



sarasota orchid society **view**

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

**October—Michael Sinn
– “Orchid Hunting in
Venezuela”**

**November—Fred Clarke
will speak on “Grow-
ing and Breeding
Catasetums”.**

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**December—Annual
Auction**

January—Annual Show

**February 7th—Bob
Scully – tentatively
titled “What’s New in
Asia”**

**Meetings are on the 1st
Monday of each month.
Doors open at 6:15 pm.
Cultural Study Group
starts promptly at 6:30 pm.
Regular meeting starts at
7:30 pm.**

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Monthly Checklist for September and October

Cattleya

Despite the shortening days and lowering angle of the sun, September can still be one of the hottest months. Water and fertilizer need to be in balance with heat and light. The alert grower will notice, however, that his or her plants are beginning to slow down a bit. Growths are maturing, and the sheaths are giving the promise of the next six-months' bloom.

Check plants for potting needs for the last

time this season. Any in dire need should be potted, even some that may be on the cusp, as there is just enough of the growing season left to allow the plants to establish before the days start to get really short and cold.

This is the month for purples derived from *Cattleya labiata* breeding to flower. If you are short on flowers, look into this group. There is nothing that can quite match this type for beauty and fragrance. They are easy to grow, too.

Plants summered outdoors should begin to be prepared to be brought back into the winter growing area. Clean the plants up and be on the lookout for any pests they may have picked up during the summer. Treat as necessary.

Cycnoches

This little-known and under-appreciated genus, which can have male or female flowers, is at its best in the autumn. Two of the spectacular varieties are *Cycnoches loddigesii*, with its large brown flowers resembling a prehistoric bird, and *Cycnoches ventricosum*, the swan orchid. This last one has large, fragrant green flowers. The biggest problem, culturally, will be red spider mite infestations that require immediate attention. Plants are quite seasonal, requiring heavy watering in the growing season and then a drier dormant winter season.

Cymbidium

Through diligent modern breeding programs, the cymbidium season gets stretched longer and longer. Now we can expect to

See "September/October" on page 5

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October

The Sarasota Orchid Society Inc.

(SOS) meets on the first Monday of each month at Selby Botanical Gardens, 800 South Palm Ave., Sarasota, FL. The SOS Inc., an affiliate of the American Orchid Society, is a nonprofit association with the aims of promoting the development, improvement and preservation of orchids through the dissemination of information concerning the culture, hybridization or development of orchids; and generally to extend the knowledge of orchids.

Annual dues are \$20; \$25 for family. Deadline for the newsletter is the 15th of the previous month.

Contributors to this newsletter give reprint rights of their work to newsletters and other affiliates of the American Orchid Society.

www.sarasotaorchidsociety.org

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If you are not a member of the American Orchid Society, let me briefly tell you about the premier organization devoted to our hobby. The AOS is the world's largest specialty horticulture group and offers information not available elsewhere. The monthly magazine, *Orchids*, is the most highly-regarded orchid periodical in the world. The photography and articles are outstanding. Membership entitles you to a 10% discount on publications and your dues support conservation and educational programs. As a new member you will receive a copy of *Your First Orchid*, a book chock full of advice and an *Almanac* listing all affiliate organizations (Florida has the most with 58), growers, special interest groups, descriptions of awards, and many more resources. Membership forms are available at the sign-in table for anyone who needs one.

The AOS also publishes the *Awards Quarterly (Now on CD AQ Plus)*, with detailed descriptions of 200-300 awarded orchids with color photographs. I eagerly await mine every three months.

Dues are U.S. single membership \$60.00; for a 2 year membership \$108.00. American Orchid Society, 16700 AOS Lane, Delray Beach, Fl. 33446

Monroe

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UPCOMING SHOWS

September, 2010

18-19—Ridge Orchid Society Show, Lake Mirror Center, 121 S. Lake Ave., Lakeland, FL.

