

EPIDENDRUM SYMPETALOSTELE Hágsater et L. Sánchez, sp. nov.

Holotype: COLOMBIA: Antioquia, San José del Nus, "El Socorro", 1 December 1972, ca. 1500 m, P. Ortiz Valdivieso 603 & S. Restrepo, P. Ortiz Valdivieso pers. herb. (illustration voucher, plant, side view of column and ovary and floral dissection.)

Epidendrum latijabro Lindl. simile, sed differt petalis usque ad partem medianam columnae adnatis, columnae apice utrinque lobis prominentibus bifidis, clinandrium prominentissimo irregulariter laciniato.

Hierba epífita, cespitosa, ca. 17 cm de alto. Raíces basales, carnosas, 0.5-1 mm de grosor. Tallo sencillo, tipo caña, fuertemente comprimido lateralmente, flexuoso, ca. 11 cm de largo. Hojas 3-4, equidistantes a lo largo del tallo; vaina lateralmente comprimida, lisa; lámina subcoriácea, angostamente elíptica, retusa, márgenes enteros, extendidos, sin carina dorsal, 3.5-7.5 x 1-3 cm. Inflorescencia terminal en el tallo maduro, 1 flor. ~ una sola vez, sécil. Bráctea floral mucho más corta que el ovario. Flores 1-3, simultáneas, resupinadas, verdes. Ovario terete, ligeramente engrosado arriba de la mitad, no ornamentado, 28-37 mm de largo. Sépalos ligeramente reflexos, subcoriáceos, libres, glabros. Sépalo dorsal angostamente oblanceolado, agudo, márgenes enteros, revolutos, 5-nervado, 35-42 x 3-5 mm. Sépalos laterales oblicuamente oblanceolados, agudos, márgenes enteros, revolutos, 5-nervados, con numerosas nervaduras secundarias, 35-42 x 3-5 mm. Pétalos suberectos, membranáceos, adnados a la columna hasta cerca de la mitad de la longitud de ésta, linear-espátulados, agudos, márgenes enteros, ligeramente extendidos, 3-nervados, 27-30 x 1-2 mm. Labelo unido a la columna, transversalmente oblongo en forma general, someramente trilobado, bicalloso, los callos pequeños, subglobosos, base cordada, disco con tres quillas centrales y varias venas engrosadas, las quillas laterales continuas con los callos, 10 x 26 mm; lóbulos laterales semiorbicular-subcuadrados, con una muesca marginal hacia la base; lóbulo medio corto y muy amplio, somero y ampliamente emarginado, con un mucrón poco evidente en el ápice. Columna recta, 20-27 mm de largo incluyendo el clinandrium, con una prominencia bifida a cada lado del ápice, ésta variable en longitud. Clinandrium muy prominente, irregularmente lacinado. Antera subsférica, 4-locular. Polinios, caudículas, viscidio, rostelo, nectario y cápsula no vistos.

Epiphytic, caespitose herb. Stems strongly compressed laterally, flexuous. Leaves narrowly elliptic, retuse. Inflorescence terminal, sessile. Flowers 1-3, simultaneous, resupinate, green. Ovary somewhat dilated above the middle, terete, unornamented. Sepals somewhat reflexed, subcoriaceous, free, glabrous. Dorsal sepal narrowly oblanceolate, acute, margin entire, revolute, 5-veined. Lateral sepals obliquely oblanceolate, acute, margin entire, revolute, 5-veined, with numerous secondary veins. Petals suberect, membranaceous, adnate to the basal half of the column, linear-spatulate, acute, margin entire, 3-veined. Lip united to the column, subcoriaceous, transversely oblong, shallowly 3-lobed, bicallose, the calli small, subglobose, disc with 3 central keels and several thickened veins, base cordate; lateral lobes semiorbicular-subquadrate, with a conspicuous marginal notch near the base; midlobe short and very wide, broadly and shallowly emarginate, with a obscure mucro in the sinus. Column straight, with a bifid prominence at each side of the apex. Clinandrium very prominent, irregularly lacinate. Anther subspherical, 4-celled.

OTHER SPECIMENS: COLOMBIA: Dodson & Hills 3220, SEL!

OTHER RECORDS: COLOMBIA: Without locality, cult. A. Niessen, transparency AMO! (illustration voucher, lateral view of flower and close up of lip and column.)

DISTRIBUTION AND ECOLOGY: Known only from Colombia. Epiphyte, at about 1500 m altitude. Flowering apparently throughout the year.

RECOGNITION: *Epidendrum sympetalostele* is one of the most distinctive members of the *E. difforme* Jacq. complex, and can be easily recognized by the suberect petals which are adnate to the column such that they appear to arise from the middle of it, and by the transversely oblong, shallowly 3-lobed lip with three central keels on the disc and several thickened lateral veins, the lateral lobes with a conspicuous notch near the base, the midlobe short and very wide, shallowly and broadly emarginate and with a minute mucro in the sinus. Also definitive are the prominent, bifid lobes at the sides of the column apex, and the very prominent clinandrium which is irregularly lacinate.

CONSERVATION STATUS: Undetermined.

ETYMOLOGY: The epithet is derived from the Greek words petalon, petal, and stele, column or cylinder, plus the prefix sym-, indicating union or fusion, in reference to the adnation of petals and column that characterize this species.

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Herbario de la Asociación Mexicana de Orquideología, A.C. Plate 191
Apartado Postal 53-123, 11320 México, D.F., MEXICO ICONES ORCHIDACEARUM 2. 1993

