



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 71

ISSUE 2

February 2021

## February Speaker: Linden Burzell, Ph.D., Unifoliolate Cattleyas



Please joins us on February 8 at 7:30 pm via Zoom for Dr. Linden Burzell's lecture on Unifoliolate *Cattleyas*. As always, the Zoom link will be on our homepage @ FLOS.org.

Dr. Burzell began collecting as a young man in Vista, CA, buying his first plants from some of the famous Southern California growers of the late 50's and 60's. He moved to Hawaii where he received his Ph.D. in marine microbiology. During his 30 years in Hawaii, he was active in the orchid world as a member of the Windward Orchid and Hawaii Orchid Societies, and on the board of La Hui Okika Species Club.

Dr. Burzell returned to orchid growing with a vengeance when he relocated to San Diego in 1996. He maintains a growing collection of *Cattleya* species cultivars and enjoys breeding, exhibiting, and photographing his orchids. He is a student AOS Judge in the South Pacific Region.

### Mark Your Calendar

**February 8:** Linden Burzell, Ph.D., Unifoliolate *Cattleyas*

**March 8:** Patricia Harding, Testing Orchid DNA and Developing a Family Tree

**April 12:** Glen Decker, The Hike from Hell: In Search of *Phragmipedium kovachii*

### Welcome New Members

Constance McCabe  
Laura Metrick  
Murray and Lila Zedeck

## President's Message

-Rich Ackerman

Hello FLOS,



I recently found a stack of old FLOS newsletters and started reading through them. What a goldmine! For years they have been full of growing tips, advice, interesting stories, local lore, and more for the orchid lovers among us.

Did you know that you can find all issues since 2008 on our website? Visit [www.flos.org](http://www.flos.org) -> About -> Newsletter Archives to stroll down FLOS Memory Lane. Many thanks to former editors Dot Henley and Ginny Salus, and current editor Kate Donohue. We also appreciate Luanne Betz's consistent website updates.

Days are getting longer and repotting season is just about here. Watch for new roots and repot when active growth is resuming. Consider adopting the motto "Mount more, pot less" to minimize repotting in years to come. Snails and mites might start to show up by the end of the month so keep your eyes peeled for them. Finally, share cuttings and divisions with your friends. Just as our past newsletters bring back fond memories, so too do orchids acquired as gifts or swaps. In a few years you will have a collection of great memories with the added benefit of an occasional bloom.

### "Show Table - Pandemic Edition"

Members can submit up to two pictures for judging, deadline end-of-day Saturday, February 6. Email photos to Rich and Joan. Email photos only.



2019



2001



## Olivier Shares His Experiences

### *Catasetums*: Dormancy and Repotting

The dormant season for *Catasetums* will slowly come to an end. Some *Catasetums* have long dormancies, while others have little to no dormancy. *Ctsm. pileatum* (the largest flowers of the genus) is one such plant with no or short dormancy. On average, dormancy will last one to two months. *Cycnoches* seem to remain dormant at least two months.

Not all *Catasetums* begin their dormancy at the same time, and allied genera can behave differently. While I have had *Catasetums* blooming in April or even earlier, all the way to early winter, *Cycnoches* and *Cycnodes* bloom later in the season, usually in the fall, sometimes on leafless bulbs, while *Mormodes* and pink *Clowesias* (with small flowers) almost always bloom on leafless bulbs in the winter. Those that bloom while leafless should be watered some while blooming. Otherwise, whenever your plant is leafless, just consider it dormant and forget about it (zero water). **The back bulbs are a water reserve meant to get through dormancy.** So, as long as the back bulbs are reasonably plump, you do not have to worry because the plant can take care of its new growth and new roots on its own.

Once your plant is leafless, put it aside and make sure it does not get watered. Some people lay the pot on its side. I put them underneath an overhang where no water will reach them.

I give my dormant plants direct sunlight for two or three hours in mid-afternoon, but I'm careful to watch for signs of sunburn. Weak bulbs may burn, some turn white and then usually rot. **That is why it is best to not peel away the dried leaves on the back bulbs as they tend to protect the bulb from excessive light while dormant.**

I repot my *Catasetums* as soon as I see a new growth and preferably before roots appear, lest I risk damaging the fragile new roots and set the plant back. I usually trim off 75% to 90% of the old roots as most are dead anyway. I make sure to keep enough roots to help stabilize the plant in its new pot.

