

# Orchid Society of Santa Barbara

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society



Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 11, 2007

Location: Louise Lowry Davis  
Recreation Center  
1232 De La Vina (at Victoria)

Potting Demo: 7:00 PM

Meeting: 7:30 PM

## Francisco Miranda of Boa Vista Orchids will speak about Brazilian Cattleyas

We are very pleased to welcome Francisco Miranda from Boa Vista Orchids in Florida. Miranda began studying orchids in his native Brazil in 1981, receiving a master's degree in 1985 for his work with Brazilian laelias. He has discovered and described numerous new species, particularly in the genera *Catasetum* and *Mormodes*. Today, he is recognized as a Taxonomic Authority by the American Orchid Society, specializing in Brazilian orchids, particularly those of the cattleya alliance. If you want to know about Brazilian cattleyas, this is the talk for you!

**Potting Demonstration:** Jeff Thompson continues his series on potting orchids in various different media. This month's discussion will feature a comparison of some of the multitude of media available for potting orchids.

OSSB Officers for 2007:

President - Don Brown      Vice President - Carole Thompson  
Treasurer - Angela Watt      Secretary - Heidi Kirkpatrick

Visit the OSSB Web Site!

[www.orchidsb.net](http://www.orchidsb.net)

## Calendar of Events

July 13-15, 2007

### 27th Annual Santa Barbara Orchid Estate International Orchid Fair

Earl Warren Showgrounds, Fri-Sat 9-5, Sun 10-4. Free admission; parking \$5. Be sure to check out the nursery open houses! Host Santa Barbara Orchid Estate will be open during the fair. Cal-Orchid will be open during the fair and feature a BBQ and live music on Saturday. Hatfield Orchids in Oxnard will be open during the fair.

Looking ahead...

January 23-27, 2008

### 19th World Orchid Conference

Miami, Florida. Full registration prior \$300. Full registration includes the preview party, unlimited entry to shows and lectures, closing ceremony, and a registration packet. Companion registration (\$150, one per full registrant) includes everything but the registration packet. Single day registration is available. Show entry is \$20. For the non-orchid spouse, there are plenty of day trips in Miami, some of them pretty reasonably priced. Check out the website at [www.19woc.com](http://www.19woc.com) for more information or to register. (Editor's note: I hear that hotel rooms are going fast; if you plan to go, you should make arrangements soon.)

February 29-March 2, 2008

### 63rd Annual Santa Barbara International Orchid Show

Note the early date of next year's show!

## Summary of the June 2007 Meeting

❁ President Don Brown welcomed visitors, including Ila Hamilton and Doreen Laquidara and thanked Jeffrey Thompson for bringing the June refreshments. The OSSB refreshment sign-up sheet is full through November. Thanks to those who have signed up!

July	Sandy Svoboda
August	P. J. Sanderson
September	Ed and Shirlie Carter
October	Bryce and Nancy Augustine
November	Laura Dewey

❁ President Don Brown reminded members of upcoming events—the Orchid Fair in July (see page one of this newsletter), the OSSB August potluck picnic, the OSSB Fall Show. Watch your newsletters for further information!

❁ Sad news: long-time amateur paphiopedilum expert and Southern California resident Helen Congleton passed away in June.

❁ Gene Baum told members that the Coastal Valley Orchid Society in Lompoc is looking to repeat its successful judging Expo from last year. Look for a possible date in September.

❁ Our local AOS judges are still working on the details necessary to bring AOS judging to Santa Barbara, held in conjunction with OSSB monthly meetings.

### Program

President Don Brown introduced our June speaker, local favorite Lauris Rose of Cal-Orchid. Cal-Orchid is approaching its 20th year in operation, with Lauris and James Rose at the helm. Lauris spoke to the members about breeding epidendrums, for which they are recognized in the industry.

Cal-Orchid is a melting pot of epidendrum breeding lines from Korea, Hawaii, Santa Barbara, and other regions. As a result, their product is different from others on the market. At Cal-Orchid, Lauris and James aim for the Living Bouquet™, an ideal defined by flowers being in balance with the plant so that the whole looks attractive on the dining room table. This goal has shaped their choices in epi breeding?

But why epidendrums? They're hardy and produce showy heads of flowers. Best of all, from a commercial standpoint, they grow quickly. Pods ripen in three months, then spend a year or less at the lab in flasks. From flask, seedlings go into seed packs in moss, with the "runts" already going to the compost pile. Next comes the three inch pot. Lauris described a plant one and a half years out of flask as a toddler. In another year, the plant is a teenager. A year after that, the plant is an adult in a five inch pot.

Plants in the Cal-Orchid breeding lines have leaves as stiff

as cardboard, a fact demonstrated by Lauris when a leaf she broke had an audible "crack." Their breeding has increased the size of the individual flowers and the impact of the flowering heads, while reducing plant size to avoid "leggy" plants. Leggy seedlings are discarded, as are those prone to making keikis, which make for messy plants.

