Cypripedium druryi in the first volume of his *Icones Plantarum Indiae Occidentalis* (1874). It was transferred to *Paphiopedilum* by Stein (1892).

The geographical isolation of *P. druryi* from other *Paphiopedilum* species is remarkable, for many hundreds of miles separate it from allied species in the Himalaya and South-east Asia. It is apparently confined to the Travancore Hills in India. V. & J. Mammen (1974), in an illustrated account of their expedition to re-collect the species, describe its habitat in the Agastya Malai (Agasthyamalai) area, above 1525 m: bamboo forest gives way to open rock faces covered with sparse scrubby vegetation and small patches of palms. Here, relict populations of *P. druryi* 'cling tenaciously to overhanging rock faces' in the few areas which have escaped burning. The orchids grow in full sun or lightly shaded by a scrub of *Euphorbia* species or grass. Sarojini Menon *et al.* (1995) have conducted a detailed study of seven localities within a three to four km stretch of mountain side in Agasthyamalai, at between 1400 and 1550 m elevation, and suggest that it grows on steep south-east or south-west-facing rocky slopes in open or partly shaded places on weathered rocks and in poor soils in montane grassland in association with grasses, shrubs and stunted trees. The roots are embedded in the top layer of soil. Individual plants with rhizomes up to one and a half metres long and with up to 35 shoots were observed. Plants were easily found in March when they were flowering but had become overgrown and shaded by the annual growth of the surrounding vegetation by October.

Paphiopedilum druryi is very limited in distribution in the wild and certainly vulnerable. The species was already very rare when rediscovered in 1972 due to the destruction of its habitat by burning. Further recent collections from its known localities have severely reduced it. Recent field work suggests that viable populations survive. Sathish Kumar (pers. comm.) found about 280 plants surviving in five colonies, a couple of which had populations in single figures. Field work by Sarojini Menon *et al.* (1995) led them to conclude that it survives in relatively small populations, ranging from 20 to 1500 square metres in extent. Some of these contain substantial numbers of plants, up to 3459 in the largest. Previous reports of its extinction or near extinction are erroneous but have led to field work that now provides a better understanding of the biology of this isolated species. The rate of fruit set and seedling numbers in the known populations are low.

Fig. 81. *Paphiopedilum druryi*, close-up of flower in cultivation. (Photo.: P. Cribb)

Fortunately, *P. druryi* is now fairly widespread in cultivation and it is to be hoped that it will remain popular not only for its delightful butter-yellow flowers but also as a parent in hybridisation programmes where its flower-shape and colour are desirable features. Plants from the early introduction of Beddome