

THE HOUSTON HAPPENINGS

The Monthly Newsletter of the Houston Orchid Society, Houston, Texas

Speaker: Greg Butler, Warm Growing Species

By Holly Miller, First Vice-President



Greg Butler of Oak Hill Gardens is our speaker for the November meeting and his talk is on warm growing species. He will have plants to sell at the meeting and is also bringing pre-orders.

Greg grew up on the East Coast.

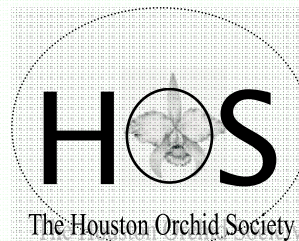
He has been a Boston Red Sox fan since 1967. He was graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 1981 with a Bachelor of Business Administration/Finance. For 15 years out of college he was employed with Wallace Computer Services, a national provider of business forms and computer supplies. Most of his time there was spent in sales and sales management, with a brief stint in the training department.

In 1996 he removed his monkey suit and noose in favor of shorts and a t-shirt, and entered the wonderful world of orchids at Oak Hill Gardens. He had the incredible foresight (and good fortune) to marry Liese Pigors (founder Hermann's daughter) about 10 years earlier, hoping someday for a shot at orchid infamy. Upon joining the Oak Hill Gang he instantly became the "idiot son-in-law" that every family business is loath to take on board. The company has remained in business to this day despite his best efforts to run it into the ground. His duties include, but are not limited to, sweeping the head house and driving the van. He reports directly to his wife. Joking aside, Greg and Liese are officers of the business and are primarily involved in the day-to-day running of it.

Oak Hill Gardens' diversified business includes plant rental, gift plant deliveries to the Chicagoland area,

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The Houston Orchid Society was established in 1945 and is a recipient of the AOS Distinguished Affiliated Societies Service Award.



orchid and house plant walk-in trade (both retail and wholesale) as well as mail-order to the orchid hobbyist, a segment of the business which has grown substantially over the last five years. Species orchids are an especially strong feature of the firm as well as hybrids of the unusual type for the hobby grower. Expansion has brought a total of over 20,000 sq. ft. under glass in eight greenhouses. Greg and Liese have two intelligent and handsome teenage sons, Cameron and Jared. Greg's hobbies include road cycling, skiing, guitar and drinking wine.

HOS Membership Renewals for 2009

It's that time of year. Memberships to the HOS run from January through December. Please fill out the enclosed membership form and bring it to the next meeting along with your check to renew.

President's Post

By: Deana Roberts, President

It's a Picnic, Sunday October 26, bring a covered dish a cooler with ice and some chairs and your good to go. Denny is doing bbq, HOS is supplying tea, soft drinks, paper towels, paper plates, plastic wear and drink cups. The easiest way to get to Denny's place is take 45 towards Dallas, past the airport, exit Old Town Spring and stay on the feeder road till you see the sign that indicates Tomball, take a left here which is FM2920 and then continue 7 lights until you pass the Valero, Texaco and Shell stations, next street is Goesling and make a right, go 1.1 mile, on the post the address is 22332, Denny will try to put some balloons on mail box, there is a dumpster near the road and perhaps his 3 horses will be grass and milling around.

Denny has lots of plants that did not succumb to Hurricane Ike and hey will be for sale and the BEST is the plants that we have ordered especially for the auction and the profits are going towards the AOS show this coming spring.

We expect great weather, bring bug spray, bring yourself, your kids, your neighbor and NOT RSVP'D to Holly Miller, do so, hollymill@earthlink.net. See you Sunday in the country.

Houston Judging Center

By Margaret Putman

HJC Results - October 11, 2008 -.

There were 9 plants entered for judging with no awards. There were 12 Accredited Judges, 2 Probationary Judges and 4 Student Judges present with a total of 24 persons attending. The next regular judging will be held November 15, 2008 in Jerabeck Center, University of St. Thomas, 2000 Mt. Vernon St., Houston, TX. Please bring a sack lunch. It is requested that all plants be entered before 11:30 A.M. so that they may be properly researched prior to judging.



Winners' Tips

Hybrid Winner: C. Portia 'Blue' owned by Denny Haase



Photograph courtesy of Malcolm McCorquodale

The plant is Cattleya Portia "Blue" It is a primary hybrid of C. bowringiana and C. labiata. This plant grew from a division to its present size in 4 years which lends to the vigor of the species' growth. I counted 74 flowers on it with 4 more spikes coming. It grows well in our climate as do both of the parents. It grows in normal cattleya conditions. Denny

Species Winner: Stanhopea wardii owned by Nina Rach



Photograph courtesy of Nina Rach

Nina was unable to get us writeup, but she has wonderful information on growing Stanhopeas on her website: <http://stanhopea.autrevie.com/>.

