



Gulf Coast Orchid Society Newsletter

July 8, 2012

Our July meeting will be held Sunday, July 8, at 2:00 at the **Jeff Davis Community College** located at the corner of Switzer Rd and Debuys; just north of Pass Rd. We will meet in the cafeteria meeting room. **There will be no New Growers meeting.**

PROGRAM: Our July 8, 2012 program will focus on using our orchids. Our own Beryl Davis will give a demo on putting our beautiful orchid flowers to use. This is going to be fun, we will bring Beryl a bunch of cut orchids and she'll show us how to show off our flowers in great easy ways.



Many of you are thinking why would you want to cut your flowers? Well, there are several reasons. First the plant expends lots of energy holding and supporting those flowers; energy that can be used growing stronger and making more flowers. Secondly unless you live in your growing area you can't enjoy the beauty and fragrance of orchids as much as cutting the flowers and bringing them into the home. Did you know that some orchids only let their fragrances out at certain times of the day? If the flowers are in your home you are more apt to smell those wonderful orchid fragrances. Thirdly orchids are love; we all love growing our orchids; we love our flowers; share a little love by giving someone an orchid!

At left is Stacy Thompson Mckenzie carrying a bouquet of orchids. You might not be able to make a bridal bouquet, but Beryl will show us some simple arrangements that are awesome that we can make like the vase of Brassias at right that were used for the reception table.

Any member who has plants to sell can sell them at the July meeting. Please make sure they are free of critters and priced. The society gets 10% of all sales.



REFRESHMENTS: Bill and Tina Torguson and Judy Chinsee will provide July's refreshments. Word and Walter Taylor will provide refreshments for August. If you'd like to bring refreshments or if you have to change your date; call Andra at 228-388-5054.

AUGUST PROGRAM: Our August meeting will be Sunday, **August 12.** One of our long-time members has donated quite a few plants to the Society. We will have a short discussion of the qualities of these plants, several of the more desirable plants will be auctioned; the rest will be priced very reasonably for the members to **purchase during break.** First come first served! No one has to wait in line or draw numbers.

FUTURE PROGRAMS: Please let us know if there is a topic you wish us to cover. **They will all be at J.D. in the cafeteria meeting room.**

Sept. 9, Ashley Matherne of Orchid Retreat will speak on Growing Cattleyas and will be selling divisions of his plants.

Oct 14, open - we'll take orders for wholesale plant order

Nov. 11, Work Session for our 2013 show. Plant distribution from wholesale plant order.

Dec. 9 Orchid bingo and covered dish luncheon

BATON ROUGE SHOW: The Society will do a 50' exhibit at the Baton Rouge Show. It is the week after our July meeting, July 13-15. The theme is "Exotic Places Around the World" (Example Paris, France, London, Costa Rica, and USA). This mid summer show offers us all a chance to show and see some plants which bloom at a time which is "off the beaten path". The schedule on Friday includes show setup from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and plant registration from 12 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.; A.O.S. judging begins at 6:30 p.m. The show and sales are open to the public on Saturday from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. and on Sunday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Show takedown begins at 4

p.m. on Sunday. If you have some ideas for the theme or would like to help with set up or send plants, please let us know at the meeting.



HAWAII ORCHID SHOW: Karen Kimberly our wholesale orchid vendor tells us that Hawaii's biggest and best show of the year, the Hilo Orchid Society Show is happening August 3-5. This show fills a stadium! They charge \$5.00 at the door or \$3.00 in advance for admission.

ORCHID TRAVELS: Dave and Janet Olier went to Key West last month. While driving back, they stopped at R.F. Orchids, 28100 SW 182 Ave., Homestead, FL. Bob Fuchs, who the "RF" stands for, came to the coast and spoke to us last year on Vandas. He invited us all down to visit. Janet and Dave took him up on his offer and they were amazed. Not just with the orchids but all the exotic, tropicals growing in their gardens. That's Janet at left going through the entrance to the gardens. Below right is a view from the entrance to one of the greenhouses. Below left is Janet with all her purchases! No not really; but



Janet reports that she found some great bargains.



If any of you have plans to go to Florida this summer, give them a call 305-245-4570. Their gates are open Tuesday through Sunday, from 9 to 5. Walking tours of the private garden are at 11 AM and 3 PM on Saturdays and Sundays weather permitting. They have a comfortable sitting area for those that don't feel like a tour or shopping and just want to chill in heaven for a few hours.

WIN MONEY: Many of you said at the June meeting that you'd write and essay for the Mid America essay contest. If you've put it off and just haven't gotten around to it I'm reprinting the rules below:

Write an essay on "Why _____ Is My Favorite Orchid Genus" - you fill in the blank -- and win up to \$100.00! If you prefer to write about your favorite orchid or species within a genus, that will be fine, too. The essay should be no more than 500 words in length and submitted no later than October 1st to Doris Asher, Chair, Mid-America Communications Committee (asherdoris@juno.com) - winners will be announced at the Congress' Sunday Business Meeting in Independence, MO, October 28, 2012. You do not need to be present to win. First prize wins \$100.00; second, \$50; third, \$25. All three prize-winning

essays will appear in future issues of The Mid-American, the newsletter of the Mid-America Orchid Congress.

