

# SOUTHERN ONTARIO ORCHID SOCIETY

established in 1965

## November 2008 NEWS

### Volume 43, Issue 10



**Executive:** President, Tom Atkinson 416 449-7907;

Vice-president, Yvonne Schreiber, 905 473-3405 ;Secretary, Sue Loftus 905-839-8281;

Treasurer, Elizabeth McAlpine, 416 487-7832

**Membership:** Annual Dues \$25.00/Calendar Year(January 1- December 31). Membership Secretary, Hess Pommells 416-245-0369, Apt. 503, 370 Dixon Road, Weston, Ontario, M9R 1T2

**Web site:** [www.soos.ca](http://www.soos.ca) Member of the Canadian Orchid Congress; Affiliated with the Orchid Digest, the American Orchid Society, and the International Phalaenopsis Alliance

**Honorary Life Members:** Terry Kennedy, Doug Kennedy, Inge Poot, Peter Poot, Joe O'Regan, Diane Ryley

**Next Annual Show:** February 14 -15, 2009, Get ready!!!

**Next Meeting: November 2, Toronto Botanical Garden, Sales at 12 noon, Program at 1 pm. Andrea Niessen of Orquideas del Valle of Cali, Columbia will be our guest speaker.**

They have a great range of orchid species, the full range, cool to warm. The plants we saw on our recent visit to both their locations were superbly grown. I was even enthralled by the many warm species especially Stanhopeas and Gongoras. A link to their web page is available on the SOOS web page. With her husband, Juan Carlos Uribe, Andrea has maintained her own orchid nursery since 1989, **Orquideas del Valle Ltda**, which has grown to include two retail shops, one in downtown Cali (Colombia) and the other in the town of Ginebra; two nurseries, one for warm growing and the other for cool growing plants and laboratory facilities for seed flasking. She will speak to us on "The Beauty and Diversity of Colombian Orchids" and "The Pleurothallids from Colombia". Andrea will also have with her some beautiful Colombian orchids for sale .

**Vendors and Buyers please note: Sales start at 12 noon. We need to have time to set up the room and the vending stations without the interference of the public and members not involved in the setup process. Please do not attempt to buy or sell before 12 or during the meeting.**

**Your 2009 SOOS Membership Renewal form is in this newsletter. Please fill it out and take it or mail it to the Membership secretary Hess Pommells, Apt. 503, 370 Dixon Road, Weston, Ontario, M9R 1T2**

## SOOS President's Remarks

Hello fellow orchid lovers.

Our federal election has come and gone. Whether the party of your choice did well, or not so well, the most important issue in the short-term seems to be the economy. In the long-term though, any economic solution must take into account the environment and its protection. Without clean air and water, and abundant, rich soil to grow our crops and provide sustenance and habitat for the creatures and our beloved orchids, the planet and all life on it will be at best impoverished, and at worst become extinct. I am writing these notes on Thanksgiving Day, though you will not read them for a week or more. So, please join with me in giving thanks for what we have. And let us all do things in our own lives to ensure that neither of the two doom-&-gloom scenarios cited above come to pass. Each of us can make a difference.

Now, back to the day-to-day world. Most of you will know that Inge and Peter Poot create our newsletter. You receive it as softcopy on your computer, or via snail mail and Canada Post. Some of us slave away for hours writing our contributions to each newsletter. In my case, it is really not hours at all, and it is fun. But let me draw your attention to the work which Inge and Peter do to prepare these documents. For example, watch Inge as the speaker at a monthly meeting enthral us with words and slides; she will be sitting taking copious notes. As I read our newsletter, and the summary of what the speaker presented, I am always struck with a "Holy moly!" moment; as in, did Inge really write all this herself, versus getting it straight from the speaker? And the answer is, yes, she did. It is an amazing ability, based on years of study and observation of orchids in order to accurately capture what the speaker was saying. Behind the scenes, Peter assembles the items for the newsletter, sets it up on the computer, and ships it off to those of us who have email, or to the printer to be folded and mailed to the rest of the members. We may take what goes into the newsletter for granted, but it behoves us to perhaps offer Inge and Peter the occasional kind word, or feedback on what they do for us.

