

THE HOUSTON HAPPENINGS

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

Speaker: Peter Tobias, Orchid Conservation

By John Stubbings, First Vice-President



Peter Tobias first started growing orchids in Chicago in the early 1970s but his hobby only "...really got out of control" when he moved to Encinitas, a coastal town just north of San Diego, CA, in 1980. His collection is primarily species orchids, most of which are grown outdoors. In 1999 he visited the Atlantic Rainforest in Brazil at the invitation of Rosario Almeida Braga. After that visit he started his own little rainforest in two large backyard avocado trees. The rain for this forest has to be provided from a hose. Peter was a founding member of the San Diego County Orchid Society's Conservation Committee. The success of that endeavor in San Diego led to the idea that orchid lovers nationwide, and even internationally, might support an organization devoted to orchid habitat protection. In 2006 the Orchid Conservation Alliance received its 501(c)3 designation from the US government, allowing it to collect donations tax-free for orchid conservation purposes.

In his non-orchid life Peter is a professor of immunology at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, CA. In his laboratory he studies the mechanisms by which fatty plaques accumulate in the arteries and lead to atherosclerosis. Most of this work is done in mice and isolated cells. The hope is that a better understanding of the beginnings of this disease will lead to better approaches to avoiding or preventing it. Peter says that growing orchids or seeing them in the wild will probably not prevent atherosclerosis. However, lots of hiking to get to the orchids will probably slow its development and growing them will make you happier, both of which are good.

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



SIGN UP FOR THE ANNUAL WORKSHOP!

August 7 and 8, 2009

The Crooker Center, 3900 Graustark

University of St. Thomas
Houston, TX 77006 [Montrose area]

Co Chairs: Fr. Ted Baenziger Co-Chair (713) 525-3146 ejb@stthom.edu and John Stubbings Co-Chair (832) 693-8140 JDStubbings@comcast.net

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President's Post

By Holly Miller, President

I hope you are all enjoying your summer. This heat and drought has been relentless and I hope everyone is keeping an eye on their orchids for signs of stress. They may need more air flow to combat the heat and also more water than we've been used to giving. The price of an additional fan or two and the minimum amount of electricity it takes to run them is well worth the alternative of replacing orchids.

Calvin Starr has updated the HOS website with a new look - check it out when you get some time. He's done some really nice work. He added a page called Orchids for Kids and with Nina Rach's help, created a nice source for kids of all ages to learn about orchids. He's looking for a few members who would like to form a committee to contact teachers, scout leaders and children's groups to let them know about the webpage. Contact Calvin at calvin@kr5e.com if you are interested in this.

I hope you are all planning on attending the Summer Workshop on August 7th and 8th. AOS judging will be at 6:30 Friday evening and everyone attending the workshop is invited to enter plants - plants should be entered between 4:00 - 5:45. The Preview Reception with plant sales and a silent auction will be from 7:30 - 9:00 with wine and hors d'oeuvres.

On Saturday, Peter Lin from Diamond Bar, California will present "Wild, Weird and Wonderful Orchids, A Portrait of Orchid oddities!" and he will also discuss "Growing Dendrobiums" in a breakout session. Lean Parker from Shreveport, Louisiana will present "Easy to Grow Orchid Species" and "Species Growing Specifics" in her breakout

Use Goodsearch and Help the AOS!

By Greg Allikas

Last week Dianne Gorbach informed me that the AOS had an account with a Yahoo search spinoff called.

How this works is that when you search (or shop) through the Goodsearch portal, the AOS makes money. Not a lot (a penny per search) so if I am the only one using the service I can tell you right now, it isn't going to make a whole heck of a difference. But if ALL of you search through Goodsearch, and tell your friends to, we might just create a pyramid scheme to rival the fortunes of Bernie Madoff...or at least we can hope. There are a couple ways you can do this...

The easiest is to download the Goodsearch toolbar. Just click on the link below and you can install that toolbar already aiming pennies at the AOS. Just follow the directions. Although you can keep your Google toolbar, I have turned mine off for now so I get in the habit of using the Goodsearch window. Another way to raise peanuts for the AOS is to click the Goodsearch graphic on the AOS homepage and that will take you to their search portal.

