



SEPTEMBER 2007

GENERAL MAILING ADDRESS

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The Ottawa Orchid Society meets every third Sunday of every month from September to May inclusive at 1:30 P.M. at the Tom Brown Arena, 141 Bayview, Ottawa. Guests are welcome.

MEMBERSHIP: \$25 from September 1 - August 31.

MEETING: Tom Brown Arena, 141 Bayview, Ottawa Sunday, September 16, 2007 @ 1:30 PM

Bulbophyllums and their Culture

Weird, odd, stinky, bizarre, beautiful and wonderful are but a few of the very many words that can describe Bulbophyllums, one of the largest families in the orchid world. In September, come and meet **Bill Thoms**, a noted grower and orchid judge from Central Florida. With his wife, **Doris Dukes**, he has won more Awards for Culture than just about anyone else in the world, a whopping total of 62 at last count in over 20 genera, including 19 in the Bulbophyllum alliance. Bill will be speaking on this very topic at the World Orchid Congress in February, so come and take a sneak peek without the travel. This is also your chance to give Bulbophyllums a try, since Bill will be bringing a number of plants with him. You can also pre-order your plants to make sure you get exactly what you want. A list of his plants and directions are included on the Society website.

Orchids 101 for beginners (and those looking for a refresher) begins at 12:30 p.m. sharp. September's topic is 'Getting Orchids to grow and bloom'. Marilyn Light is giving this course.

Don't forget to bring your blooming orchids to our monthly show table!

NOTE FROM SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Summer break is over and it looks like we are going to have a great year ahead. Our Program Coordinator, **Julie Mertens**, has put together a great package of events and speakers for the forthcoming year. **Marilyn Light** has agreed to continue with her Orchids 101 lectures, a popular feature of our monthly meetings with many of our members. If you have never taken any course from Marilyn, you are encouraged to attend. She's a great teacher!!! We are happy to announce that **Jean Hollebone** is continuing to coordinate the Society's monthly show table, another feature that is a major highlight of our monthly meetings. Folks with blooming orchids are encouraged to bring plants to the monthly show table. Don't be shy, show us what you have blooming in your home. Plans are underway to change the look of our monthly newsletter, jazz it up with photographs and give it new life. We are working to put the newsletter up on the Society web site where you will find photographs in color. We would like to have members visit the web site for the monthly newsletter as this will greatly help to reduce the high cost of producing a hard copy of the newsletter and mailing it out to folks. Money saved here will be used to benefit the Society in other ways while keeping membership costs at the current level. Members who do not have computers or internet access will continue to receive Spike in the mail. Speaking of memberships, September is membership renewal month. It would be great if members renew their memberships promptly. This would help our Membership Coordinator, **Theresa Lafleur**, greatly. The ECOS show in Montreal is coming up October 27-28. Hope many of you will be able to attend. It is a great show with always some out-of-country vendors to tempt you with new hybrids. If you are planning to go to Montreal, try to go down with some other Society members. This is a wonderful way to get to know other members better and who knows, you could end up putting together a display with one or two other members that you got to know on just such a trip.

There is a tremendous amount of excitement in the orchid community over the discovery of *Phragmipedium kovachii*, an orchid with fantastic 8-10 inch flowers! There are some exciting crosses that have been made, more to be created, and some of these seedling hybrids are already appearing in the marketplace. Should you be one to buy either one of the species or hybrid, you can produce your own cross and see what this produces. Apparently the hybrids grow very quickly to blooming size and you don't have to wait 6 to 10 years to see what your creation looks like. Your editor has put together an article on *Phrag. kovachii* and the color photographs will make your mouth water.

Our Society will be hosting the Canadian Orchid Congress' annual meeting in conjunction with our annual show in April and this is sure to attract orchid enthusiasts from across the country. We hope to have a great show and work is underway already lining up speakers and putting together a program of lectures that will be of broad public appeal. The World Orchid Congress is to be held in Florida this upcoming January. A number of Society members are planning to attend and January is a great month for a trip down to Florida. There will be participants from around the world and you can be assured that there will be some great things to see and buy at this event...remember the *Phrag. kovachii* hybrids I spoke about...look out for them. If you have never propagated an orchid but thought of trying your hand at it, this is the orchid to use, either the species or the hybrid, you won't be disappointed with the results.

