



An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society

The purpose of the Society is to stimulate interest, provide education, and enable the exchange of information among those interested in all aspects of orchid culture

VOLUME 70

ISSUE 12

December 2020

Important Announcements

The **FLOS Annual Holiday Party** on December 6 has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 upsurge. Refund checks are in the mail.

There will be no **Monthly Meeting** or **Pandemic Show Table** ribbon judging in December.

Membership Renewal Relief: FLOS activities have been severely curtailed by COVID-19. To express our gratitude for our members' patience and support this year, our Board of Trustees has voted to extend active memberships free of charge for one year, applicable to all active members as of November 11.

If you have already renewed your membership, it will now expire on 12/31/2022. If you have not yet renewed, your membership expires 12/31/2021.

New Trustee: Please welcome **Gerritt Stryker** to the FLOS **Board of Trustees**. Gerritt has been an active participant on our House Committee, Auction Committee, Million Orchid Project, and just about any time we asked for help. He is a Florida Master Gardener volunteer and has been working with the K.I.N.D. Garden (native and invasive plants) at Extension headquarters. Thank you, Gerritt!

President's Message

-Rich Ackerman



Hello FLOS,

As you all have seen, FLOS is continuing to adjust to these challenging times. I am grateful for the flexibility and support from our Board and members.

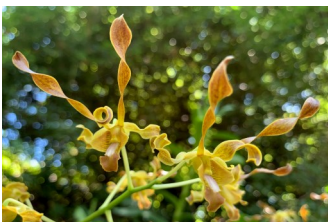
We traditionally use proceeds from our annual FLOS Auction to partially offset Holiday Party expenses. With the party cancelled, those funds were applied to extend everyone's membership for the coming year. Details are elsewhere in the newsletter.

I would like to welcome Gerritt Stryker to our Board of Trustees, filling in for Francisco Lambert, who had to step down. Gerritt has been very active in our Society, and we thank him for his willingness to serve on our Board.

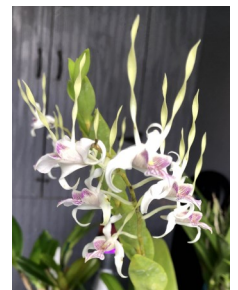
We have started discussing when and how to start meeting again in person. It is going to be a different world! We will probably end up in a blended virtual/real environment.

Finally, I hope everyone has a safe and fun holiday season. The cooler weather is a relief for us and for our orchids. Enjoy the fresh air! I hope to see everyone soon.

January Speaker: Henry A. Gallis, MD



Our January speaker will be Henry A. Gallis, MD, from North Carolina. Dr. Gallis is Past President of the Triangle Orchid Society and a recent emeritus AOS Judge. He will be talking about Antelope Dendrobiums. Please join us via Zoom to learn about the history and culture of these amazing flowers. As always, the Zoom link will be on our homepage @ FLOS.org.



2019



2001

Welcome New Member

David Felder

Orchidiction

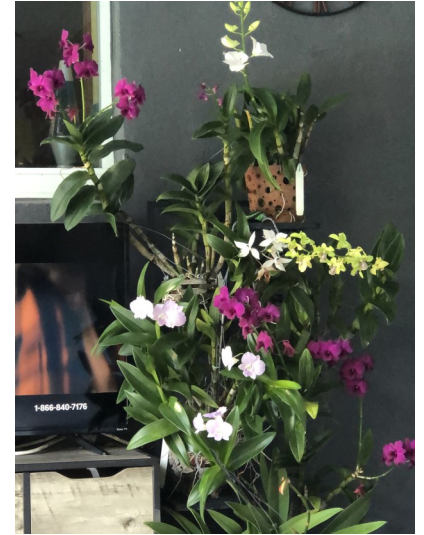
By Kate Donohue

Big Bang from a Big Box



New hobbyists are anxious to build their collections and enjoy beautiful flowering orchids, but it's frustrating waiting several years for two- or three-inch potted orchids from specialized orchid vendors to bloom—IF you can keep them alive. Most of my orchid deaths are these smaller plants. So, I decided to limit my purchases to blooming size plants, but these cost more, so I can't afford as many.

Big box and grocery stores offer orchids at great prices, but this somehow feels like "cheating," like buying a knock-off Prada handbag. We don't know who grows them, and most have no ID tags. Several years ago on one of my orchidiction rampages, I saw slotted baskets with wire hangers at Home Depot, each basket containing two different types of *Dendrobiums* for \$29.95. How could I resist? I bought four baskets, all of which have proven to be healthy plants, vigorous growers, and abundant bloomers for months on end.



