

THE HOUSTON HAPPENINGS

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

Speaker: Tom Biggart, Australian Dendrobiums

By John Stubbings, First Vice-President

Tom Biggart is the owner and head grower of Granite Hills Orchids in El Cajon, California (a small town 15 miles east of San Diego). His nursery is a hobby business which means he doesn't make a living growing plants. It is more of a labor of love!

Tom loves plants in general, and orchids are his main passion. He is very interested in Encyclias and has a large collection of Encyclia species and hybrids. The Australian cool growers are a current interest. He is in business with the Harveys of Cedarvale Orchids. They are major Australian growers and hybridizers of native Dendrobiums.

He is a retired elementary school teacher with orchids as his new students. He would love to have anyone stop by to talk orchids should one be in the San Diego area. Web site for Granite Hills Orchids is www.granitehillSORCHIDS.COM

Ticket Sales Pre-Event Orchids, Texas Style Show

By Jim Butler, Show Co-Chair

A ticket sales contest will begin with the March 5, 2009 HOS meeting for the April show that will take place for the public on April 24, 25, and 26, 2009.

Here are the details:

For the largest number of tickets sold for \$4 each by April 23, 2009:

- First Prize - Three blooming-size orchids
- Second Prize - Two blooming-size orchids
- Third Prize - One blooming-size orchid

Money and any unsold tickets must be turned in before or not later than 6 PM April 23, 2009 to Jim Butler at the Hilton Houston North Hotel, location of the Show and Preview Party. Prize winners will be announced sometime during the duration of the Orchids, Texas Style show.

Tickets to the show/sale will be sold for \$4 each when purchased prior to the show that begins for the public on Friday, April 24. Tickets purchased at the door Friday, April 24 through Sunday, April 26 will cost \$5.

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



Wild Orchid Field Trips

We will be looking for *Listera australis* (the twayblade orchid) and *Colorallorhiza wisteriana* (the spring coralroot orchid) at the Big Sandy Creek Unit, the Menard Creek Unit, and the Turkey Creek Unit of the Big Thicket National Preserve.

March is not a good month for orchids except for the spring coralroot and the twayblade.

The next field trip will be on April 4. Early April is a good time to look for the whorled pogonia orchid and the Oklahoma grasspink orchid. We need to be searching for Cyps later in April.

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President's Post

By Holly Miller, President

I'd like to take a moment here to express my thanks to all of the officers and committee members. The transition into 2009 went so smoothly and you are all doing such a great job! I'm really pleased with the dedication and enthusiasm that all of you are putting into your volunteer jobs. It makes it easy and pleasant for all of us.

For our show in April, John Jamerlan is in charge of putting the HOS Exhibit together and he needs help with design, setup and donation of plants. Because this show is in conjunction with the AOS and SWROGA meetings, there will be numerous other orchid societies from our region entering exhibits. I sincerely hope that ours is the best. It won't happen without some of you volunteering to help John - please let him know now that you can help or donate plants.

The Newcomers Group, under the direction of Jean Schwenke, will be doing their own exhibit and can also use some help - especially plants. Newcomers don't have very many orchids, much less very many that will be blooming at the right time. Please consider putting some orchids in the Newcomers exhibit also. Your orchids can win ribbons and trophies no matter what exhibit they are in.

If you do plan on entering orchids in either of these exhibits, put masking tape on the pot with your name and phone number so the plant does not get lost after the show. I like to clean the leaves before the buds get too large or fully open. Many times, I've broken off a large bud or flower trying to clean them the night before a show. I like to use watered down milk and a soft cloth - other people use orange juice - the water deposits come right off with a little soft rubbing. Make a list of your plants and preferably email it to John or Jean prior to the show or bring it with your

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Houston Judging Center

By Marj Putnam

HJC Results February 21, 2009-

There were 19 plants entered with 12 nominated for further consideration with 4 awards:

1. Paph. William Ambler 'Loren' (rothschildianum x wilhemeniae) AM 81 points, owned by Judith Neufeld, Houston, TX (20094605)
2. C. Spring Climax 'Carte Blanche' (Tiffin Bells x Barbara Billingsley) AM 80 points, owned by Jeff Bradley, Houston, TX (20094608)
3. Paph. Mem. Larry Heuer 'Magnolia Prime' (malipoense x emersonii) AM 80 points, owned by Doug George, Magnolia, TX (20094607)
4. Trichoglottis bataanensis 'Judith' (species) provisional CBR, owned by Judith Neufeld, Houston, TX (20094606)

There were 14 Accredited Judges, 3 Probationary Judges, and 2 Student Judges, with a total of 25 persons attending. The next regular judging will be held March 21, 2009 in the 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 (tie): Paph. Kimura's Present x Pavarotti x Springtree grown by Judith Neufeld



Photograph courtesy of Malcolm McCorquodale

We brought it home in our GMC Truck loaded, packed to the rear with other 200 + orchids (some from other members that went to the WOC), and it survived and not only that, it came back blooming just as beautiful and gorgeous as it was a year ago!!

