

**Zeitschrift:** Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Herausgeber:** Swiss Society of New Zealand  
**Band:** 73 (2007)  
**Heft:** [7]

**Artikel:** Tracking down the scents of the natural world  
**Autor:** [s.n.]  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-944334>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

**Download PDF:** 15.03.2025

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

## Tracking down the scents of the natural world



Roman Kaiser was born in Kirchberg SG in 1945. He studied chemistry at Winterthur Technical College and in 1968 joined the Givaudan research centre as a fragrance and flavour chemist. Since 1975 he has worked mainly on the investigation and reconstitution of all types of natural scents.

Until the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, natural extracts of scented flowers or other plant parts, together with some animal secretions, were the only raw materials used in the creation of fragrances.



Chemists working in the fragrance industry have been investigating natural products extensively since the dawn of modern organic chemistry. As a result of this continuing research work, perfumers now have at their disposal about 500 regularly used natural products for the preparation of their creations, but at least double this number of synthetic fragrance compounds that have originated from natural products.

Roman Kaiser has over the past three decades travelled around the globe chasing new scents – a quest that has taken him to such exotic places as Lower Amazonia, Papua New Guinea, India and many rain-forest biotopes.

He says that the sense of smell gives us a sense of other living beings, of our own species, of animals and plants, and plays an important role in the forces ruling the living world. Scents open an additional dimension in our life. They tell us so much and together with visual perception they generate quite of-

ten aesthetic effects so that something we see becomes even more beautiful because it has an attractive scent.

Scents are also vital for the reproduction of plants. The only reason for a flowering plant to produce a scent is to attract a responding animal pollinator to ensure the preservation of the species.

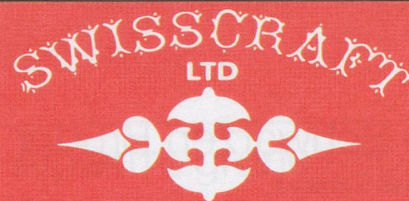
The rainforests are by far the most life-intensive biotopes on earth and since natural scents are always ultimately connected to living beings, the chances are corre-



spondingly high to be successful on such quests for new scent molecules and new scent concepts. The technique used involves taking samples by non-destructive methods only. This usually includes enclosing the flower in a glass vessel for up to two hours and capturing the natural scent in an absorption trap. This is later analysed in the laboratory using mainly gas chromatography and mass spectrometry, and the results can allow chemists to reconstitute natural scents. Such methods have over the past 25 years allowed Kaiser and his colleagues to investigate more than 1'900 flower, plant, wood and herb scents out of a selection of about 9'000 species of plants evaluated during this time.

Roman Kaiser has published two books so far. "The Scent of Orchids" summarises the olfactory and chemical investigations of over 160 species. "Meaningful Scents around the World" offers an insight into a hidden world.

*from swissinfo*



Incorporating Domestic & Commercial Work  
Specialists in Fabric & Leather Upholstery  
Also Deep Diamond Buttoning  
All Furniture Re-Upholstery

**Swisscraft Ltd**

Manager: **Herbert Staheli**

Showroom: 33-39 Colombo St  
Frankton-Hamilton

Call us

Phone 07 8477 220

Fax 07 8473 039

### Swiss Bakery, & Cafe

Owners Franz & Eveline Muller have been baking and serving fine food and coffee at their Swiss Bakery & Cafe since its establishment more than 12 years ago.

#### Enjoy

- Cooked breakfast as well as a large selection of bakery goodies.
- Specialty Swiss confection and chocolates
- Party food including specialty cakes and fancy party breads to order.



Hours: Monday to Friday 8.00 - 4.30  
Saturday 8.00 - 2.30  
Sunday closed

Ph: 09 489 9737 5 Milford Road, Milford

### Swiss and German

**Delicatessen**

**Munz Chocolates**

**Toggenburger Kagi fretli**

**Hero Preserves and Roesti**

**Nowka Sauerkraut, Rotkraut, Gurken, Senfgurken, Sellerie Salad**

**Herring in tin**

**Organic Bread**

**Pumpernickel**

**Marzipan**

**Bahlsen Biscuits**

Please ask for our Price List

*Impex*

INTERNATIONAL TRADING LIMITED  
FINE QUALITY PRODUCTS

Ph 09 407 4277 - Fax 09 407 4278  
Free Fax 0800 4SWISS (0800 479 477)  
email: [impex@xtra.co.nz](mailto:impex@xtra.co.nz)

PO Box 528, 13a Sammaree Pl, Kerikeri