

ORCHIDS and How to Grow Them

by Gloria Jean Sessler

This is a good book on general orchid culture for the novice and near-novice hobbyist as well as the casual reader. The first chapter is an introduction covering the history of orchids, natural habitats, orchid classification, important species, different mechanisms of natural pollination and tips on selecting orchids.

The next several chapters cover the aspects of orchid culture in some detail: the effects of temperature on the flowering of different species; light requirements and photoperiodism; the need for good ventilation; potting, watering and feeding; and things to do at different stages in their growth cycles.

The chapter on increasing ones collection states the obvious - by dividing, growing from back bulbs, buying seedlings and mature plants. The appendix does give a list of places to buy orchids and supplies.

The section on orchid problems, pests and diseases parallels the AOS booklet on the same subject. It also gives practical ways to cope with them.

The discussions of warm-growing and cool-growing orchids is general and simplified. It doesn't cover orchids specifically hybridized to be warm or cool tolerant, or exceptional species in warm or cool-growing genera.

An excellent calendar of seasonal activities - a veritable checklist of things to do for various orchids at different times of the year. The book is well-illustrated with many black and white photographs and a number of color photographs of several varieties of orchids.

- L.K. (Buddy) Harvie