

Orchid Society of Santa Barbara

An Affiliate of the American Orchid Society

Next Meeting:

**Wednesday,
December 16, 2009**

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

Meeting: 7:30 PM

Annual Holiday Potluck!

Good food, good company, a special holiday raffle table—it's time for our holiday potluck, held in conjunction with the Santa Barbara Cymbidium Society! This year, OSSB and SBCS will have a special raffle table; remember that your ticket purchase helps raise money for our society!

Bring a dish for 6-10 people. And bring your own plates, silverware and drinks. Coffee will be provided. Here is what to bring, according to your last name:

A–I: *main course dish*

J–Q: *salad or side dish*

R–Z: *desert*

Some of our members are very good cooks, so our holiday potluck is always a culinary delight.

Setup Help: President Randall Umland can use some help with setting up tables and chairs before the meeting!

AOS Judging: Bring your plant by 6:30 PM to register it for AOS judging. If you have questions, contact judging chair Bryce Augustine.



Photo: Don Brown provided this photo of the Best Orchid in Show of *Schombolaelia* Summit.

WINTER AND SPRING MAKE ORCHID SEASON!

January 16-17, 2010

54th Paphiopedilum Guild. Contact your editor for info.

January 23-24, 2010

Peninsula Orchid Society Show, Redwood City, CA.

February 12-14, 2010

Newport Harbor Show, Westminster Mall, Westminster, CA.

February 26-28, 2010

Pacific Orchid Exposition, Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA.

March 12-14, 2010

Santa Barbara International Orchid Show.

OSSB Officers for 2009:

President - Randall Umland

Treasurer - PJ Sanderson

Membership & mailing - Robin Hamlin

Directors:

Visit the OSSB Web Site!

Vice President - Carol Rogers

Secretary - Heidi Kirkpatrick

Show Chair - Tom Ball

www.orchidsb.net

Summary of the October 2009 Meeting

❁ AOS Corner

The American Orchid Society has Members Meetings twice a year, once in the spring and again in the fall. These events are open to any orchid lover to attend. Think about going to the next one which is in Oklahoma City from April 28 – May 2, 2010. You can obtain information under “Events” at the AOS web site or at <http://www.2010aosshow.oosorchids.org/> At each of these meetings the AOS has been hosting Town Hall meetings where they have been answering questions from membership in a public setting. Let me share a couple of the questions and answers from the recent California town hall meeting.

Q. How is the AOS doing financially?

Answer: The organization is struggling and has cut its expenses in every instance that it can. The staff has been dramatically cut back. Several fundraising campaigns have been initiated. We are asking for donations from Orchid Societies as well as all members. If we all pull together we can make it through this difficult financial time.

Q. Can we sell the headquarters building?

Answer: It has been investigated, but zoning laws and the economy do not make this a feasible option at this time. If the AOS can attract enough people to the facility we are better off having it open. It provides positive cash flow. It also provides the means for AOS members to have reciprocal membership to over 200 other gardens around the world.

If you have a question for the AOS leadership, you can email me and I will get an answer to you: affiliated_societies@aos.org

Sincerely,
Carol Holdren
AOS Affiliated Society Committee

❁ A Fun Way to Help Your Society - Host a Speaker!

Some of the most enduring friendships are made over orchids. I know of a number of folks who maintain long-distance friendships with orchid speakers whom they hosted. OSSB is hoping for members who would be willing to host out-of-town speakers. The society cannot afford a hotel room, but if there is a list of potential hosts who might be available to host a speaker, OSSB could

consider inviting speakers from further away to our monthly meetings. Contact Frank Methman at 566-0839 or fmorchids@hotmail.com to find out more.

❁ Program

Carol Rogers introduced our October speaker, Dan Asbell of Asbell's orchids. For the last six years, he has been working with his father at the nursery. He spoke to the membership about cymbidium companions.

They were growing cymbidiums and a few others including a very large *Sarcochilus*. After enough people asked about buying a piece of the *Sarcochilus*, they split the plant into 57 pieces, each selling for \$20. This encouraged them to investigate what grows outside with cymbidiums.

The first step is to look at where cool growers come from. Cool growing species are found in Asia, India, and Southeast Asia along rivers, with elevation being key. In the foothills of the Himalayas in Nepal, the forests are more open, consisting of oak trees, large rhododendrons and conifers. Cymbidiums and other orchids in these areas grow in fairly bright filtered light.

From the mountains of Vietnam and China and into Thailand and Burma, for example, comes *Coelogyne corymbosa*, a six to eight inch plant with crystalline white flowers touched with orange on the lip. This species quickly forms a specimen plant; theirs has 11 pseudobulbs and 10 new growths, almost doubling in size. *Coelogyne tormentosa* produces 15 to 20 flowers on a pendulous spike and almost doubles every year. Note however that because these plants don't have a definitive season, one is more likely to get an extended, modest display than one big bloom a year. Plants of this species in Indonesian mountains tend to experience higher light and tolerate a few very cold nights annually, though they tend to grow on a rise where cold air does not pool.

