

PREFACE

In November 2012, the Fourth Scientific Conference on Andean Orchids was held, seven years after the First Conference in Gualaceo, Ecuador. What began as an idea conceived at a dining room table with Pepe Portilla of Ecuagenera in 2004 is now an internationally renowned series with two goals: 1) convene experts from the Andes and elsewhere to share their knowledge and promote the protection and preservation of the unparalleled species richness of the Andes, and 2) help train students from all the Americas in techniques related to systematics, ecology, and conservation science that can be applied and shared with others in their own countries. Since the First Conference, there have been more than 100 speakers in the series from around the world with steadily increasing numbers of registrants and poster abstracts. Over 40 scientific posters were on display at the Fourth Conference, most of them from Andean nations, Mexico, and Brazil.

ALEC M. PRIDGEON