

Journal Europäischer Orchideen

Vol. 38

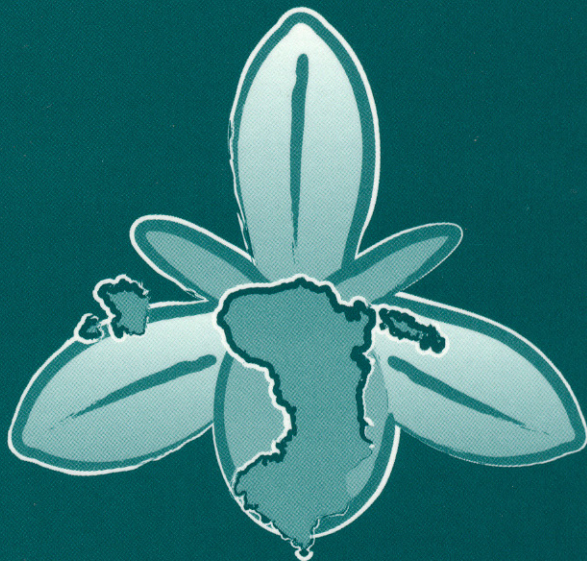
Heft 2

Juni 2006

Mitteilungsblatt des AHO Baden-Württemberg



OPHRYS'05



ΠΑΝΕΥΡΩΠΑΪΚΟ ΣΥΝΕΔΡΙΟ
ΓΙΑ ΤΙΣ ΑΥΤΟΦΥΕΙΣ ΟΡΧΙΔΕΕΣ
EUROPEAN CONGRESS
ON HARDY ORCHIDS
ΧΙΟΣ 13-17.4.2005 CHIOS, GREECE

Orchids and their habitats in Georgia

¹ Georgian Society of Nature Explorers "Orchids", Georgia.

² AHO-Baden Württemberg, Germany.

20 genera and 51 species of *Orchidaceae* are found in Georgia so far. Among them, two species are represented by two subspecies each. Georgia covers an area of 69 494 km². It presents a great variety of widely contrasting landscapes due to geological, geomorphological, hydrological, climate and soil conditions and frequently alternating and ranging from subtropical forests to dry desert-steppes from the Black Sea to the east. Some orchid species are adapted to a great variety of biotopes such as shrubbery or wetlands, alpine meadows or open woodlands or even forests. Most orchid species, however, are restricted to a more or less narrow spectrum of habitats and prefer concrete biotopes.

Main habitats where orchids can be found are:

(1). Forests

Forests occupy 32-35% of the territory of Georgia. The riparian and marsh forests occur in all regions of Georgia. Mountain forests are represented by lower, middle and upper belts. Oak, beech (*Fagus orientalis*) and beech-chestnut forests grow in the lower and middle belts changing higher in the mountains into the Caucasian fir (*Abies nordmanniana*) and Oriental spruce (*Picea orientalis*) forests. *Pinus kochiana*, *Acer trautvetterii*, or *Quercus macranthera* grow at tree line ecotone in different regions. There are also well-developed crooked-stem birch forests (*Betula litwinowii*) in the tree line, usually occupying the steepest northern slopes. Especially mountainous broad-leaved (Fig. 6.1), coniferous (Fig. 6.2), beech and oak forests are rich in orchid species. Typical woody species are e.g., *Cephalanthera* spp., *Epipactis* spp., *Platanthera bifolia*, *P. montana*, *Orchis mascula* subs. *longicalcarata* and all saprophytic orchids. In pine forests, there can be found *Goodyera repens*. Riparian forests accommodate such species that prefer humid habitats, e.g., *Listera ovata*, *Dactylorhiza romana* subsp. *georgica*, *Ophrys* spp., *Orchis militaris* subsp. *stevenii*, *O. purpurea* subsp. *caucasica*, *O. simia* and *Stenienella satyrioides* prefer oak forests at a lower mountain belt.

(2). Dry open woodlands

These relict forests are to be found in semi-arid regions of the eastern Georgia and are composed by *Pistacia mutica*, *Juniperus* ssp., *Pyrus* ssp. etc. Only few