



Fig. 35. *Paphiopedilum stonei* in its natural habitat on limestone in Sarawak. (Photo.: A. Lamb)

Despite the frequent appearance of jungle-collected plants in the trade, *P. stonei* has a very limited distribution and its frequent re-collection must inevitably have severely depleted it in the wild. It is somewhat protected by its habitat, because limestone areas are not easy of access and one hopes that sufficient colonies survive where they cannot be stripped. However, even sheer cliffs, one of its favoured habitats, do not seem to be sufficient to protect it. It grows on these at between 60–700 m elevation, lightly shaded by the crowns of trees growing at the base of the cliffs. All of the herbarium collections I have examined, bar one, come from the First Division of Sarawak. I was particularly interested to find a single specimen of *P. stonei* collected on a cliff at 700 m in the Hose Mountains in the Third Division. This has broad leaves over 4 cm in width and five smaller flowers with a yellow background to the sepals. It much resembles plants sold as *P. stonei* var. *latifolium* in recent years.

*Paphiopedilum stonei* is unlikely to be confused with any other species but is, nevertheless, quite variable in nature and several of the most unusual have received recognition at varietal rank. The most remarkable of these is var. *platytaenium* (Rchb. f.) Stein with broad petals 1.5 cm wide. Illustrations of this spectacular orchid are given by Warner & Williams