

REVIEW

K. H. K. WODRICH: *Growing South African Indigenous Orchids*. A. A. Balkema Publishers, POB 1675, 3000 BR Rotterdam, 1997. 280 pp., many black/white and colour photographs. ISBN 90-5410-650-6. Price: NLG 165.

Judging from the title this would be a book for a distinctly limited audience. After all, only very few of the more than 430 South African orchid species are in general cultivation. For two reasons that judgement would be wrong. First, many South African orchids deserve to be much more widely cultivated. This book may be considered an excellent promotion for these beautiful but neglected species. Second, this book could well be described as an up-to-date guide to orchid growing, where the examples happen to be South African species. Especially valuable is the detailed information on cultivating terrestrial species. These are generally much more difficult to grow than the epiphytic ones, and most of the advice given here applies just as well to Australian and Mediterranean orchids. Propagating orchids by sowing is given extensive coverage, down to a blueprint for building your own laminar flow cabinet. All the information is very clearly represented, with many instructive photographs. The colour photographs are excellent, and the book is well-produced, although I personally dislike blank margins as wide as 5 cm, as they are here.

This book is warmly recommended, not only to those who are attracted by the subject of the title, but to all who are seriously interested in cultivating and propagating terrestrial orchids.

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