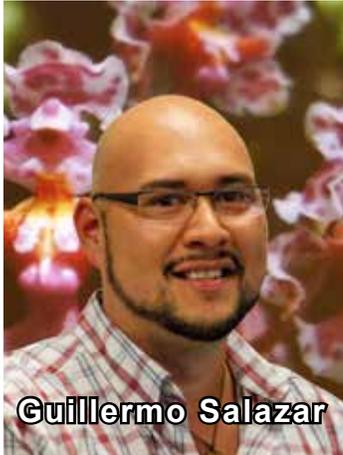




## CLUB NEWS



**Guillermo Salazar**

### February 3 Monthly Meeting

by Janis Croft,  
croftie1984@gmail.com

**Welcome and Thanks.** President Bob Schimmel opened the meeting at 7:15 pm with 48 attendees. Bob welcomed our four visitors and new members Wes and Joyce Dean and Doriana Borrero. He also thanked Jeanette Smith, Dianne Batchelder

and Mama Borrero for their wonderful refreshments and reminded all to enjoy while dropping a dollar in the jar.

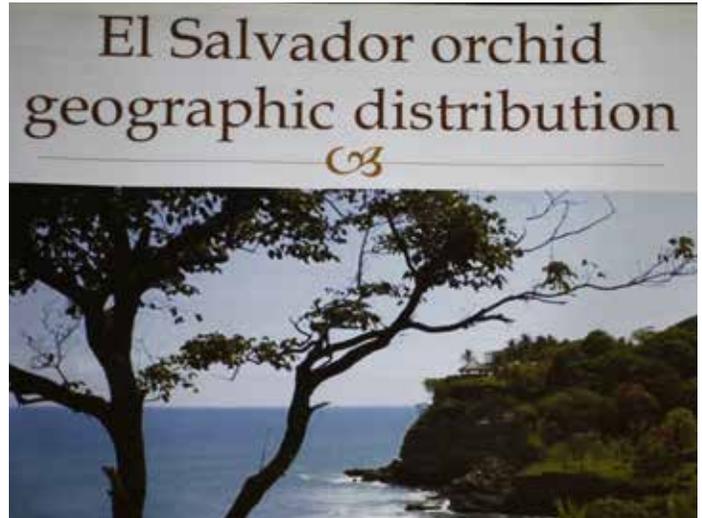
Linda Stewart recognized our birthday people with free raffle tickets and Bob reminded all to vote for their favorite orchid on the show table

**Club Business.** Annual dues are now being collected, \$15 for an individual and \$25 for a family. Bill Gourley, Treasurer, is collecting payments.

- SAOS Library advises members to just email Penny Halyburton with your book selection (see our website) and she will bring your requested book(s) to the next meeting.
- The Bottoms will be making a supply run this month. If anyone wants anything else just e-mail Sue with a list of what you need.
- The next Keiki Club will be meeting February 15 at Bob and Yvonne Schimmel's Home, 702 Wilkes Court in St. Aug 32086. The topic will be spring preparations.
- The Repotting Clinic starts up again on Feb. 7 at Ace Hardware on U.S. 1 from 9 am to 1 pm.
- We've accepted an invitation to participate in the Jacksonville Orchid Society Show on March 28 and 29. Start grooming your orchids now. Christie Peppard asked for volunteers to assist in all types of areas to contact her.



**Orchid Events.** There are four shows in Florida this month in Venice, Boca Raton, Greater Orlando and Naples. Check out the website for more details.



**SAOS Program.** Sue Bottom introduced our guest speaker, Guillermo Salazar from Miami, who spoke about the Orchids of El Salvador, Land of Hidden Treasure. Guillermo was born in Miami but grew up in El Salvador. He started collecting orchids at the ripe age of 9 years. He is a Landscape Designer with degrees in landscape design and environmental horticulture from UF/Gainesville. When he was nine, he was the first child member in the San Salvador Orchid Society and today he is in the AOS judging program.



*Example of a slide from Guillermo's presentation*

**Continued on page 3**



# CLUB NEWS



## Upcoming Orchid Events

### February

- 7 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 7-8 Venice Area Orchid Society Show  
Venice Community Center
- 10 JOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Jim Roberts, Topic TBA
- 14-15 Boca Raton Orchid Society Show  
Safe Schools Institute
- 15 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm  
Spring into Action  
Bob and Yvonne Schimmel's Home  
702 Wilkes Court, St. Aug 32086
- 20-22 Naples Orchid Society Show  
Moorings Presbyterian Church

### March

- 3 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Peter Lin, Diamond Orchids  
Neofinetia falcata and Its Hybrids
- 6-8 Englewood Area Orchid Society Show  
Englewood Methodist Church
- 6-8 Martin County Orchid Society Show  
Martin County Fairgrounds
- 7 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 7-8 Tampa Bay Orchid Society Show  
Egypt Shrine Center
- 10 JOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Speaker and Topic TBA
- 13-15 Fairchild's International Orchid Festival  
Fairchild Botanic Garden, Coral Gables
- 20-22 Port St. Lucie Orchid Society Show  
Port St. Lucie Community Center
- 22 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners  
Spring Repotting  
Sue and Terry Bottom's Home  
6916 Cypress Lake Ct. St. Aug 32086
- 28-29 Jacksonville Orchid Society Show  
The Garden Club of Jacksonville

### April

- 4 SAOS at Ace Hardware, 9 am til 1 pm  
3050 US 1 S in St. Augustine  
Repotting and Plant Clinic
- 7 SAOS Meeting, 7 pm  
Keith Davis, Keith Davis Orchids  
Demystifying the Bifoliate Cattleyas
- 14 JOS Meeting, 7 pm, Topic TBA  
Speaker TBA
- 11-12 EPIC Celebration of Spring  
Annual Flower and Garden Expo  
Ag Center, St. Augustine
- 11-12 Tallahassee Orchid Society Show  
Doyle Conner Building
- 19 Keiki Club for Orchid Beginners, 1 pm  
Orchids Outside the Pot

### St. Augustine Orchid Society Organization

President	Bob Schimmel <a href="mailto:schimmelr55@bellsouth.net">schimmelr55@bellsouth.net</a>
Vice President Programs	Sue Bottom <a href="mailto:sbottom15@bellsouth.net">sbottom15@bellsouth.net</a>
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Librarian	Penny Halyburton <a href="mailto:phalyburton@comcast.net">phalyburton@comcast.net</a>
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Operations Committee Chair	Jeanette Smith <a href="mailto:jesmith@watsonrealtycorp.com">jesmith@watsonrealtycorp.com</a>



# CLUB NEWS

Continued from page 1

El Salvador is a small country with diverse topography from volcanic mountain tops to pine tree forests to the Pacific coastal beaches without tourist development. As a child, he remembers looking out of his bedroom window and watching the beautiful orchids grow in the trees outside. Guillermo has a passion for El Salvador and shared many beautiful slides of the variety of growing conditions. He referred all to the definitive three volume set, *The Orchids of El Salvador*, by Fritz Hamer which describes over 362 species in 93 different genera.



Guillermo then proceeded to share slides of all types of orchids from El Salvador. Some orchids are so prolific that he referred to them as growing like weeds. His favorite was *Encyclia cordigera*, one of the largest and most colorful encyclias that is quite common. It is scented and comes in an alba variety that is true white with green petals. He showed many miniatures and varieties that grow well in Florida as well as in El Salvador.



The most common orchid in the country is the *Guarianthe aurantiaca*. It is a hardy, low maintenance plant showing a bright orange flower with red markings on lip. The second most common orchid in the country is *Guarianthe skinneri*, commonly referred to as San Sebastian. It has four color varieties: alba (pure white), coerulea (bluish), rosea (pinkish blush) and alba oculata (white with dark purple center). Many of the orchids he described have scents from citrus to very sweet sugary smells to not so pleasant odors; he described walking into his green house and being reminded of Cinnabons which was caused by the cinnamon smell from his *Myrcyllum trinasutum* orchid.

We saw many beautiful photos of a large variety of species from El Salvador. Guillermo Salazaar will be returning to discover more orchids in situ and will be leading tours of his acquaintances back to this beautiful country.