Proposed Officers Slate for 2009

By: Don Ghiz

The following is the proposed slate of officers presented at the October meeting by Don Ghiz the chairman of the nominating committee. Members will vote on the slate during the November meeting.

President	Holly Miller
1st VP	John Stubbings
2nd VP	John Jamerlan
Membership Sec	Katherine Brown
Recording Sec	Claudia Hanson
Treasurer	Jill Smith
Past President	Deana Roberts
Show Chair 2009	Melba & Jim Butler
SWROGA Reps	Julius Klehm Marilyn Holloway

Board Members

All of the above officers will serve on the Board. In addition, the 2009 Show Chairs, Melba and Jim Butler will serve, as will the 2010 Show Chair when named by the President.

The at large membership is also represented on the Board on the basis of one member for each fifteen members. Thus, with 221 members, the following 14 people will serve on the Board. Seven new reps each year, alternating on two year terms.

One Year (served last year)	Two Years (new)
Jeff Bradley	Donna Williams
Greg Scott	Joe Fields
Dave Hunt	Ted Baenziger
Johnny William	Don Ghiz
Sandra Higham	Calvin Starr
Dolores Fields	Doug Harris
Marvin Gerber	Loren Neufeld

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AOS Corner

By Melba and Jim Butler

Orchid Trivia: "It is hard to say why, but many who plan to build a greenhouse for growing orchids seem to have the idea that they must have one of special construction. This is not so. Any greenhouse that is well built and includes all the essentials for healthy plant life can be adapted for the growing of orchids. This includes all of the greenhouses of standard construction... The less expensive, pre-fabricated types, the conventional straight- and curved-eave styles, lean-to-greenhouses and conservatories." Reference: American Orchid Society Bulletin, Vol. 17, No. 1, January 1, 1948: Greenhouses for the Amateur Orchid Grower by Ernest Chabot, Author of "Greenhouse Gardening for Everyone"

As the saying goes, "Some things do not change." That can be said about the orchid trivia above. Because today, in 2008, for the hobbyist, many times a greenhouse becomes a necessity when the orchid collection becomes too many plants to take care of all over the yard and on the window sill and every place that is not already occupied. Many greenhouse owners begin by looking at books, articles and ads in magazines, or searching the Internet for greenhouse designs that could fit somewhere in the yard or as an attachment to the house. Some choose a greenhouse location that can be visited often, like an empty lot or pasture nearby, with plumbing and electricity.

It would be uncommon to find any two greenhouses that come close to being the same. Even though some hobbyists borrow several ideas from others in the design beginning, eventually they make changes that suit their own growing habits and styles. Somewhere along the way to the finished product, it becomes their own creation. The exception is the one who goes to a greenhouse company and chooses a greenhouse and standard benches. Here there could be duplications.

One way many hobbyists decide how to personally construct a greenhouse for growing orchids is to visit other growers in their particular area of the country - fellow orchid growers, especially. Eventually they get enough ideas to go to a greenhouse designer or to begin the effort themselves.

The important thing is for the greenhouse to function for the good of the orchids and the grower -- with proper light, circulation, temperature, and enough conveniences for the grower to feed and water their particular orchid collection. But as Mr. Chabot wrote back in 1948, don't start too small! Orchid collections are more likely to grow than to shrink.

For those interested in building a greenhouse, much research is recommended.



Culture Q&A

HOS Culture Q&A Panel: Ted Baenziger, Jay Balchan, Dolores Fields, Joe Fields, Marvin Gerber, Renee Gerber, Doug Harris, Rick Hepler, Julius Klehm, Nina Rach, and Greg Scott.

Q: What is the optimal Ph for Orchids? Do each genera prefer different Ph levels? What level Ph would be considered high? And low? And what do you do if you do have high or low Ph?

A: With 30,000-odd species growing in diverse habitats all over the world, there is a range of pHs favored by orchids. The two extremes of low and high pH environments are probably bogs and limestone cliffs.

Low pH

For instance, some of the lowest pH values are found in bogs (pH 3-5), which are often seen in glaciated areas (NY - Michigan - Wisconsin - Minnesota - Canada) and are fed by rainwater. Sphagnum moss is the dominant plant in bogs; it takes in mineral cations (positively charged ions such as Ca⁺⁺ and Mg⁺⁺) and gives off hydrogen ions (H⁺) which keeps the pH low.

