



## In memoriam Dr Eduard Ferdinand (Ed) de Vogel (1942–2021)

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Dr. Ed de Vogel (Fig. 1), former orchid taxonomist at the Rijks-herbarium, the Netherlands (now included in the Naturalis Biodiversity Center), has died aged 78. Spanning the profession from fieldwork to laboratory, he brought together extensive collections of orchids, revised groups of *Coelogyninae*, and guided a project to produce a synopsis of New Guinea orchids to its successful completion.

De Vogel was interested in nature since his youth. He joined the NJN, the Netherlands youth society for nature study, and took a special interest in the Miocene mollusc faunas in the eastern part of the Netherlands. Sampling the fossil-bearing beds, a few meters under the surface, demanded special equipment such as bulldozers, drilling rigs and motor driven sieves. He greatly enjoyed this work and in later years participated sometimes in similar projects for fun. He regretted that, as a student, he had been unable to become assistant to Dr C.O. van Regteren Altena, at that time curator of the Mollusca collection at the Leiden Natural History Museum. If he had managed to do so, it is doubtful that we would have known him as a botanist today.

He studied biology at Leiden University in the late 1960s. For his master's degree (or rather the Dutch equivalent thereof), Prof. C.G.G.J. van Steenis, the founder of the Flora Malesiana project, entrusted him with the task of writing a monograph of the orchid tribe (now subfamily) *Apostasiaeae*. This resulted in his first orchid paper (De Vogel 1969). As De Vogel remembered it, Van Steenis rewrote almost the entire manuscript but categorically refused to become co-author.

After graduating, De Vogel was offered a PhD project in Indonesia, to study seedlings of (mainly) forest trees. He lived for four years with his wife in Bogor, Java, collecting and sowing seeds and making observations on the seedlings. His first daughter was born in Indonesia. It took several years to write his PhD thesis and he received his doctorate in 1979. His thesis was soon published as a book, *Seedlings of Dicotyledons* (De Vogel 1980).

Earlier, in 1975, he had joined the staff of the then Rijksherbarium. During his time in Indonesia, De Vogel had taken an interest in orchids, but it was only after finishing his PhD work that he had the chance to work more seriously on these plants. He was especially engaged in the subtribe *Coelogyninae*, in which group he produced several revisions. These were published in the journal *Orchid Monographs*, which he founded and which lasted nine years before it fell victim to budget cuts. The demise of *Orchid Monographs* encouraged him to start

a new project, together with the first author, which he would consider his most enduring legacy to orchid taxonomy: a CD-ROM series in six volumes on orchids of New Guinea, using the Linnaeus II software developed by Expert centre for Taxonomic Identification (ETI) in Amsterdam (now incorporated in Naturalis Biodiversity Center). Raising funds for the project was a major challenge, but De Vogel was an excellent ambassador for his cause. Whenever he was in Asia, he took the time to travel around to meet potential supporters. He convinced the Cheng Kim Loke Foundation and the Australia and Pacific Science Foundation to invest considerable sums in the project. Later, John Tan Jiew Hoe sponsored some of his trips to New Guinea. Two volunteers, Piet Hartog and Rik Neiryndck, helped with the task of scanning and digitally cleaning manuscript drawings