Well, enough said. Let's look forward to exciting and fun times ahead with our orchids.

MONTHLY SHOW TABLE

Thanks to Jean Hollebone, who has agreed to continue coordinating the monthly show table, we are fortunate to be able to continue with this very popular feature of our monthly meetings. The monthly show table serves as our mini show and provides us with a wonderful insight to what members grow throughout the year. Members and guests are encouraged to bring their blooming plants to monthly meetings and place them on the show table in their appropriate category for judging purposes. Each category is identified by genera. There are some non-genera judging categories such as one for miniature orchids (orchids that are classed as miniatures because of their growth habit) covering all orchid genera and one expressly for "novices", people who have not previously won a show table ribbon at our monthly meetings.

People with plants for the show table are encouraged to bring their orchids as close to one o'clock as possible to permit the plant to be judged for a ribbon award. Show table judges may have one or more categories to judge and

once a class has been judged, plants placed on the show table after this point may not be included in the judging. To avoid disappointments, come early and place your plant on the show table in the appropriate class.

One last note. We ask each member bringing plants to monthly meetings to ensure that they are pest and disease free. If you think you have a problem plant and are bringing it in to a meeting to have a someone look at your plant, please place the plant in a plastic bag and keep it away from contact with other plants, whether on the show table, the raffle table, people's sale plants, etcetera. If a plant with pests or a possible disease problem is found on a show table, the raffle table, or some other spot where other plants are present, the affected plant will be moved away and isolated so that other plants do not become affected.

2007-2008 Meeting Schedule

Julie Mertens, our Program Chair, has been hard at work planning the next season. Here is the 2007/2008 schedule:

Meeting Date	Presenter and Topic
September 16, 2007	Bill Thoms will speak on Bulbophyllum Culture – this is the very same presentation that he will be making during the World Orchid Congress in Miami!
	Group order from Carter and Holmes – a great opportunity to get great plants!
October 21, 2007	Jerry Duffield will present The Do-It-Yourselfer-Orchidist's Guide to Lights and Fans
November 18, 2007	Annual OOS Auction
December 16, 2007	Christmas Social
January 20, 2008	Nina Rach, a well-known Texas AOS judge, will speak on Jewel Orchids and Other Terrestrials
February 17, 2008	A Recap of the 19th World Orchid Congress, with a very special plant raffle
March 16, 2008	Michael MacConaill, our expert AOS photographer in residence, will present Orchid Photography 101, just in time for you to practice your photography skills for the orchid show season!
April 20, 2008	Henry Steger, a past President of the Ottawa Orchid Society, will speak on Local Orchids – who says you have to go far to see new orchids?
May 18, 2008	Dr. James Brasch, of Hormones Canada, will be speaking on Orchid Propagation and the Conservation of Private Collections

UPCOMING EVENTS

Toronto is an official AOS (American Orchid Society) judging center. Montreal is an additional judging site for the Toronto Judging Center. Judging in Toronto is generally on the first Saturday of every month. Judging in TORONTO takes place at the Toronto Botanical Garden (formerly Edwards Gardens), corner of 77 Lawrence Ave. (corner Leslie Street) beginning at 1:00 p.m. unless stated otherwise. Judging in Montreal is generally the 3rd

Saturday of every month at the Montreal Botanical Garden, 4101 Sherbrooke Street East beginning at 1:00 p.m. Although judging begins at 1:00 p.m., there is a great deal of activity before that. Beginning at 10:00 a.m., there is student training, workshops, presentation of recent award slides, etc. If you are interested in learning more about orchids, these are two places for it. Anyone can bring a plant in for judging. Everything is open to the public and everything is free. **For enquiries concerning the Montreal Judging Center or the AOS Judging Program, call Howard Ginsberg @ 514-878-1900 or 514-871-0205 (e-mail: orchids@bedfordorchids.com; for Toronto, call Mario Ferrusi @ 905-892-4187, e-mail: mferrusi@sympatico.ca .**

