

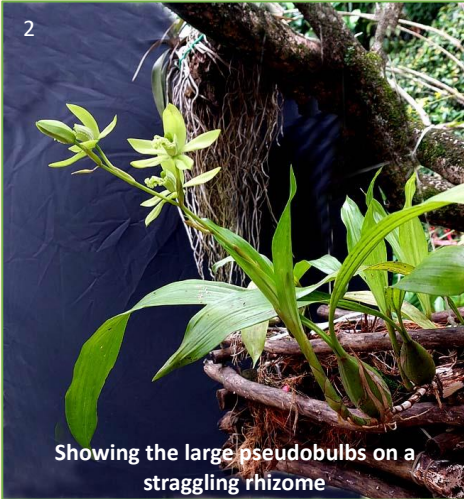
Natural History Snippets

Brief reports by members based on their observations of nature
 Members are invited to submit their photographs and stories to muhudubella@gmail.com for publication

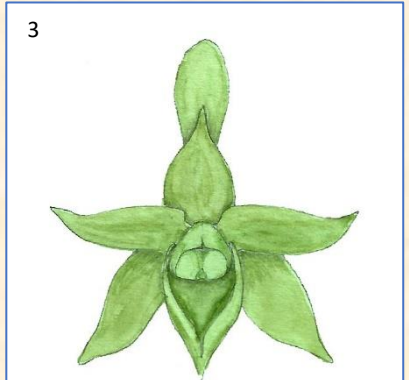
Green Orchids

Coelogyne pandurata and others

Green is not a colour that is seen often among flowers, especially a solid green like in this epiphytic orchid (Fig. 1). It is a species native to the tropics, from Malaysia to the Philippines, called the black-lipped orchid of commerce. Fairly easy to cultivate but needs a lot of space, as its large, bulbous pseudobulbs topped by two large leaves are widely spaced on a rhizome (Fig. 2). Sri Lanka's native orchids of the genus *Coelogyne* are small, with white or yellowish flowers. But we do have some other species that are greenish, if only in some of the floral segments. The exception is the tiny flower of *Angraecum zeylanicum*, previously called *Mystacidium zeylanica*. This orchid (Fig. 3) is a native of Sri Lanka and the Seychelles.



Paintings by Dorothy Fernando & Malik Fernando

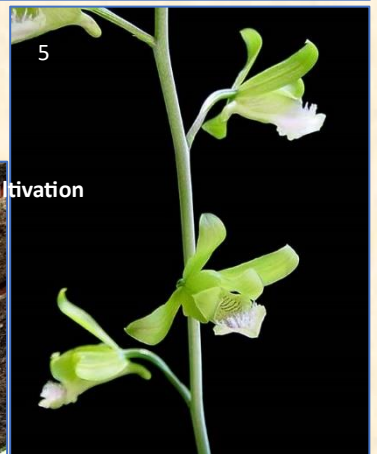


Painting by Dorothy Fernando & Malk Fernando

Luisia teretifolia (Fig. 4) is a low country epiphytic orchid that we collected at Ragama (flower at left); an orchid featured on a Sri Lanka stamp. Sometime later, also in the nineteen-seventies, we found a plant on a tree by the side of the road at Pussellawa that appeared to be the same species but had green and purple flowers (flower at right). This orchid is now assigned to *Luisia zeylanica* Lindl. (An annotated checklist of the orchids of Sri Lanka, Fernando & Ormerod¹). The green form is the same species.

There are a number of species of the genus *Eulophia* in Sri Lanka, all terrestrial. Two species have green flowers with white lips marked in red.

E. epidendreae (Fig. 5) grows in strong sunlight with large conical pseudobulbs topped by long, grass-like leaves. Many flowers are borne on long, branching stalks. *E. pulchra* (Fig. 6), previously *E. macrostachyum*, has tall, cigar-like pseudobulbs topped



by two wide leaves. It grows in shade on the forest floor and produces long spikes with many flowers.

The enlarged flower images were drawn to scale by Malik Fernando and painted in water colour by Dorothy Fernando between 1970 and 1981.

¹*Rheedea*, 18 (1): 1-28, 2008.
 The National Red List 2020, Orchidaceae: 97.