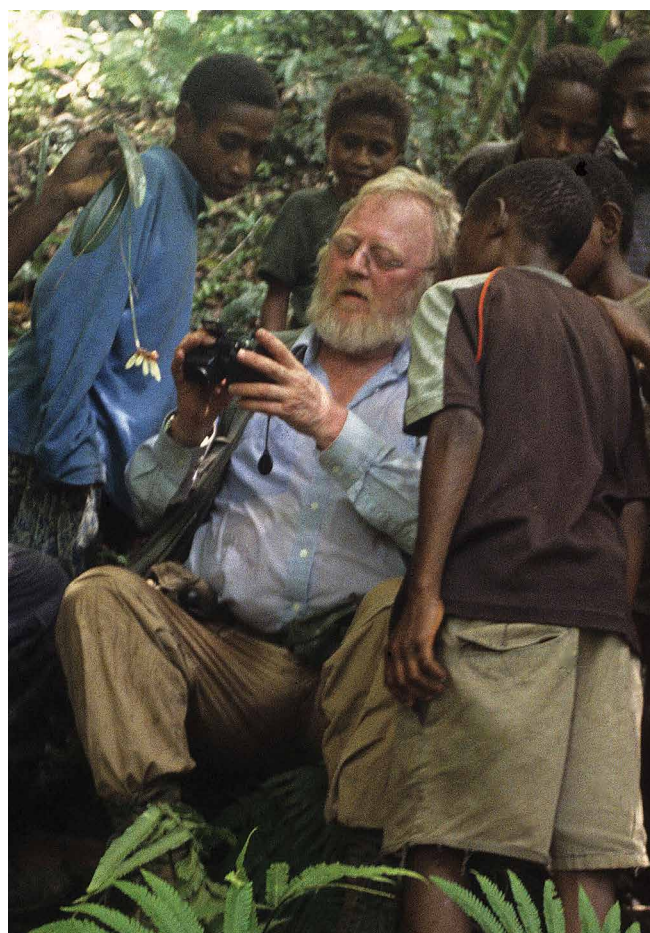


Fig. 1 Ed de Vogel collecting in Papua New Guinea in 2003 (© Art Vogel).

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Fig. 2 *Dryadorchis dasystele* Schuit. & de Vogel (© Ed de Vogel).

made by J.J. Smith, of which there are c. 6700 in the Leiden archives. Using the same ETI software, an illustrated checklist of the orchids of the Philippines on CD-ROM was produced, of which the lead author was Prof. Maribel Agoo, who spent about a year in Leiden for this purpose.

After his retirement, in 2004, De Vogel spent much of his time updating the associated website with new images and species. The CD-ROMs no longer work on modern computers, but fortunately, the content of the New Guinea series, except for the keys, is available on the website <http://www.orchidsnewguinea.com>, set up by Wolfgang Bandisch.

As a teacher, De Vogel was patient and helpful. He taught students, both in Indonesia and in Leiden, the basics of plant taxonomy, from properly collecting and labelling specimens, to writing taxonomic revisions. He in turn learned these essential skills from Van Steenis, who had lived and worked for decades in Indonesia (then the Dutch East Indies) before the war, where the renowned orchid specialist J.J. Smith was for some years his director. De Vogel taught before molecular techniques became commonplace and when cladistics was seen by some as a questionable innovation. While he himself did not engage in that kind of research, he had no doubt that the methods were sound and useful, and readily accepted the results of such studies. He had several students who did an 'orchid project' with him for their Master's degree, and he also co-supervised a number of PhD students, two of whom produced a thesis on orchids: Jaap J. Vermeulen (1993) and Barbara Gravendeel (2000).

However, De Vogel's main passion was undeniably fieldwork. He loved to travel to wild and remote places and made around 40 field trips, mainly in Indonesia (Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, Maluku and Indonesian New Guinea), Malaysia (Sabah, Sarawak), Brunei Darussalam, the Philippines, and especially Papua New Guinea, altogether spending around 14.5 years in Southeast Asia. The exact number of his field trips is somewhat difficult to establish, as some of his expeditions lasted months and included visits to different areas and islands. He collected around 10 000 herbarium specimens (often with duplicates). He never shunned challenges in the field. He could spend hours just collecting representative material of one palm or rattan. De Vogel's fluency in Bahasa Indonesia enabled him to quickly establish friendly contact with local officials, colleagues, students, and villagers, and it usually only took



Fig. 3 *Bulbophyllum nocturnum* J.J.Verm., de Vogel, Schuit & A.Vogel (© Jan Meijvogel).

him minutes to make people smile, because he loved telling anecdotes and cracking jokes.

In the field, De Vogel often showed a great disregard for comfort. Phil Cribb (pers. comm.) remembers that he regretted letting De Vogel take care of the food supplies when they went on a joint expedition to the Apo Kayan in Kalimantan in 1991. It was not that there was not enough, but one huge bag of rice and one equally huge bag of dried fish did not exactly allow for a varied menu. Rice and fish three times a day soon became a struggle. Cribb lost so much weight on that trip that his wife hardly recognized the emaciated figure when he came home. Meanwhile, Ed thrived as usual. Others remember uncomfortable nights in small villages, sleeping on concrete floors, and camping for days on a cold and rainy mountain top with a few cream crackers with marmalade as the culinary highlight of the day (the marmalade applied to the cracker with a huge bush knife). Scenes like De Vogel wading through deep mud to obtain a sample of a palm characterize the man.

Sometimes he made films during his expeditions, and some of the footage, for example in various remote islands of the Moluccas and in Papua Province, will have anthropological value because they show a way of life that no longer exists, or will soon cease to exist. During his last months, he oversaw the digitization of his expedition films.

