

Slipper Orchids, by Hennessey, Esme F. & Hedge Tessa A.

The slipper orchids are among the most popular orchids in cultivation today. From Asia and its adjacent islands, western and temperate Europe, North, Central and South America, come the slipper orchids, whose dominant characteristic is a large lower petal shaped like a sabot, clog, moccasin, shoe or slipper. In an absorbing and attractive account of these unique and fascinating plants, hundred and four life-size illustrations in color, superbly executed in the medium of watercolor, of all five genera of the subfamily Cypripedioideae are presented in one volume for the first time. The plants selected for presentation include most of the species that are commonly grown in cultivation as well as carefully chosen representatives from among the primary and complex hybrids.

Each of the exquisite color plates is accompanied by a comprehensive text, which details the species distinguishing features, their distribution the world, their natural habitats and the history of their introduction into cultivation. More than 40 plates are devoted to hybrids, and an important additional feature is the information on the ways hybridization has been affected, on chromosome counts and on the culture of plants, as well as the criteria used in judging slipper orchids.

An introductory section provides an invaluable synthesis of information derived from many sources about the five genera and their hybrids, including chapters on nomenclature and the registration of orchid hybrids, cultivation and taxonomy, and the species' geographical distribution. Keys to and checklists of species, distribution maps, a glossary of botanical terms, an extensive bibliography and indexes of species and man – made hybrids complete this comprehensive survey.

Designed to inform and delight orchid enthusiasts, this magnificent work of reference and scholarship, lavishly illustrated, will take pride of place in any orchid lovers collection.