I kept it in my indoor growing "sanctuary" (one area in our house, with plant grow lightings and floor fans for circulation). I bring most of my blooming orchids in and move them back to the greenhouse when they finish blooming.



Photograph courtesy of Judith Neufeld

I spray them every day, once or twice with rain water and once a week I give them a bath in the sink, thoroughly with running water, let all that water drain out; then rinse them with rain water that has a very weak fertilizer; I then immediately put it in the saucer while there's more water draining into the saucer (not to overflow). This keeps the moisture too. Now, I'm using Schultz Expert Orchid Food (19-31-17) to spray

(Continued on next page)

Winner's Tips (Continued)

very weakly every other day. It's working and my "babies" are happy. I've used Peters too. Most of my Paphs (non-blooming or in buds) are in the greenhouse with my variety of collections and are treated with the same attentions I give to the ones inside the house.

Many of my indoor flowering orchids last unusually long, and this particular "baby bulldog" was still in its peak after three months when I entered it in our April Shower Show last year and took first place ribbon.

Hybrid Winner (tie):Blc. Plum Island 'Newberry' HCC/AOS grown by Gerald Kitchens



Species Winner: Encyclia polybulbon 'Eddie Mitchell' grown by Eddie Mitchell



Photograph courtesy of Malcolm McCorquodale

I grow my Encyclia polybulbon outside most of the year. It is mounted and I hang it on the branches of a rose where it gets dappled light. I water it once or twice a week. When it starts to get chilly, around November, I bring it inside and hang it in my bathroom window. It gets bright indirect light and likes the humidity. It's a very easy orchid to grow and I highly recommend it.

AOS Corner

By Melba and Jim Butler

Orchid Trivia: "You should begin preparing an orchid for exhibition before the blooms are actually open. By doing so the flowers are encouraged to open to their fullest potential and present themselves in the best way possible." This "timely" orchid trivia is from the Orchid Photo Page Web site of Greg Allikas at www.orchidworks.com; from there, click on "The Online Guide to Exhibiting Orchids."

Exhibiting Orchids:

Just in time for orchid show season, a step-by-step illustrated guide at www.orchidworks.com is just the thing for orchid hobbyists. All orchid hobbyists could be categorized as either of these: 1) needing a refresher course, or; 2) needing a beginner's course -- on how to groom orchids and get them in tip top shape for the upcoming show(s). We are right at the beginning of the orchid show season, so tune in to this free course. It will take only minutes to browse through. If something seems obvious, you will only need to read it but if you need notes, I suggest you print the page or paragraph.

Information is there that couldn't possibly be known if you haven't exhibited previously. After reading and seeing all the information that is offered, readers will feel more confident about creating an exhibit. Greg talks about such things as

- AOS point scale for judging exhibits
- Master Class with Woody Robbins - This is a photo guide that illustrates building an exhibit, from a sketch to the finished exhibit. A sketch is not necessary but some would find it helpful.
- How many plants are needed
- Exhibit materials checklist (this is definitely a necessity and items can be added)
- Grooming Your Orchids (Reading this is a must)
- Color Flow (exhibits should be arranged so color flows? - Who knew?)
- Idea Book I and/or Idea Book II -- Be warned. These are photos of actual exhibits. Some use large numbers of orchids. They are very beautiful. Large numbers of orchids make fine exhibits. Also, exhibits using 5 orchids or less can also be very good.

Again, all of the above information is from Greg Allikas' Web site www.orchidworks.com.

All I can add is that building an exhibit is rewarding because orchid lovers want to show their orchids off to the best advantage. Exhibiting is fun and even those who don't consider themselves "creative" will be surprised at what they can do. One thing that is most helpful to some is to set the exhibit up at home and take a photo. Using the photo when setting up the exhibit is much easier because the idea was created at home and it just requires putting it together again.

