Drosophyllum lusitanicum

A new (and simple) method of Cultivation

By Alexander Mrkuicka, Höpflergasse 6/16/1/4, A-1230 Wien, Tel. 86 18 992, Austria

For the past years I have had some success in growing *Drosophyllum lusitanicum*—which is one of my special favourites—with methods of SLACK or FESSLER, but during the summer I always had problems with watering the plants when being abroad. Either rotting or dried plants were the result.

Not willing to resign, I carried out some experiments with the aim of keeping *Drosophyllum* without the necessity of watering each day.

The main points with *Drosophyllum* are to:

1) keep the soil in the pot humid but not wet
2) keep the air dry during sunny hours

After some more or less unsuccessful tests, I found a very suitable method by using a modified pot-in-pot system (which is well known among growers of terrestrial orchids) adapted to *Drosophyllum*.

Cultivation:

The seed is sown into a clay-pot 13 cm **without a drainage hole** (if not available, close the drainage with silicone or cement—but no plaster!!) in sand: peat 3:1 or, even better:

2 parts sand
1 part chopped dry *Rhododendron* leaves
1 part peat.

After moistening, the pot is wrapped in a plastic bag until the plantlets develop. Then it is set into a 15 or 17cm plastic pot, the space between stuffed with sphagnum.

I keep these "Double Pots" in a saucer with always 1-2cm of water, where the plants grow to a size of 40 cm in two years without getting dry or rot. You only have to be careful about **never pouring water into the clay-pot from above!!**

The sketch will show you the system more clearly than my description:

