

THE HOUSTON HAPPENINGS

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

Speaker: Weyman Bussey -- Mexican Species, Distinguishing the Common from the Uncommon

By John Stubbings, First Vice-President



Our July speaker is Weyman Bussey. Weyman eats, sleeps, and breathes ORCHIDS! Starting at the age of 12 and continuing to date, orchids have been his hobby, profession and passion. From the time he graduated from college in 1976, he has been located in the American tropics.

where he claims he can at least be close to the orchids in the wild, and he doesn't have to worry about them freezing. He earned his B.S. degree in Ornamental Horticulture and Botany at the University of Florida. He frequently mentions famous orchid people he has evidently learned a lot from, such as Milton Carpenter, Tom Sheehan, Jean Merkel, Joe Rudvalis, Ben Berliner, Fred Thornton, to name a few. He has traveled extensively around the world and gives a presentation, not overly technical, but down to earth and loaded with common sense (of course you know, common sense is the least common of the senses!).

Weyman will present "Mexican Species, Distinguishing the Common from the Uncommon" The handout summarizes everything with charts and tables, so you don't have to take notes. It compares 35+ species in 7 distinct, often confused groupings -Laelias, Myrmecophilas, small flowered yellow Oncidiums, Oncidium maculatum group, Oncidium laevae group, and the cool and warm growing mule ears (now called Trichocentrums). These are surprisingly the most popular and more often confused Mexican species.

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



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Don't let the name fool you, the Orchid Digest is a non-profit membership-based organization dedicated to orchids. Designed to appeal to the mid-range to advanced grower nothing beats the *Orchid Digest*. For just \$32 per year you get 4 issues of full-color, in-depth articles about orchids. The magazine is large format and the fourth issue of the year is always an extra-special issue devoted to a single genus. **For membership application forms contact Fred Missbach (404-237-1694)**

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President's Post

By Holly Miller, President

I hope to see most of you at our 30th Summer Workshop on August 7th and 8th. John Stubbings and Ted Baenziger have planned a great line up of speakers for us with something for everyone. There will be AOS judging on Friday evening and a preview reception and sales. The series of lectures will be on Saturday with breakout sessions on how to grow Dendrobiums, species, Cattleyas, and growing indoors and outside. Lunch on Saturday is included in the workshop fee. There will be a silent auction benefiting the Houston Judging Center on Friday night and another benefiting the HOS on Saturday along with orchids for sale from commercial vendors.

The schedule and registration forms are on the HOS website and will also be at the July meeting. Don't miss this opportunity to hear the speakers, ask your questions, purchase plants and have fun with the rest of us.

The Board of Directors has approved the location of the 2010 HOS Show and we are excited to have this opportunity. The show will be April 17th and 18th in the lobby of the Museum of Natural Science - right next door to the Garden Center. The space will be tight but we can make it work and the advantages are great. The location is central and easy to get to, the show space is free and parking in their garage is free to members, vendors and judges. The Museum will do all advertising and there is a steady stream of people through the lobby all day long. They are also willing to sign us up for the next few years so there will be some consistency in our show location.

See you at the July meeting!

Houston Judging Center

By Margaret Putman

HJC Results - June 20, 2009

There were 14 plants entered with 2 awards:

1. Coryhopea Cutuc 'Autre Vie' (Coryanthes speciosa x Stanhopea florida) AM 82 points owned by Nina Rach, Houston, TX (20097396)
2. Promenea Chameleon 'Autre Vie' (Limelight x guttata) AM 80 points, owned by Nina Rach, Houston, TX (20097397)

One plant was scored but not awarded.

There were 16 Accredited Judges, 3 Probationary Judges and 2 Student Judges present with a total of 26 persons attending.

The next regular judging will be held July 18, 2009 at the Jerebeck Center, Room 202, 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: *Doricertrum pulcherima* 'Kodama' grown by Bill Bartlett



This is the first and only *Doricertrum* that I have tried to grow. I purchased it from Oakhill Gardens about 11 years ago and it has been in its present basket since July, 1999.

I wasn't sure how to pot it, the parents being *Doritis pulcherrima* and *Ascocentrum miniatum*. So I chose a

Photograph courtesy of Malcolm McCorquodale

a 6" wooden basket (for the *Ascocentrum*) lined it with coconut fiber and filled the cavity with phalaenopsis potting mix (for the *Doritis*).