- Sept.22-23 Central Ontario Orchid Society (COOS) Show and Sale, Cambridge Hespeler Arena, 640 Ellis Road, Cambridge, Ont. Contact: Dr. Frank Maine, tel.#519-823-1089, e-mail: maine.f@sympatico.ca <http://www.coos.ca/>
- Sept 29-30 The Foothills Orchid Society (Calgary, Alberta), Triwood Community Association Hall, 2244 Chicoutimi Drive NW, Calgary, AB Contact: Sharon Williams (williams.sharon@shaw.ca) <http://members.shaw.ca/foohillsorchidsociety/>
- Oct.27-28 ORCHIDFÊTE 2007 at the Days Hotel, 1995 Rue Guy (near intersection of Rene Levesque Blvd.) in Montreal . This event is hosted by the Eastern Canada Orchid Society (ECOS) of Montreal. Phone 450-467-4795 <http://www.ecosorchids.ca/>
- Oct. 27-28 Fraser Valley Orchid Society Show & Plant Sale will be held at the Langley Civic Centre, 20699 - 42 Ave., Langley, B.C. <http://www.orchidbc.ca/>
- Nov 10-11 Niagara Region OS CAW Hall 124 Bunting Rd, St. Catharines, Ont Contact: Jodi Shannon, Show Chairperson Tel.# 905-641-1934 <http://www.niagaraorchidsociety.org/>

2008

- Jan. 23-27 World Orchid Congress, Miami, Florida <http://www.19WOC.com/>

CARTER AND HOLMES GROUP ORDER – Julie Mertens

You will no doubt also remember from our fall calendar that September is the month where we'll be making a group order from Carter and Holmes in the States. C & H has been in business for more than 50 years and has grown to be one of the largest in the States, with worldwide recognition as an outstanding source for plants. With over 800 items, there is definitely something for everybody!

During the September meeting, we will have C & H catalogues and listings available for your perusal, though we would recommend you also visit their website (www.carterandholmes.com) before the meeting to look through their plants at your leisure and to make your selections. And while you do so, we would ask to keep in mind that all plants imported into Canada must be bare root, which means that for us there is not a great deal of difference between the plants sold as "bare root" and those in 2.5" pots (except a few bucks off!). Also, Carter and Holmes will give you one free orchid for every five you order (ergo, order 10 plants and you get two freebies). And finally, please note that unfortunately, because of exporting and importing restrictions, we will not be able to order Paphiopedilum species. All other species and Paphiopedilum hybrids are good to go.

Another thing to keep in mind is that the price listed on the C & H website is not exactly the price you will be paying. C & H offers all orchid societies a 25% discount, but we have to add to that price the cost of obtaining phytosanitary and CITES certificates which are necessary for importing (50%), the cost of currency conversion (about 6% as we write this), taxes (also 6%), banking fees (up to \$50) and, the biggest item of them all, the cost of

shipping from South Carolina (several hundred dollars). This gives us the following estimates: to plants costing less than \$15, add \$3; to plants costing \$15 to \$20, add \$2; to plants costing \$25, add \$1; and to plants costing \$30 and up, there will be no additional charge. As an example, let's say that I want to order the bare root *Asconopsis Irene Dobkin 'Elmhurst'* HCC/AOS (and I actually do) which is listed at \$10.50, my price will be \$13.50 CDN. These are of course estimates and subject to slight changes.

All orders must be paid at the September meeting. Cheques should be made out to the Ottawa Orchid Society. Unpaid plants will unfortunately not be ordered. If you cannot attend the September meeting, please contact our Program Chair, Julie Mertens, at (613) 323-0460 or by e-mail at julie_mertens@videotron.ca, to make arrangements. You can also contact Julie if you have any questions or require clarifications.

Plants will be delivered to Julie's house the week before our October meeting, at which time they will be packaged according to orders to be delivered to you during our meeting on October 21, 2007. Again, those unable to make that meeting are asked to contact Julie to make alternate arrangements.

