

Wild Orchids of Britain and Europe, by Davies, Paul and Jenne

Imagine producing a field guide to all the wild orchids of Europe, with no less than 328 color photographs to aid identification. This is what the authors have done, not just for the British Isles as far north as Iceland and Norway, across the continent through the orchid rich areas of France, Germany, Switzerland and Austria, and throughout the Mediterranean from Portugal to Israel, via Spain, Italy, Greece and all the major islands. They even include the rarities of western Asia as far as the Urals. The result is a marvelous mixture of botany and travel, an extended orchid hunting quest for flower lovers, or reference book for experts and enthusiasts alike -- all done with the proper, and all too necessary, emphasis on conservation.

As attractive as it is authoritative, *Wild Orchids* provides up-to-date information on orchid biology, distribution and classification, as well as detailed descriptions of species, subspecies and in some cases their numerous variants. It also gives advice on where, and when, these fascinating flowers may be seen, and photographed, growing wild in their natural habitats. A feature of the book is the country-by-country coverage which will help orchid lovers to make the most of their opportunities for travel.

Distilled into *Wild Orchids* is the absorbing pleasure that all three authors have derived from discovering a strange variety and limitless fascination of these lovely plants.

Paul and Jenne Davies, both teachers at Denstone College, Staffordshire, are lifelong orchid enthusiasts and specialists in orchid photography. Their photographs have been exhibited by Kodak, and in 1981 four of them were reproduced for a special issue of postage stamps in Cyprus -- a rare distinction. This, their first book came about as a result of their extensive travels in search of wild orchids and the unrivaled collection of photographs that they accumulated, and was completed with Anthony Huxley's collaboration

Anthony Huxley is a well-known writer on botanical and horticultural subjects. His 31 books include *Flowers of the Mediterranean* (written with Oleg Polunin) and *Flowers of Greece and Aegean* (with William Taylor), both published by Chatto and Windus, and most recently, the *Penguin Encyclopedia of Gardening*. He is a member of the Council of the Royal Horticultural Society and holds their highest award, the Victoria Medal of Honor.