**Meeting Conclusion.** Harry McElroy announced the Member's Choice Award as Sue Bottom's *Rhyncholaelia digbyana*. The raffle table was the final event of the evening with Christie Peppard and Dianne Batchelor presiding. Thanks to all of those that stayed and cleaned up the room.



*Courtney reviewed the Show Table and explained some of the more interesting orchids*

Thanks to Watson Realty and Jeanette Smith for the use of their meeting space at 3505 US 1 South



# CLUB NEWS

## 2015 Dues Are Now Due

Membership dues for 2015 are now due. We'll be collecting dues through the March meeting, after which we'll update our 2015 SAOS roster and email distribution list. Dues are \$15 for an individual and \$25 for a family. If you can't come to the meeting, you can mail your membership check to SAOS c/o Bill Gourley, 807 Kalli Creek Lane, St. Augustine, FL 32080.

## March 3 Monthly SAOS Meeting Neofinetia falcata and Its Hybrids

Peter T. Lin of Diamond Orchids in southern California will speak about miniature vandaceous species and hybrids, with an emphasis on the charming *Neofinetia falcata*. *Neofinetias* are native to Japan and have been grown there for centuries. They are highly treasured and come in many flower forms and leaf forms. It has been used with other vandaceous genera

Peter is an accredited judge with the American Orchid Society. Due to limited growing space, Peter likes to specialize in miniature orchids, both species and hybrids, and has received numerous AOS awards. He maintains a collection of a thousand or more orchids at his home in Southern California in 3 small greenhouses, outdoors, as well as an offsite greenhouse.

## January 18 Keiki Club Bringing Home New Orchids

About two dozen folks came to the first Keiki Club get together of 2015 at Kathy and Mark Young's home. After a tour of their incredible homestead with the million dollar view, we met in the Garage Mahal where Mary Colee talked about what to look for when buying an orchid. The bottom line is make sure that the plant looks happy and is growing vigorously. Your future plant should have plump pseudobulbs and canes, clean full leaves, no obvious indication of pests or disease, and don't forget to make sure there's a plant tag in the pot. When you bring home your plant, try to isolate it for a time to make sure there are no lingering problems. A drench with one of Bayer products is also a good precaution. There were some goodies given out at the end of the meeting courtesy of Fred Keefer.



## February 15 Keiki Club Spring into Action

Orchid lovers will get together at the February Keiki Club meeting on Sunday, February 15 from 1 to 3 pm to discuss spring preparations. The dull, gray, cold days of winter are behind us and spring is around the corner. Orchids are awakening and getting ready to enter their prime growing season. Are you staking, do you have supplies for the repotting marathon, is your summer growing area prepped? It's time for you to spring into action!

**Where:** Yvonne and Bob Schimmel's Home  
702 Wilkes Court, St. Aug 32086  
**When:** February 15, 1 to 3 pm

## Special Online American Orchid Society Membership

**Only \$40**

- Subscription to monthly issues of ORCHIDS magazine
- Free and discounted admission to more than 200 botanical gardens and arboreta
- Access to reliable on-line orchid information and features available only to AOS members
- 10% discount on purchases on-line at aos.org including back issues of ORCHIDS magazine and AOS published books



# INSPIRATION

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*C. skinneri*

© Terry Cotton 2015



# CULTIVATION

## Your Orchids in February

based on Robert Scully articles,  
courtesy of the AOS



**General Growing Tips.** Spring is around the corner. Order your potting supplies early to make sure they are not sold out when it's time to repot. Observe plants (including companion plants like bromeliads) carefully for signs of disease and insects. Avoid having heated or air-conditioned drafts blowing directly on orchids. Don't bring you plants out too early. It is starting to warm but you can expect more orchid threatening cold fronts through March.

**Cattleyas.** Your cattleyas are starting to rouse, even though temperature and light conditions are not yet ideal for growth. Continue to use dilute water soluble fertilizer on your orchids at 1/4 to 1/8 strength. New green root tips are starting to emerge on the unifoliate, marking the beginning of the spring repotting season. Sometimes it is necessary to split open a sheath with a sterile blade to reduce pressure on the emerging buds or to allow accumulated condensation (possibly from fluctuating temperatures) to dissipate.