Show time will be here before we know it. Start now to get plants ready and to plan the exhibit!!



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: Question: What do I use to prevent insects? A systemic or treat only when insects are present?

A: First and foremost, good house keeping! This is the best defense against sucking insects. As you clean house you will see things that are not right and early. If you do come across scale, spidermites, mealy, etc., you can take care of the problem plant with one of the least toxic products e.g. rubbing alcohol and a Q tip. Isolate the plant from the rest for a 4-6 week period during this time reapply the treatment at 7-10 day intervals two more times then wait to make sure the pests are gone before reintroducing the plant back into the collection. Also, check other plants that were next to the infected plant for pests.

In more problem cases e.g. numerous plants involved I like to use Advance for tree and bush which has a product known as Merit, excellent against scale and mealy but not spidermites. Treat with Advance the same as above. If you need to retreat switch to a Orethene powdered product, this keeps the bugs guessing and dying! Good Luck -Rick

A: I treat for two insects whether I see them or not. very Spring (April/May) I treat the entire greenhouse for scale using the systemic Merit. I use the Merit in place of my regular fertilizer and water only the roots and pots, not the foliage. I make sure the plants are on the dry side when I apply the Merit. Starting in May, I treat for red spider mites once a month, using a miticide, not an insecticide. I treat in May, June, July, August and September. I alternate Avid and Kelthane so as to avoid a resistant strain developing. I do not worry about whether I see the spider mites, a 10 power magnifying glass is needed to see them. Heat and dry conditions are positive conditions for spider mite development. If you wait until you see the silvery webs on the bottom of your phal leaves, your plant has been seriously damaged.

These products are pricey, but a little goes a long way. It is worthwhile to buy and divide these products. - Marvin

A: The answer completely depends on the type of insect you want to prevent, so it's hard to answer the question without some more detail. Some insecticides are more general purpose (like malathion or orthene) but others (like kelthane for spider mites) are very targeted. I would say (although I'm not an expert) that the more things a treatment targets, the less well that it does it overall.... especially these days when you really can't get hard core pesticides. Non-pesticides like neem oil and pepper spray can kill anything, but they are very localized and

short term.

The only systemic treatment that I do is for scale. I use Safari for that (and it really only treats scale) and I treat the entire greenhouse once a year. If I get other bugs, I treat those only if I see them generally with something like orthene. - Jay

A: I treat only when insects are present. I see no reason to introduce toxic chemicals into the environment if it is not necessary. - Nina

Intermediate Group Visit to Cat Springs

By: Calvin Starr

I wanted to let everyone know about the trip eight of us from the Intermediate Group made to Cat Springs this last weekend.

We were invited to visit Carol Davis' greenhouses and help her with her orchids. Carol purchased a property known as the "Oasis" last September from the estate of a lady who was the heir to the Gates Tire and Rubber Company. This lady had two hobbies. She raised tropical plants and raised Pekingese show dogs, some of which were shown at Westminster and they said had won many awards there. She had 135 dogs when she died. Pictures of the Kennels are on the web site.

She had built 5 greenhouses and three of them are really elaborate. One has a swimming pool and a Koi pond inside and a second floor balcony. They have not been well maintained since she died a year and a half ago, but the tropical plants in them for the most part have thrived and the biggest problem is they are overgrown and taking over. She had one house with her orchid collection and they were in need of care. To make sure she always had control of the environment in the greenhouses all of the heaters run on propane and there is a huge generator. It is like you see at hotels and can provide power for 22 average houses. There is also a huge commercial Reverse Osmosis water system.

Our project was to check and repot the orchids. There are about 80 orchids and we repotted all of them and gave Carol a quick course on caring for them and how to run her greenhouse. She will be adding to the collection.

(Continued on next page)

Intermediate Group Visit (Continued)



Photograph courtesy of Calvin Starr Frank Lee and Carol Davis looking at one of the plants that needed care.

Carols main business is Carol Davis Court Reporting here in Houston, but she also owns and manages a working cattle ranch in Cat Springs, a Bed and Breakfast with about 12 houses and cabins located outside of Cat Springs and owns and runs an excellent restaurant in Cat Springs and now is remodeling and updating the "Oasis". On the ranch there are a camel, a kangaroo, miniature horses and peacocks. This is one industrious woman.

