

25. PAPHIOPEDILUM GLAUCOPHYLLUM

Paphiopedilum glaucophyllum was discovered in the South Pegunungan Mountains at 200–300 m altitude near Turen in east Java by B.J.C. Verhey in 1897. He presented a plant to the Buitenzorg (now Bogor) Botanic Garden where it flowered in 1899 and was described the following year by the eminent Dutch botanist J.J. Smith.

Shortly afterwards, M. Rimestrad sent large numbers of plants to Europe and it was figured in *Curtis's Botanical Magazine* in 1903. Since then, it has been a relatively common plant in cultivation and, until recently, was exported in some quantity from Java. I have recently visited the area where it was discovered in east Java and can confirm that it is now a rare plant in the wild. Many of its former habitats have been destroyed by agriculture and forestry on this overpopulated island while the discovery of new colonies rapidly leads to their exploitation by plant collectors whose activities remain unchecked in the region.

Paphiopedilum glaucophyllum is closely allied to *P. victoria-regina* and they have in recent years been considered subspecies of the same widespread species. It differs however in a number of small yet consistent features, notably its glaucous foliage, the dorsal sepal which lacks bold maroon stripes on the veins, the deflexed, long-ciliate, white petals spotted with purple, and the obtuse staminode.

The considerable influx in recent years of wild-collected plants of this complex from both Java and Sumatra has tended to confirm that the distinctions between the various taxa are small yet consistent. Also Wood (1976a) and Karasawa & Saito (1982) have indicated that *P. glaucophyllum* has a consistently higher chromosome number than *P. victoria-regina*. I shall therefore, mindful of the need for nomenclatural stability, treat *P. glaucophyllum* as a distinct species on morphological, cytological and geographical grounds.



Fig. 52. *Paphiopedilum glaucophyllum*, close-up of flower. (Photo: E. Grell)