When repotting, I put 1/3 inert material in the bottom of the pot (mostly charcoal with some perlite) and then 2/3 damp sphagnum moss for *Catasetums*, but use dry bark for *Cycnoches/Cycnodes* (because they rot easily, and moss is too water retentive). Since you have to wet the moss to use it, it is important that the moss be damp rather than wet. Also, it is best that it does not come in direct contact with the new growth because it can cause rot! If the back bulb is top-heavy and you have difficulties positioning in the new pot, you can stake the tallest bulb to stabilize it. Repotting *Catasetums* usually happens in early spring, but all you have to do is observe your plant. Once the new growth appears, you should repot immediately.

Once repotted, you must continue withholding water for quite a while (usually another two months) because longer and stronger roots mean stronger growth and more flowers. Watering too soon will usually rot the new roots. The common wisdom is that you should wait to start watering until your new shoots reach 3" to 5" in height AND have roots that are 3" to 5" long. If you have a "mini" *Catasetum* (like *denticulatum*, e.g.), obviously you will not use the 5" rule; just compare to the previous year's growth and focus on roots that are long enough.

Last year I switched a lot of my *Catasetums* to clear plastic pots instead of clay because it is easier to monitor the root growth by peeking through the pot to see how the new roots grow. My plants have thrived, and I will do mostly plastic pots again this year. The drawback is that *Catasetums* are usually top-heavy, so I double-pot them in a clay pot for stability.

A new bulb just emerged.  
It is time to repot.



These roots are not long enough.  
Water should still be withheld.



## Slipping Down the Orchid Rabbit Hole

By Vicki Hallock

A few months ago, I purchased a *Platystele apoloae* from Ecuagenera. I like *Platysteles*; they grow well in my Biorbs, are floriferous, and bloom often. When I acquire a new species, I research it. I want to know where it grows, how it grows, its elevation, light requirements, blooming period, watering needs, everything I can find out. My first go-to is IOSPE, International Orchid Species Encyclopedia. This online treasure of over 23,000 listed species is administered by Jay Phal of Key West. I highly recommend it. In fact, FLOS donated to IOSPE a couple of years ago. Please check out this wonderful resource at [www.orchidspecies.com](http://www.orchidspecies.com)

Each orchid in my collection is numbered, researched and added to my journal. I photograph the first bloom of every orchid to include on that orchid's page. I am on book #12 now. I know, I am OCD. I wish all those orchids were alive but just like January's speaker, Harry Gallis, I've "croaked" or killed many.

My *apoloae* recently bloomed and, of course, I photographed it and posted the picture on the FLOS Facebook group. It is very tiny with translucent sepals and petals and a dark, red lip. But when adding the picture in my journal, I discovered that for some reason, I had not done any research. Off to IOSPE, but it wasn't listed, nor was it in Ron Parson and Mary Gerritsen's *Compendium of Orchid Species* book. Hmm .... Back to the internet where I found it was a newly discovered species (2018) from SW Ecuador. Further research confirmed the plant as *Platystele gerritsenianum*, not *Platystele apoloae* (Species Identification Task Force of the American Orchid Society, May 2020). *Gerritsenianum* was listed on IOSPE and nicknamed 'Mary Gerritsen's Platystele'. What? Wait a minute. That's the author Mary Gerritsen, our FLOS November speaker! Wow! I searched further and was led to the November 2016 issue of *Orchids* magazine for further description. That's when I slipped down the rabbit hole.

Looking through my back copies for that issue, I became enchantedly sidetracked. I could have looked on the AOS website for that issue, but what is the point of keeping all the magazines if I don't use them? Besides, the photos are so beautiful. As I searched through stacks, I decided to cull catalogs and other magazines interspersed among the *Orchids*.

The first one to cull was from Mounts Botanical Garden, but inside I found an article on South Florida's native orchids written by dear and recently departed Chuck McCartney. That's a keeper. Then on to the old catalogs from Carter and Holmes. Nope, I'm keeping them too.

I couldn't easily find the issue I wanted because I kept finding other articles to reread, one on botanical art, another by Chuck McCartney, had to read *Psychopsis papilio* since mine has been sequentially blooming for almost three years. An article on *Cattleya forbesii*, my favorite *Cattleya*, had to be read as well as the one on *Encyclias*. There was another article on orchid art. This one by Bob Fuchs. I found several on *Vandas* which I have just started growing and had to read those, too. One of my favorite sections is the award photos in the back of each issue. I like to see which orchids have received AOS awards in my attempt to grow orchids worthy of an AOS award.

