

PHIOPEDILUM TONSUM

Paphiopedilum tonsum was first collected in 1882 by Charles Curtis, an orchid collector for Messrs. Veitch & Sons of Chelsea. A plant collected by him in a batch of *P. superbiens* (as *P. curtisii*) flowered in the late summer of 1883 at the Royal Exotic Nursery. H.G. Reichenbach described it shortly afterwards naming it for its petals which lack noticeably ciliate margins. This feature and its rather distinctive ochre colour serve to distinguish it from allied species such as *P. javanicum* (Reinw. ex Lindl.) Pfitzer, *P. dayanum* (Lindl.) Stein and *P. violascens* Schltr. in sect. *Barbata* Kraenzl.

Paphiopedilum tonsum is also rather a variable species particularly in flower size, petal shape and spotting and staminode shape and, although no subspecies are recognised, several varieties have been described.



Fig. 98. *Paphiopedilum tonsum* growing in the wild in northern Sumatra. (Photo.: J. Comber)