**Cymbidiums.** Stake cymbidium inflorescences that emerge from the mass of foliage on these winter-spring bloomers. Maintain temperatures at 50 to 60F to keep the flowers opening slowly. Dramatically higher temperatures and hot drafts cause bud drop.



**Dendrobiums.** Watch for flower buds on dendrobiums like Den. lindleyi, Den. nobile hybrids, Den. superbum (syn. Den. anosmum) and other deciduous species and hybrids. These have longer flowering when exposed to cooler night temperatures as the blooms open and mature. Avoid dousing open flowers when watering. Give slightly more water to these plants (that have been kept reasonably dry prior to flowering) once they begin to bloom. Continue to protect evergreen-type dendrobiums from low temperatures that may cause leaf loss.



**Oncidiums.** Do not permit miltonias and odontoglossums to dry out because this is a critical time for flower-spike development. Stake the spikes. Continue to use a dilute water soluble fertilizer before the flowers begin to appear.



**Phalaenopsis.** Continue to use a dilute water soluble fertilizer on phalaenopsis. Be careful not to splatter the flowers or they will stain. Phalaenopsis exude a honey-like substance on the developing inflorescence that attracts scale insects. Watch for signs of any problem that can be spot treated before it becomes a major situation. Avoid spraying insecticides on blossoms.



**Miscellaneous Genera.** The Catasetinae (catasetums, clowesia, cycnoches and mormodes) have dropped most of their leaves and should be kept dry. Watch for signs of new growth that marks the beginning of the repotting season for the catasetum relatives. Remove the old medium, cut off dried roots and pot in sphagnum moss or, bark or ProMix interlayered with the time released fertilizer Dynamite but DO NOT WATER. If you water before the new growth is about 4 inches tall, it will probably rot. Your Ludisia discolor is in bloom this month.



# CULTIVATION



## Orchid Questions & Answers

by Sue Bottom,  
sbottom15@bellsouth.net

**Q1.** What are these yellow spots on my cattleya leaf?

**A1.** That sure looks like scale. Look at the underside of the leaf and see if you have white

masses under there. You can use a soft toothbrush or Q tip dipped in isopropyl alcohol or put the alcohol in a spray bottle and spray the plant. Walgreens sells isopropyl in a high quality sprayer that you could use to spray the plant top to bottom. For some residual treatment, you could finish up with a drench of one of the Bayer products containing imidacloprid.



**Q2.** I live in Massachusetts and have my cymbidium outside from March until mid-November and then it goes upstairs to a small bathroom with southern light. Fearful of losing my one and only, I have always slightly under watered it, thus some curling of leaves and slight splitting. The only issue that I presently have is that some leaves are twisting. Any ideas?



**A2.** This beautiful Cym. Pauwelsii 'Kessander' received a cultural award from the AOS. We turned to resident cymbidium expert Harry McElroy for an answer: How a plant is placed in relation to the sun is important when moving them. It is a good practice to develop a system - like placing the tag on the side of the pot away from the sun. If a plant grows in one place for an extended period the new leaves grow so that the sun strikes the leaves in the most efficient way for photosynthesis. Moving the plant and placing the plant so that the sun is at a different orientation to the plant often causes the leaves to twist to the new sun angle. After becoming aware of this you may automatically call the side of the plant facing the sun "the front" and the part away from the sun the "the back". How



much a leaf twists when moved depends on its stage of growth or maturity. Mature leaves twist less than leaves which have more to grow.

**Q3.** We have been raising orchids for 10 years. Our front hall looks like a greenhouse due to a 20 ft x 8 ft dome above it. We recently have become infested with small flies. I have tried various chemical methods but to little avail. I am not sure what kind of flies they are. Any thoughts?



**A3.** I'm guessing fungus gnats. Here's a link to some information on controlling [fungus gnats](http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7448.html) <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7448.html> from the University of California. They report that fungus gnats are primarily a nuisance insect that thrives in moist conditions but can cause root damage. You can spray with *Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies *israelensis*, sold as Gnatrol, which is a different product from the traditional Bt.



**Q4.** Can you identify this orchid for me? I believe it is an air plant variety found growing wild in trees in Florida. It was given to a friend of mine as a gift and he would like to know the species.