Raise \$\$ for the AOS - it doesn't cost you a dime.

Winners' Tips

Hybrid Winner: Den Blue Twinkle x Den antennatum grown by Sandy Higham



Photograph courtesy of Malcolm McCorquodale

It is in a short clay pot with slits. The media is mostly broken up lava rock that I bought from Home Depot. I water every other day when it is very hot.

In the winter, I water once a week or less. I fertilize often with a weak solution of Peters Calcium and Magnesium fertilizer during the growing season. The plant gets strong light.

Species Winner: Encyclia alata grown by Malcolm McCorquodale



Photograph courtesy of Malcolm McCorquodale

I have been watering this plant every day or two and fertilizing it every week or so with either Peters 20-20-20 or BR-61.

Its first flower opened on the Monday before the meeting. I repotted it last year in a basket fashioned after one that Bill Bartlett showed the Beginner's group how to make.

Jill and Gerry Smith and Their Orchids are Moved In

By: Susan Taylor

I was luck enough to be able to visit Jill and Jerry during a recent trip to Florida for the South Florida Leadership Conference. The penthouse is more spectacular than I remembered and the Vandas are very happy campers in the Florida climate.

Jill indicated that the move went well and she was able to find a garden in which to place most of her orchids, but continuous rains caused a big problem with rot. They are now working on getting a covered area set up at a friend's for a more permanent location.

During the move, Jerry found a notebook that his grandfather kept on orchids he had grown in Florida. What a keepsake from way before electronic recordkeeping was around. He still has several of his grandfather's orchids in his collection.

They have joined the Ft. Lauderdale OS and are looking forward to working with that society

James Brizendine Collection Donated to HOS

Due to the unfortunate passing of James Brizendine, his wife Kitten, is donating his orchid collection to the HOS. They were not members but were known by a number of our members. John Stubbings and Bill Tippet have looked at the collection and the plants are mostly very nice. We are moving the entire collection to Clown Alley - John has graciously offered to house them under shade cloth between his office and the greenhouses until we can sell them. There are over 1200 plants in the collection and plans are in the works for disposition of the orchids.

Texas Gulf Coast Fern Society

Meets the Third Sunday of each month at the Houston Garden Center at 2:00 PM. Come join us and learn more about growing ferns in the Houston environment. Visity the website at <http://www.tgcfensoc.org/> for more information.

AOS Corner

By Carol Holdren, , AOS Affiliated Society Committee

American Orchid Society Affiliated Societies

As a member of an AOS Affiliated Society your society receives a monthly copy of Orchids magazine. If you are not an AOS member, in which case you get your own Orchids magazine at home, then checking out the club copy is a good way to see what you're missing. July's issue has a great article by Ken Slump about orchid viruses as well as several other articles, information on orchid shows and ads for orchid related items. The information is for beginners as well as more advanced orchid growers. Think of it as a meeting that is in addition to your monthly club meeting - your local orchid society does the best job of helping you grow orchids in your particular area and the AOS is the organization that can help with orchid growing on a national level. To join go to www.aos.org

The AOS web site also has information on the upcoming AOS Members Meeting which is open to everyone - it is an orchid conference and they are always great fun as well as full of new and exciting orchids. The next meeting is outside Los Angeles, CA in October 2009 at the beautiful Huntington Botanical Gardens. <http://www.orchidshow.org/> Check that out too!





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: With the extremely hot weather we're having, should we cut back on fertilizing since the plants do not seem to be growing as quickly as they were earlier in the summer?

A: Personally, I don't cut back on fertilizer in the summer. Assuming the plants that you are growing are ones that appreciate warmer weather (cattleyas, phals, vandas, dendrobs), I would try to encourage growth to keep up with the fertilizer. Summer is the time for growing and you need to provide conditions that promote that. This can be tough. Generally when the temps get above 95, most orchids shut down to conserve water. So you want to extend the amount of time that the plant do not have to face these conditions. There are some things you can do. For example, you need to be sure to avoid direct sun. Even if the leaves don't burn, if they feel warm or hot to the touch, then the plant is too hot and you need to find a shadier place for it. Maybe you can find a place that has a breeze...maybe a place that gets hit with a sprinkler in the morning. If you can find this good spot, keep the fertilizer going! - Jay