Carol put us up on Saturday night in some of the Bed and Breakfast and we had an excellent dinner Saturday night at her restaurant. We will be making a follow up trip in a few months.

I have put up pictures at the following web page. It has a lot of pictures and takes a little while to load completely: <http://www.kr5e.com/Oasis.htm>

Registering Your Plants for the Show

By: Susan Taylor, Julius Klehm

Entering your plants into a show is not quite as easy as you probably think it will be. There is more to do than just growing them and bringing them in! But you can make it much easier and more efficient by doing a couple of things in advance of the show and it can be a fun thing as you can learn a lot more about your plants.

To enter your plants, you will need to fill out a form for each plant which is called the entry tag. Entry Tags will be available at the show registration desk or you may be able to get them prior to the show.

If at all possible, and before the show look up the parents of your plant. If you have OrchidWiz© or one of the other orchid databases this will be very simple to do. If not, you

can do it through the Royal Horticultural Society Grex Name Search at <http://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/registerpages/orchidsearch.asp>. If you do not have a computer, maybe a friend can help or you can get help at the show. Each plant must have an entry tag which looks like this for the plant Phalaenopsis Goodgirl 'Katherine' FCC/AOS:

	329	12	C
	CLASS	EXHIBIT #	LTR
Phal. Goodgirl 'Katherine' FCC/AOS			
NAME	VARIETY	AWARD (S)	
PARENTS: Phal. Hotshot '#1'			
Phal. Pretty Girl '#2'			

The class is determined by what kind of orchid and in some cases, what color, your orchid is. The class listings are available on the show website under the Show Schedule page. This is one area where it is important to have advice if you are not sure of where to put your plant. At each registration table, a judge representative is normally available to help with this. For our show Julius Klehm and Joe Fields will be helping out. Your exhibit number will be given to you when you register to put in an exhibit. And the letter represents the person in a multi-person exhibit such as the Newcomers. As a side note, most plants will not have a variety name or an AOS award and therefore you would not fill in Variety and Award on the form. Further, you probably will not have variety names for the parents for example '#1'.

So when you come in, you will need to have looked up your plant parents, fill out an Entry Tag, determine what class and then give all this information to the person (if this is not your personal exhibit) in charge of the exhibit. This is generally done with a sign-in sheet. It is extremely important for all information to be legible and if you're bringing in several plants if you can do it on a typed sheet or Excel spreadsheet it makes life much easier for those who are working registration and setup. After completion of all the information on the Entry Tag, the front original of the Entry Tag must be turned into the Plant Registration Desk so that the plant can be entered into Show list of entries for Ribbon Judging. The carbon copy of the Entry Tag must be placed on the plant that you put in the Exhibit so that the Ribbon Judges may easily identify your plant when they are judging. In a group or society exhibit, there may be more than one plant with the same name, so this step is necessary. After all the Ribbon and AOS Judging has been completed (approximately 5 PM on Thursday) these Entry Tags should be taken off your plants. Whoever is in charge of the Exhibit (if a group or society exhibit) should have some tag for each plant that clearly identifies the plant, but is inconspicuous, that will be left on the plant for the duration of the show.

President's Post (Continued)

plants. Your list should include the plant name and the parents. You can look for the parentage at the following website - <http://www.rhs.org.uk/plants/registerpages/orchidsearch.asp>. If you have trouble, email the orchid name to me and I would be happy to help you.

If you are not planning on registering for the entire show and lectures, you should consider attending the Preview Party on Thursday night and/or the Banquet on Saturday night. At the Preview Party, there will be hors d'oeuvres and beverages to enjoy as you get to see the judged orchids and exhibits and be the first to shop the vendors before the public comes the following day. The Banquet is a seated dinner with entertainment, preceded by a fun auction benefiting the AOS. Both of these events are fun - think about it. Prior registration is required to attend either of these functions - that's why I'm bringing it up now. See the HOS website for more information about all of the show events and to obtain a registration form.

The March meeting should be fun - see you there!