Several hours passed and I had completely forgotten what started this search. Eventually, I found what I was looking for in the *Lindleyana* section of *Orchids*, November 2016. Yes, my plant is *Platystele gerritsenianum*. I find it interesting that mine was labeled *apoloae* since Jose Portilla, an owner of Ecuagenera, was an author along with Mary Gerritsen and others on the study of *Platystele gerritsenianum*. Whatever it is named, it is still an extremely cute, tiny orchid.

In closing, if you are not a member of The American Orchid Society, please consider joining. The magazine alone is worth the cost of your membership, not to mention the other benefits. For reduced cost, you can receive "Orchids" digitally and still enjoy the rest of the benefits.

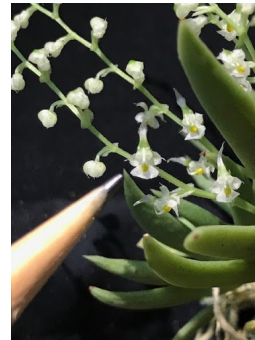
Happy Growing!

# January Ribbon Awards

<i>Bc. Jeremy Whyte</i>	Karen Fleisher	Blue
<i>Blc. Chyong Guu Linnett</i>	Kate Donohue	Blue
<i>Blc. Empress Worsley</i>	John Wrench	Blue
<i>Bulb. mastersianum</i>	Sara Singer	Blue
<i>Czl. Tsiku Chuchango</i>	Rich Ackerman	Blue
<i>Den. Burana Jade</i>	Timothy Russo	Blue
<i>Epi. ciliare</i>	Rich Ackerman	Blue
<i>Eth. Hilo Adventure*</i>	Gerritt Stryker	Blue
<i>Myc. Erin Courtney's Suncoast</i>	Kate Donohue	Blue
<i>Onc. Sharry Baby</i>	Timothy Russo	Blue
<i>Paph. spicerianum</i>	Sara Singer	Blue
<i>V. Chief Berry Berry</i>	Vicki Hallock	Blue
<i>V. Jamaica Pixie</i>	Karen Fleisher	Blue
<i>B. nodosa</i>	Mercedes Rodriquez	Culture
<i>Den. wassellii</i>	Claire Garrett	Culture
<i>Eyv. Phoenix</i>	Melanie Cohen	Culture
<i>Gongora aromatica</i>	Claire Garrett	Culture
<i>Ornithocephalus manabina</i>	Vicki Hallock	Culture
<i>Rth. Siam Fancy</i>	Kelvin Stansberry	Red
<i>V. Pachara Delight</i>	Millie Pinal	Red



*Gongora aromatica* Culture  
Claire Garrett



*Ornithocephalus manabina* Culture  
Vicki Hallock

(\* ) Denotes Registered Hybrid



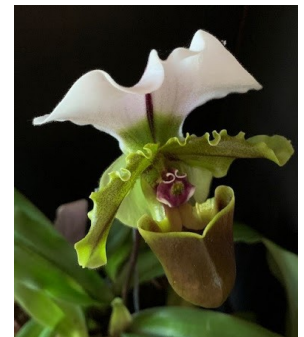
*Blc. Chyong Guu Linnett*  
'Smile' AM/AOS  
Blue Kate Donohue



*Bulb. Mastersianum* 'Young's  
A-Doribil Gift' AM/AOS  
Blue Sara Singer



*V. Chief Berry Berry*  
Blue  
Vicki Hallock



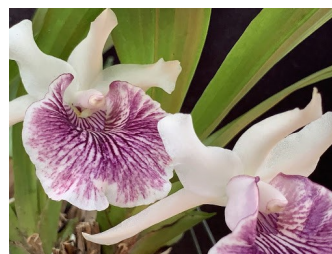
*Paph. spicerianum*  
Blue  
Sara Singer



*Vanda Jamaica Pixie*  
Blue  
Karen Fleisher



*B. nodosa*  
Culture  
Mercedes Rodriguez



*Czl. Tsiku Chuchango*  
Blue  
Rich Ackerman



*Blc. Empress Worsley*  
Blue  
John Wrench

## Love at First Sniff – *Rhynchostylis*

By Claire Garrett

I remember as if it were yesterday – the first time I fell in love with an orchid. It was 20 years ago that I discovered the big *Rhynchostylis gigantea* displayed in the tropical plant conservatory at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. Its numerous inflorescences loaded with magenta flowers exuded such a captivating fragrance that I was forever smitten! I visited this orchid in bloom each winter, and at some point, I decided I just had to have one. Sadly, my first several *Rhynchostylis* did not survive my well-intentioned yet misguided care, but I was determined to succeed and eventually I learned how to grow this orchid successfully.

