



March 2005 - Volume 2, Number 3

Published by the South Florida Orchid Society

## President's Message

Dear members,

The 60th Miami International Orchid Show is over, but we cannot forget its beauty, magnificence and splendor. What a show! It is still the best in the country. An event of this magnitude just does not happen, it takes a lot of work and effort by the people in charge.

I would like to thank Dorothy Bennett, our show chairman, and Richard Brandon, her assistant, for a job well done. I know that they have worked over a year in the planning and preparation, but it takes more than two to make it happen. I want to thank Bob Fuchs for coordinating the A.O.S. judging and Joan Viggiani for controlling the tickets sales and managing the show budget. Julia Hamner always makes sure hospitality has priority. Sandy Shultz directed the lectures and walking tours. Danny and Barbara Lutz displayed the individual entries. Dick Farwell was responsible for the great Premier Party. Carol De Biase was the non-vendor liaison, and Julie Rosenberg was the vendor liaison for exhibitors, and of course, Marlene Clark made sure that everyone was well fed the day of set up. But this is not enough; there were many more people making this show happen, our multitude of volunteers. To all those volunteers that donated their time in the different areas such as, security, ticket checking, ticket boxes, hospitality, setting individual entries and tour guiding, a big thank you. And last but not least, there is a person who is behind the scenes, Ellen Hanson, thank you for always being there for us.

Changing subject, the last meeting was quite attention grabbing and out of the ordinary. Dorothy Bennett and Bob Fuchs were in charge and did a marvelous job. For March, Michael Coronado has secured Elly Carroll as our meeting speaker. Please try to make it.

I'll see you there.

Eduardo Marcellini

PS. I hope I did not forget anybody on the thank you list, but if I did, please forgive me, you did a great job, too.

## Program: "Culture Tips for Growing Orchids in South Florida"

*Presented by Elly Carroll*

Now that many of us have purchased new orchids at our recent show, March seems like the perfect time for a refresher course on general orchid growing. For our program this month, Elly L. Carroll will present a lecture on basic culture for growing orchids in South Florida. Elly has been growing orchids here for over 15 years.

Her passion began simply – by wanting to make the area around her new hot tub colorful with the orchids she purchased. When she determined the flowers could last over a month she caught the "Orchid Bug". Now with a collection of over 500 plants she is an award winning grower.

Elly will share with you the tricks and tips that have led her to win many society ribbons and culture awards. She will discuss the basic needs of orchid and how best to get them to flourish in our climate. The lecture will include a demonstration using Dendrobium and Phalaenopsis on how to pick the right size pot, how to cut back spikes, etc. There will also be time for a question and answer session and for trouble-shooting your orchid problems.

Elly will provide our monthly raffle table, as well.

Elly is a wonderfully knowledgeable and dynamic speaker. Her lecture promises to both educate and entertain both experienced and beginning growers. I know you won't want to miss this one!

Michael Coronado  
Vice President/Program Chairman

## Cultural tips for Bulbophyllum

by Camp Lot A Noise Tropicals

Most BULBOPHYLLUMS, including the CIRRHOPETALUMS, are easier to grow mounted and to us present a more natural appearance. Most are rambling growers and resent being disturbed; however, they do not seem to mind an occasional clipping of a few unruly leads to keep them neat.

In growing most Bulbos, we have found sphagnum moss pads mounted on the back side of cork slabs to be an excellent growing method. The recurved shape of the cork retains more moisture in the moss pad, which the Bulbos love. We have found the easiest method is to tie the plant with 6 lb test nylon fishing line. There are almost as many ways of mounting Bulbos as there are Bulbonuts.

After the plant has recovered from its self imposed pout and the new roots have gained a foothold, the nearly invisible fishing line can be removed. The fishing line does seem to injure the Bulbos, and is usually left in place. Other mounting materials are wood slabs, driftwood, cactus wood, tree fern plaques, TF pots, TF totems, and TF balls. Wood baskets with moss or osmunda pads are a close second choice. If a potted Bulbo is your choice, they will enjoy any loose well drained media. The bulk of Bulbos have numerous short roots which do not penetrate the media deeply, so shallow media is a must to avoid root rots.

In our experience most Bulbos are in continual growth, except for a brief rest in the cool of the winter. They usually bloom on the matured new growth. If there is a peak bloom period it would probably be spring and early fall. The majority of Bulbos are comfortable in a temperature range of 45 F to 95 F. Some of the higher elevation Bulbos, such as those from the Himalayas and New Guinean mountains prefer cool temperatures for part of the year and can be a little difficult in warmer areas. Preferred light conditions are bright shade. If adjusted slowly, full morning sun up to noon is

enjoyed by most Bulbos. If you can comfortably read a newspaper without squinting or straining to see then you have the right light.