Every so often, usually before a holiday, Home Depot and Lowe's stock up on blooming *Dendrobiums*, *Encyclias*, *Oncidiums*, the ever-present *Phalaenopses*, and occasionally *Vandas* and *Cattleyas* priced well below what you would normally pay for them. Sometimes I've found an ID tag stuffed way down in the pot. They also have packaged bare root plants with a bit more information on the label. OK, you won't find that rare or unusual orchid and you can't submit them for judging unless they are identified, but they will certainly "dress up" your grow or display area with lots of color and are worthy of some space in your collection.

(Photos: Stands of "Big Box" *Dendrobiums* displayed on either side of the TV in our outdoor Orchid Theater)

No More Iguanas



A recent *Sun Sentinel* article suggested using reflective surfaces to ward off those omnipresent iguanas stalking our orchids like an all-you-can-eat salad bar. The reporter suggested a free solution of hanging old cd's on wire or string because of the reflective underside. Now, that sounded downright tacky to me, sort of like having a busted refrigerator, three-legged chair, and old tire planter in your back yard. So, I went online and found three spiral reflective spinners for \$12.97 and mirror windchimes for \$32. As a devoted windchime and dancing light lover, I immediately ordered two windchimes and hung them the moment they arrived. We haven't seen an iguana since! AND as an added bonus, all those Blue Jays that steal the coconut fiber, moss, and other nesting materials from my shade houses are also gone, along with their raucous chatter. What a great idea!



Silicon for Orchids?

There are a ton of different fertilizers, micronutrients, and similar products available to help us grow orchids, but Sue Bottom's article in latest issue of *Orchids Magazine* discussed one that was new to me: Silicon Supplements. Rarely mentioned on fertilizer labels, silicon is the second most common element in soil. It is not required for plant growth, but it can help us grow stronger, faster growing orchids that are more resistant to pests, diseases, and environmental stresses. Absorbed through the roots, it promotes thickening of cell walls, leading to stronger stems and thicker leaves.

Silicon is only minimally water soluble and can damage plants if applied improperly. Do not mix or apply with other fertilizers/chemicals, mix in very small concentrations, and use the same day. Dyna-Gro Pro-TeKt Silicon Supplement is popular with orchidists. It is readily available, easy to use, and inexpensive (under \$13 for 8 oz.). Better, stronger, more disease and insect resistant orchids, huh? Why not? Definitely worth a try!

Olivier Shares His Experiences: *Stanhopea* – Reader’s Digest (Part 2)



Stanhopeas are highly variable plants in terms of colors! The same label can result in a pale yellow flower or a dark orange one! There is also plenty of unresolved controversy as to their proper classification. It is also not uncommon to buy a mislabeled plant. It is usually not possible to identify a *Stanhopea* until it blooms. The plants all look alike.

The fragrance and the very intricate shape of the lip are the core strategy for reproduction among *Stanhopeas* because the fragrance is meant to entice one particular type of male euglossine bee, and the lip is specifically shaped to espouse the bee’s body, making sure the pollination happens. The *Stanhopea* color apparently plays little to no role in the attraction of the bee, and this might explain why there is such variation in nature. The color does not matter to the survival of the species. So, when there are doubts about the proper ID for a *Stanhopea*, it is usually the shape of the lip rather than the color which is often the best way to differentiate between species that are very close. The lip has 3 sections:

Upper part: HYPOCHILE: saclike appearance with the scent glands that produce the fragrance.

Middle part: MESOCHILE: short middle section with a pair of horns to guide the bee.

Lower part: EPICHILE: looks like a landing platform for the bee at bottom of the lip.

The mesochile and horns are absent in five primitive species (*ecornuta* group and *avicula* group).

Fragrance is another way to identify a *Stanhopea*, but descriptions of fragrances are highly subjective and difficult. So, morphology is usually easier. Some species like *connata*, *platyceras*, *tricornis* etc., have a distinct visual characteristic that makes it easy to identify them without any doubt.

When it is almost ready to bloom, the flower usually stops developing for a couple of days. This is when the fragrance is developed by the flower.



Stan. haselowiana



Stan. embreei

The short life of the *Stanhopea* flower is believed to be caused by the massive amount of energy required to produce such intricate blooms. The highly specialized fragrance, size and shape of the flower all require a lot of energy, and the plant wants to shed the flower as soon it has served its purpose. Since this is a common trait among all *Stanhopeas*, hybridizing within the genus will never improve flower longevity. Apparently, the only genus in the *Stanhopea* Alliance which has flowers that last up to two weeks are *Acinetas*. Crossing *Acinetas* with *Stanhopeas* gives you an *Aciopea*. These plants are very attractive and their blooms last longer.