Also known as the Foxtail Orchid, these slow-growing natives of lowland areas in Southeast Asia do best when grown outdoors in shallow open unglazed ceramic, plastic, or wood baskets with just a little coarse potting media. This way the thick roots can get plenty of air circulation which discourages root rot, but grown like this, they require daily watering. My five *Rhynchostylis* do well in the dappled sun of my bottlebrush tree. To avoid lower leaf loss, I learned to bring them indoors when temperatures drop below the upper 50's for more than a few hours. *Rhynchostylis* buds attract thrips, so I learned to start spraying them every other week when inflorescences first emerge in November. This diligence helped produce flawless flowers on the specimen that I submitted for judging at the 2018 FLOS show, where it was awarded a coveted FCC (First Class Certificate of 91 points). I gave it the unique cultivar name 'Claire de Lune.'



Photo by Tom Kuligowski



Photos from Zoe Bejar

While these orchids like daily watering, they must dry out afterwards, so hot summer monsoon conditions can be deadly. Without regular preventive fungicide applications, their crowns and thick leaves are subject to soft bacterial rot which, if left untreated, can kill the entire plant within a few days. Case in point, after doing a preventive fungicidal spraying I left home in August 2019 for what I thought would be just a few weeks. But as my absence was extended, the awarded *Rhy.* Claire de Lune fell victim to disease when the next regular fungicide treatment was just two weeks overdue. The neighbor who stopped by to check on my orchids sent me pictures with a message saying, "I don't know what this is, but I think it is not normal!"

*It was the dreaded soft bacterial rot!*

I called on Zoe Bejar who took the orchid to her house where we analyzed it together on Facetime before she performed major surgery to cut out all the affected parts. This left the orchid badly disfigured, but it survived. It eventually grew new keikis and is blooming this year with 11 inflorescences, thanks to my alert neighbor and skillful intervention by Zoe!

*Rhynchostylis* are not easy orchids for beginners, but if you love them enough to go the extra mile, they will reward you with long-lasting flowers and intoxicating fragrance.

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## March Speaker

Our March speaker will be Patricia Harding, a world traveler, observer, photographer, and writer who also grows orchids at her Oregon home, where she has been "stuck" for more than a year. She will talk about testing orchid DNA and developing a family tree, how it is done and why it works. Sounds downright scary, right? Not so! Ms. Harding promises a science-for-the-layman presentation so we can understand how to make an orchid family tree without knowing the DNA in all the individual plants—all with a bit of humor and "some pretty orchid pictures." She will also explain the reasoning behind some of the often-confusing name changes that have occurred in recent years.



# American Orchid Society

*Education. Conservation. Research.*

## AOS Speakers Day



AOS is holding our first online orchid “Speakers” Day, which will be all about orchid culture. Open to the public.

**Saturday, February 6**

The following speakers will be helping us learn more about our growing:

- 11 am - Kristen Uthus, New World Orchids:  
Growing Miniatures
- Noon - Francisco Miranda, Miranda Orchids:  
Brazilian Habitats and Species
- 1 pm - Ron McHatton, AOS Chief Science Officer:  
Those Pesky Bugs
- 2 pm - Dave Sorokowsky, Paph Paradise:  
Growing *Paphs* Successfully
- 3 pm - Alan Koch, Gold Country Orchids:  
*Dendrobium* Culture

Pssst, we will have a couple raffles on our wheel of fortune!

**Cost: \$30—Register online at AOS.org**

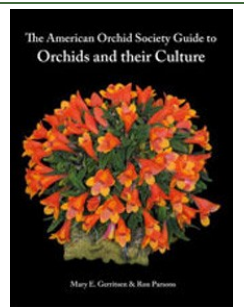
## AOS Webinars:

Online video webinars are added every month. The AOS Speakers Day will replace the February Webinars. Visit [AOS.org](http://AOS.org) to register for an upcoming webinar or watch recorded webinars at your convenience. Some are member only, just another reason for joining AOS.

## 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 Joan Connors, our AOS Representative, with any questions.

We have copies of our November speaker's book *The American Orchid Society Guide to Orchids and their Culture* for \$15. Contact Rich ([richackerman@gmail.com](mailto:richackerman@gmail.com)) if you want one. It's an excellent reference book for both the new and experienced grower.



