

66. PAPHIOPEDILUM PURPURATUM

Paphiopedilum purpuratum is a distinctive species similar in its overall colouring and flower size to *P. barbatum* but readily distinguished by its broader petals, which lack large warts on the upper margin, by its more lunate staminode, and relatively smaller ovate, acuminate dorsal sepal. The petals of *P. purpuratum* are also covered by small warts on the basal two-thirds of the inner side.

This species was originally described in 1837 by John Lindley who based his description on an illustration of a plant cultivated by Messrs. Loddiges but imported by Messrs. Knight of King's Road Nursery, Chelsea. The provenance of this plant was reportedly the Malay Archipelago, an origin repeated by Hooker for his Botanical Magazine account in 1856. The plant illustrated as *Cypripedium purpuratum* by Wight (in his *Icones Plantarum Indiae Occidentalis* 5: t. 1760, 1851) is almost certainly the Malaysian *P. barbatum*. This putative origin, no doubt, led to the description of *Cypripedium sinicum* from Hong Kong. However,



Fig. 120. *Paphiopedilum purpuratum*, close-up of flower. (Photo.: J. Asher)