**A4.** That is a Tillandsia, in the bromeliad family. It may be *Tillandsia bulbosa*.



# CULTIVATION

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## **Cattleya skinneri**

by A.A. Chadwick, [Chadwick & Son Orchids](#)

Reprinted with Permission, April 2003 *Orchids*



Easter would not be Easter without *Cattleya skinneri*. This delightful small-flowered *Cattleya* species always produces an abundance of bright rose-lavender flowers in time for this spring holiday. It is as much a part of this holiday for me as daffodils or the traditional Easter lily. Because it is so easy to grow and flower, *C. skinneri* is one of the most rewarding of nature's spring-flowering orchids.

*Cattleya skinneri* is native to Central America, where it thrives in wet mountain forests from just above sea level to about 4,000 feet (1,220 m). Its growing range begins in southern Mexico and extends through Guatemala and Honduras into El Salvador, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. It is one of the most common orchids found in Costa Rica and is so popular there, it has been named Costa Rica's national flower. Throughout the area, you can find plants growing in many gardens in the towns and cities, on porches and patios, fastened to trees, on tile roofs, or forming dense masses along the tops of adobe walls. Whole trunks of sabal palms can be seen covered with plants, put there by their owners to produce a colorful display for the religious holidays.

*Cattleya skinneri* is usually referred to as a bifoliate *Cattleya* because of the two leaves that adorn the top of its pseudobulb, but, more importantly, its flowers have an entire lip - in other words, one that continues all the way around with no cuts in it as you have with *Cattleya intermedia* or *Cattleya guttata*. In this sense, *C. skinneri* is similar to the autumn-flowering species, *Cattleya bowringiana* and *Cattleya deckeri*. Like *C. bowringiana*, *C. skinneri* has a limited range of color forms, and most plants have rose-lavender sepals and petals with a darker lavender lip, and the lip has a white throat. There are, however, some semi-albas and albescens forms that are quite striking. The rarest and probably the most beautiful form is the true alba, which has glistening white sepals and

petals and a white lip with a pale yellow throat. The true alba has no trace of lavender color anywhere in the flower.

*Cattleya skinneri* produces from five to 12 flowers on a spike and usually has more than one lead even on a small plant, so the result is a marvelous display of flowers. The flowers are somewhat larger than those of *C. bowringiana*, normally measuring about 4 inches (10 cm) across, although some can be as large as 5 inches (12.5 cm).

*Cattleya skinneri* was one of the earlier of the *Cattleya* species discovered, appearing in 1836 just after *Cattleya mossiae*. It was described as a new species in 1837 by the English botanist James Bateman in his book *The Orchidaceae of Mexico and Guatemala* (Tab XIII). Although Bateman had never been to Mexico and Guatemala, he was the world authority at the time on the orchids of these countries because of a man named George Ure Skinner, who ran a trading company in Guatemala. When Bateman was still a student at the Natural History Museum at Manchester, England, he noticed specimens of birds and insects Skinner had sent to the museum. He wrote to Skinner asking if he would send him specimens of orchids, and Skinner responded enthusiastically, sending box after box of plants he collected in the local countryside. At times, so many plants arrived that the commercial orchid company James Veitch eventually set aside a whole greenhouse exclusively for Skinner's Central American orchids, and every private collection in Europe soon had a plant of *C. skinneri*.

In his description of *C. skinneri* in 1837, Bateman told of his apprehension when he wrote to Skinner, a perfect stranger in a faraway country where no one really knew with any certainty that there were any orchids. Bateman described his surprise when Skinner accepted the challenge of finding and collecting Guatemalan orchids and began sending him plants. Skinner soon developed an obsession for orchids that Bateman found astonishing. "In pursuit of this object," Bateman wrote, "there is scarcely a sacrifice which he has not made, or a danger of hardship which he has not braved. In sickness or health, amid the calls of business or the perils of war, whether detained in quarantine on the shores of the Atlantic, or shipwrecked on the rocks of the Pacific, he has never suffered an opportunity to escape him of adding to the long array of his botanical discoveries."