The discovery of *Phragmipedium kovachii* has excited many in the orchid community resulting in a race to be the first to make this orchid available to orchid growers throughout the world. Crosses are being made as quickly as this can be done. There is no doubt that we will see some fantastic plants in the years ahead with orchid flowers never seen before. However, behind the scene, habitats are being stripped of a natural treasure much like what took place when European conquerors first invaded South and Central America beginning in the 1500's and repeated throughout the centuries. A lot of parallels can be drawn between what took place then and what is happening now.

PHRAGMIPEDIUM KOVACHII



Fig. 1: Alfredo Manrique with *Phrag. kovachii*

Photographed above next to a *Phragmipedium kovachii* is Alfredo Manrique, owner of Centro de Jardineria Manrique (CJM) in Lima, Peru. In May, 2003, Alfredo Manrique was the first person chosen by the Peruvian Ministry of Natural Resources (INRENA) to artificially propagate the magnificent and stunning *Phragmipedium kovachii*. INRENA gave Alfredo permission to collect five *Phrag. kovachii* plants in their natural habitat, just weeks before that habitat was completely depleted of all *Phrag. kovachii*, an estimated 2000 to 3000 mature plants and thousands of seedlings. CJM entered into joint ventures with Glen Decker from Piping Rock Orchids (USA), Fritz Schomburg from Tropical Propagation (USA), and Peter Croezen of Green Canyon Orchids (Canada) to grow and distribute plants of *Phrag. kovachii* and *Phrag. kovachii* hybrids worldwide.

For the USA, Europe and Asia: Piping Rock Orchids <http://www.pipingrockorchids.com/>
For Canada: Green Canyon Orchids <http://home.golden.net/~orchids>



Figure 2: *Phragmipedium kovachii*. The flower of *Phragmipedium kovachii* has a horizontal spread of up to 8 inches (11 – 15 cm.) and ranges in color from pink to royal purple.

History: *Phrag. kovachii* was discovered by Faustina Medina Bautista in October, 2001 on or near his farm near Moyobamba and Chachapoyas in northern Peru. The first documented illegal appearance of *Phrag. kovachii* was at the May 17-19, 2002 Redland International Orchid Show in Miami, Florida. An unspecified Peruvian nursery owner is rumored to have been offering it for sale at \$10,000 per plant. A little while later on May 26, 2002 Virginian J. Michael Kovach purchased 3 plants from Bautista at his roadside orchid kiosk. He brought one plant back to the United States which he took to Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota Florida on June 5, 2002. A formal description was immediately written by two staff members of Selby's Orchid Identification Center, J.T. Atwood & S. Dalstron, and one Peruvian reviewer, R. Fernandez. It was issued on June 12, 2002 as a supplement to *Selbyana*, the Gardens' scientific publication. This beat the publication by Eric Christenson in *Orchids*, which was published June 17, 2002, by five days. The tale of the upheaval that followed Selby's description of an obviously illegally-imported plant is well-covered in "The Case of the Purloined Orchid," by C. Pittman (2005).

The Peruvian Government hoped to have the most important orchid species to be found in the Neotropics in the last 100 years named after the country where it was found, *Phragmipedium peruvianum* but this was not to be.

Plant Habit

- Leaves: up to 55 cm long, 5 cm wide, hard, leathery, with occasional basal purple-red coloration
- Inflorescence: 1-3 flowered, blooms sequential, 20-40 cm long
- Bloom: 15-23 cm wide, after opening it grows and lightens in color, ovary 8-9 mm wide, 8-11 cm long

Habitat Data

- Distribution - near Moyobamba and Tarapoto, Peru, elevation: 1900-2000 m.; peak flowering in the wild: October-March [probably]
- Ecology: steep limestone cliff faces lacking blanketing vegetation; mean temperature range: 16-17°C
- Light: partial sun, from Koopowitz (2003): "The cliff was unshaded by trees and thus the plants were growing in exposed sunlight."
- Medium: calcareous, pH 6.97, on moss over brown, gravelly soil, roots within a few cm of the soil surface

- Water: constant moisture, from Koopowitz (2003): "This was not the rainy season. It had only rained twice this day."