The genetic make-up of present day epis includes primarily five species. These are:

*Epi. ibaguense* — from Mexico and Central to South America. Orange to yellow flowers.

*Epi. radicans* — found from Mexico to Colombia. Flowers range from red to orange.

*Epi. secundum* (syn. *Epi. elongatum*) — described in 1789 in Peru. Flowers vary from pink to white to yellow.

*Epi. ellipticum* (syn. *Epi. xanthinum*) — native of Brazil. Lilacs, purples, yellows.

*Epi. cinnabarinum* — also from Brazil. Large oranges, wide, fimbriated lip, and unfortunately tall plants.

The Cal-Orchid breeding line has broadened the range of colors available. At first, noted Lauris, orange dominated, as it went along with preferred size and shape. Now, more pinks and raspberries are being produced, with the shape of these getting less starchy. Lauris showed a slide of a charming pink with white lip, plus epis in salmon color or guava colors. She commented that it is difficult to get a full and shapely yellow.

Lauris had a number of useful cultivation tips. She noted that the spike can be cut beneath a spent head to encourage branching. Once the plant is finished blooming, the dead spikes can be removed and the canes themselves trimmed to make the plant more pleasing in shape.

Cal-Orchid epis and epis in general prefer to be underpotted. Lauris noted that epis prefer to grow on the dry side, since the species come from dryer environments; too much moisture encourages root rot. For small plants, a recommended mix is half fine bark and half medium bark. Mature plants in bigger pots do well with two-thirds medium bark and one third fine bark; the addition of perlite to this mix is also beneficial. Fertilizing can be done with Osmocote timed-release fertilizer. Lauris uses Miracle Grow at her house.

Since many of their plants are sold to Florida, Cal-Orchid grows their plants very bright to prepare them for the hot Florida sun. Leaves often will have a hint of red in response. The plants bloom very well in such high light levels, and the stud bench during flowering season is a sight to see.

Lauris related an interesting and unexpected anecdote about

cut flower spikes. James made arrangements of cut spikes from the stud bench to take to a show in Florida. A local grower collected the discarded spikes after the show and managed to root them in wet oasis (florists' foam)—much to the Roses dismay!

Lauris also reported on an event about which Americans heard virtually nothing. The event was "Royal Flora: Thailand Salutes Its King," a celebration of his 60 years as their monarch. The event was located in Chiang Mai, a former capital of Thailand located in the northern part of the country. Lauris noted that northern Thailand is safer than the south, where there is fighting and unrest.

Despite dissatisfaction with the other branches of their government, Thais have a deep reverence for their king and no expense was spared in creating this huge flower show to honor the King and one of his passions (horticulture). Among the King's hugely popular concepts was his idea for the self-sufficiency of his constituents. He believes that dividing each plot of land as follows would allow each family to be comfortably self-sufficient: 10% for the house, 30% for water management, 30% for rice paddies, and 30% for horticulture, including trees and fruit trees.

Lauris reported that Thais everywhere could be seen wearing yellow polo shirts with the King's emblem—even newscasters wore them. In recognition of Royal Flora, the King ordered a large quantity of the polo shirts, which were sold cheaply to his people. The color yellow was chosen because it is associated with Mondays, the day on which the King was born.

Lauris showed a few slides of the shopping stalls prior to the ticket sales for entering Royal Flora. A number of different genera could be found in flask. Potted paphiopedilums made a showy display. Lauris was unimpressed by their epis.

Entry to the show was through a walkway lined by columns emblazoned with photographs of the King. The show itself covered some 200 acres with over 2 million featured plants.

Inside, there were various displays, including a number from foreign countries. Lauris showed a photograph of a bed of Dutch tulips. These were protected from the hot Thai sun by shadecloth. Even then, the tulips would last only a short time before collapsing in the heat. Since the duration of Royal Flora was two months, the Dutch had to replant the tulip bed a number of times.

The show was not just about flowers, but also about education, and included a number of structures. There were traditional Thai houses, some in which one could go to get a massage. There was an African round mud house with a thatch roof. There were also modern structures, such as an enclosed pavilion boasting a tower of bromeliads.

One of the educational exhibits Lauris found interesting taught visitors about grapes, which are foreign to Thailand and unfamiliar to Thai consumers. The climate around Chiang Mai is suitable for growing grapes. Recently, rootstock was imported from California, so there are vineyards growing in Thailand.

Lauris showed a number of photographs of the orchid pavilion, which included individual plants to be judged, garden displays of orchids, and several educational exhibits about orchids. Among the individual plants to be judged, Lauris saw epidendrums,

phalaenopsis type dendrobiums, a striking *Plectrelminthus caudata*, and, interestingly, lycastes, which do not enjoy the heat. Also featured was *Cymbidium tracyanum*, with its stripes and spots, hairy lip and fragrance. It can be found in Southeast Asia, as can *Paphiopedilum charlesworthii*, plant of which covered a whole display wall.