It receives the same watering (currently twice weekly) and the same fertilizer as most of my other orchids. Because many roots are now outside the basket, I try to give it an extra spraying between the regular waterings. I grow it in bright light. Three basal keikis have appeared in the last 5 or 6 years - this year the original plant and the two oldest keikis have bloom spikes. It has been an easy to care for plant and very rewarding when it blooms - usually for eight weeks or more.

Species Winner: *Grammangis ellisii*, grown by Laurie Skov



This species is one of only two in the Genus. It is native to Madagascar's tropical rain forest growing in bright light along river's edge. The plant is ideally suited for Houston's summer hot, humid, wet, growing conditions. In summer, I grow it in the same area as my warm growing *Catasetums*. It has an extensive root system that does not like to be disturbed and it needs good drainage, so I

Photograph courtesy of Malcolm McCorquodale

planted it in a large coconut fiber lined basket, with tree fern as the main potting media. It likes a high phosphate fertilizer, as the pseudobulbs are huge. It blooms each May/June from the base of its emerging new growth. Flowers last about four weeks. The individual flowers look a lot like those of *Lycaste* although they are unrelated.

Cypripedium Restoration Committee Report

By: Doug Harris

We are busy growing *Cypripedium kentuckiense* seedlings to be transplanted back into two National Forests in Texas. The species is considered "endangered" in Texas, and through the efforts of a number of concerned HOS members, we may have over 100 one year old seedlings ready for the Spring of 2010.

In doing so, we are following in the footsteps of the Central Louisiana Orchid Society, or CLOS. Their efforts in their first year of participation provided around 200 seedlings and then some 700 plants in their second year.

HOS is raising some 120 small seedlings. Thus far, in six weeks of progress, our losses are only 3 small plants, so we are doing well. In addition to our seedlings, Stephen F. Austin University's Dept. of Biology has about 300 seedlings growing in their green houses above Lufkin.

Our HOS members who have visited several locations where this increasingly rare native orchid are growing naturally are continuing in efforts to insure the continued presence in Texas of the largest flowered cyp in the United States. Hopefully additional seed can be obtained and sowed to provide a greater number of seedlings to grow for 2010 and 2011.

In April, pollen was placed on a number of flowers. Your committee chairman, along with HOS member Joe Liggio, have traveled over 2000 miles on several week ends visiting the *Cypripedium* sites in the wild. Committee members Ted Baenziger, Jay Balchan, Katherine Brown, Don Ghiz, Denny Haase, Julius Klehm, Calvin Starr, Susan Taylor and Carolynn White along with Bruce Cameron deserve your thanks for volunteering.

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. Visit the website at <http://www.tgcfernsoc.org/> for more information.

AOS Corner

By Carol Holdren

Let's talk about FREE!

If you are looking for orchid information - try the American Orchid Society web site at www.aos.org. Much of the web site, including the forum, is open to everyone. There is a "Member's Only" section that has great information and we do want you to join the AOS and get our great magazine, *Orchids*, as well as access to that part of the web site, but if you aren't ready for that right now don't hesitate to visit the web site.

At the web site under "Orchid Information" there is a place to sign up for a FREE Beginner's Newsletter. And there are also culture sheets. If you give an orchid as a gift it is nice to include a culture sheet with it. You can download those at no charge - FREE. Also your society can download them to give away at shows or at meetings.

The AOS web site lists upcoming shows which is great to check out when you are traveling. Wouldn't you hate to go to a city and find out you could have gone to an orchid show - if you had only known it was on? The web site also has all of the AOS Affiliated Societies listed along with when they meet and their contact information. Our society recently had a guest who was from New Jersey and visiting their mother in Delray Beach, FL. She went to 3 different orchid societies while in the area and had a great time. If you are an orchid grower you have instant friends all over the world. FREE! Under "Shop" you will find the "Orchid Source Directory" which lists vendors according to area. Now that might cost you something!

One event in particular you might want to plan a trip around are the AOS Members Meetings. The AOS Fall Meeting will be held at the Huntington Botanical Garden outside Los Angeles, CA along with the Southland Orchid Show. The dates are October 15 - 19, 2009. The Spring Meeting is in Oklahoma City, OK on April 28 - May 2, 2010. These meetings are orchid conferences with a lot going on, tours and lectures as well as the show. If you come to a meeting please join us at the Affiliated Society Breakfast. The registration is not FREE but the hotels are discounted for the meetings and the hosting clubs go to a lot of effort to hold the costs down while having a great event.

