-veined, the apex obtuse, thickened; **lip** orange, suffused with purple, fleshy, obovate, 5 mm long, 3 mm wide, the apex obtuse, decurved producing a retuse appearance from above, the disc broadly shallowly concave and smooth, without a callus, the base truncate with a narrow, transverse cavity without a transverse callus, solidly fixed to the column-foot; **column** slender, 4 mm long, the foot thick, 2 mm long, the anther, rostellum and stigma subapical.

ECUADOR: **Bolivar**: cloud forest west of Guaranda on the old road to Puebloviejo, alt. 2600 m, 26 Mar. 1984, *C. Luer, A. Hirtz, S. Dalström, T. Höijer & J. Kuijt 9746* (Holotype: MO); wet, secondary forest west of Guaranda, alt. 2600 m, 12 Feb. 1990, *S. Dalström & Årnbj 1334* (MO); terrestrial on the road cut west of Guaranda toward Catarama, alt. 3150 m, 13 Mar. 1991, *C. Luer, A. Hirtz et al. 15023* (MO).

This species, apparently endemic in southeast-central Ecuador, is closely allied to the variable *P. laevigata*-complex. With the large habit with a large spathe, the two concepts are indistinguishable vegetatively. A similar rash of racemes reaches beyond the leaf. *Pleurothallis laevis* is distinguished by the totally glabrous flowers, and lateral sepals that are not deflexed near the middle. The lip is larger, obovate and without any callus. The obtuse apex is decurved.

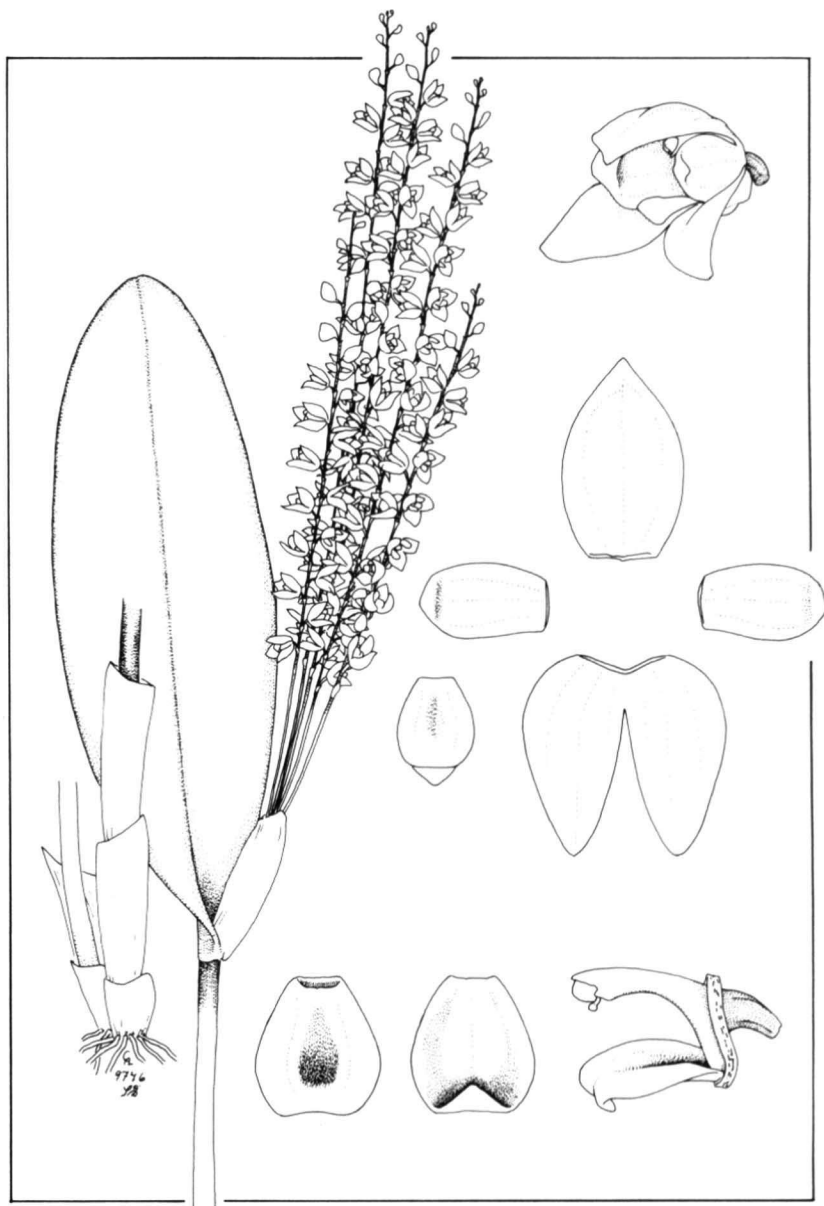


Fig. 32. *Pleurothallis laevis*