

Capturing all honors and winning with flying colors to receive "The prize of the month" is not an individual plant but a group of plants; namely, *Sarcopodiums*. These plants which previously had produced from one to two spikes a season now show eighty-four spikes, elaborating their section of the orchid house with an array of color.

Beverly Farms, Massachusetts

SOBRALIA MACRANTHA IN OAXACA

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ONE OF THE most striking of the orchids of southern Mexico and Central America is *Sobralia macrantha* Lindley with its very large purplish-rose blossoms. It has been collected in the highlands of southern Mexico (Puebla, Vera Cruz, Oaxaca, and Chiapas) and in Guatemala, British Honduras, Honduras, Salvador, and Costa Rica. Until recently, our large herbaria have lacked material of this orchid from Oaxaca, but in 1938 and 1939 I found *Sobralia macrantha* to be one of the most abundant orchids in the northeastern part of this state.

In the District of Teotitlán (Oaxaca), *Sobralia macrantha* is known by the Mazatec Indian name *shka-to-tsa* ("gum-plant"); in the adjoining District of Cuicatlán, the Chinantec Indians call it *li-chi*; and in the District of Choapam, the Mije Indians know the orchid as *tu-wi*.

The Zapotec Indians of the Districts of Villa Alta and Choapam are energetic tradesmen. During Easter Week, when important religious celebrations are held in Oaxaca City, these Indians collect quantities of blossoms of *Sobralia macrantha*, *Stanhopea tigrina* Batem. ex Lindl. and *Talauma mexicana* (DC.) Don (a tree of the *Magnoliaceae* which has large, fragrant flowers). These flowers are taken to Oaxaca City, several days' travel afoot, to be sold in the native markets.

Sobralia macrantha is usually found in very sunny and dry exposures. It exhibits a predilection for rocky crags, cliffs, or banks from which the three- or four-foot stems grow in a pendulous position. In Oaxaca, I found that *Sobralia macrantha* was almost invariably accompanied by such heliophiles as: *Epidendrum radicans* Pavon ex Lindl.; *Chelonanthus alatus* (Aubl.) Pulle and *Lisiantlus nigrescens* Cham. & Schlecht. (*Gentianaceae*); *Saurauia* spp. (*Dilleniaceae*); etc. It is significant, however, that *Sobralia macrantha* is not always found in sunny places. I made several collections of this orchid from colonies which were growing in rain-forests where little direct sunlight ever penetrates. In this atypical habitat, however, the entire plant is smaller, and the colour of the flower seems to be paler.

Sobralia macrantha always occurs in colonies, and a number of flowers blossom at the same time during June, July, and August. There is a cliff in Comaltepec, District of Ixtlán, approximately eighty-five feet tall which is completely covered with plants of *Sobralia macrantha*. Fortunately, the locality is very difficult of access, and the colony is not disturbed by native collectors. On June 22, 1939, I counted seventy blossoms of this beautiful plant in this one locality.

The photograph which accompanies these notes was taken on June 29, 1939, at Rio Caracol below the Chinantec Indian town of San Juan Zautla on Cerro Machin, District of Cuicatlán (long. 96° 40', lat. 17° 50'). It shows a very interesting habitat of *Sobralia macrantha*. The colony which is illustrated grows on a moss-covered rock which stands in the turbulent Rio Caracol. The orchids grow



SOBRALIA MACRANTHA IN OAXACA, MEXICO

eriantly and hang down so near the water's edge that they are frequently wet with the spray. Nevertheless, the flowers appear to thrive and to persist for many days in this very damp habitat.

Botanical Museum, Harvard University

ANAL ZONE ORCHID SOCIETY EXHIBITION AT THE GAMBOA ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW

THE MOST pretentious, diversified, interesting Isthmian flower shows ever undertaken are those of the town of Gamboa.

Unusual plants from all corners of the earth are brought to the Summit Experimental Gardens at Summit, C. Z. Mr. Lindsay and his staff of helpers deserve unstinted thanks and praise for their generous contributions of blooming orchids and other plants exhibited with rare taste at the Gamboa Flower Show.