Currently, there are only 15 legally collected plants of *Phrag. kovachii* in cultivation in three Peruvian nurseries. These three nurseries were given permission by the Peruvian government to collect 5 plants apiece for use in artificial propagation. However, thousands of plants have been illegally collected and exported all over the world, especially to the United States and Europe.

The first legal plants were collected by Alfredo Manrique, owner of Centro de Jardineria Manrique. Centro de Jardineria Manrique partnered with Piping Rock Orchids of Galway, New York, Tropical Propagations of Madison, Wisconsin, and Green Canyon Orchids of Canada to breed species and hybrid seedlings from these plants. Piping Rock Orchids will oversee worldwide distribution (except for Canada, for which Green Canyon Orchids is responsible.). The first species and hybrid flasks and hybrid seedlings were offered for sale at orchid shows in Spring 2006. The first widespread advertisement by Piping Rock of species and hybrid seedlings appeared in the August 2006 Orchids magazine.

The second group of plants was collected for propagation by Peruflora. The flasks resulting from the breeding of these plants were first made available for sale at the 2005 World Orchid Conference in Dijon, France. Flasks have since been offered for sale all over the world. However, anyone who purchased flasks from Peruflora was required to sign a contract promising not to sell, trade or donate any seedlings until February 15, 2007. This contract was issued by the nursery, Peruflora, and was in no way connected with INRENA, the branch of the Peruvian government concerned with overseeing the legal propagation of *Phrag. kovachii*. The contract is suspected to be a way for Peruflora to maintain a monopoly on flask and seedling sales for as long as possible.

The third group of plants was collected by Vivero Nuevo Destino, the nursery of Lee & Chady Moore.

The first US nursery to offer *Phrag. kovachii* seedlings from Peruflora for sale was Orchids Limited of Plymouth, Minnesota. They were offered as "futures," to be delivered in April 2007. Prices for individual plants were \$225-\$500 (including overnight shipping), depending on the seedling size at the time of delivery. A 50% non-refundable deposit was required to reserve a seedling and if the company could not fulfill the order, the deposit was issued as store-credit rather than a refund. This offer by Orchids Limited was viewed by some as gouging on a scale never previously heard of in the American orchid community. In response to criticism posted on the Slipper Orchid Forum, Jerry Lee Fischer states that, "Now as to costs. I am charging a price which includes overnight shipping. \$225.00 is not a great deal of money when you consider that I have already spent well over \$11,000.00 for 8 flasks (this includes transportation and trip costs). I also spent 4 days of travel time plus another 4 days getting the whole trip arranged. I am presently paid anywhere between \$175.00 to \$350.00 per hour when I do consulting work for hobbyists or commercial nurseries. This work supplements our income so my time is worth something as well. I am also spending 2 years of effort and care to grow these plants to the best of my ability. Next time you go out to a fancy restaurant and spend \$200.00 on a meal what do you have the next day? Surely an interesting orchid plant is worth more than that." The total retail price of the futures being offered by Orchids limited was \$75,000

The second US nursery to offer *Phrag. kovachii* seedlings from Peruflora to be delivered in early 2007 was Flasks by Chuck Acker. These seedlings were offered in batches of 5 for a far more reasonable price of \$100 per seedling. A 50% deposit was required at the time of purchase, but would be refunded if the company could not fulfill the order.

In 2006, Piping Rock Orchids was selling flasks of *Phrag. kovachii* with 12-15 seedlings for \$225 (US); flasks with 25-30 seedlings for \$400 (US); and individual seedlings in 2 ¼ in. pots for \$100 (US). *Phrag. kovachii* hybrid seedlings were being sold at \$75 (US) each.



Fig. 3: Glen Decker, owner of Piping Rock Orchids holding a *Phragmipedium kovachii*

In August 2006, Piping Rock Orchids was selling 3”– 4” seedlings of *Phrag. kovachii* for approx. \$100 (US) and was optimistic that many of these plants would be blooming by the Spring of 2007. The average size of flowers is 7” but the largest flower they have had was 9.5 inches across. There tend to be 1-3 flowers per inflorescence and the “Laura” parent they are using is blooming twice a year.