It may seem early, but planning for the February 2009 SOOS Show is underway. Wayne Hingston,



**Uncle Wayne wants you**

the chairman, will have updates and requests for us at each monthly meeting. And with but a top hat, an unwavering stare, and a finger pointing at each of us, let us imagine him as "Uncle Wayne", as he states with vigour, "Uncle Wayne wants you!". Please answer his call.

The December SOOS meeting is our annual pot luck and auction meeting. Peter Poot informed us of the need for us to whip up and bring one of our favourite dishes as contribution to the edibles table. And he also asked us to please consider donating an orchid, or orchid-related item to the auction. We need your input on both of these items so that on December 7 the auction will raise needed funds, we will all be happy bidders on wonderful plants and other items, and we will go home plump and contented, ready for the Christmas season.

Orchidfest 2009 will be held on Sunday, August 2 (2009). Your board of directors is in the process of forming a team to plan and run this one day, highly acclaimed, and delightful event. We would like you to consider joining the team. If you have any interest at all, please come see Mario Ferrusi or me, and ask us to explain the in's and out's. It's not daunting, and we can tell you what we did this year to make the day a success.

A penultimate tidbit or two:

" "Orchid growers have the best compost." - Jay Norris. So true, yet so unfortunate!

" Email tip: "Read every word in an email, and read every word in every attachment to that email, before pressing the SEND button." - you will not be sorry that you did. (Attributed to a SOOS sinner who shall remain anonymous.)

As ever, I end these remarks by saying here are my email id: [asimina@sympatico.ca](mailto:asimina@sympatico.ca) and phone number: 416-449-7907. Like the Maytag repairman, I do get lonely.

**Welcome New Members**  
**Andre Levesque**

## **A Suggestion Box is coming to the Meeting**

For those of you who are too shy to buttonhole a member of the executive with your beefs or advice, there will be a suggestion box at the meetings. Your anonymous (or not) tips and complaints will be gratefully accepted, and hopefully acted upon. Don't be shy, tell us how we can improve, tell us that you like what we do, or offer to help us.

## **Newcomers' Meetings**

Wayne Hingston will once again present his excellent series on the culture of the most popular types of hobby orchids. These sessions are for members who have just started in orchids and will be presented at the Toronto Botanical Garden Board Room on the following **Monday** evenings at 7 pm:

Nov 17, 2008

Dec 15, 2008

Jan 12, 2009

For further information call Wayne Hingston at 905-649-2467

## **Coming Events**

### **November**

1, Toronto Centre Judging, 1 pm, Toronto Botanical Garden

2, SOOS meeting, Toronto Botanical Garden, noon.

8, Niagara Region Orchid show, St. Catherines  
15, Montreal Judging Centre, Jardin Botanique de Montreal.

### **December**

6, Toronto Centre Judging, 1 pm, Toronto Botanical Garden

7, SOOS meeting, Toronto Botanical Garden, noon

## **COOS Show Results**

Joe O'Regan once again placed an exhibit in this show for SOOS. Plants were provided by Aina Balodis, Wayne Eyles, Wayne Hingston, and Joe himself. The exhibit received an Honorable mention ribbon. Thank you all for your contributions and congratulations to the ribbon winners which were as follows:

### **Aina Balodis:**

First place for Howeara Lava Burst

Third place for Doritanopsis hybrid

### **Wayne Eyles:**

Second place for Paphiopedilum Helena x Jolly Green Gem.

Second place for Phalaenopsis Barbara Moler

Third place for Paphiopedilum Mem. Connie Truax

### **Wayne Hingston:**

Third place for Dendrobium Red Badge

Third place for Paphiopedilum Manahawkin

### **Joe O'Regan:**

Third place for Clowesii russellianum.

## **AOS Judging Results**

### **Central Ontario Orchid Society Show, Cambridge, September 27.**

Coryhopea Wojj's Procrastinator 'Roger Sheng'

HCC-AOS 79 points ( tigrina x Coryanthes macrantha ) Roger Sheng.