South Florida is a good location to grow *Stanhopeas* because many grow warm and should be grown outdoors, but not all *Stanhopeas* will bloom here. Some need colder winter nights to bloom. As always, you find contradictory information on the subject. I’ll talk more about this next month.

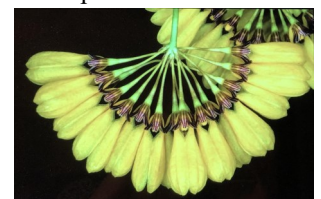
November Speaker: Mary E. Gerritsen, PhD

Dr. Gerritsen is a world-renowned expert on miniature orchids and co-authored the now four-volume *A Compendium of Miniature Orchid Species* with photographer Tom Parsons. She has traveled the world in search of miniatures *in situ* and lectured extensively on the subject.

A miniature orchid is a plant less than 6”. The inflorescences can be any size. The flowers are often larger than the plant, and some plants mound together to look like a much larger plant. The advantage of growing miniature orchids is that a large collection requires very little space. They can easily be grown indoors under lights and in terrariums. Miniatures come in an almost infinite array of sizes, shapes, and colors, and most orchid species have miniatures. Dr. Gerritsen’s presentation shared photographs of many of these amazing flowers. She also announced that a second edition of her book is scheduled for release early to mid-2021.



Den. cuthbertsonii
‘Christopher John’ AM/AOS



Bulbophyllum retusiusculum

Note: Photographs shown to the right are screen shots from Dr. Gerritsen’s presentation.

November Ribbon Awards

<i>Blc.</i> Copper Queen	John Wrench	Blue
<i>Bulb.</i> Lovely Elizabeth 'Red Swallow'	Sara Singer	Blue
<i>Bulbophyllum moniliforme</i>	Vicki Hallock	Blue
<i>Den.</i> Woo Leng	Mike Vaupel	Blue
<i>Fdk.</i> After Dark 'Sunset Valley Orchids' FCC/AOS	John Wrench	Blue
<i>Laelianthe (Lnt).</i> <i>wrigleyi</i> 'Blue Lagoon'	Jill Smith	Blue
<i>Macroclinium aurorae</i>	Vicki Hallock	Blue
<i>Oncidium</i> Aloha Iwanaga 'Canto Quimbaya'	Claire Garrett	Blue
<i>V.</i> Nippon 'White Diamond'	Kate Donohue	Blue
<i>Catasetum schmidtianum</i>	Olivier Turner	Cultural
<i>Coelogyne rochussenii</i>	Claire Garrett	Cultural
<i>Ctt.</i> Gigi Andrae Louis	Sandi Block-Brezner	Cultural
<i>Den.</i> Flamingo Gardens	Mike Vaupel	Cultural
<i>Guaranthe deckeri</i> var. <i>coerulea</i>	Francisco Lambert	Cultural
<i>Sobralia</i> sp.	Francisco Lambert	Cultural
<i>Brassavola nodosa</i>	Arthur Clark	Red
<i>Bulbophyllum medusae</i>	Sara Singer	Red
<i>Ctism.</i> Linda Vanella (*)	Kate Donohue	Red
<i>Myc.</i> Beth Sadacca	Jill Smith	Red

(*) Denoted Registered Hybrid



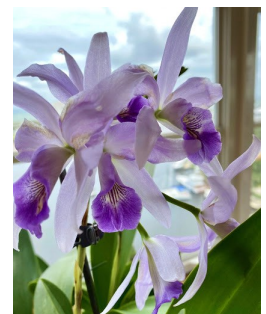
Ctt. Gigi Andrae Louis
Sandi Block-Brezner



Macroclinium aurorae
Vicki Hallock



Blc. Copper Queen
John Wrench



Lnt. *wrigleyi* 'Blue Lagoon'
Jill Smith



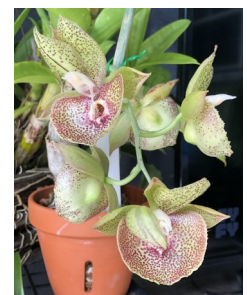
V. Nippon 'White Diamond'
Kate Donohue



Bulb. Lovely Elizabeth
'Red Swallow'
Sara Singer



Bulbophyllum medusae
Sara Singer



Ctism. Linda Vanella
Kate Donohue



American Orchid Society

Education. Conservation. Research.