You can read about the recently rediscovered Yosemite "bog" orchid (*Platanthera yosemitensis*) in this July 2007 article at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/parknews/yborchid.htm>

Some very interesting bog orchids (*Corybas*; *Pterostylis*) grow in New Zealand, such as the swamp helmet orchid, *Corybas carsei*, *Pterostylis paludosa*, and broad-lipped leek-orchid *Prasophyllum patens*. But other *Pterostylis* species grow in coastal limestone areas of Australia... so there is still great divergence in the genera.

Not all wetlands are acidic! There are also areas called "fens" - which are fed by groundwater or surface water runoff; fen water pH is by definition neutral to alkaline (above 7). What we call swamps are usually fens overgrown with small trees. An areas intermediate between fen and bog is sometimes called "poor fen." This is a wetland area with acidic water and low nutrient levels; you see sedges growing here, and some orchids.

In Texas, we have the Rose Pogonia (*Pogonia ophioglossoides*) growing with *Sarracenia* pitcher plants and *Drosera* sundews in seasonally boggy fields in the Big Thicket.

Beware of common names, which can lead to inaccuracies, such as the "Bog Twayblade," also known as the "Fen Orchid," *Liparis loeselii*, which grow in the Northeastern US. Which name do you rely on if you wanted to grow this in captivity-- bog (acid) or fen (alkaline)?

To make it even more complicated, fens and bogs can be side-by-side, if there's an area of fresh water runoff

moving next to or through a bog. So you can have plants with drastically different pH requirements growing very close together.

High pH

Higher pH environments include coastal limestones (raised beach terraces in some cases), as mentioned for Australia; limestone karst in southwestern China and northern Vietnam, where many *paphiopedilum* species grow, including *Paph. concolor*, *barbigerum*, *henryanum*, etc.

There is a lot written on the subject of pH in orchid culture, and I'm sure others will address it. One place to start reading is "Supplementing calcicolous Paphs" at <http://lady Slipper.com/calsub.htm> - this includes a very nice chart of measured substrate pH for difference paph species, arranged by group. - Nina Rach

A: My understanding is that all orchids prefer a Ph of 4.5 - 5.5 Higher or lower means that they do not grow as well. - Marvin

You're Invited! Come to Lafayette for the 48th annual Louisiana Short Course sponsored by the Acadian Orchid Society

What:

- *Enjoy speakers/vendors:*
 - o *Linda Wilhelm from Woodland Orchids in Charlotte, N.C.*
 - o *John Stubbings from Clown Alley Orchids in Pasadena, Tx.*

When: Saturday, Dec. 6, 2008, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Where: Ramada Inn-Lafayette

Stay: Call the Ramada for a special room rate of \$62.00 at 337-235-0858

Fees: \$35.00 for the Short Course, with meals on your own.

Send your check payable to the Acadian Orchid Society to

Janet Gianelloni

P.O. Box 134, Church Point, LA 70525

Phone: (337)322-8323

The Fine Art of Finding Orchids

By: Doug Harris

Imagine going on a hunt for new locations where wild orchids might be found. Sure, you can go to the same old known spots and see them in natural surroundings. But think about it. There are whole sections of the Big Thicket and our state and federal parks and national forests which still have not had a survey of the flowering plants completed. I don't know how to express the feeling of being there and discovering some of our native orchids among the forest plants and trees and documenting the new populations.

Orchid species usually bloom at specific times within reason, but hitting the optimal time for peak blooming can be a truly awesome experience. Depending on factors such as rainfall amounts and other things such as storms and hurricanes, you could find almost none in bloom on the day you venture into the fields and forests. Maybe a week or two either way in scheduling a trip might develop into underdeveloped flowers or else have displays where flowers are already passed their peak and are fading away. And visiting a second location which has not been blown apart by a hurricane as a back up location requires a knowledge that it exists.

We will be seeking the giant spiral lady's tresses or *Spiranthes longilabris* on our next trip. New search areas will be involved along with a known site. This is an increasingly rare find in Texas and other southern states. However, noting that suitable environs where it might be found within reasonable distance from Houston do exist but these areas require a search in order to spy new sites with the plants. November also is the time to look for seed pods of *Cypripedium kentuckiense*. So there should be two jaunts into the woods in November.

Joe Liggio and myself would like to invite you to join in the fun. Our October 12th trip was successful in finding two different orchid species. Just ask Brian Clark who went along if he thought his time was well spent. I know mine was!

We set up an email address where you can become a participant. If you wish to join in and receive notification of planned trips, you should send a note to be included. Include your cell phone and home phone numbers, so you can be notified of any changes and rain dates.

