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DESCRIPTION;

Charles Darwin wrote, "I was never more interested in my life in any subject than this of orchids". Orchids are part of one of the most highly evolved plant families, comprising over 25,000 species.

This book focuses on the orchids of the breathtaking Sikkim Himalayan region, renowned for its natural beauty. Sikkim is home to the third-highest mountain in the world, as well as a UNESCO World Heritage site that harmoniously blends nature and culture. Although it is the second smallest state in India, Sikkim is a biodiversity hotspot, showcasing one of the highest concentrations of plant and animal life. Being the only organic state in India, it offers an exceptional environment for studying both flora and fauna.

Sikkim boasts one of the most significant orchid diversities in the Indian subcontinent. Orchids make up 10% of the state's floral diversity and account for a third of the total orchid diversity in India.

In this publication, the author shares insights into the history of plant explorations in the region, outlines trekking routes to see orchids in their natural habitat, and discusses cultural practices based on 35 years of experience in growing them. He showcases 100 of the most visually striking species, including some that are rarely seen in the wild. This selection encompasses a diverse range of colours and forms, shaped by millions of years of evolution, all designed to attract pollinators.



This is the second revised edition of the first comprehensive guide book on the orchids of Sikkim in over a century. Sikkim is a mountainous State of incredible beauty and climatic variations that range from 250m to over 3000m in a short North-South span of just 150km. The book is a unique celebration of the orchid diversity of the Sikkim Himalayas. This edition features over 120 stunning new photographs capturing rare orchids in their natural habitat and enumeration of 100 species in 60 genera. Included in this edition are detailed field maps for the orchid species photographed. It has comprehensive and up to date information on tourism, botanical history and cultivation of orchids. It is an essential guide for anyone interested in discovering the wonderful, unique and fascinating plants of the Sikkim Himalayas.

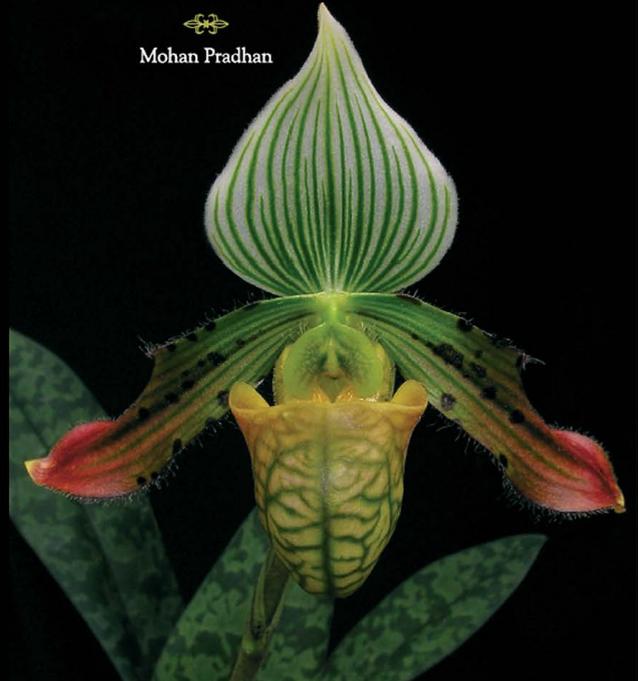
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Cymbidium lancifolium



Etymology: Latin *lancifolius* (with lance-shaped leaves).



A dwarf terrestrial species found on the floors of deep, shaded and broad-leaved forests in rich humus. The plant bears thick, spongy roots that act as a stick to the cigar-shaped pseudobulbs. The pale translucent white to apple-green flowers with red median stripes are produced during the summer months.

Description: Root thick, fleshy. Pseudobulbs narrowly fusiform, 5-15 x 8-1.5cm covered with many large scarious sheaths and fibers. Leaves 2-5, oblong-lanceolate, plicate, acute, 10-40 x 2-4cm, petiolate; petiole 10-20cm long. Inflorescence erect, lateral from pseudobulbs, 3-8 flowered; floral bracts lanceolate, boat-shaped, acute, 0.5-1.5cm long. Flowers 3.5-5cm across; sepals and petals white-apple green, red median stripe, lip white, red-spotted to transverse bands; pedicel and ovary 1.5-4cm long. Sepals similar, oblanceolate, acute, 1.5-3 x 0.3-0.8cm. Petals oblong to narrowly elliptic, acute, 1.5-2 x 0.5-0.8cm. Labellum 3-lobed, 1.5-2 x 0.6-1.5cm; lateral lobes, narrow, rounded, apical lobe narrow, much recurved; disc with two horizontal keels. Column slender, long, curved, winged, 1-1.5cm long.

Habitat: Terrestrial in the floors of broad-leaved forests in the sub-tropical zone. The thick fleshy root grows just below the leaf litter and humus and along the ground surface and not into the soil. 1200-1800m.

Flowering time: All through the summer months, from May to September.

Himalayan distribution: Bhutan, India (Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, West Bengal) and Nepal.

Cultivation: 1 (i), (ii), (iii) & (iv). Temp/H/III. 55-65% shade. Keep moist throughout the year.