Dendrobium cuthbertsonii ' ' HCC-AOS 77 points  
Mario and Conni Ferrusi

### **Toronto Centre, October 4**

Bulbophyllum Wilbur Chang 'Who died' HCC-AOS 79 points (echinolabium x carunculatum ) Doug and Terry Kennedy

Slc.? (Precious Stones x Barefoot Mailman ) HCC-AOS 79 points Gilberto Arrieche

### **Niagara Frontier Orchid Society Show, Buffalo, October 11.**

(Brassolaeliocattleya Haw Yuan x Potinara Haw Yuan Glory) 'Kristin', HCC-AOS, Bloomfield Orchids  
Dendrobium serratilabium CHM-AOS, Bloomfield Orchids



Dendrobium  
serratilabium



(Haw Yuan x Haw  
Yuan Glory) 'Kirstin'

## **Other Judging News**

Michel Tremblay, one of our Montreal student judges was advanced to Probationary Judge by the American Orchid Society at its meeting at Longwood Gardens on

Saturday, October 18. Congratulations Michel. Training as a student takes a minimum of 3 years, and Michel now needs to do another 3 years before he can advance to full Accredited Orchid Judge status in the AOS.

Herman Pigors and the Wilsons (Ken and Regina) were elevated to Emeritus Judge status. The new chair of the AOS Judging Committee is Gary Kraus. Peter Poot and Terry Kennedy will continue to head Toronto and Howard Ginsberg and Andre Levesque will continue on in Montreal for 2009.

### **The AOS meetings in Wilmington and Longwood**

The AOS continues to transform itself into a more member oriented organisation. The magazine 'Orchids' has improved with many more articles for the hobby grower. The latest issue has an article by our own Wendy Hoffman about her light setup. If you have not seen it, 'Orchids' is available in the Library. The record of AOS awards which was formerly published as Awards Quarterly is now available as a computerized data base called AQ plus, a SOOS copy is also in the library. It has the award descriptions as well as the award pictures.

The meetings ran from Thursday to Sunday morning with full access to Longwood Gardens for registrants. On Friday there were some tours of the DuPont family estates in the area as well as a few interesting orchid talks and of course the AOS auction which brought in \$30,000. The auction was of "Heritage Plants", lots of old Cattleyas and some old Cymbidiums and Paphiopedilums that went at outrageous prices. I must be getting along myself because I do have some of those cymbidiums in my greenhouse.

On Saturday we judged some of the Longwood Orchids and all registrants had a behind the scenes tour of the Longwood orchid propagation houses. The Trustees spent all day doing a strategic plan for the AOS the details of which will be in the next 'Orchids'.

Longwood gardens were of course wonderful and are a must see for anyone horticulturally inclined.

### **Programme Notes by Inge Poot**

As a pre-amble to the programme given by Russ Vernon in September, 2008 on the orchids grown by the Eric Young Foundation on Jersey Island he

gave us some great cultural tips on growing orchids in general and Odontoglossums in particular.

Any plant that suffers from stress will get sick or be attacked by parasites more readily.

The factors that create stress include:

If light, temperature, humidity, water quality, watering frequency are incorrect for the particular plant, if the rate of fertilization is wrong or even absent or -the greatest stressor of all: flowering-occurs, the plant will experience stress. The more you are away from the ideal conditions for the plant, the more stress the plant has.

Plants capture the sun's energy with photosynthesis by "fixing" carbon dioxide and that carbon dioxide which has "fixed" needs to be more than what the plant releases when it respire. If there is no net gain, the plant is stressed and will retrench or eventually die.

As hard as it is to believe, SOME Odontoglossums can be grown with Phalaenopsis. The epicentre of Odontoglossum distribution is in Mexico and Columbia. The genus is found from sea level to high altitudes. Odontoglossum crispum, the most important species found in most of the hybrids, grows at 3000 feet + in elevation. Some plants grow lower down and some are higher up in the mountains, which means that they vary in the temperatures they can tolerate. In their native habitat they grow on the trunks of trees in cloud forests or on slopes. That means that they get morning sun, but by the time the sun would get hot in the afternoon, mists roll in and shade the plants and keep them moist and well ventilated.