AOS October Webinars:

Online video webinars are added every month. You can register for an upcoming webinar or watch recorded webinars at your convenience. Some are member only, just another reason for joining AOS.

Greenhouse Chat, Ron McHatton

Orchid Q&A

Tuesday, December 1, 8:30 pm

A Conservation Update: Ghost Orchids in Florida and the Guanahacabibes Cuban National Park, Larry Zettler

Wednesday, December 16, 8:30 pm
(Members only)

West Palm Beach Judging Center

The Judging Center is still operating under COVID-19 protocols, so there are no in-person activities or judging until further notice. Please contact our AOS Representative Joan Connors with any questions.

An Orchid Miracle for Stressful Times

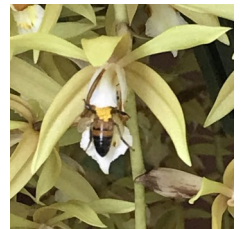
By Claire Garrett

The blooming of *Coelogyne rochussenii* is truly fabulous, but the three-week journey of inflorescence development is even more remarkable. I had seen pictures and occasionally a live specimen in full bloom at shows, but I had never witnessed the miracle of how these unique inflorescences develop until recently. In the middle of the pandemic and amidst the stresses of the national election, I found myself drawn to this amazing orchid several times every day to “Zen Out,” and observe and photograph its daily development. I watched and waited with excruciating and delighted anticipation.

Then the November issue of *Orchids Magazine* arrived, and coincidentally Thomas Miranda’s Monthly Checklist article spoke of the “rich experience and exquisite torture” of “the daily progress of an inflorescence, the fattening of buds, their gradual infusion of color....” When I wrote to tell him that I had just experienced what he had written about, he replied and shared that he had a soft spot in his heart for this orchid species. He revealed that during his tenure at the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden, they lovingly nicknamed their specimen “Blonde Marley” as the spikes in bud resembled Dreadlocks!

The ‘Dreadlocks’ on my specimen soon burst open, exuding an intoxicating and pleasantly indescribable aroma, attracting many bees from dawn to dusk. I became fascinated by these bees, observing and photographing their hungry foraging and adorable pollinia ‘backpacks.’ I could not get enough of this complex perfume, bravely dodging bees to steal yet another sniff! The flowers are short-lived and a little like Cinderella at the ball, within a mere 48 hours all the flowers began to shrivel up and the stunning spectacle was finished.

I grow my *Coelogyne rochussenii* in high quality sphagnum moss in a fast-draining plastic basket. This native of Thailand, Malaya, Java, and Borneo is a heavy drinker, requiring a thorough daily drenching during the summer growing season, but reduced watering during the winter. It thrives in the filtered light of my bottlebrush tree, in what I would describe as “Phal” light.



***Cattleya Labiata*: 1856 Version**

The following is an excerpt of an article in the *New York Times* from June 3, 1856. It reports on a meeting of the New York Cultural Society and includes the original wording and spelling. It is an interesting example of how orchid culture has been discussed and contested for centuries and is still so today.

“A meeting of this Association took place at Clinton Hall, Astor-place, last evening



Cattleya labiata orchids

The air-plant shown last evening by Dr. Knight is a great curiosity. It is an orchid. Some persons incorrectly designate such plants as parasitical. That is not the case. They thrive as well attached to dead wood as to a living tree. The scientific name of this variety is “*Cattleya labiata*,” and is found in the West Indies, sometimes 40 feet from the ground, deriving its sustenance exclusively from the surrounding atmosphere, a very direct illustration of the theory of Liebig, that plants derive all their carbon not from the earth, but through their leaves from the carbonic acid contained in the air. This specimen is in full blow; it has six pale rose colored petals with fimbriated edges, and is a very interesting object. It has been disputed whether this plant exists in this country. This specimen is not indigenous to America.”

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Fort Lauderdale Orchid Society
P.O. Box 4677, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33338



Regular Meetings: Second Monday of each month.
Time: 7:30 pm. Place: Christ Lutheran Church Social Hall,
1955 East Oakland Park Blvd. Fort Lauderdale, FL 33306
Directions: From I-95 take East Oakland Park Blvd., go 2.4
miles, turn left on NE 20th Ave. Or take US-1 (Federal Hwy.)
to Oakland Park Blvd. west for two blocks, turn north on NE
20th Ave. Park in the rear of the church which is on the NW
corner of Oakland Park Blvd. and NE 20th Ave.
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Website: www.FLOS.org