A: I'm not sure that I have the best answer but I usually do not cut back because I've always assumed that they needed as much energy as they would normally get if not more. I water more often depending on the mix that they are in and type of plant. I still water weakly, weekly (as needed now in the heat) and flush every 3-4 weeks so that there is no buildup. - Julius

A: Yes, it is true you should cut back on the fertilizer when the air temperature reaches into the 90's and beyond! If your growing area hovers in the mid 90's to low 100s the fertilizer could be harmful rather than beneficial. Ed Wright from San Antonio, a judge and long time orchid grower, always preached about orchid physiology slowing down in high temperatures and that fertilizing was a waste of resources and could even act as a toxin. The plants would fair far better if maintained in a lower temperature with plenty of moist air movement. - Rick

President's Post (Continued)

session. Michael Sinn of Canaima Orchids in Palmetto, Florida will present "Venezuelan Cattleya species in their Habitat" and "Growing Cattleyas" in a breakout session. Fr. Ted will have a breakout session on "Growing OUTSIDE and Inside, Without a Greenhouse" and there will be two others. The breakout sessions are quite casual and you will have the opportunity to ask about anything you'd like to know.

A good lunch is included in the registration fee. Plant sales and another silent auction will go on all day Saturday. So many great presentations in one day - What a deal!

Our Annual Picnic will be Saturday, October 24th at Clown Alley Orchids in Pasadena. I'm looking for some people who would like to help me organize it. Please let me know if you can help.

Are HOS Refreshments in Jeopardy?

By: Noreen Tolman

Do you, as an HOS member, enjoy having refreshments at the monthly meetings? Do we, as membership, want to continue having refreshments at the monthly meetings? Have you signed up this year to bring something to one of the meetings? We have close to 100 members that come to the monthly meetings each month, some months more than others. The Houston Orchid Society provides coffee and various soft drinks, plates, napkins, cups, table cloths, utensils, etc. In return the HOS asks volunteers to bring food items each month. We ask that a minimum of 6 people sign up each month (excluding Dec).....which is 66 for the year. There are three categories, with a minimum of two persons each to sign up.....Savory (non-sweet); Fruit & Veggie trays; and Sweets. For those that do not cook or bake, work, or do not have the time.....fruit or vegetable trays, or other ready-made items can be picked up relatively inexpensively at the local grocery store prior to coming to the meeting. We gladly take monetary donations as well, to purchase items on your behalf. If everyone that comes to the monthly meetings signed up at least ONE time, we would have more than enough people to fill the entire year.

With that said, I would like to thank those 39 of you that have signed up or brought refreshments for this year. I would most of all like to thank the handful of people that have brought more than once, and especially those of you who, on numerous occasions, have been willing to fill in on the months that we have been short! I'd also like to thank those who brought that take into consideration the number of people that come to the meetings. The HOS membership that comes to the meetings and partakes of the wonderful goodies you 39 have provided month after month, appreciate this very much.....and hopefully will sign up at least once a year to help contribute. Please sign up at the next meeting.....we would all appreciate this.

Thank you!

Erwinia problems

Reprinted from Floralia BV Newsletter, Volume 26 NR. | OCTOBER 2008, <http://www.floricultura.nl>

Erwinia is a bacterial disease known to cause the dreaded soft rot or “slime” in Phalaenopsis. This bacterium dissolves the cell walls, leaving a glassy wet spot in the leaf. The symptoms may develop within one day or night and a plant that leaks bacteria may quickly affect neighbouring plants. The main cause is the climate; a combination of high temperature with a high air humidity and little ventilation will quickly do the trick. Weak plants with little roots or just after potting or moving are most sensitive.