In cultivation, Odontoglossum crispum should be given 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees C) minimum in winter and in the summer it will be happy if temperatures stay below 65 degrees F ( 18.3 degrees C) and if they do not go above 70 degrees F (21 degrees C) during the day. If it is too hot outside, bring the plants into an air-conditioned room. If they are kept too warm during the night, their metabolic processes will use up too much of the stored food the plant made during the day, resulting in stress.

Another problem resulting in high stress is lots of air movement under conditions of low humidity. This results in more transpiration of water than the roots can take up as a replacement. To overcome this, place the plants on trays filled with pebbles and water, mist frequently or have lots of other plants around. Their transpiration will increase the local humidity.

Wrinkled leaves are an indicator of water stress. To check for the cause, water the plants and the next day, remove them gently from the pot to check the roots. If the roots are white, increase the watering frequency. If the roots are brown and mushy, re-pot the affected

plants and water them less frequently.

Water quality is very important. Use low solute water such as rain water , reverse-osmosis water (this uses a lot of tap water to produce. The typical reverse osmosis unit uses 4 parts tap water to produce one part de-ionized water. Buying de-ionized water may be more economical) . When the water evaporates it leaves all the minerals that were dissolved in it behind. At first it burns root tips and later the entire mature root. To prevent salt build-up re-pot frequently. Also use water with a pH of 5.5 to 6.5 occasionally to dissolve the salts and flush them out of the medium. This lengthens the useful life of the medium.

On the other hand, the purer your water is the more you need to supplement with trace elements and not just fertilize with the macronutrients. Fertilize at ¼ strength every time you water and once a month, water heavily without fertilizer.

To change the pH to the desired range , use "pH-Up" or "pH-Down". Both are available in pet stores that carry aquarium supplies. You can also dissolve a bit of lime or ammonium hydroxide to raise the pH and vinegar to lower the pH. Get a pH tape or strip in the pet store to see how you are progressing towards your desired pH. If your water contains a lot of minerals(-if it is "hard"), then the minerals will buffer the pH, that is make the pH resistant to change. You will therefore need far more pH-Up or pH-Down to change the pH than you would with pure water.

Light: Odontoglossums need almost as much light as Cattleyas, that is 1500 to 2500 foot-candles of light. If they get the higher light, they produce more flowers.

Re-pot when the roots come out of the bottom of the pot.

Potting mixes: At the Eric Young Foundation, where you see nothing but superbly grown plants, they felt that good New Zealand sphagnum grew the best Odontoglossums and Lycastes. As good sphagnum became hard to get they switched to Douglas fir bark and perlite. In this mix, the roots get damaged when the plants are re-potted. When the quality of the bark available deteriorated and became very unpredictable, they tried HP Promix plus bark plus perlite. It turned out this mix became too acidic after about a year and mandated too frequent re-potting. They did extend the life of the mix by sprinkling lime unto it, but it was too unpredictable.

They grow in coconut now. Coconut must be

soaked in rain-water before use, because it is full of salt, because the coconuts are floated in the ocean to their destination. To remove this toxic salt, -even if the medium is washed-soak overnight in rain-water, drain, fill again, wait one hour, then drain again.

This medium is very slow to break down. Coir, a shredded form of coconut husks looks a bit like osmunda and that is the form they use for Odontoglossums. The mix consist of:

50% coir

25% coarse perlite

25% fine charcoal

If the particular plant seems to not like coir, use 30% coconut chips . They have tried this mix for 3 months now and it seems to work well so far.

Other people have used Rhodan (which is attic insulation cut into cubes) with good success.

Mario Ferrusi uses sphagnum plus Styrofoam beads with excellent results.

As mentioned before, flowering is the biggest stressor for plants. If they produce fragrance, then the energy consumption is very much higher. To make sure the plant does not flower itself to death, cut off all Odontoglossum inflorescences produced from the first of May until the end of August. Do use active cooling to reduce temperatures during hot spells.

After September first you can allow the inflorescences to grow since temperatures will be lower and stress the plants less. They will usually produce 2-3 inflorescences per new growth at this time if well grown.

Diseases:

Black Spots, can be sunburn, but they are usually caused by a bacterial or fungal infection.

Peppering of tiny black spots is a bacterial infection .

