



March 2008 - Volume 5 - Number 3

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President's Message

It is so rewarding to see all our blooming orchids as spring approaches! And for those of you who bought the mystery phalaenopsis plants for the competition, remember the rules- first spike gets \$25, first bloom- \$100, second place \$50, third place - \$25. Get out that fertilizer!!!!

Our annual auction will be held at the April meeting. Please consider donating at least one plant - surely you have an orchid just begging to be repotted that you could divide. Or maybe you have an orchid that never blooms and is taking up space- donate it to the auction, give it a chance to bloom with someone else, and then you can buy another orchid!

Do you have an orchid collection that you would like to show off? We want to organize an Orchid Safari for SFOS members, which would be a one day event on a weekend. It is great fun and very educational to see the various growing conditions and techniques of our members. If you would like to include your yard or shade house on the Safari, please let me know as soon as possible.

See you at the March meeting!

Sandy

MARCH PROGRAM The Taiwan International Orchid Shows

presented by Tom Harper

Our March speaker, Tom Harper, has been growing orchids for 35 years. Tom started Stones River Orchids in Franklin, Tennessee in 1975 the same year he registered his first hybrid. Tom is a hybridizer and grower of phalaenopsis. He is a Past President and Past Vice President of International Phalaenopsis Alliance. At this time Tom is the current Southeast Regional Director for the International Phalaenopsis Alliance. For those who attended the 19th World Orchid Conference Tom was one of the speakers.

The program tonight will be on "The Taiwan International Orchid Shows". The program will include some highlights from the 2005, 2006 and 2007 Taiwan International Orchid Shows with a brief travelogue about Taiwan. Tom will also give us some tips on how to grow successful phalaenopsis.

Stones River Orchids will provide the sale and raffle plants.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the meeting.

Carol



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Bring Your Orchids in for Judging!

You can win with your orchids by bringing them in at our next meeting March 19th. Dress your plants up and bring them in.

AUCTION TIME

April in South Florida is AUCTION TIME! We will not have a guest speaker, raffle, judging or orchid clinic this month. Instead, we offer you a wonderful opportunity to purchase fabulous plants from supporting donors at unbelievable prices.

We've collected wonderful donations from various show vendors and more are coming in. If you'd like to donate plants, please contact me at 786-385-2616.

Once again professional auctioneer, Bryan Kinsley, of Sunset Auction Co, will conduct our auction. It promises to be an entertaining evening of fun.

Support your society and build your orchid collection by bringing your friends, neighbors and check-books. Credit cards will also be accepted.

Sincerely,

Carol De Biase
Vice President/Program Chairman

Florida West Coast Orchid Society Annual Auction

Saturday, April 19th, 8am – 4pm.

Plant preview 8am – 9am, Auction 9am – 4pm
or until plants are gone. Hundreds of exotic orchids
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Thank you, Barbara Pecan, Publicity

AOS MEMBERSHIP SPECIAL

From now through March 31st, new members can join for \$49.95/yr or \$99.95 for two years. Current members may extend their membership at the \$99.95/2 year rate. While the \$5 rebate to the sponsoring society has been suspended during this promotion, two year extensions or sign ups still receive the \$30 coupon. The website has been updated to reflect these prices so people can sign up through the secure website, call membership at AOS (561-404-2060) or one of the current membership brochures can be used. Just cross out the \$60 and enter the new price. In addition to the obvious benefits of membership like Orchids Magazine, membership in AOS gives our members privileges at over 200 American Horticultural Society member Gardens and Arboreta. This turns out to be, unfortunately, a rather well-kept secret. For a complete list go to: http://www.ahs.org/pdfs/07/0708_RAP_Brochure.pdf. Ron McHatton, Director of Education and Regional Operations

Tree Fern as a Mounting Platform

by Susan Taylor - Bella Online

Tree fern has been used as a mounting for orchids for a number of years, especially once Osmunda fiber became more and more expensive and difficult to find. We have now reached the point where the demand for the product is endangering many of the slower growing species of this large fern.

