

Orchids, by Black, Peter McKenzie

The worldwide family Orchidaceae contains almost 1/7 of all flowering plants. Its huge numbers -- nearly 1000 genera and 20,000 species -- are matched by and the norms diversity in size, color, shape and habitat. There are some species which would fit comfortably inside a thimble and others which can climb to the top Of the tree 100 feet tall; some have flowers the size of pinheads while others have petals 2 feet long. They can be found at heights above 14,000 feet arctic tundra; in semi -- desert, swampy marshes and grassy meadows; high up on trees and on the ground -- and even beneath its surface.

Peter Black has described issue orchid growing from its origins in early Chinese, Japanese and Greek cultures to the Advanta hybridization in the middle of the 19th century and the revolutionary development of asymbiotic and apical meristem methods of propagation in the 20th century. He has explained the lifecycle of orchids and the extraordinarily complex and delicate mechanisms they have developed to ensure their pollination - and thus their survival. he has shown how these beautiful and fragrant flowers can be grown and enjoyed light everyone, whether in a specifically constructed orchid House or on a windowsill, describing in detail those genera most commonly grown commercially and those most suitable for home cultivation and the care necessary for their good health.

The outstanding photographs, 16 full-color, reveal at a glance the beauty of these exotic plants which led the early orchid hunters to risk their lives for their collection.

Peter Black was surrounded by orchid since childhood when his father and Mr. Flory took over the world famous Orchid nurseries of Veitch and Sons, the pioneers of the orchid hybridization. He continued this the tradition by Creation of many beautiful new hybrids which brought him both an international reputation and many awards. Yet he was also familiar with the problems of the amateur grower -- from questions asked after his lectures to orchid societies in this country and the United States and by visits to his nursery, and from a worldwide correspondence. He was thus able to relate the knowledge of one of the foremost authorities in the field to what is needed by the amateur orchidologist.

