

Orchids of Africa, by Stewart, Joyce & Hennessey, Esme F.

Interest in orchids of Africa is on the increase. Familiar with the colorful and large flowered plants from America and Asia, growers are now looking to Africa for species that are different, unusual, new or more demanding to cultivate. Consequently, there is an ever-growing need for information on these fascinating orchids: this beautiful original book will help to meet that need.

Part I contains a review of the African orchids south of the Sahara, including descriptions of the kind of plants and flowers, their structure and habits, and the first complete list of the currently recognized genera. In Part II fifty selected species are illustrated by Esme Hennessey's detailed paintings in full-color, while Joyce Stewart's text describes them botanically and discusses their origins, habitat and introduction to cultivation. Chosen to portray some of the diversity of form, color, shape and size that is found among the African orchids, the species present a display of attractive, unusual and intriguing plants. The exquisite paintings were taken from life and are mostly reproduced life-size.

In the words Professor E. A. Shelpe of the Bolus Herbarium, University of Cape Town: "The text is accurate and eminently readable. The book should be of interest not only to those amateur botanists interested in orchids, but also to those amongst the international fraternity of orchid growers who would wish to attempt cultivation of some of the more spectacular flowers or interesting species."

The author, Joyce Stewart, and the artist, Esme Hennessey, are well known botanists worldwide and in South Africa, and both hold senior lectureships in botany at the University of Natal and the University of Durban -- Westville, respectively. They have published many botanical papers and books and have been invited to lecture at a number of international conferences in their specialized fields. Mrs. Stewart has lectured as far afield as Germany and Switzerland and has been invited to talk in Britain on African orchids, while Mrs. Hennessey has visited the United States of America to talk on South African flora and botanical art. Esme Hennessey's paintings are noted for their botanical accuracy as well as for their beauty and originality of composition