So there are some FREE things in the orchid world along with a lot of FUN.



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: I grow many of my plants in areas where they only get sunlight from the side instead of from above. When those plants put out new growths (such as cattleyas and dendrobiums) should I point those new growths towards the direction of the sunlight? I assume that they need the light more, but that they are also most susceptible to sunburn, being more tender.

A: I've never worried about what direction my plants were oriented when new growths came out. However, I've always been in a greenhouse or window sill. Not knowing what degree of sunlight your plants are getting it would be hard to tell. Even when I grew on a window sill facing south, I always had cheese cloth or something else protecting my plants from the sun even though they had air conditioning. Personally, I would not worry about that directionality if my plants were growing well otherwise and had sufficient shading to give them a nice green color. Julius Klehm

A: New growths do not need more/less light than older growths. New growth on plants will generally grow toward the light source. With dendrobs and cattleyas with long thin growths this can lead to plants that tilt over and are unbalanced. I would suggest that you rotate these types of plants so they generally grow upright if your main light source is always from one place. This is obviously less important for phals and paphs which are not tall and thin. - Jay Balchan

A: Always best to point new growth towards the light. Overhead sun is the most dangerous insofar as sunburn is concerned, so I do not think you have a problem. - Marvin

A: Leave the plants be, they will find the right amount of light they need. If a plant sends out a new growth that is horizontal to the ground, then too little of the light needed. If the growth coming up is straight up and down, such as, Cats or Dends then that is good light. - Rick

Bromeliad Society/Houston Inc.

Regular meeting third Tuesday of month at
7:30 PM

Houston Garden Center
www.bromeliadscietyhouston.org

Houston Orchid Society 30th Consecutive Summer Workshop

University of St. Thomas

Downtown Houston

Friday and Saturday August 7 and 8, 2009

AOS Judging, Sales, Lectures and
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- Lena Parker – Easy to grow Species
- Michael Sinn – Venezuelan Cattleya Species

For details contact:

John Stubbings 281-991-6841

JDStubbings@comcast.net

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ejb@stthom.edu

For registration and further information visit
www.houstonorchidsociety.org for the
registration package and complete agenda.

Wild Orchid Field Trip 5/23

By: Donna Williams

Our hunt on May 23 was again led by Joe Liggio. The weather was really nice - warm but not too hot or too muggy. The orchids we were looking for this day were the Texas ladies tresses (*Spiranthes brevilabris* var. *brevilabris*) and the grass pinks (*Calopogon tuberosus*).

We met at the usual place (Wal-Mart parking lot in Cleveland) and headed out to FM 2269 to a field behind Tarkington High School (Tarkington's Prairie) where we saw our first orchids which were the Texas ladies tresses. It is a lovely little plant with, as you might expect, its ¼ inch long flowers arranged in a spiral. The flowers are white and bloom on a stalk about 14" tall. There was another orchid next to them that looked almost identical but had enough variation that Joe is checking into whether it might be a different species. In that field we also saw wildflowers of sneezeweed, yellow star-flower, and candy root.



Photograph courtesy of Donna Williams
Texas ladies tresses or *Spiranthes brevilabris*

We then got back on the road and headed east to CR 2142A to see a large bed of featherbells. This field also had *Echinacea sanguinea*, powderpuff mimosas, milkweed, black-eyed susans, cowpen daisies, white fleabane, and sneezeweed. It was a beautiful setting - a country dirt road with both sides lined with blooming wildflowers in many different colors.

Next we headed to a spot outside Kountze where we found our second orchid, the grass pink or *Calopogon tuberosus*. This was in a pine savannah wetland which provides a richer habitat for the orchids. The grass pinks are a beautiful orchid - fairly large and a gorgeous shade of deep rose. The shape of the flower reminded me somewhat of a large *Tolunnia* flower. Here we also saw white-topped sedge, tiny sundews, blueheart, and rose-gentian wildflowers.

Our next journey was south on FM 326 to Little Rock Road for more grass pinks. We were hoping to find a third little white orchid - one which is very rare but which Joe had

seen in this location in the past. However, the area has become quite overgrown with shrubs and we were unable to spot it. The grass pinks are large and bright enough that they were easy to see and they were fairly plentiful.