Send your information and request for inclusion to orchidsurveyor@yahoo.com and sign on to receive notices and updates. We try to schedule trips on dates with the least conflict with other plans and will be announcing scheduled dates primarily by email. On a given trip, you are asked to send a RSVP to the email address so a reasonable number to go can be met.

Thanks for your interest.

Local Authors Publish Marie Selby Botanical Gardens Illustrated Dictionary of Orchid Genera

Peggy Alrich and Wesley Higgins, PhD co-authors of The Marie Selby Botanical Gardens Illustrated Dictionary of Orchid Genera are proud to introduce this extraordinary work of 10 years in the making.

This 512 page full-color dictionary is the most comprehensive collection of orchid genera published to date with more than 3,800 names. The dictionary is an invaluable reference that presents the current status of orchid taxonomy and the history of generic names, making it an important reference for botanists, taxonomists, orchid lovers and horticultural specialists. Easy to read and understand, its color-coded, fact-filled pages are complete with color illustrations or line drawings for each genus.

Each genus description includes the author(s) name and publication name, as well as page number and year of publication. Accepted genera include subfamily, tribe, and subtribe placement. The etymologies have been carefully researched and greatly expanded from other listings. Each entry lists the genus' type species or lectotype, the number of species credited to the genus, and the species distribution. Also included is a brief description of the plants and flowers of the genus. Additionally, the dictionary includes an introductory overview of the orchid family by David Benzing, the well-known epiphyte ecologist.

The appendices include a list of the taxonomists along with their birth/death dates and genera authored, a listing of the standardized publication abbreviations used in literature, and a listing of species illustrations used.

The dictionary is now available for purchase at Banyan Treasures and The Garden Shop at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens. You can also order online at www.selby.org.

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Fall SWROGA Show

We look forward to seeing you at the Fall 2008 SWROGA Show and Members Meeting in Wichita Falls, Texas. This event is sponsored by The Red River Orchid Society.

During these hot days of summer we are certainly envisioning the pleasant days of fall. And the first of many pleasant fall days can be enjoyed in Wichita Falls, Texas, at the SWROGA Show and Members Meeting that will be held November 7-9, 2008.

The Red River Orchid Society has worked hard and has succeeded in planning a wonderful event for our enjoyment. Along with a hospitality suite and the company of the society members there will be a Continental Breakfast provided by the Manager of the Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel, the host hotel, on Friday and Sunday mornings from 7:30 - 9:00 a.m.

The Judges' Buffet and the AOS Judging will be held on Friday evening. Saturday morning begins with the Affiliated Societies Breakfast and Raffle and then continues with committee meetings and the SWROGA Directors and Members Meeting. At 12:30 p.m. the Dallas Judging Center will hold their monthly judging session.

Lectures will begin at 2:00 p.m. and be presented by Greg Butler of Oak Hill Gardens and Max Thompson, AOS Judge and a member of the Kansas Orchid Society. Greg's topic of discussion will be "Erias of Interest - A Furry and Floriferous Family of Orchids" and Max will enlighten us with the subject of "Angraecums And Their Culture."

Saturday evening promises to be one of fun and laughter as we all enjoy the SWROGA Auction and the Banquet. On Sunday morning, The International Phalaenopsis Alliance, under the direction of Dr. Olie Garrison, will also have a program to share with all who can attend.

In these busy and uncertain times, it is difficult for SWROGA to find societies that are willing to extend an invitation to all of the members of SWROGA to visit their area and to work so hard to provide us with the opportunity to treat ourselves to a week-end of friends, fellowship and learning. Please show your support this fall to the Red River Orchid Society and the Southwest Regional Orchid Growers Association by attending the SWROGA Show and Members Meeting in Wichita Falls, Texas.

**The SWROGA Affiliated Societies
Committee**

Welcome New Members

Clifford B. Legaspi

Welcome Guests

Sarita Cannon

Jim Moore

Miriam Sicilia

Thanks for Refreshments

Bill Bartlett

Bente Davies

Mary Card

Ada Ganze

Midge Gorman

Sandra Higham

Maureen Kracker

Claudia Ludwig

Get your newsletter notification by email

Get your newsletter by email and save the society printing and mailing costs as well as helping reduce the use of paper in the environment. Instead of a paper copy, you will be notified via email when the newsletter is posted at the society website. You will be able to read it almost a week before those who are getting the hardcopy. Best of all, you will see all the pictures in full color -- and you know that orchid are *much* prettier in color!

Just let me know at sataylor@eastex.net and I'll add you to the list.