Between 1985 and 2008, De Vogel made field trips in Sarawak and Papua New Guinea, where he focussed on collecting living orchids instead of gathering general herbarium material. Altogether, he collected close to 6000 living orchids, which were cultivated in the Hortus botanicus, Leiden, and in local collections in the countries of origin. In this way, many new species came to light (Schuiteman 2010), because only a minority of the species are in flower when you find them in the wild, but if you grow them in cultivation most will flower eventually. For several decades we, along with De Vogel, had our regular Hortus day once a week (usually on Wednesdays), when we would sample and photograph the living collections. At that time, these were expertly tended by the greenhouse manager Art Vogel and his team. We would first have lunch with the Hortus staff in Art Vogel's office (usually fried fish we had bought from a fishmonger nearby) and spent the afternoon collecting, photographing, identifying, databasing and preserving the material. This was

often exciting, especially when something new and surprising flowered, such as the beautiful *Dryadorchis dasystele* Schuit. & de Vogel (Fig. 2). One species turned out to flower at night, a fact that was discovered when De Vogel took a budding plant home to find out why the flowers were always withered when we saw them in the Hortus. This was *Bulbophyllum nocturnum* J.J.Verm., de Vogel, Schuit. & A.Vogel (Fig. 3), collected by De Vogel on the island of New Britain in 2008. Altogether, he (co-) described around 200 new orchid species, mainly originating from these collections. At least 15 plant species and one genus, *Devogelia* Schuit., as well as three species of Mollusca were named after him.

De Vogel was a short man, certainly for a Dutchman. Despite his stature, he had a special gait propelling him forwards with surprising speed, so that much taller and longer-legged people found it difficult to keep up with him. A large ginger beard (later turning grey, then white and becoming wispy) and a vest of an indeterminate greenish colour and with many pockets on each side, stuffed with hand lenses, pens and notebooks, completed his rather striking and relatively unchanging appearance. When people commented on his vest, he happily explained the advantages of wearing such a garment, and a staff member of ETI once asked him if he was married with it. De Vogel was, in fact, married twice, and left two daughters.

Early in 2020, when he believed he had recovered from throat cancer, De Vogel took the opportunity to travel once more to the Indonesian part of his beloved New Guinea. He was helping a foundation there, Yayasan Pendidikan Alam Papua, with setting up orchid, butterfly, zoological and anthropological gardens in Keerom Regency near Jayapura; he wrote how successful they had been in obtaining land and government permissions. When the Covid pandemic broke out and countries started to restrict travel, he barely managed to get on the last flight from Jayapura to Jakarta on 26 March. Sadly, the cancer returned late in 2020 and this time, treatment proved ineffectual. His doctor told him he could not be cured. De Vogel had always been a no-nonsense person and he spent his last months at home, calmly arranging his affairs. He died in his sleep on 28 July 2021.

## Eponymy of Ed de Vogel

### Mollusca

*Gastropoda, Cerithiopsidae, Cerithiopsis (Cerithiopsis) vogeli* A.W. Janssen, 1967

*Gastropoda, Raphitomidae, Raphitoma vogeli* Landau, Van Dingenen & Ceulemans, 2020

*Gastropoda, Diplommatinidae: Opisthostoma devogelii* Vermeulen 1991

### Plantae

*Apocynaceae Hoya devogelii* Rodda & Simonsson

*Cunoniaceae Weinmannia devogelii* H.C.Hopkins

*Myristicaceae Myristica devogelii* W.J.de Wilde

*Myrtaceae Syzygium devogelii* Brambach, Byng & Culmsee

*Orchidaceae Devogelia* Schuit.

*Bromheadia devogelii* Kruij.

*Bulbophyllum devogelii* J.J.Verm.

*Calanthe devogelii* P.J.Cribb & D.A.Clayton

*Chelonistele devogelii* Schuit.

*Coelogyne devogelii* (J.J.Wood) M.W.Chase & Schuit.

*Coelogyne edii* R.Rice

*Coelogyne eduardii* M.W.Chase & Schuit.

*Dendrobium devogelii* J.J.Wood

*Dendrochilum devogelii* J.J.Wood

*Habenaria devogeliana* Kolan., Szlach., Kras & S.Nowak.

*Primulaceae Ardisia devogelii* B.C.Stone

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(assisted by Lut C, Van Welzen PC)

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1970

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1971

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