Skinner continued to seek out Central American orchids for Bateman for the rest of his life and the two developed a lifelong friendship that is one of the most famous and productive in orchid history and led Bateman to write what is often considered his best work, *The Orchidaceae of Mexico and Guatemala*. Virtually all the orchids Skinner sent to Bateman were new to European horticulture and both John Lindley and James Bateman described them as new species. Because of his dedicated efforts, Skinner

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# CULTIVATION

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## Continued from page 8

was honored by having his name appear on *Barkeria skinneri*, *Lycaste skinneri* and Bateman's favorite, *Cattleya skinneri*. Of all the Central American discoveries, Bateman considered *C. skinneri* the best.

The high esteem in which *C. skinneri* is held by orchid growers is demonstrated by the awards it has received over the years. Fine clones of *C. skinneri* have received more than 40 awards from the American Orchid Society alone. Two of the best lavender clones 'Heiti Jacobs' and 'Carpinteria' received First Class Certificates and there are numerous lavenders with Awards of Merit. An albescens clone, 'Debbie', also received an FCC/AOS because of its excellent form and large almost-white flowers. Because it produces plants with so many leads and such an abundance of flowers, *C. skinneri* also has a host of Cultural Commendation awards to its credit, and has been one of the most popular orchids exhibited at spring flower shows.



In the early days of orchid hybridizing, *C. skinneri* was crossed with many of the other *Cattleya* and *Laelia* species, plus *Brassavolas*, *Epidendrums* and *Schomburgkias*, but none of these crosses produced anything as famous as *C. bowringiana* hybrids like *Cattleya Portia*. The popularity of small *Cattleyas* today, however, continues to make *C. skinneri* a useful parent in modern commercial crosses.

One of the earliest and most beautiful *C. skinneri* crosses and one that is still remade by commercial growers is its hybrid with another Central American *Cattleya*, the orange-colored *Cattleya aurantiaca*. The hybrid is called *Cattleya Guatemalensis* and it is also a naturally occurring hybrid between these two species. A fine clone of *C. Guatemalensis* has flowers that look like *C. skinneri* for size and shape, but capture some of *Cattleya aurantiaca*'s orange hues, giving the flowers a touch of coral, salmon or rosy-pink. The full range of color in *C. Guatemalensis* includes orange, purple, yellow and red, although plants with these more brilliant colors seem to exhibit more characteristics of the *C. aurantiaca* parent than *C. skinneri* with narrower petals and smaller flowers.

Easter is a perfect time for orchids - particularly when the orchids are *Cattleya skinneri*. The sun is higher in the sky now and the bitter winds of winter are just a gently moving remnant of an April shower. The greenhouse has become the warm tropical climate of an Andean summer day, and *C. skinneri* is in flower everywhere. *Cattleya skinneri* is the orchid that makes spring sparkle, and it is too bad we can enjoy it only once a year.

*Cattleya skinneri* is one of the easiest of the *Cattleya* species to grow. It is a vigorous plant and usually produces multiple leads, so you can develop it into an exhibition plant with very little effort.

In the United States, *C. skinneri* normally begins sending out new growths in late summer and will complete these by late autumn or early winter. If you encourage the plant to begin growing a little earlier with frequent light sprays of water in late June, it can make two growths a season and bloom on both of them.

Once a growth is mature, the sheath will turn brown and buds will develop and emerge from the dried brown sheath in time for it to flower in late March into mid-April. The flowers will last in bloom three to four weeks under normal home conditions, a little longer at cooler temperatures of 55 to 60 F (13–16 C). After blooming, the plant should receive less water and be allowed to rest for a couple of months.

Like most *Cattleya* species, *C. skinneri* needs lots of sun and moving air. A night temperature of 58 to 60 F (14–16 C), and a day temperature of 85 F (29 C) suits it well.

Repot *C. skinneri* immediately after it has finished flowering. If you want to develop an exhibition plant with many growths and flowers, instead of cutting it up and repotting it, simply move the plant into a larger-size pot as soon as the lead pseudobulb reaches the edge of the container. You should do this before the lead pseudobulb begins to root.