This organism can get a foot-hold if condensation of water occurs on the leaves because of low air movement, high humidity or dropping temperatures. Oncidium Sherry Baby is very susceptible to this organism, as are many Odontoglossums.

High temperatures can cause a calcium deficiency, which too shows up as black patches.

To prevent bacterial and fungal spotting, use preventative sprays:

Phyton

Consan, 2-3 times per week

Physan 27 once per month. Make sure the pH of the water you use for this spray has a pH of 6.5 or above to prevent copper toxicity.

Next came some lovely pictures and comments on the plants grown at the Eric Young Foundation:

Eric Young wanted to develop tetraploid (4n) plants to help produce showy plants that are appreciated by the

general public as well as orchid growers.

Mr. Young's favourite genera were Odontoglossums, Cymbidiums, Calanthes, Paphiopedilums and Phragmipediums.

The present head grower at the Foundation is Chris Purver and he oversees different growers specializing in each of the major genera -to achieve their breath-taking results.

Mr Young also started to collect a fantastic library and this is added to by the foundation personnel. The wonderful plants are produced by line-breeding and by colchicines treatment of the flasks to double the chromosomes. To be able to get flowering plants of new crosses quickly, and thus be the one to name the new cross, the cross is often first made with a tetraploid and a diploid resulting in fast-growing, but sterile triploids. Once the cross has been named the tetraploid version of the cross just has to grow up to get awarded under one of the Jersey names!

The Calanthes grown by the Foundation are selected on the basis of being good pot plants. Good colour of crosses such as Calanthe Grouville -a lovely red- are a must.

Paphiopedilums are still being hybridized by the Foundation. They never stopped their interest in the large complex hybrids and as a result are now ahead in their breeding just as the large "toads" are coming back into fashion.

Phragmipedium besseae hybrids from the Foundation are famous in orchid circles. Their Phrag . Don Wimber and Phrag. Jason Fischer are wonderful! To get the reddest colour in these hybrids keep them cool when they are in bud. By keeping them cool they respire less and more energy is left over to use in making the sugar-based red pigment. Another hint on how to spot tetraploids- they tend to have wide leaves. So any plants in a flask of colchicine -treated seedlings, they can pick out the 4n plants right away!

As for Cymbidiums, they are grown to huge size by the Foundation! The British like their Cymbidiums to be less full, but flatter than we do. Xanthic yellows are cymbidiums that have no brown in their flowers. Both xanthic and non-xanthic yellow cymbidiums are represented by lovely clones at the Eric Young Foundation.

The Jersey Cymbidium house has high pressure mist above and below the benches. The house is heated by hot water pipes placed under the benches. During the winter the minimum night temperature is 45 degrees F (7 degrees C). The

day temperature is 50 degrees F (10 degreesC).

As for the Odontoglossums, red colour is introduced by the use of Cochlioda species such as Cochlioda sanguinea. This genus makes the flowers smaller, but introduces branching of flowering stems and true red colour. However it does not do anything for warmth tolerance.

Odontoglossum harryanum does introduce more warmth tolerance. You can tell its influence on the flowers by the squaring of the lip, spotting near the base of the lip and a splash near the base of the petals.

The problem of reflexing lips in Odontoglossums is largely genetic and has little to do with culture.

The species *Odontoglossum crispum* and *Odontoglossum nobile* were not separate during early hybridizing and as a result the parentage of many modern hybrids is not as stated. *O. crispum* produces fewer but larger flowers, often with lacerated and crisped edges to the flowers. It has many varieties with or without lots of colour. *O.nobile* produces many small, but flat flowers with almost entire edges. The flowers are far more frequently a creamy white with few or no spots.

### **Show time:**

Now is the time to set flower buds on your Phalaenopsis plants, so they will be in full bloom for our February show. According to p185 in the March 2007 copy of "Orchids" here is how to get Phalaenopsis to bloom: Keep the plants at a constant day and night temperature, at or below 25 C (77F) for 4 to 5 weeks. It works faster at 25C than at 20C. Once the flower spike is visible grow the plant at 17C to 26C (63F to 79F) depending on how fast you want it to grow. The buds on the inflorescence will initiate when the flower stem is 5cm (2") long, but the temperature must be below 28C (82F) or you will get keikis instead of flowers and /or bud drop. Also remember that temperatures over 27C (80F) reduce the flower count and make the flowers thinner and shorter lasting.

