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La Croix, I.F.: **The New Encyclopedia of Orchids. 1500 Species in Cultivation.** - Timber Press, Portland - London 2008. 524 pp. USD 59.95. ISBN-13: 978-0-88192-876-1.

This Encyclopedia has been written with the aim to reflect the latest scientific research in orchid DNAs the results of which have led to a radical reassessment of orchid classification. Long-accepted names of both the species and genera have been changed. With an estimated 25 000 orchid species (and over 100 000 hybrids which are not included in the Encyclopedia) a rather rigorous selection was necessary. The first four short chapters are an introduction to orchids as plants, their cultivation, pests and diseases, and conservation and propagation. The main part of the Encyclopedia is a detailed description of 1500 cultivated species in 350 genera presented in alphabetic order. Each item includes a description of plant morphology and sizes, characteristics of the whole plant, leaves, flowers, inflorescences, *etc.* including taxonomical and etymological data and synonyms if present. Further details concern growth and native habitat of the species as well as the country of

origin and valuable remarks and tips to cultivation of the plants. An important help in the identification of the species are more than 1000 excellent photographs made by Manuel Aubron. The author of the book is Isobyl La Croix, botanist at the University of Edinburgh. She has done extensive fieldwork throughout the world, but especially in Africa, where she lived for 22 years. She has written several scientific books and articles on orchids. At the end of the book a glossary of important botanical terms, a list of References, an Index of common names and another one of scientific names of the orchid plants mentioned in the Encyclopedia are added.

The broad and deep knowledge of orchids and long-lasting experience in orchid cultivation reflected in the Encyclopedia are the guarantee for it will be used by scientists, collectors or people starting with orchid cultivation.

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