As the root mass – which is what we use as mounts – is stripped from wild growing ferns, eventually the plant dies. This is especially true in the case of the South American varieties where it is estimated by some that the majority of species are now endangered. I was able to find some information on sustainable production of tree ferns in plantation form in Australia. And Tasmania has fairly

Continued on page 3



Sandi Jones
Tom Wells

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Spring Orchid Growing Tips 2008

by Susan Taylor - Bella Online

strong governmental regulation of the harvesting of wild ferns. It is only allowed in areas that are being cleared for road building and/or farmland where the ferns would be eliminated anyway. Unfortunately, import of tree fern products from this part of the world is prohibited in the US and Canada so we have no way to buy sustainable product. I was unable to find any source from South America which was marked as plantation raised and not from the wild. If anyone knows of any such source, please let me know and I will pass the information on.

In light of the endangered status of most of the tree ferns, I have stopped using it for any mounting I'm doing. Coconuts, baskets, plaques, cork mounts and EpiWeb which is a new product made of recycled bottles, are all alternatives which should be considered instead of any kind of tree fern unless you know the source of that product.

Coconut husk pieces are a resource that is simply thrown away now in many tropical areas and they provide an ideal planting and mounting product. Chips are used extensively in culture and the larger pieces are not hard to find at most supply vendors. Cork slabs, which have also been used extensively for years, and are a renewable resource are now becoming scarcer due to a pest which is killing off the cork trees. It is a truly renewable resource and we hope that the pest can be managed so that this mounting medium is available for years to come.

As more and more people move away from tree fern products, we should start seeing more conservation friendly alternatives such as the EpiWeb product produced in many of the shapes that we now see in tree fern. In the meantime, please consider moving to one of the other products in order to reduce the demand for wild harvested ferns.

Clean up your growing area

Make sure your growing area, either greenhouse or window sill, is clean and free of dust, mold, spores and dust. Remove all your plants and clean thoroughly to get the year off to a good growing start for your plants. Check how your plants are growing and reorganize them; move those that need more light closer to the source, move away for those that seem to be burning. Clean up your plants by removing brown sheaths and checking for hidden bugs. Check your plant tags and replace those that have deteriorated.

Stake your plants

Since orchids grow so slowly it is just our nature to leave them in one place and very often they will start tilting in the direction of the most light. We need to stake our plants (particularly Dendrobiums and Cattleyas) so that they will grow in an upright fashion to present their flowers aesthetically. Dendrobiums in particular will lean over without proper staking. Use stakes that are the same height as the tallest growth and tie or clip two or three times the full length of the stake.

Turn your plants

In addition to staking your plants, turn them one quarter of the way around each week if you are growing in a windowsill or with the light source on one side. This will allow the plant to grow more evenly and keep it from leaning in one direction. The excep-

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tion to this rule is when the plant is producing an inflorescence or flowering stem. You want to stake the inflorescence, but do not turn the plant or you will ruin the presentation of your flowers.

Watch the changing light conditions

As the light changes, be sure to watch out for burning of leaves. More hours of light and the movement of the sun at this time of year make it hard to judge the amount of light your orchids are getting. If you notice that those nearest your light source are getting yellowish, make sure that they are not burning. Thin leaved orchids such as *Oncidiums* and *Dendrobiums* will show the problem first; most *Cattleyas* will turn yellowish or show reddish shadows on their leaves.

Repot growing orchids

Repot all those orchids which have outgrown their pots or whose media has deteriorated. Spring is the optimum time to repot most orchids since it is the start of the growth season. Be sure to disinfect any pots you reuse by soaking them in chlorine bleach for 24 hours prior to potting in a previously used pot. Use 1/2 cup bleach per gallon of water. Put the newly potted plants in a shadier location for about a month and then move to their normal location.

Chocolate Easter Eggs

When opened, these eggs will have a white cream filling with a yellow center.

Makes about 24

1 cup butter, softened

2 teaspoon salt

4 teaspoons vanilla

1 can sweetened condensed milk

10 cups powdered sugar

1 teaspoon yellow food coloring

1 pound semi-sweet chocolate

Beat together butter, salt and vanilla until light and fluffy. Add milk, beat in powdered sugar. Blend until the mixture is stiff. Dust with a little extra powdered sugar and knead with hands until smooth.

Set aside a little more than 2/3 of the mixture. Knead yellow food coloring into the remaining mixture until uniform in color. Divide into 24 equal parts and shape into round balls. Divide the white mixture into 24 equal parts and mold the white mixture around the yellow balls to form an egg shape. Dry at room temperature on paper towels for 24 hours.