Bulbos prefer to be evenly moist, except a slight drying in the winter. During growth period, the Bulbos should be given heavy watering, so they are never dry.

Because of the wet conditions loved by the Bulbos, fungus can be a problem. A monthly preventative spray of your favorite fungicide is desirable to ward off problems. Good air movement is a must to keep leaf fungus down, because of the heavy watering regime.

Fertilization is simple - Bulbos love to eat. 1/4 strength at each watering is sure to keep them happy. We have found organic fertilizers, such as fish emulsion, cow manure teas are enjoyed as well as salt based fertilizers. If you use the salt based fertilizers ensure no salt residue is left in the roots. Always flush, with clear water, monthly to protect the short tender roots from fertilizer burn.

While not insect resistant, bulbos seem to rarely be bothered by insects other than an occasional scale or mealy bug infestation, which can be easily handled by a 70% isopropyl alcohol and soap drench, or your favorite insecticide.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

**Apr.: Annual Auction** - Plan now to be on hand for some of the ultimate orchid bargains donated to support our Society's annual fund-raising event.


**May: "Schomburgkia Intergenerics", Paul Storm, Meke Aloha Orchids**

**June: Installation and Awards Presentation** Awards Committee Chairman, Robert Fuchs, will provide a review of the SFOS awards for the past year and make presentations to the winning exhibitors.



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## SFOS NEW MEMBER PACKETS

To welcome new members into our Society, SFOS now offers an amazing new member packet that is mailed to all new members. The new packets contain updated pesticide information, our by-laws, a membership roster and several coupons, the value of which far exceeds the cost of membership. Please talk to your friends and let them know about our wonderful new member packets as well as the other benefits of being a member of South Florida Orchid Society like free entrance into the Miami Orchid Show and our wonderful and informative monthly programs, just to name a few. Below is a list of the businesses that have donated coupons for our packets:

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| • Godlove & Son Orchids, Inc./<br>Palm Bay Orchids | • Fairchild Tropical Gardens       |
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## UPCOMING AREA EVENTS

**April:** Annual Show - The Central Orchid Society will be celebrating 50 Years by hosting its annual show. The theme of the show is "Golden Treasures". The show will take place April 2-3, 2005 at the Central Florida Fairgrounds (Highway 50 West) in Orlando, Florida. The hours of operation are 9-5 Saturday & Sunday and the show will be AOS judged. For more information please contact Ed Gilliland at 407-295-7667.

## Bring Your Orchids in for Judging!

You can win with your orchids by bringing them in at our next meeting March 16th. Dress your plants up and bring them in.



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## Hardy Bletillas

by Clark T. Riley\*

*Bletilla striata*, *Ble. striata* f. *alba*, *Ble. ochracea*,  
*Ble. Brigantes*

As is the case with epiphytic orchids, a relatively few hardy terrestrial genera hold disproportionate potential for horticultural usefulness. Along with *Cypripedium* and *Calopogon*, some of the greatest potential lies in the genus *Bletilla*. This small genus is represented in cultivation by only three species and their varieties, *Bletillas striata*, *formosana*, and *ochracea*. Of these three, *Ble. striata* and *Ble. ochracea* are vigorous and hardy, at least to USDA zone five. *Bletilla striata* is found in at least 4 varieties, the type variety of bright magenta purple, the white variety *alba*, a smaller variety with white sepals and petals sporting a pink or pink-tinged lip, and a variety with white variegations in the leaves. The purple and white varieties have long been available in the horticultural trade and can often be found for sale in retail garden centers. This "commoner" presentation may, in part, be responsible for the otherwise surprising lack of interest displayed by the orchid community. The species *ochracea* possesses bright mustard yellow flowers and has recently been introduced into cultivation from western China through the efforts of the National Arboretum and a network of dedicated fanciers. *Bletilla ochracea* has proven equally hardy to *Ble. striata* and hybridizes readily with it. *Bletilla striata* and its varieties and *Bletilla ochracea* are very amenable to cultivation. Both do well in bright light in normal quality soil, planted three to four inches deep. In the author's garden in Baltimore, Maryland, USA, in USDA zone 6.5, both species multiply rapidly growing in full sun. They are mulched with two to three inches of pine straw in the Winter to prevent early emergence in the Spring as the growing tips are susceptible to unsightly frost damage. Neither species is fertilized, nor has any fungicide or insecticide ever been used on either species. Under these conditions, the leaves of *Ble. ochracea* are slightly thinner than *Ble. striata* and the plants are slightly smaller. Other than these minor differences, the plants are very simi-

lar in their presentation. *Bletilla ochracea* blooms about three weeks later than *Ble. striata*, though there is plenty of overlap in their two month blooming periods. The racemes of both species yield three to ten flowers and, in good years, many of the racemes will be branched. The hybrid between the two species is intermediate in all respects and is very attractive, combining the bright rose color of the *Ble. striata* with a graceful presentation and bright yellow disk in the lip from *Ble. ochracea*. A bundle of *Bletillas* is lovely and long lasting. One feature which portends a bright future for the genus is the ease with which the *Bletilla* racemes can be pulled from the plant, eliminating the need for cutting utensils with their attendant risk of virus transmission.