## AOS Library Volunteer Opportunity!

*Calling all orchid lovers with a little free time to spare!*

The American Orchid Society is considering opening the amazing AOS Library located at Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden in Coral Gables to the public on a limited basis, IF a sufficient number of volunteers can commit to staffing it. AOS is asking each volunteer to commit to just a couple shifts per month so that regular open hours can be established for the Library.

No experience is necessary, but a love of orchids and a friendly spirit are a big plus. Training will be provided once the program is ready to start up. If this stimulates your curiosity and you would like to find out more, please contact Claire Garrett, Volunteer Coordinator (954-684-1062/[clairegarr@aol.com](mailto:clairegarr@aol.com)).

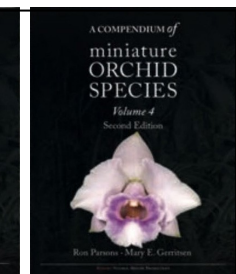
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## Beautiful *Cattleyas* for First Ladies

By Kate Donohue

I'm always grateful to Rich Ackerman for sending interesting articles from a variety of sources as fillers for our newsletters. The timing of Arthur Chadwick's article posted on KPC News.com December 23 is perfect. Mr. Chadwick is president of Chadwick & Son Orchids Inc. in Powhatan, VA. Portions of his article are summarized below.

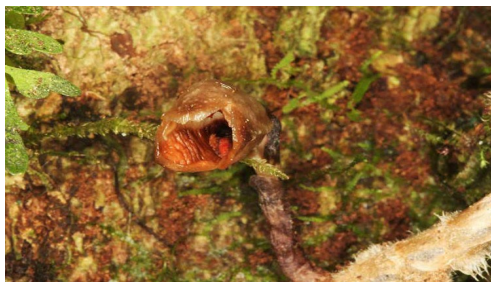
The tradition of naming orchids for our First Ladies goes all the way back to Mrs. Herbert Hoover and has continued ever since. Dr. Jill Biden is the 16<sup>th</sup> consecutive First Lady to have her own *Cattleya* hybrid. *Blc.* Jill Biden (Goldenzelle x Sea Swirl), was officially registered with the Royal Horticultural Society in 2013 while her husband was Vice President. The wives of both the Presidents and Vice Presidents traditionally receive orchids. The full collection of First Lady *Cattleyas* resides at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

*Blc.* Jill Biden was bred by The Orchid Trail of Morrisville, NC, and named by Chadwick's. The large frilly flower has a delightful fragrance. It also has an impressive lineage.

“The first parent, *Blc* Goldenzelle (Fortune x *C* Horace), is a product of the 1980's California breeding scene and is one of the most widely used stud plants in history with over 250 registered offspring. The American Orchid Society has granted prestigious flower quality awards to 30 different varieties of Goldenzelle.

The other parent, *Blc.* Sea Swirl (Greenwich x Mount Vernon), produces flowers with an exotic greenish hue and originated in 1989 at the legendary breeding program of orchids by Hausermann in Villa Park, Illinois. Variety 'Whirlpool' AM/AOS was distributed worldwide and can be found in many collections today.”

*Blc.* Jill Biden holds a unique place in history as the only orchid known to have been transported aboard Air Force Two, the Vice President's official plane. Shortly after its registration in 2013, flowers from the orchid were presented to then Vice President Biden during a campaign visit to Richmond, VA. He loved the flowers and took them home to his delighted wife.



## The World's Ugliest Orchid

By Kate Donohue

A new orchid species was discovered in 2020 under the leaves of the shady forest floor in Madagascar and promptly named the “Ugliest Orchid in the World” by its discoverer, Johan Hermans of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Named *Gastrodia agnicellus*, this new species has no leaves and spends most of its life underground except when blooming. “*Agnicellus*” is Latin for “Little Lamb,” and describes its woolly, tuberous root. “With a bit of an imagination, you can almost see a lamb's tongue in the flower.”

Unlike most orchids, *Gastrodia agnicellus* has no cells for photosynthesis, so it relies entirely on fungus. It is not known how this plant is pollinated. Similar orchids usually smell like rotted flesh, but this one has a fresh citrusy smell. Its range is very limited and shrinking because of fires and agriculture, so *Gastrodia agnicellus* has already been classified as a threatened species.

(From an article by Ibrahim Sawal in *New Scientist* Magazine, December 17, 2020).

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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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