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Primula vialii

[Synonyms : *Primula littoniana*, *Primula littoniana* var. *robusta*]

ORCHID PRIMROSE is a perennial. Native to China it has dense orchid-like spikes of small hanging, blue to violet or pink flowers.

It is also known as Chinese pagoda primrose, and Poker primrose.

Vialii commemorates a French ethnologist and missionary, Father Paul Vial (1855-1917), who worked in Yunnan, south-western China.

This flower was found in the 1880s by Jean Marie Delavay (1838-1895), the French missionary who authorities believe was the first European botanist in western China. He sent seeds to Paris but they remained there unplanted until the 20th Century when orchid primrose seems to have been rediscovered in the wild. This time the credit is given to the Scottish plant collector George Forrest (1873-1932) who sent the plant back to England.