According to Glen Decker of Piping Rock Orchids, they are the first American nursery to be actively propagating and hybridizing *Phrag. kovachii*. This has been a project that they had been working on since May of 2003, when Alfredo Manrique, owner of Centro de Jardineria Manrique, Lima, Peru, was granted the first permit to collect the five plants that they are presently working with. Since that time, three companies have formed an exclusive partnership for the US, European and Asian markets to make this all happen, one from Peru and the other two from the United States. This partnership is comprised of Centro de Jardineria Manrique - owner, Alfredo Manrique, Piping Rock Orchids - owner, Glen Decker, and Tropical Propagations - owner, Fritz Schomburg. There is a separate partnership between Peter Croezen of Green Canyon Orchids International in Canada with Alfredo Manrique to sell *Phrag. kovachii* in Canada. After countless meetings between Alfredo and INRENA officials in Peru, Fritz and Decker returned from Peru with 24 mother flasks: 10 flasks of *kovachii* sibs and selfings and 14 flasks of different *kovachii* hybrids. After the arrival of the 24 "mother" flasks, Fritz Schomburg began the task of replating the seedlings at his lab, Tropical Propagations in Madison, Wisconsin. Many of these mother flasks contain thousands of plants and there is an expectation that there will be an excellent supply of most of the crosses produced. Based on how long the seedlings have been in the mother flasks, it is apparent that the species is growing slower than the hybrids.

Based on germination and growth rates, Glen Decker expects the following crosses to be the first hybrids for sale in 2006:

- Phrag. Haley Decker = *Phragmipedium* (*kovachii* x Saint Ouen) (Saint Ouen = Hanne Popow x *besseae*)
- Phrag. Suzanne Decker = *Phragmipedium* (*kovachii* x Cape Sunset) (Cape Sunset = Eric Young x *schlimii*)
- Phrag. Fritz Schomburg = *Phragmipedium* (*kovachii* x *besseae*)

Phragmipedium kovachii x Living Fire (Living Fire = Sorcerer's Apprentice x besseae)
Phragmipedium kovachii x Walter Schomburg (Walter Schomburg = Eric Young x Andean Fire)

Canadians who wish to purchase Phragmipedium kovachii flasks please contact Green Canyon Orchids, see <http://home.golden.net/~orchids>



Fig. 4: Phrag. Haley Decker

Fig. 4 is a photograph of Phrag. Haley Decker (April 12, 2007). The natural spread of the flower is just under 14 cm. (approx. 5.5 inches); petal width is just under 5 cm. It is expected that the flowers of a more mature plant will be bigger. This hybrid is named after Glen Decker's daughter, Haley.

In the December 2003 issue of Orchid Digest magazine, Harold Koopowitz wrote an interesting article about his visit to Peru to document and photograph a recently discovered patch of Phragmipedium Kovachii. News followed soon after from a Peruvian grower that this patch, as with three other locations discovered earlier, had been stripped bare of these magnificent orchids. The following is the first part of a lengthy posting by Olaf Gruss on the Orchid Spring Discussion Board on Tuesday, December 23, 2003. In Olaf's posting it is not clear which bits (if any) were written by Olaf, and which bits were written by Lee Moore.

Dear Orchidfriends:

Today I get from a friend a very interesting but also horrible story about Phrag. kovachii. The original mail was written by Lee Moore and sent to many orchidists all over the world.

I have just returned from my farm in Moybamba this week and what I am going to relate to you about what I have seen and discovered on this trip will shock and enrage you.

I happened to return to my hotel at lunchtime with my friend, Manuel Camacho who is a local orchid enthusiast and guide to the Phragmipedium kovachii sites. We noticed a double cabin pick truck parked near the door of our hotel. What we saw in this pickup shocked us both and we could not believe what we were seeing!

There were 7 large rice and coffee sacks stuffed full with several hundred of the largest P. kovachii that we have ever seen with leaves fully 2-3 feet long sticking out the tops of the sacks with no attempt to hide them. I wanted to take a video or photo but I had left my cameras at the farm and was helpless.

