

## RESEÑAS DE LIBROS

**KÖNIGER, WILLIBALD.** 2004. *Oncidium*. Eine Monographie - Band I / A monograph - Volume 1. München, Verlag Helga Königer. 256 pp., color photographs and pencil drawings. In German and English.

First of a planned series of five volumes, the first release of the monograph of the genus *Oncidium* by Willibald Königer, with the assistance of Dieter Pongratz, includes 60 species, all of them discussed and illustrated with a crisp color photograph, a detailed and well-reproduced pencil drawing by Pongratz, and a bilingual text in German and English. Texts include the bibliographical citation of the protologue, the acronym of the herbaria where holotypes are deposited, a list of synonyms, and paragraphs on etymology, assignment to a Section within *Oncidium*, reference to similar species, description (with a separate paragraph on measurements), diagnostic features, notes on ecology, variation and nomenclature, culture, and distribution. In the chapter on distribution a few localities are given for each species, based on field observations by the author, data from protologues and herbaria specimens (but location of vouchers not included), as well as from literature and locality data provided by more than 40 persons cited at the end of the book. Conclusive chapters are devoted to a general discussion of the Sections of *Oncidium*, sources of data, a photographic arrangement according to Sections of the species included in volume 1, and a taxonomic index accounting for 207 names for 60 accepted species.

A discussion on the history of the genus is promised for the forthcoming volume 2. In the present volume the author gives no reasons for adopting a rather conservative taxonomy of the genus and rejecting the results of recent realignments of Oncidiinae based on molecular evidences. The brief statement about the Sections recognize 16 Sections, one of which, Sect. *Crassifolia* Kgr., is proposed as new (but not formally validated) to replace Section *Pulvinata*. The monotypic Sections *Onusta* (or the genus *Zelenkoa*) and *Rhinocerotus* are subsumed under Sections *Excavata* and *Paucituberculata*, respectively. Königer follows Senghas' system in merging Section *Planilabria* into *Oncidium*, and Sections *Planifolia* and *Plurituberculata* into *Oblongata*. Species recently transferred to

the genera *Trichocentrum* and *Cyrtochiloides* are here maintained in *Oncidium*. The lack of recognition of the characters used to segregate *Cyrtochiloides*, however, results in the placement of closely related species (*Oncidium ochmatochilum* and *O. riopalenquenaum*, and *O. panduriformis* respectively) into two separate Sections.

In the discussion of species, the name *O. confusum* Rchb.f. is resurrected for the Central American species long known as *O. polycladium*, but the latter name is not proposed as a synonym. The geographic range of *O. isthmii* is limited to Panama and Colombia, seemingly excluding Costa Rican populations, and the rather well-defined *O. stenobulbon* is subsumed under *O. ansiferum*.

The analytical drawings are extremely accurate and arranged consistently to facilitate comparisons. In view of the relevance of pollinarium morphology for the infrageneric classification of *Oncidium*, we hope that in the next volumes the very detailed illustrations of these organs will be reproduced in a higher scale for better appreciation.

The generic limits of *Oncidium*, one of the largest genera in Neotropical Orchidaceae, have been historically fluid, as well as the formal and informal proposals of infrageneric divisions. In recent years, a stream of works mainly based on analyses of molecular data, suggested a general rearrangement of genera within the Oncidiinae, but the bulk of species of *Oncidium s.s.* is still waiting for a definitive placement. This is probably due, at least in part, to the large number of species in the genus and the plethora of published names, many of which were based on scanty material or known exclusively from the type specimen (often only a rather crude illustration). The work by Königer fills this gap, presenting in a clear and documented way the first part of a real "encyclopedia" of the genus. I recommend the book to anyone interested in the systematics of this interesting group of Neotropical orchids, and anxiously look forward for the next volumes.

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