Species of the Month

April 2003

Greater Las Vegas Orchid Society

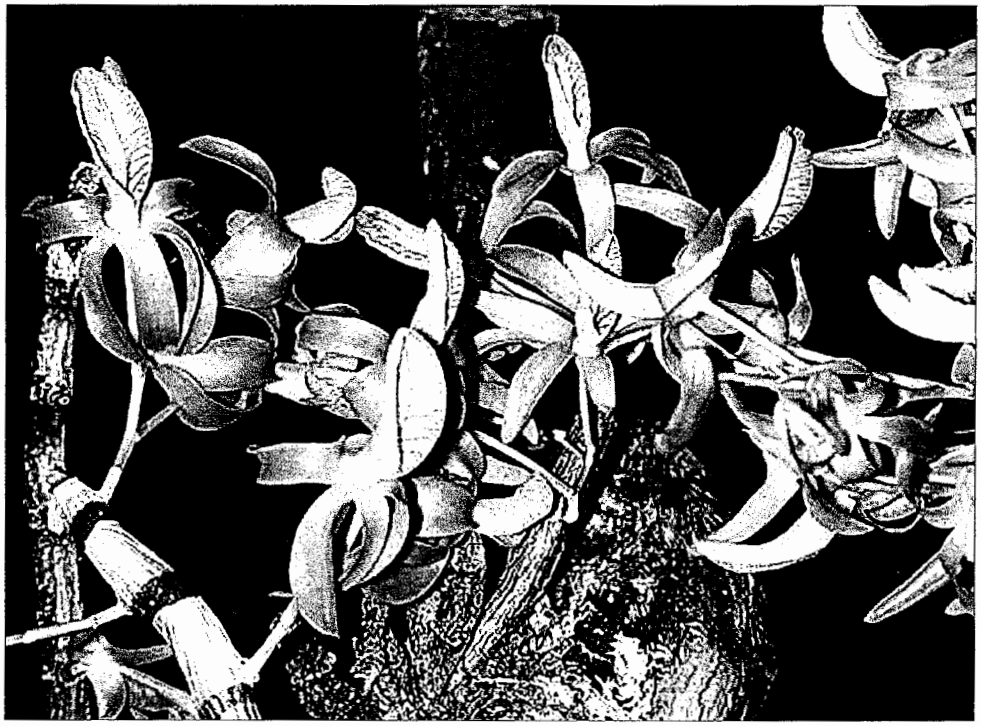

Photo courtesy of Andy's Orchids

Dendrobium unicum

A Far Out Miniature

A Thailand native, easy growing *Dendrobium unicum* is a spring to summer bloomer. They are found growing on rocks or bushes in areas with low, scrublike vegetation. It has terrific color, shape and an intense peach fragrance. The 2" to 4" purplish canes are topped with numerous bright green 2" deciduous leaves. The multiple short three-flowered spikes emerge from the cane nodes. The blooms are up to 2" in diameter with twisted brilliant tangerine sepals and petals and a cream colored tubular lip that is heavily marked with purple venation and curls backward.

LIGHT

Bright; 2500-3500 Footcandles (very bright indirect light). Light should be as high as possible without burning the leaves. Strong air movement should be supplied.

TEMPERATURE

Intermediate; 55°F min. to 85°F max. Summer days average 80-82 degrees F and nights average 67-68 degrees F.

WATER

Moist; 3-5 waterings per week (let dry lightly between waterings). Plants should be kept moist while actively growing. Reduce watering gradually in autumn after the new growth has matured.

HUMIDITY

In the natural habitat the humidity ranges from 80-85% in the summer through early autumn. For two months in winter it drops to 55%.

POTTING

Plants may be mounted if humidity is high. If potted, use an open fast draining medium. Repotting is best done in the spring when new roots are growing.

FERTILIZER

Fertilizer should be provided on a regular basis during the active growing period, 1/4 to 1/2 strength applied weekly from spring to mid-summer. Use a fertilizer high in phosphates in late summer and autumn.

Sources: Andy's Orchids, www.andysorchids.com and *Orchid Species Culture, Dendrobium* by Margaret L. and Charles O. Baker