My wife had seen the farmer Faustino Medina hanging around the hotel earlier and asked why he was here. He just said he came to see some friends. Faustino is the original discoverer of Phragmipedium kvachii and now we know why he was hanging around our hotel. We had heard rumors about a new site being found and now it was confirmed because the previous four sites have been totally wiped out.

It was just a coincidence and a one time chance that we happened to come in while the truck was parked at the hotel to see this contraband. This makes me wonder how many others that we did not have the chance to see. Since it was Saturday, we could not report this to INRENA to have this man detained. I took down his license, etc. and found out from the hotel reception who he was and that he lived in Tarapoto. I also learned that he comes to Moyobamba very often and does the same thing. So he checked out with his truckload of *Phragmipedium kovachii* and went on his way with no one to stop him. We went to Tarapoto on Monday to make the denouncement to INRENA about this atrocity. Guess what? All government offices in Peru had shut down totally until the 6th of January for summer vacations. Only in Peru do things like this happen. The whole government shuts down for 3 weeks...can you believe this?

Anyway, I found that there had been an exhibition of the famous new and most 'valuable' orchid in the world at a downtown hotel and was featured on the local TV the week before. Incidentally, INRENA, said or did nothing about this. After investigating this, I found that the exhibitor had been the owner of the pickup truck, Ing. Kenneth Reategui who had a small recreational park and restaurant on the outskirts of town. I went there in hopes of getting some pictures as evidence. After paying my entrance fee of 1 Sol to this abandoned park, I asked the young boy that seemed to be in charge about these new special slipper orchids. He said that Mr. Kenneth brought a lot of them in the other day but has taken them all to a big orchid dealer in Lima.

Also, we learned that a few weeks after Koopowitz visited the last known site that was teaming with *P. kovachii* about which he wrote in the *Orchidist*, a helicopter with cargo boxes on the skids, came in to pick up an unknown large quantity in sacks. The helicopter did not land at the site but picked them up on the road after they had been brought out by 'orchid enthusiasts'. We have the name of the helicopter company and the registration number that has been reported to INRENA which has done nothing about it. We are trying to investigate this ourselves to find out who chartered that helicopter on that date to make an official denouncement with documentation.

In early September, a friend of mine went to the site which Koopowitz visited & photographed only to find it totally wiped out including all visible seedlings except for two plants that they saw very high up out of reach on the cliff which is the only reason they are still there. They took photographs of this site as it is today which I am forwarding to Koopowitz for the record. We know who did the deed because he sold several hundred to an Ecuadorian dealer and others to a dealer in Lima. He offered 200 to me which I turned down. He is Jose Mendoza, the taxi driver that took Kovach to Progresso when he got his single plant that he took to Selby for identification. We know him well because he has been our taxi driver for a couple of years until recently when we dispatched him after finding out what he was doing.

Now, a new site has been found by Faustino which also is quickly going the way of the Dodo Bird. These statements are fact and not rumor because we live there and know everyone and almost everything that is going on.

Unfortunately, the *Phragmipedium kovachii* has had a very sad history since its discovery by farmer Faustino Medina in May a year and a half ago. The first plants were sold to truck drivers and tourists on the side of the road as pretty flowering plants for less than a dollar. Naturally, they never would have survived in such hands. Then along came Villena who bought up all she could get her hands on and then Kovach got his single plant left over after Villena left.

Farmer Faustino had found two sites which were quickly wiped out. My wife was able to get a hold of some of these for our nursery before they were all gone. But these were sabotaged by a local jealous 'orchid enthusiast' in an attempt to keep us out of the future market. Most of these died but we were able to salvage a few of these which are growing well now. Then farmer Juan found two more sites which were also quickly wiped out. The second site being the one that Koopowitz visited and wrote about but is now gone with the wind. And now comes farmer Faustino with another recent find which will not last very long. I only saw ONE pickup truck load going out. How many more have I not seen and are yet to go out until those are also wiped out? This last site will not see the New Year.