Erwinia Chrysanthemi

More Erwinia types

The most common one is *Erwinia carotovora*. This is a real weakness parasite that quickly attacks under circumstances that are ideal for the bacterium. One of its characteristic is the strong scent, rotting fish odour, that this bacterium spreads. Adequate climate control and quickly drying the plants can control this bacterial infection just as quickly. However, over the past months we have also seen an increase in analyses of bacterium *Erwinia chrysanthemi*. This is a more aggressive type than *E. carotovora*. One of the main differences is the odour that is hardly noticeable. The symptoms mainly differ in the development of the damage. *E. chrysanthemi* appears to grow leaves for a longer period before the wet, glassy spot appears. First the leaf becomes dull and yellowish and only after a few days the watery spot appears, usually on the older leaves at the bottom of the plant. Eventually the entire leaf collapses. *E. chrysanthemi* also spreads more aggressively than *E. carotovora* and that is not only caused by contact

with the leaves but also by splashing irrigation water. Usually various plants divided over a container or table get infected and the bacterium is easily passed on. In this regard the infection may be similar to *Pseudomonas*.

Measures

The measures remain the same as for any other bacterium infection:

- Remove all infected plants before every watering
- Prevent a dead climate by ventilating and heating, using fans and, in particular drying quickly after watering.

Hygiene measures such as disinfecting hands, putting infected plants in a plastic bag before moving them, cleaning up waste etc.

There is no real control agent for the *Erwinia* types or *Pseudomonas*. We do have disinfection agents that may prevent spread and development. Most commonly used are:

- H₂O₂ hydrogen peroxide and agents such as Horticlean and Jet 5 that can be sprayed on the affected spots in a 0.5% solution. It can also be sprayed through the rain line.
- ClO₂ chlorine dioxide dosing in the irrigation water with 2 dpm also appears to be an effective way to control the bacteria. That requires investment in an accurate dosing unit with a vessel with hydrochloric acid and sodium hydroxide to apply it.
- Disinfection agents on the basis of Cu (copper ions or copper hydroxide) and other, for instance quaternary compounds may help control the spread of the infection. To prevent disruption of the iron supply due to precipitation, it will be necessary to use the more expensive 4.8% EDDHMA (Bolikel).

The basic drawing means prevention by taking the right climate measures, humidity control and hygiene

Bomeliad Society/Houston Inc.
 Regular meeting third Tuesday
 of month at 7:30 PM

Houston Garden Center
www.bromeliadoscietyhouston.org

Fall SWROGA Show To Be Hosted by the Arkansas Orchid Society



The Arkansas Orchid Society will be hosting The SWROGA show and sale at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel in North Little Rock in October 2009. The Wyndham has very nice facilities and has provided room to have all activities at the hotel.

This will be an American Orchid Society sanctioned show.

There will be displays and sales tables from as far away as California. This is a good place to visit if you grow orchids or want to learn how to. There will be speakers as well as information on how to grow orchids

As a fundraiser to help offset the costs of the show, there will be a raffle of a set of White Orchid silver plate. The tickets are \$5.00 each or \$25.00 for six and can be purchased from Mavis.

The set includes 73 polished, ready to use, pieces in an anti-tarnish box:

- 8 knives
- 8 dinner forks
- 8 salad forks
- 8 dessert forks
- 8 soup spoons
- 24 teaspoons
- 1 large pierced serving spoon
- 1 small pierced serving spoon
- 2 large serving spoons
- 1 cold meat fork
- 1 gravy ladle
- 2 butter knives
- 1 sugar shell

For further information visit the show website at:
http://web.me.com/jerrynalice/Site/SWROGA_SHOW_%26_SALE.html

Welcome New Members

None submitted

Welcome Guests

Kathy Carrier
 Michael Cobstead
 Bee & George Coulam
 Fe De La Calzada
 Josh Fidler
 Jesus S. Lopez, Jr.
 Nickolas Lopez
 Deidre Lopez
 Beverly Robinson

Thanks for Refreshments

Ken Gardner
 Midge Gorman
 Margaret Kripke
 Tracey Peterson
 Vanessa Peterson
 Nina Rach
 Jean Schwenke

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. New members will be added to the email list automatically. If you wish to get a printed version, please let me know.

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



Committee Bulletins

Newcomers Group

Chair: Jean Schwenke, schwenke@atlascsusa.com 832-746-1003

The Newcomers Group had a wonderful meeting last month, thanks to the warm hospitality of Jay Balchan. Seeing such an exquisite collection was an inspiration to us all. Jay shared some much needed tips on how to maximize our growing areas, including ways to mount and hang orchids to free up shelf space. Thanks so much, Jay for giving us the kind of practical advice necessary to help us get a handle on this hobby.