Committee Bulletins

Newcomers Group

Chair: Debbie Peterson-Chair dpeterson@avalonadvisors.com
281-890-0811

Co-chair: Edwina Mitchell, Co-chair
Edwina.Mitchell@shell.com 281-479-6539

Thank you John for hosting our October Newcomer's meeting and donating plants to us. Everyone really enjoyed seeing your place and learning about your orchids and your business. Thanks for all the good tips you gave us too.

Our November meeting will be our last Newcomer's meeting for 2008. The meeting will be Sunday, November 16th from 2-4PM at John Stubbings - Clown Alley 3119 Lilly Street, Pasadena, Texas 77505 (281)-991-6841 Cell (832)-693-8140 clownalley@sbcglobal.net. This will be our repotting meeting, so be prepared to get dirty. Please do not bring your own plants for repotting. We will also have food for this meeting, instead of just snacks. So please come hungry! I will be supplying everything you need from the generous donations HOS members have given us. I'll be emailing everyone on November 12th to remind you of the meeting and give you any further details. If you have any questions please contact Debbie or Eddie.

Attention all HOS members: If you have any plants that need repotting that you'd like to donate to the Newcomer's, please bring them to Debbie and Eddie at the November 6th HOS meeting. Or we can pick them up before our meeting on the 16th. Thanks!!

Please bring your nametag to the meeting. See Eddie if you need to order your nametag and for the purple and green Newcomer ribbons to attach to your nametag (which designate you as a newcomer).

Raffle Table

Chair: Lee and Gordon Rowell

Now for the month of November we have purchased a special society package deal from our wonderful speaker, Greg. Check out their website, www.oakhillgardens.com to see what they all have to offer. You will stay busy on the computer for awhile checking out everything! After looking at their website, I called (847) 428-8600, and spoke with Liese and she was very helpful with my preorder. I believe that there can not be enough great things said about Greg, as he will be driving down all our preorders, plants for his sales table and our plant raffle table! Then pick up and go to more orchid shows. Yea Greg! Greg and Liese stay busy running the overall operations while Hermann, Liese's father and founder of Oak Hill Gardens, stays concentrating on the development of the laboratory. Founded in 1973 they have expanded to 20,000 square feet of greenhouses. I won't go more into the history as you've already read about Oak Hill Gardens from our President, Deana, and Vice President, Holly. Most of us have seen him at the orchid shows. Check out his busy show schedule; he is a busy man. Please stop by the raffle table after you have been by his sales area!

Please, please, bring your box tops for education!
Look forward to seeing everyone there!

Houston Orchid Society 2008 Officers and Committee Chairs

Officers

<i>President</i>	Deana Roberts
<i>1st Vice President</i>	Holly Miller
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	John Stubbings
<i>Recording Sec.</i>	Katherine Brown
<i>Treasurer</i>	Jill Smith
<i>Membership</i>	Donna Williams

Chairs

<i>Guest Hospitality</i>	Jean Schwenke
<i>Happenings Editor</i>	Susan Taylor
<i>Librarian</i>	Sarah Bentley
<i>Newcomers Group</i>	Debbie Peterson, Eddie Mitchell
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	Richard Champagne
<i>Plant Raffle</i>	Lee and Gordon Rowell
<i>Refreshments</i>	Cherie Lee
<i>Silent Auction</i>	Judith and Loren Neufeld
<i>2008 Spring Show</i>	Don Ghiz
<i>2009 Spring Show</i>	Melba Butler
<i>HOS Web</i>	Calvin Starr
<i>2008 Workshop Chair</i>	Ted Baenziger and John Stubbings

Directors

<i>Two-Year Term</i>	<i>One-Year Term</i>
Joe Fields	Fr. Ted Baenziger
Greg Scott	Calvin Starr
Melba Butler	John Jamerlain
Jim Butler	Phillip Free
Dave Hunt	Richard Lund
Johnny Williams	
Sandra Higham	
Dolores Fields	
Marvin Gerber	
Jerry Stephens	

Representatives

AOS Representative	Melba and Jim Butler
IPA Representative	John Stubbings
ODC Representative	Joe Fields
SWROGA Representative	Julius Klehm and Marilyn Holloway

Houston Orchid Society
November 2008 Meeting

2008 Speakers

November: Greg Butler, Oak Hill Gardens

December: HJC Auction and HOS Party

Program: Greg Butler, Oak Hill Gardens
Warm Growing Species

Date: November 6, 2008

Time: 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Place: Houston Garden Center

HOS Website

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

Houston Orchid Society
The Houston Happenings
P. O. Box 648
Ace, TX 77326