Cold air from Tibet will follow river valleys and drift into India and Bangladesh, with some areas near rivers reaching down to 10 °F. A number of vanda species come from this region, including *Vanda coerulea* and species in the background of *Vanda Tokyo Blue*, the latter of which will tolerate freezes and blooms three

times a year. However, vandas do like humidity; in our less humid California environment, they can be helped by draping the hanging roots with Spanish moss, a type of tillandsia. *Vanda suaves* can also be grown outside in our area.

All of these Asian plants experience a cold, dry winter, followed by a cool spring with some rain. The mild summer then becomes the monsoon season, with copious rain and sometimes very hot temperatures.

Phaius tankerville is an example of a plant with a wide habitat range and a similarly wide temperature tolerance. The Asbells have a cross of *Phaius tankerville* with *Phaius tuberculosa* which they have grown protected as small seedlings just to speed up their growth. Grown plants don't need such cossetting.

The western mountainous portion of South America provides a number of cymbidium companions, with elevation again being key to temperature tolerance. For regions near the equator, day-night temperatures vary more than seasonal changes. Plants from Ecuador and Peru will have a smaller range of temperature tolerance than those from Asia. However, a similar climate to California can be found in the coastal mountains of Brazil, and many of those plants, such as *Zygopetalum mackii*, would do well with cymbidiums. Even though normal temperatures in some of the Brazilian areas are warm, they will get very cold storms from the southeast.

Mexico has a large number of different climates, some of which are mild like California's. Again, elevation gives temperature tolerance. *Encyclia citrina* is found in oak forests at 5000 to 10,000 feet elevation. The plant grows pointing downward; flowers are bright yellow. From similar environments comes *Rhynchostele* (originally *Odontoglossum*), which can have three to five flowers on a spike. *Laelia furfuracea* also likes a bit of cool.

Coastal ranges in Australia also provide a number of useful cymbidium companions, such as *Sarcochilus hartmannii* and the natural hybrid *Dendrobium* × *delicatum*. From Africa comes the notable *Ansellia africana*, found in Kenya and Tanzania down through

South Africa. These plants endure hot and dry conditions of 6 to 8 months with no rain, followed by a 4 month rainy season. Plants are found above thirty feet on trees because giraffes will eat anything lower. It is a common yard orchid and grows robustly, with ever larger canes. Large plants producing better flowers.

Eulophia is a genus native to Africa and into Asia, with some 250 species. Since it is related to cymbidiums, the Asbells have tried crossing *Eulophia* with cymbidiums, but no seed pods held. *Phaius* with *Cymbidium* has resulted in some germination.

Finally, *Stenoglottis* is a California native and good cymbidium companion. It is deciduous in cold weather, which keeps the tubers protected during frost. In even temperatures in a greenhouse, it will skip dormancy.

The Asbells grow 6400 square feet of shade cloth, with some 50 x 150 feet under a fiberglass roof and a seedling house for more tender plants. Dan noted that he probably does better now working with his dad than he did as a kid. They are doing more shows these days. He noted that many plants like time to mature, so growers should not get discouraged. Of course, for a commercial grower, much of the expense comes from the time it takes to grow an orchid plant.



Photo: *Laelia* Bonnie Bonita 'Sweetheart' HCC/AOS from the fall show. Photo courtesy Don Brown.

OSSB Officers for 2010

The membership approved the slate of officers for 2010: President Frank Methmann, Treasurer PJ Sanderson and Secretary Heidi Kirkpatrick. Robin Hamlin will return as Membership and Mailing Chair. Thanks to Tom Ball for returning as Show Chair for our recent fall show.

Cymbidium Congress

Come to the Cymbidium Congress! This day long lecture event is held in conjunction with the spring show. Registrants get admission to the lectures, admission to the show, breakfast & lunch, plus the CSA Auction & the Gala Awards Banquet. More info to come!!

Ribbon Judging Results

Winners in the show table voting for November were as follows. Tied for first were Larry Vierheilig with *Onc.* Juhbao Gold 'Tainan' and James Merriman with *Milt.* Anne Warne "Alii" AM/AOS. TJ Bloominger's *Haerella odorata* took second place. Third place was a three way tie between Don Brown's *Paph* Hsingying Agogo and two of TJ Bloominger's plants: *Lc.* Sacramento and a striking, yellow *Sophronitis coccinea*. Thanks to these growers and to everyone who brought plants. No AOS awards were given this month.

Looking Ahead...

The spring show is just around the corner. Support your society by volunteering and attending the show. The show is March 12-14, 2010 and society members are needed to install the society's exhibit, staff the society's sales booth, and volunteer to help the show itself. More at upcoming meetings! Randall Umland and Heidi Kirkpatrick are both staff of the spring show, so you will be receiving appeals at meetings!