NAME TAGS AND SHIRTS: If you want a GCOS name tag; see Marilyn at the meeting. If you want a GCOS shirt see Chip Lechner at the meeting.

GCOS WEBPAGE AND FACEBOOK: At our April meeting our webmaster, Chip Lechner, told he's had a few hardware problems and has not been able to update the website. He has done a great job with the website in the past and he'll update the site when he gets the problem fixed. In the meantime check out our face book page.

WHAT'S FOR SALE THIS MONTH: Jo Ann is tired of keeping Bulbophyllums in her Phalaenopsis room. She'll be bringing in four plants given to her by a very generous donor. At this time we are not sure if we'll offer them for auction or if we'll price them for sell during break. Jo Ann is also donating a Vanda in full bloom, two spikes, for the Speaker's fund; this plant will definitely be auctioned! On the next page is an article by Larry Hennessey of the New Orleans Orchid Society. Larry is an authority on Bulbos. The pictures are of blooming plants similar to the ones that will be sold at Sunday's meeting.

Bulbophyllum Growing Tips

by Larry Hennessey

I never considered growing bulbos until I met Tom Nasser of Carolina Orchids at the Orchid Growers Fair in Baton Rouge about 10 years ago. He gave a talk about them and I had lunch with him afterwards. He couldn't understand why no one was interested in



Bulb. decurviscapum photo from Internet Orchid Species

growing bulbos down here. He said the climate was perfect for growing them at least 8 months of the year. Most of them love the warmth and the humidity that we all complain about. They are both disease and pest resistant. The only problem that I've experienced is the occasional new growth that rots when water gets trapped in it after watering. But this doesn't appear to bother the plants any; they just put out another new growth. In fact they seem to be the quickest

orchid to grow into a large specimen. Young plants appear to double in size each year. And many bloom off and on for several months. Some are sequential bloomers and some just put out occasional flushes of blooms.

Bulbos are one of the largest and most diverse groups of orchids. They range from miniatures well under an inch in height with flowers too small to be clearly viewed by the naked eye; up to *Bulbo phaleanopsis*, which can have leaves over 6 feet long and *Bulbo echinolabium* whose flower can be over 15 inches from top to bottom.

Bulbos have two complaints commonly levied at them: they have an unruly rambling growth habit that doesn't allow them to be grown easily and they have weird foul smelling flowers.



Bulb. Elizabeth Ann 'Jean' photo from AQ Plus

many intricate features that you really have to study them to notice everything. Most have a hinged lip that swings back and forth when the flower is moved by the wind or something touching it. Some have filaments that may appear to be tassels fluttering in the wind.

The bulbos are most commonly split into 2 groups: *Bulbophyllum* and *Cirrhopetalum*. The *Cirrhopetalums* were split from the rest of the bulbos because the flower are arranged in an umbel. This is sometimes called the Daisy Chain type because the umbel resembles a daisy if you look down at it.

I've been successful growing bulbos in pots using my *Phalaenopsis* mix, which is 67% bark mix and 33% Fafard potting mix. The bulbos need even moisture around the roots just like phals and this mix seems to accomplish that. Another way to grow them is in baskets filled with sphagnum moss. I've been growing some in baskets next to my vandas most of the year and have not had any rot problems even though they get watered at least once a day in the summer. Of course the more natural way to grow them is mounted. If you decide to try growing them mounted make sure you place a pad of sphagnum moss under them to retain some moisture around the roots and water them like a vanda, the more the better during the hot summer.

There is also a good reference book dedicated to bulbos by Emily Seigerist, *Bulbophyllums and Their Allies* published in 2001. This book is primarily a reference book. A more practical book for beginners and people interested in growing tips for Bulbos is *Bulbophyllums The Incomplete Guide; From A to Why?* Self published by Bill Thoms in 2009.

Note to members - This book is in our library. Check it out.



Bulb. blepharistes photo from AQ Plus



Cirr. vaginatum photo from AQ Plus

It is true that some bulbos have a rambling growth habit just like other groups of orchids such as *Cattleyas* but this can be handled in a number of ways. You can choose the bulbos that don't have a gap between the pseudobulbs. This includes a number of species and hybrids in the *levanae* group, *echinolabium*, *carunculatum* and others. If you do choose one of the rambling types you can pot them in a large bulb pan or basket and just keep wrapping the growths around the inside of the pot. You can also grow them mounted, which is a more natural way to handle them.

It is also true that some bulbo flowers are foul smelling but some do smell nice. Besides, the foul smelling ones don't smell up a greenhouse. You have to stick your nose all the way up to the flower if you're curious about how bad it smells. The smell is to attract their pollinating insect, which is a fly. The worst smelling ones that I know of are *burfordiense* (ripe Bourbon Street garbage truck), *levanae* (rotten shrimp heads), *nymphopolitanum* (barnyard droppings).

I've had a *macranthum* in bloom off and on for a couple of months in the greenhouse and filling up a quarter of it with a most pleasant aroma. Also, the flowers have so