Photograph courtesy of Donna Williams
Grass pink or *Calopogon tuberosus*

About this time we were all a bit hungry so we stopped at a family-run barbecue restaurant in Warren. We had stopped here on one of our previous trips and the food is quite good. Following lunch we set out to see Geraldine Watson's place (Watson's Pineland Reserve) where Joe knew there would be a good selection of grass pinks in bloom at this time of year. We were not disappointed in the least. This was a most spectacular spot. It was in the boggy portion of Geraldine's land that they were growing and glowing! The entire area was covered with the brilliant pink of the grass pinks alongside hundreds of pitcher plants which were gold and green with maroon markings. It was a truly spectacular sight - one that a picture could not capture sufficiently. This sight alone was worth the entire trip!

Our last big stop was to Pitcher Plant Trail in the Turkey Creek Unit of the Big Thicket National Preserve. This is a really nice walk through some beautiful terrain. There are many lovely plants to see here, including *Rhododendron oblongifolium* which made a spectacular display of white against the forest floor. There were also numerous ferns (royal, cinnamon, chain, & bracken), dewberries, puncture vine, swamp cyrilla, sweetbay magnolias, wild bean, lobelia, and egg-leaved skullcap to name a few of the other plants.

This was a very successful trip with beautiful scenery and wildflowers but, most importantly, with two very lovely wild orchids - the Texas ladies tresses (*Spiranthes brevilabris* var. *brevilabris*) and the grass pink (*Calopogon tuberosus*)! Please consider joining the group for the next "hunt." We think you will be as thrilled as we have been.

Once again, THANK YOU, JOE, for another marvelous experience!

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Welcome New Members
(none for June)
Sayeda Hasan - name misspelled

Welcome Guests
Ralph Neal
Beverly Robinson

Thanks for Refreshments
Don Ghiz
Frank and Cherie Lee
Trey Netalon
Noreen Tolman
Maryanne Walker
Donna & Johnny Williams

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See the totes at the AOS booth at the HOS meeting on July 2.



Committee Bulletins

Newcomers Group

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

The Newcomers Group would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Holly Miller for hosting our June meeting. I know we're all inspired to branch out now and try to grow some of the more unusual varieties that are Holly's specialty. She assures us that we can do it too. Maybe by this time next year we'll have something exotic blooming to show the teacher.

I wonder if we realize how fortunate we are to have such an abundance of accomplished hobbyists in our HOS? Our July meeting will be hosted by one such skillful connoisseur, Jay Balchan. His greenhouse is quite a sight to behold, stocked with every type of orchid you could name (and many I bet you can't). Bring your umbrella hats and come on out and bask in a little summertime orchid fever.

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 July will be on the 26th and held at Debbie Peterson's house 8503 Parmer Ct 77064. We will be talking about alternative orchid growing environments for the growers that do not have greenhouses and will talk about Encylia's and their culture. Study up and be ready to discuss and participate.

Our June meeting was held at Teas Nursery. We had a great discussion on Paphs and their culture and had Rick Hepler there to confirm our facts were correct. Thanks Rick for your expertise in Paph growing.

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.

Raffle Table

Chair: Mary Gunn, Sylvia Dekmezian, Amy Colville

The purpose of the Plant Raffle is simply to provide a fun activity at our meeting with the opportunity for members to win a plant to add to their collection. It is not a profit making venture, but simply for the enjoyment of HOS members. We put the money we receive back into the next month's order. So the more tickets you buy, the more plants we can get for the next meeting! We are hoping to increase the number of plants that we have at each raffle so that the odds of winning increase for the participants. We try to get a variety of genera and species that will appeal to a broad range of interests.

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.

We will have a suggestion sheet to request what type of orchids you want to see in the Raffle. Please give us your feedback.

Houston Orchid Society 2009 Officers and Committee Chairs

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|---------------------------|-----------------|
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| <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 |

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| <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 |

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| AOS Representative | Jim Butler |
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| SWROGA Representative | Julius Klehm and Marilyn Holloway |

Houston Orchid Society *July 2009 Meeting*

Program: Mexican Species
Weyman Bussey

Date: July 2, 2009
Time: 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Place: Houston Garden Center

2009 Speakers

July – Weyman Bussey, Mexican Species
August – Peter Tobias, Orchid Conservation
September – Bob Fuchs, Vandas
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