Melt chocolate in the top of a double boiler until smooth. Dip eggs in chocolate and allow to harden on a cooling rack with waxed paper placed underneath. Keep refrigerated.

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Easy Chocolate Mousse-Filled Tulip Cookies

Ingredients:

- 24 wonton wrappers (refrigerated in produce department)
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine, melted
- 3 tablespoons sugar, divided
- EASY CHOCOLATE MOUSSE (recipe follows)

Instructions:

1. Heat oven to 300°F.
2. Place individual wonton wrappers on wax paper; brush one side with butter. Sprinkle each wrapper evenly with scant 1/2 teaspoonful sugar; press each wrapper, sugared side up, into ungreased small muffin cups (1-3/4 inches in diameter) to form flower shape.
3. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or just until crisp and golden brown. Cool completely in pan on wire rack. Pipe or spoon EASY CHOCOLATE MOUSSE into center of each 'tulip' cup. Cover; refrigerate. Refrigerate left-over cookies. 2 dozen cookies.

EASY CHOCOLATE MOUSSE: Beat 1 cup (1/2 pt.) cold whipping cream, 1/2 cup powdered sugar, 1/4 cup HERSHEY'S Cocoa or HERSHEY'S Dutch Processed Cocoa and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract in medium bowl until stiff. Use immediately.

Dendrobium Phalaenopsis

Dendrobium orchids are called "Phalaenopsis type" because their flowers resemble those of the Phalaenopsis variety. Phalaenopsis type are evergreen, while other varieties of Dendrobiums shed their leaves in the fall and winter. Dendrobiums are also commonly used as cut flowers because of their sturdy stems and distinctive coloring.

Temperature: The ideal day temperature is 75-85 °F, while the ideal night temperature is 60-65 °F. Occasional temperature extremes are tolerated if exposure is not prolonged.

Light: These dendrobiums enjoy full morning sun, but will require shading between 11am and 3pm - less shading will be needed in late afternoon. An overhead light source is most effective.

Water: Phalaenopsis-type dendrobiums grow best when their potting medium becomes dry between waterings. They are epiphytes in Nature, (i.e. - they grow on trees) and are accustomed to becoming fairly dry between the rains of their natural habitat.

Continued on next column

Repot: Repot once every two years in Spring, after blooming, or when new growth starts. A mix of 10 parts fine-grade Fir-bark and 1 part orchid mix will work well in 6" pots and smaller, while medium-grade Fir-bark works well in larger pots.

Feeding: High-nitrogen fertilizers (25-9-9) can be used year-round at one teaspoon per gallon of water. Feed once a month.

Mystacidium capense and Diaphananthe caffra

Mystacidium capense and Diaphananthe caffra

South Africa is home to a number of petite angraecoid spiphytes that make charming subjects. Both species, *Mystacidium capense* with starry flowers and *Diaphananthe caffra* (*Mystacidium caffrum*) with teal emerald green column, are easy to grow and flower when mounted. They thrive in intermediate conditions and are not particularly fussy. *Mystacidium capense* is moth-pollinated and is fragrant in the dark. It produces a pleasant musky-spicy scent if put into a dark closet for half an hour. A well-grown plant can easily produce four or more inflorescences, open simultaneously. *Diaphananthe caffra* has a look-alike that is more frequently seen in the trade called *Diaphananthe millerii* (syn. *Myacidium millerii*). The spur tip in the former is inflated while in the latter species it is acute. (*Printed with permission from Harold Koopowitz*)

Pleurothallis gelida - The Frosty Pleurothallis

Found from Belize to Ecuador, Venezuela and Jamaica on steep slopes in wet montane forests at elevations of 200 to 2300 meters as a medium sized, warm to cool growing epiphyte with erect, stout ramicauls enveloped partially below by 2, scarious sheaths and carrying a single, apical, erect, coriaceous, nerved, abruptly contracted below into the sulcate, petiolate base leaf that blooms on several, fasciculate, 6" [15 cm] long, many [30 to 35], successively flowered inflorescence arising through an annulus and occurring in the winter.