# CULTIVATION

## Why Do You Grow the Orchids You Grow?

### This Year It's Habenarias

by Sue Bottom, sbottom15@bellsouth.net

Has your taste in orchids changed over time? When you first start growing orchids, you buy everything in sight. You know what day the Sun Bulb plants are delivered to Home Depot so you can have first pick. Courtney says there is something about orchid growers, they go through all the trials and tribulations of growing one type of orchid and then when they finally figure it out, they decide to start growing a different type of orchid. I think he's got me pegged. Cattleyas are my enduring favorite, the incredible flowers, the fragrance, perhaps that's why most of my benches and some of the overhead racks are filled with cattleyas. But then I go to an orchid show and see something else that intrigues me.



*L. purpurata var. schusteriana*

When we were living in Houston, the Houston Orchid Society was a phalaenopsis club thanks in part to Bill Tippitt's breeding of multifloral phals. I grew lots of phalaenopsis, the hybridizing for yellows was in its heyday and the

harlequin phals were just introduced. I still buy and grow phals and love them for their long lived graceful blooms.

Then one day Stephen Moffitt gave a presentation to our Galveston club and introduced us to catasetums. So naturally I started growing them. What is easier than a plant that goes dormant in the winter and then grows like mad in the summer. Fred Clarke of Sunset Valley Orchids reignited my interest with all his beautiful and fascinating hybrids.



*Phal. Olympia's Cameo x Phal. Little Netsuke*

Next there was the vanda phase, I had to have one of every color and shape. After that it was the ephemeral stanhopeas. My Stanhopea grandiflora bloomed 8 times in one year and I was hooked. It took a bit of observing how Penny and Viv succeeded

with theirs and some trial and error until I could reliably rebloom them. Of course by then I had almost two dozen different varieties.

Roy Tokunaga of H&R Nurseries had some Habenaria medusa seedlings for sale when he came to talk to our club and I had seen pictures of this oddity so I thought, why not? When it bloomed, I was hooked and the hunt was on

for more. My enablers included Alan Koch of Gold Country Orchids, George Hausermann of EFG, Andy's Orchids website, Thanh Nguyen of Springwater Orchids and Louis del Favero. Before I knew it I had about two dozen habenarias, orchids that grow from tubers and require a dry dormant winter.

## This Year I Have a Habenaria Addiction



*Hab. erichmichelii*



*Hab. medusa*

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# CULTIVATION

Continued from page 10

That's how I found myself outdoors on a cold January afternoon with all these dead looking plants figuring out how I was going to repot them so they'd come back to life in the spring. The trickiest part is keeping the tuber oriented so the shoot end is pointing up and the root end is pointing down, easier said than done. I think I made the wrong decision on one or two of them last year.

For the similarly afflicted, this is what I have gleaned from books and talking with other orchid growers:

- *Pot Selection.* First, look for deeper standard size pots rather than azalea or bulb type pots. Don't use peanuts at the bottom of the pot cause that's where the tubers will want to form. Use smallish pots, if you think you're slightly underpotting, you've probably chosen the right pot.

- *Potting Mix.* Most folks suggest using either sphagnum moss or ProMix HP as your potting mix, I opted for a ProMix HP/sponge rock mix and top dressed with a little sphagnum moss so the soilless mix wouldn't wash out of the pot. If you use sphagnum, make sure you have the AAA grade, otherwise find a good soilless mix.

- *When to Repot.* After flowering, the vegetation starts to brown and the plant is entering dormancy. The tubers are

still growing and storing energy for next year's growth so just limit your watering until the plant dies back. Don't be in any hurry to remove the dead top vegetation from the pot because that will help you orient the tubers properly during the repotting process.

- *Tuber Orientation.* If you just knock the plant out of the pot and clean away the old potting mix like you would with other orchids, you'll find yourself saying whoops, which end is up? I held the tubers in my hand oriented top to bottom from depotting through repotting, to make sure they didn't get turned around.

- *Then You Wait.* Once your tuber is happily ensconced in its dry new home, put the pot someplace where it won't accidentally get watered. You have to wait until the tuber breaks dormancy and sends up a new shoot. Then you can begin watering. If there is no new growth when all your other orchids have spring fever, you can give your habeneria an occasional sip to encourage it to start growing.