Floralia Preorders

If you would like to place an order for us to take to either of these shows, or to be mailed from this show to your address, please read the following instructions:

- 1- Prices are as in the online list, or current list attached to this email.
- 2- There is a minimum order of US\$ 100.00, due to our administrative costs.
- 3-Quantity discounts apply as listed in our price list 2009 or special list 2009.
- 4- No charge for CITES or Phytosanitary Certificate.
- 5-There will be a Shipping & Handling charge of US\$ 1.00 per plant. This covers documents, freight, and brokerage for your plants. Order of plants may be shipped to a location other than the show; there will be an additional charge of .50 per plant.
- 6- In most cases, payment may be made upon pick up at the show. Larger orders over US \$1,000.00 may be required to send a deposit, we will advise if necessary. Orders that are shipped must be paid for in advance.
- 7- Payment must be made US\$ cash or a Bank draft or bank check in US\$ payable on an US Bank. We do not accept credit cards for payment, but we do accept Paypal, upon request.
- 8- Our online price list can be found at www.floralia.com.br, and then click on the orchid icon for English.
- 9- ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY February 22, 2009 for the San Diego and Santa Barbara shows, and by March 31, 2009 for the Houston AOS Members Meeting.
- 10- If you have any further questions do not hesitate to inquire.

Welcome New Members

Jane & Tom Anderson

Welcome Guests

Jane & Tom Anderson

Durenda Mason

Owen Sitton

Thanks for Refreshments

Allan & Bente Davies

Cherie Lee

Will Litchfield

Carlos & Kathy Mero

Holly Miller

Eddie Mitchell

Vernon Prytz

Jill Smith

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

Our February meeting was magnificent, and about forty Newcomers and Intermediates came out to visit Sherry Radack's beautiful house. Our heartfelt thanks go out to Sherry and her husband for making us so welcome as we marveled at their two immaculate greenhouses and their luscious gardens. It was hard to tear ourselves away from this Shangri La, but nobody went home empty handed, thanks to generous donations of plants and baskets from Sherry, Susan Dally, Joe and Dolores Fields, Marvin and Renee Gerber, Brian Clark, Susan Taylor, and Debbie Peterson. Our cup runneth over!

Our next meeting will be March 15th at 2:00 at the home of Calvin and Beverly Starr. The Starr's have been hobbyists for just a few years more than most of our Newcomers, but their dedication to the craft has made them a shining example for us to follow. Come on out to learn some practical tips on how to have a greenhouse of manageable size with top quality orchids.

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 will be meeting on the 4th Sunday of each month at 2PM, except for (March on the 5th & April will be on the 3rd Sunday). The meeting in March will be on the 29th and held at Teas Nursery on Bellaire Blvd. Please contact Debbie or Calvin to get on the contact list.

Our February meeting at Teas Nursery got us off on a good start on our show displays. A big thank you to Teas Nursery for allowing us to use their facility for our February, March & April meetings!! These meetings will be focused solely on the planning of our educational displays for the AOS Orchid Show in April. We're doing two displays; orchid ailments & potting media. Please let me know if you're interested in participating with us.

Once the show is over and our trophies are won, we plan on doing study groups on orchids starting in May. If anyone would like to have the Intermediate group come to your greenhouse for our meetings or to help you out in the greenhouse, please let us know. We're hooked on Orchids!

Raffle Table

Chair: Mary Gunn, Sylvia Dekmezian, Amy Colville

Raffle table plants for our March meeting will be from Andy's orchids in Encinitas, California. Andy or Harry can be reached at (888) 514-2639, and they are very helpful and glad to answer questions and talk to you about orchids. It is a family-owned nursery specializing in SPECIES orchids. They are known for their mounted orchids which they call 'orchids on a stick'. They cultivate over 3,000 different species, and have an inventory of over 180,000 plants, growing everything from traditional favorites to the rarest exotics. They will be in Houston for the April meeting and show, and you can pre-order for delivery at the show. They have an exceptional website at www.andysorchids.com

We are expecting some interesting and 'different than the usual' plants this month which should be appealing to orchid enthusiasts of all levels. Be sure to stop by to look at them, purchase some raffle tickets, and get your free door prize ticket (2 free tickets if you are wearing your name tag). Tickets are priced at 5 for \$1.00 or 30 tickets for \$5.00.

Houston Orchid Society 2009 Officers and Committee Chairs

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<i>1st Vice President</i>	John Stubbings
<i>2nd Vice President</i>	John Jamerlan
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<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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<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 March 2009 Meeting

Program: Tom Biggart
Australian Dendrobiums

Date: March 5, 2009
Time: 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Place: Houston Garden Center

2009 Speakers

April – Melba Butler, Getting ready for our AOS show
May – Greg Alikas, How to Photograph Orchids
June – Eric Michels, Weird Orchids
July – TBA
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

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