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ORCHID EDUCATION CLASSES

APRIL - JUNE 2008

APRIL

- 5, 12 & 19 Creative Photography via Orchids and Gardens
- 5 The Latest in Oncidium Hybrids and Growing Techniques
- 12 Orchids for Beginners
- 19 South Florida Gardening Basics
- 26 Diagnosing Orchid Pests & Diseases

MAY

- 3 Ikebana (Flowers kept alive) with Orchids
- 10 Growing Orchids and Companion Plants on Trees
- 17 Orchid ABC's
- 24 Gearing Up for Beginners -- Supplies, Mounts and Media
- 31 Beginners Start Here

JUNE

- 7 Success with Cattleyas
- 14 Common-Sense Approach to Growing Orchids, Covering all Genera
- 21 Successful Orchid Growing in South Florida
- 28 How to Grow Phalaenopsis

For more information on what will be taught in the above classes please contact the AOS for specifics.

Each Student Receives

- ❖ Class instruction from horticultural experts
- ❖ \$10 off American Orchid Society membership
- ❖ Free admission to the gardens on the day of the class and a tour of the botanical gardens and greenhouse directly following the class
- ❖ 10% discount on all purchases — including plants — made in the Orchid Emporium giftshop on the day of the class
- ❖ Free copy of Orchids magazine and informational brochure

Directions

The American Orchid Society Botanical Gardens are located south of Linton Blvd., west of Jog Road, adjacent to the Morikami Museum and Gardens. There is free parking and access for people with disabilities. The gardens are open Tuesday–Sunday, 10 am–4:30 pm.

To Register

- ❖ Tel 561-404-2011
- ❖ Fax 561-404-2034
- ❖ E-mail twilliams@aos.org
- ❖ Web site www.aos.org

Registration

- ❖ Advance registration required
- ❖ Payment: Cash, check drawn on a US bank in US funds, or MasterCard, Visa or American Express
- ❖ Refunds will be given up to seven days prior to class

Cost unless stated otherwise:

- AOS Member — \$25
- Member Walk-ins — \$30
- Nonmember — \$35
- Nonmember Walk-ins — \$40

SPECIAL OFFER

Sign up for 4 classes within 12 months and get the 5th class FREE.

Wine & Jazz in the Gardens — Thursdays: January 31, February 21, March 20, April 17 — 5 pm–7 pm. Enjoy wine tastings and light jazz in the American Orchid Society Botanical Gardens. For more information, please call 561-404-2000.

- ❖ Classes are subject to change. Classes with less than 2 registrants may be cancelled.

SFOS Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, March 19, 2008

Fire Fighters Memorial Building
8000 N.W. 21st Street
Miami, Florida 33122

- 7:30 pm - Registration & Judging of Plants
- 7:45 pm - Announcements
- 8:00 pm - Program
- 8:45 pm - Refreshments
- 9:00 pm - Awarded Plants Discussed
- 9:15 pm - Raffle



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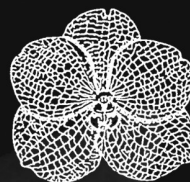
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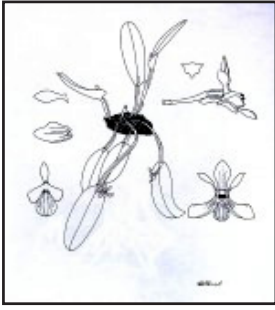
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ORCHID GENUS DESCRIPTION

Cadetia toadjanum



Introduction: This genus of small epiphytes is found mainly in New Guinea. Some sixty species are known. The genus is allied to Dendrobium.

Derivation of genus name: Named by Charles Gaudichaud-Beaupre in 1826 in honour of Charles Louis Cadet de Gassicourt

Characteristics of genus: Plants small, growing in tufts or small clumps, stems with a single node. Leaf apical, one per stem, ovate to lanceolate or linear, stiff, fleshy, apically bilobed. Flowers single, rarely two at a time, arising from papery bracts at the stem apex; mostly a white perianth with some yellow patches at the base of the mid-lobe or with patches of lavender, rose or purple marks on the labellum and parts of the column, one species is distinctly bicoloured; perianth segments free; lateral sepals joined at base to form a spur; labelum usually three lobed and pubescent on the anterior portion; lateral lobes joined to the column foot. Column short with short blunt or sharp stelids at anther apex; column foot often pubescent.

Habitat: Many species inhabit rain forest but in the highlands they are found growing in grasslands in the peat and moss as a pseudo-terrestrial. Also common along roadsides on the face of road cuttings and benches.

Conservation status: not endangered

Dated Material-Do Not Delay

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