Our next meeting will be Sunday, August 16th at 2:00 PM at the home of perhaps our most experienced HOS member, Dave Hunt, and his greenhouse proves the point. It is truly a "must see it to believe it" experience. If it can be cultivated, Dave's got it and can teach us everything about it. I hope he will tell us a bit about his extensive travels in search of the rare and exotic orchids that make up his varied collection. You won't want to miss this chance to drink from such a fountain of knowledge.

Intermediate Group

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

Co-chair: Calvin Starr, calvin@kr5e.com 281-482-5589

The HOS Intermediate Group meets on the 4th Sunday of each month at 2PM. And you must have been a member of HOS for more than 2 years. The meeting in August will be on the 23rd and held at Eddie Mitchell Litchfield's house 1505 Brookhollow Dr Deer Park 77536. We will be discussing greenhouse ventilation and Epidendrum's and their culture. Study up and be ready to discuss and participate.

Our July meeting was held at Debbie's house. Of course we had a fabulous time! A bit hot, but we learned a lot. We had a great discussion on Encyclias and their culture and we discussed how Debbie's growing her orchids without a greenhouse. We had David Hunt there to help us keep our facts straight on the growing of Encyclias. Thank you so much Dave for sharing with us your knowledge and experience with growing these types of orchids.

If anyone wants to join our group please email us or see Debbie or Calvin at the next HOS meeting to get on the email list. This group is a great way to learn just a little more about orchids.

Raffle Table

Chair: Mary Gunn, Sylvia Dekmezian, Amy Colville

Be sure to stop by the Raffle Table to get your free ticket for the Door Prize drawing; you get 2 tickets if you are wearing your HOS name tag. Raffle tickets are priced 5 for \$1.00 or 30 tickets for \$5.00. Remember to bring in your Boxtops for Education, you will get one raffle ticket for each box top you bring in. We donate these to a local school.

This month we will have a variety of orchids from several growers in Hawaii. The selection will include Antelope Dendrobiums, Phals, Paphs, Masdevallias, and Miltonias (for warm climates).

Houston Orchid Society 2009 Officers and Committee Chairs

Officers

<i>President</i>	Holly Miller
<i>1st Vice President</i>	John Stubbings
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	John Jamerlan
<i>Membership</i>	Katherine Brown
<i>Recording Sec.</i>	Claudia Hanson
<i>Treasurer</i>	Debbie Peterson

Chairs

<i>Guest Hospitality</i>	Allan Davies
<i>Happenings Editor</i>	Susan Taylor
<i>Librarian</i>	Sarah Bentley
<i>Newcomers Group</i>	Jean Schwenke, Judith & Loren Neufeld
<i>Intermediate Group</i>	Debbie Peterson, Calvin Starr
<i>Parliamentarian</i>	Marvin Gerber
<i>Photography</i>	Malcolm McCorquodale III
<i>Plant Raffle</i>	Mary Gunn, Sylvia Dekmezian, Amy Colville
<i>Refreshments</i>	Noreen Tolman, Ken Gardner, Eddie Mitchell, Will Litchfield
<i>Silent Auction</i>	Lee and Gordon Rowell
<i>2009 Spring Show</i>	Melba and Jim Butler
<i>HOS Web</i>	Calvin Starr
<i>2009 Workshop Chair</i>	Ted Baenziger and John Stubbings

Directors

<i>Two-Year Term</i>	<i>One-Year Term</i>
Donna Williams	Jeff Bradley
Joe Fields	Greg Scott
Ted Baenziger	Dave Hunt
Don Ghiz	Johnny Williams
Calvin Starr	Sandra Higham
Doug Harris	Dolores Fields
Loren Neufeld	Marvin Gerber

Representatives

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

Houston Orchid Society August 2009 Meeting

Program: Orchid Conservation
Peter Tobias

Date: August 6, 2009
Time: 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Place: Houston Garden Center

2009 Speakers

August – Peter Tobias, Orchid Conservation

September – TBA

October – Julius Klehm, Live AOS Judging

November – Fred Clarke ,Mini and Midi Cattleyas

December – Christmas Party and HJC Auction

HOS Website

www.houstonorchidsociety.org

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