*Bletillas* grow rapidly by division under good conditions. Most of the commercial *Bletilla striata* was surely obtained by propagation of a few clones. In addition, they grow with abandon from seed, utilizing any of the popular media or even on dampened *Sphagnum* moss, though the latter gives a much lower yield. Given good growing conditions, it is not uncommon to bloom seedlings two to three years from pollination. The prospect of rapid generation turnover and resulting selective breeding is very exciting. The author has second generation U.S. bred clones in the garden already under less than optimal seedling care. Other growers in the network are reporting light pink variants among seed-grown *Bletilla striata*. Attention can now focus on larger flower size and a more upward facing presentation. *Bletilla* is known to hybridize successfully with *Arundina graminifolia* (unregistered) and attempts are being made to cross it with the taxonomically related genus *Calanthe*, thus far with no reported success. The introduction of other species of *Bletilla* would be desirable.

Continued on next column 4



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## Greek Lemon Chicken Thighs And Potatoes

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 Cooking Time | 60 min  
 Level of Difficulty | Easy

main meals | Save time and infuse flavor by marinating this hearty Mediterranean dish overnight. The garlicky-lemon flavor is excellent.

### Ingredients

1/2 cup fresh lemon juice  
 1/2 cup fat-free chicken broth  
 2 Tbsp olive oil  
 4 medium garlic clove(s), minced  
 2 Tbsp dried oregano  
 1 serving cooking spray (5 one-second sprays per serving)  
 1 1/2 pound boneless, skinless chicken thigh(s), about 8 thighs  
 1 pound uncooked new potatoes, cut in half (about 10 small potatoes)

### Instructions

1. Place lemon juice, broth, oil, garlic and oregano in a large resealable plastic bag or medium glass bowl. Add chicken, seal bag or cover bowl, and marinate at least 2 hours or up to overnight in refrigerator.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a 9 X 11-inch pan with cooking spray.
3. Place chicken and marinade in pan; add potatoes. Bake 60 minutes, or longer for softer potatoes. Yields about 2 chicken thighs and 5 potato halves per serving. (Note: You may substitute boneless, skinless chicken breasts for the thighs but reduce the cooking time by 15 minutes.)



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Courtesy of Hershey's Kitchens

**Category:** Coconut, Cookies & Bars

**Yield:** pieces

### Ingredients:

3 3/4 cups (10-oz pkg) MOUNDS  
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 3/4 cup Sugar  
 1/4 cup All-purpose flour  
 1/4 tsp Salt  
 3 Egg whites  
 1 Egg, slightly beaten  
 1 tsp Almond extract  
 1 cup HERSHEY'S MINI KISSES  
 Milk Chocolate Baking Pieces

### Procedures:

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease 9-inch square baking pan.
2. Stir together coconut, sugar, flour and salt in large bowl. Add egg whites, egg and almond extract; stir until well blended. Stir in MINI KISSES. Spread mixture into prepared pan, covering all KISSES with coconut mixture.
3. Bake 35 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from oven to wire rack. Cool completely in pan on wire rack. Cover with foil; allow to stand at room temperature about 8 hours or overnight. Cut into bars. About 24 bars.
4. **VARIATION:** Omit MINI KISSES in batter. Immediately after removing pan from oven, place desired number of KISSES on top, pressing down lightly. Cool completely. Cut into bars.



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# An Introduction to Orchids

A Guide to Orchid Growing in the Subtropics

Third, revised edition, 2005,  
ISBN 0-9679831-1-8

New for 2005, this completely revised edition brings 15 of South Florida's foremost orchid experts together to share their expertise on orchid care. Lavishly illustrated with hundreds of color photographs by award-winning photographers, this new edition includes useful appendices as well as informative chapters on the care of our most popular genera. 128 pages, edited by Julie Rosenberg; contributing editors Chuck McCartney and Michael Tibbs.



The contents include:

Foreword by Mary Noble McQuerry  
General Orchid Culture, Ruben P. Sauleda, Ph.D., Ruben In Orchids  
Growing Cattleyas, Bill Peters, Whimsy Orchids  
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*Please see order form on page 7*

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## SFOS Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, March 16th, 2005

**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 - Orchid Clinic & Refreshments
- 9:00 pm - Awarded Plants Discussed
- 9:15 pm - Raffle



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