It is probably natural that our taste in orchids evolves over time. After all, if you look back at your recipes from 5 or 10 years ago you realize your ingredients and techniques have morphed over time...though you must be careful not to admit to a Louisiana native that you are now adding beans to the gumbo!

## Repotting Habenarias Can Be Tricky Business



*Habenarias Look Like They're Dead in Winter, Time to Repot*



*Nice Healthy Tubers Found at the Bottom of the Pot*



*Clean Away the Old Mix and Remember Which End is Up*



*New Home is a Small Standard Sized Pot and a ProMix Blend*



*No Peanuts, Orient the Tuber and Backfill to the Top of the Tuber*



*Top Dress with a Little Sphagnum and Insert Your Plant Tag*



# HOME & BACKYARD

## Home and Backyard Orchid Growing

Mark and Kathy Young – Indoor Sunroom



Mark and Kathy Young grow their orchids in a south facing sunroom inside the home. It is a small room off the front entryway where the outside wall is mostly glass, just perfect for growing orchids.

There are a series of wire benches on which the orchids are grown with the light loving cattleyas and dendrobiums on the upper shelves, the mid range light oncidiums on the middle shelves and the shade loving phals and jewel orchids on the lower shelves. The area gets full sun in the mornings which orchids adore. The plants are protected from the midday sun by a large oak tree and by afternoon when the sun is in the west the area is well lit but not bright. The orchids seem to love the light conditions.



The plants are getting the day night temperature change they crave even though they are growing in a temperature controlled environment. The area warms up during the day due to solar gain and cools off in the evenings as heat is radiated out of the glass. On cool winter nights, the door to the sunroom can be left open so heat from the main part of the house keeps the room from getting too cold and on warm summer days, the air conditioned air keeps the sunroom from getting too warm.

There are small circulating fans to move air over the leaves. The windows don't open so the plants are bathed in circulating air rather than fresh air from outdoors. Kathy's plants couldn't care less, in fact they are thriving in their indoor cocoon. Perhaps it is because the house is so open, bright and airy that the plants don't even know they're not in the great outdoors.



Kathy gets her orchids ready for Saturday night with her weekly watering and fertilizer regime. She has a 50 gallon tank in which she collects rainwater, and then brings 3 gallons indoors to make sure it's room temperature. All the plants are hauled into the laundry room for a thorough douse and then it's time for dinner. She mixes 1/4 tsp of fertilizer with 1/4 tsp of Epsom salts into a gallon of water and feeds them, weekly. Kathy is using a 20-20-20 fertilizer formulation which is perfect for well water, but is considering a switch to Cal Mag fertilizer to supply necessary calcium to her orchids when watering with rainwater.

When the plants are in full bloom, Kathy displays them in the family room where they can be enjoyed all day. She had a beautiful Miltoniopsis in full bloom on the day of our visit, a sight to behold! She may be one of the few to be able to get this cool grower to rebloom because it won't be exposed to our summer heat.

Kathy is very selective in the plants that she brings home because her space is limited. That's her story anyhow, I see lots of opportunities for a few more beauties!



# SHOW TABLE



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*Epi. roseoscriptum*



**Grower Yvonne & Bob Schimmel**  
*Neost. Pinky*



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*Paph. Mount Avalon*



**Grower Yvonne & Bob Schimmel**  
*Ludisia discolor*



**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*Clo. Jumbo Circle*



**Grower Harry & Celia McElroy**  
*Cym. Honey Bunny 'Sugar Candy'*



**Grower Yvonne & Bob Schimmel**  
*Brassavola Little Stars*



# SHOW TABLE



Terry Bottom

**Grower Kathy Young**  
*Ludisia discolor*



Terry Bottom

**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*Rl. digbyana*



Terry Bottom

**Grower Harry & Celia McElroy**  
*Cym. Inasa Beauty*



Terry Bottom

**Grower Yvonne & Bob Schimmel**  
*Epi. polybulbon 'Golden Gate'*



Terry Bottom

**Grower Janis Croft**  
*Lc. Aloha Casa x Lc. Casitas Spring*



Terry Bottom

**Grower Sue Bottom**  
*Den. Elated*