Among the educational exhibits on orchids was one on cosmetics and perfumes derived from the very fragrant *Rhynchostylis gigantea*. Lauris showed a photo of an interesting display on conservation, with a background meant to look like fire. The caption was, "No Forest, Worsen Environment, No Orchid."

One room in the pavilion featured propagation technology, with a number of flasks and educational placards explaining flasking of orchids. Another display showed virus test kits and discussed controlling disease and virus in orchids.

The garden displays featured plants such as paphiopedilums, dendrobiums, ascocendas, vandas, and phalaenopsis. Lauris showed a display with an elephant tusk made entirely of white phalaenopsis type dendrobiums. The membership was particularly impressed by several terracotta columns, taller than a person, topped with a terracotta bowl full of orchids. Each column was beautifully carved into lacy shapes of cattleya flowers and plants. (Your editor lusted mightily after those columns!)

Lauris also showed several photographs of the monks who were her hosts in Thailand. Back at the monastery, she took a photograph of a tree covered with an absolutely immense coelogyne.

## Potting Demonstration Report

Jeff Thompson presented an overview of how to mount orchids. Many people mount on cork bark, but other pieces of wood often work well. Jeff will use driftwood, but taste it first to determine if it is salty. Some plants go directly onto the mount, but Jeff will add Oregon green moss or sphagnum moss to retain a little moisture. He noted that sphagnum may not be a good choice for outdoors, because it is vulnerable to a bug that destroys it. If he uses moss, often he will place the moss on top of the roots; in two years, when the plant has adhered to the mount, he can then remove the moss. In the future, he is going to experiment with manufactured lumber for flat mounts.

To adhere a plant to a mount, many growers use fishing line, and Jeff was very slick in his demonstration mounting. He trapped the mount between his leg and the table, then wound the fishing line around the plant and mount. To knot, he wraps it four times, pulls it tight, then reverses direction and ties a quick knot. To stabilize the plant, he tries to weave the line through the leaves so it is atop the rhizome. He alternates weaving and tying until the plant is secure, then makes two knots to finish off. Jeff uses 12 pound test fishing line, which is the strength that won't break when he is tying knots.

## Announcements

✿ Best wishes to member Mike Hersh, recuperating from surgery.

✿ Please submit your ideas for the theme of the Fall Show! Member Donna Grubisic made suggestions. Have you?

✿ Want your plant featured on the cover of this newsletter? Email me a digital photo! Higher resolution is better: 300 dpi. Send your photo to orchidtrain@cox.net

✿ **Orchid Digest Speakers Day Report** — A number of OSSB members attended the annual OD Speakers Day at the Huntington Gardens, including yours truly. In upcoming newsletters, as space

permits, I will report on several of the very interesting lectures. The keynote speaker was the internationally recognized expert on Angracoid orchids, Joyce Stewart, who showed a number of delightful species. Martin Motes of Florida wowed the audience with intergeneric vandaceous crosses, and HP Norton of S. Carolina outlined red phal breeding in his very entertaining conversational style. Two southern California natives, Harry Phillips and Butch Weckerle-Thrun, outlined their very distinct methods for growing vandaceous orchids outdoors in our area; even our own very expert Paul Gripp took a couple notes on new ideas during the lectures!

## Cover Photo

This month's cover photo features *Slc.* Fire Lighter 'Rosminah', a shapely flower in a rich, orange-red. It is a cross of *Sophrolaeliocattleya* Bright Angel x *Sophrolaelia* Orpetii registered in 1998 by H&R. The clonal name 'Rosminah' tells us this is Don Brown's plant, since Rosminah is his daughter's name. Many thanks to Don for providing the photo.

As we all know, Don grows his plants outdoors. This is a delightful cross for outdoor growing as the fire-engine red flowers catch the eye but the plant does not demand much bench space. And here is a tidbit I learned from Paul Gripp: *Sl.* Orpetii, one of the parents, was named after the same man honored by Orpet Park on the Riviera here in Santa Barbara.

## June Show Table Results

Voting for plants on the June Show Table again had lots of ties, which shows that a number of our members are bringing in very fine plants. Frank Methmann's *Lyc.* (Geyser Gold x Wyld Surprise) took top honors in the show table voting in June. This was followed by a four way tie between: James Merriman's *Lc.* Picasso x *L. purpurata*; Bryce Augustine's *Phrag.* Le Dirovilles 'Jouniaelles'; Randall Umland's *Brassavola* Gerry Cassella; and Ed and Shirlie Carter's *Dgmra.* Winter Wonderland 'White Fairy'. Thanks to these exhibitors and to Gene Hagerty, Gene Baum, Don Brown and Jeff Thompson for bringing plants to show.