If you want to keep a Phalaenopsis growing but not flowering-to get it to a big size that will produce a stunning flower display- grow it above 28C (82F). If the days are 30C (86F) not even nights at 25C (77F) will induce flowering. Low lighting of 40footcandles or less will also prevent flowering, but at that low illumination the plant will not grow well either.

Pitson, our chemistry experimenter also found that fertilizing with a high potassium fertilizer induces flower spikes in phalaenopsis. He did not say at what

temperature he kept the plants though.

**Galeandra Culture:**

Copy the successes of Anita Kho and grow your Galeandras in clay pellets and place the pot into 2.5cm (1") of water.

Put holes 2-3cm (one inch) up from the base of the saucer to make sure the water level never rises above the 2-3cm (one inch). Her plants are wonderful! I presume she uses a low concentration of MSU fertilizer in rain water to water the plants



**MEMBERSHIP Renewal 2009**

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If Member of AOS \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Growing**

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 Windowsill \_\_\_\_\_  
 Just Starting \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP**

Single or family \$25.00 per calendar year  
Badges \$7.00 per person.

**CARD NUMBER** \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN TO:**

Southern Ontario Orchid Society  
c/o Ms. Hess Pommells, Apt. 503,  
370 Dixon Road, Weston, ON, M9R 1T2  
Phone 416-245-0369

### October 2008 Show Table

Class	First	Second	Third
Class 1 Cattleya Alliance	Laeliocattleya Mini Purple 'Princess Road' AM/AOS <i>Cathy Tacoma</i>	Epicattleya Siam Jade 'Water' <i>John Vermeer</i>	Sophrolaeliocattleya Mango Spice 'Sunset Valley Orchids' x Slc. Mini Pet 'Sunset Valley Orchids' <i>John Vermeer</i>
Class 2 Paphiopedilum	<b>Paphiopedilum St. Swithin</b> <b>Synea Tan</b>	Paphiopedilum Maudiae <i>Tenny Chan</i>	Phragmipedium St. Peter 4N <i>Anita Kho</i> Phrag. Paul Eugene Conroy <i>Synea Tan</i>
Class 3 Phalaenopsis and Vanda Alliance	Phalaenopsis appendiculata <i>Jay Norris</i>	Phalaenopsis Monte Carlo <i>Kathleen Kinnon</i>	Vanda Princess Blue x Vanda Thing Chai 4x <i>Michael Hwang</i>
Class 4 Oncidium & related	Oncidium Papilio 'Mendenhall' <i>Henry Glowka</i>	Aliceara. Helmet Roth 'Carmela' <i>Synea Tan</i>	Miltoniopsis Maui Sunset <i>Anita Kho</i>
Class 5 Cymbidium	Cymbidium Peter Pan 'Greensleeves' <i>Chee Chong</i>	Galeandra batemanii <i>Anita Kho</i>	
Class 6 Dendrobium	Dendrobium Jaquie Stocker <i>Anita Kho</i>	Prosthechea boothiana <i>Synea Tan</i>	
Class 9 Baskets or Displays	Paphiopedilums display <i>Henry Glowka</i>		



**The plant of the month for October 2008**, was Paphiopedilum Saint Swithin grown by Synea Tan. Congratulations Synea! Synea says the plant is very slow growing. She potted it in large coconut chunks on the bottom of the pot and small ones in the top third of the pot. She re-pots it every year to year and a half. She waters the plant with rain water to which she adds MSU fertilizer at the rate of ¼ teaspoon per 2 gallons of water. Every other month she flushes the pot with plain water. The plant spends the winter in a bay window with a Southern exposure protected from the strongest sun by sheer curtains. The temperature of the bay window is a minimum

of 23 to 24 degrees Celsius. Synea summers the plant out of doors on the North side of the house under the eaves of the house. The plant thus gets morning and afternoon sun, but is shielded from the noon-day sun by the eaves of the house