

BOOK REVIEW

Krishna Chowlu, Sudhanshu Shekhar Dash, and Jambey Tsering. 2024. *Orchids of Arunachal Pradesh*. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehradun, India. Pp. 422. ISBN 978-93-6028-244-8.

Dr Krishna Chowlu, Scientist D at Botanical Survey of India (BSI), Arunachal Pradesh Regional Centre, Itanagar has been working on orchid flora for more than a decade and is the life member of the Orchid Society of India. Dr Sudhansu Sekhar Dash, is Scientist F at BSI, Kolkata. Dr Jambey Tsering is a Scientist with Government of Arunachal Pradesh Department of Environment, Forest & Climate Change.

Orchids of Arunachal Pradesh is an excellent compilation that brings together detailed taxonomic information and rich visual documentation of the orchid species found in Arunachal Pradesh. This NorthEastern Indian state is known for its extraordinary biodiversity, and the authors have meticulously catalogued over 653 orchid species across 120 genera. This comprehensive reference aims to provide both a scientific and practical guide to the orchids of the region, making it a valuable resource for botanists, conservationists, and orchid specialists. The book begins with an in-depth introduction to the Orchidaceae family, focusing on its significance, diversity, and ecological role. It explains the various life forms of orchids, such as epiphytes, terrestrials, and lithophytes, along with their growth patterns, reproductive mechanisms, and ecological relationships with their environments. This section lays the foundation for understanding the complex biology of orchids, helping readers to grasp key features that will aid in the identification of the species discussed in the book. The main body of the book presents a detailed alphabetical listing of orchid species, which forms the heart of the text. For each species, the authors provide critical information,

including its scientific name, authorship, morphological descriptions, ecological preferences, and geographical distribution. One of the standout features of this section is the inclusion of high-quality, full-colour photographs for each species. These photographs, totaling over 460 images, significantly enhance the book's practical utility. Another strong aspect of the book is its botanical rigour. The authors have drawn upon both their own fieldwork and existing scientific literature to compile the most accurate and up-to-date information. The species list is not only comprehensive but also incorporates recent molecular taxonomic studies and updated classifications. This ensures that the book is relevant and reflective of current trends in orchid research. By documenting orchids that are found in different habitats within Arunachal Pradesh from tropical lowland forests to montane regions—the book paints a broad picture of the region's orchid diversity, making it a valuable resource for those studying plant distribution and ecological interactions in the Eastern Himalayas. The authors have also discussed the threats on the biodiversity in detail, highlighting the need for better conservation strategies and policies to protect the region's orchid species.

In conclusion, *Orchids of Arunachal Pradesh* with in-depth species descriptions, coupled with high-quality photographs may prove very useful for field botanists, students, researchers, educators, and amateur orchid enthusiasts who wish to familiarize themselves with the species of Arunachal Pradesh.

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