



### Book Review

H. J. Chowdhery & D. K. Agrawala. 2013. *A century of West Himalayan Orchids*. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh. New Connaught Place, Dehra Dun, India. 318 pp. Price USD 74.95

New book on 'A Century of West Himalayan Orchids' has been published. The title of the book is suitable with the content of the book itself. The book was initiated to document orchids of East Himalaya by providing reliable and accurate accounts of the genera and species found in West Himalayan with the detail history of Orchidology around the World including in India, general morphology of orchids including the variations on both vegetative and generative structures. The Himalayan regions geographically including its physiography of West Himalayan and the history of the plant exploration in West Himalaya was also discussed thoroughly. The initial book of *Orchids of Himalaya* Part I was written by George King and Robert Pantling in 1898 which contained many drawings and then followed by *The Orchids of North Western Himalaya* Vol IX Part II Duthie 1906, *Orchids of Kaumaun Himalayas* by Pangtey, Samant and Rawat in 1991, *Orchids of India: a*

*glimpse* by Misra in 2007 and many other orchid books that contribute to the information of the Indian Orchids, specifically to Himalayan orchids. The book of 'A Century of West Himalayan Orchids' is regarded as the supplement to the books of the other Himalayan Orchids that have been published. In regard to its physical form, this book is very handy to carry and easy to read due to its small size and the reasonable font size. Also, this book is completed with a large number of attractive photos of the plants, flowers and the dissection of the floral parts. Broader readers who have interests to orchids can utilize the book.

This book consists of 243 species and each species was described in a complete detail and followed by the other taxonomic information such as their proper nomenclature, flowering and fruiting time, habitats, distribution, status, and potential values. Among the species described in this book, the genus *Dendrobium* is the most dominant, followed by the genus *Habenaria* Willd, *Liparis* Rich., *Eria* Lindl. and *Oberonia* Lindl. There are 16, 11, 10, 10, and 9 species of those genera above respectively. The information in this book is useful for scientists around the world including students, orchid lovers and conservation managements to implement the information needed for conservation and research in this area.

Despite the useful information on the taxonomic accounts of this book, there are few typo errors such as 30,000 became 300,000 in the preface, unclear species names in the Figures (e.g. p. 31), and inconsistency in giving author name(s) after the scientific names and in giving photo legends that can be improved easily by massive proof reading. Also some photos do not have complete information (Figs. 18, 19). Readers need to look back to the text in order to understand the information in the photos. Also, the Figures 18 and 19 showed the type of inflorescences that are cyme, spike, umbel or fascicle without referring to particular photos. In addition, the details of the photos of floral morphology for each species can be better if it is supplemented with line drawings because many photos cannot capture hidden floral details. Additionally, the book will be more functional for the readers who utilize this book in the field if the artificial identification key of West Himalayan Orchids is presented.

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