October, 2010

1-3—Florida West Coast Orchid Society Show, Minnreg Hall, 6340 126th Ave, Largo, FL 33773

2-3—Gainesville Orchid Society Show, Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, 4700 SW 58th Dr., Gainesville, FL

16-17—Fort Pierce Orchid Society Show, Fort Pierce Community Center, Veterans Memorial Park, Fort Pierce, FL

29-31—Delray Beach Orchid Society Show, Old School Square, 51 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach, FL.

January, 2011
8-9—54th Annual Sarasota Orchid Society Show and Sale, Sarasota Auditorium on US 41



Cattlianthe (Ctt.) Chocolate Drop

For members who are receiving the newsletter by mail, you are missing out on some wonderful color pictures taken during the year in our newsletter.

If you have computer access and are getting the newsletter by snail mail, you can switch and save the Society \$7.00 per year per person.

Please contact me and I'll be glad to add you to our e-mail list.

Monroe
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Newsletter advertisements are \$120.00 per year. Checks payable to Sarasota Orchid Society may be sent to:

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LET'S TALK ABOUT SALES
The vendors who lecture at our meetings take their valuable time and effort to educate us on orchid culture. In turn, they ask us to buy their plants which they bring to sell at our meetings.

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"September/October" from page 1

have flowers open as early as September and October. Stake inflorescences and move the plants to a shadier location to help the flowers develop successfully. Because the plants will have warmth tolerance "built in" genetically, keeping the plants as cool as possible will help prevent bud curl. For the midseason varieties, inflorescences should be initiated by now. Feed plants on a regular schedule with a balanced fertilizer (20-20-20) and shade the plants lightly.

Dendrobium

This is a good season for hybrids of the *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* and *Dendrobium canaliculatum* types. Both are capable of putting on tremendous shows of long-lasting flowers. Fertilize with a low-nitrogen formula to promote the best flowers. *Dendrobium phalaenopsis* can get tall and top heavy, suggesting an attractive and heavy container would be appropriate for this type.

Lemboglossum bictoniense

Both *Lemboglossum* (syn. *Odontoglossum*) *bictoniense* and its hybrids bloom in this season. *Lemboglossum bictoniense* is a showy species from Mexico that has three different color forms: *sulphureum* (green with white lip), *album* (brown with white lip) and *roseum* (brown with a pink lip). It is a

vigorous grower with tall inflorescences of many flowers, and imparts to its progeny (as seen in *Odcdm. Bittersweet* and *Odm. bicross*) ease of culture, warmth tolerance and eye-catching patterns. They make a prime candidate for *odontoglossum* beginners and advanced alike.

Paphiopedilum

Standard, green-leaved *paphiopedilums* begin to show their bloom sheaths this month. Late-season heat waves can blast these early sheaths, so be observant about proper cooling and air circulation. As with the rest of your plants that may have been summered outdoors, it is time to prepare for their move inside. Clean each plant and implement pest-control practices. Repotting, if necessary, is appropriate.

Phalaenopsis

The bulk of this season's growth is being ripened this month, with growers in cooler climates seeing the first emerging inflorescences. Some night heating may be necessary in the cooler areas. Begin to watch watering more carefully, and reduce feeding proportionately with reduced watering needs. An extra dose of phosphorus and potassium, such as a bloom-booster or high-acid-type fertilizer, is beneficial.

Rossioglossum grande

Once known as *Odonto-*

glossum grande, this is a spectacular orchid with six to eight flowers up to 8 inches across. Often known as the tiger orchid, it has bright golden yellow flowers heavily marked with chestnut brown barring. The plants are beautiful with a grey-green cast to the foliage, which is borne on succulent pseudobulbs. It prefers hot and wet summers with cooler, even down to 40 F, dry winters. Grow under filtered light. Watch for snails and slugs that eat the flowers, pseudobulbs and leaves.

The AOS thanks Ned Nash and James Rose for this es-



Our plant of *Catasetum sanguineum* flowering last year. The distinctive feature that first struck me was the nose-like projection from the apex of the lip. In some views it resembles a bird's beak.

Collectors' Item

Catasetum sanguineum

Lindl. & Paxton

All photography © 2005-2010 Greg Allikas

G.C.K. Dunsterville offers the following brief description of this species in a 1980 article which appeared in the A.O.S. Bulletin, and later in book form as a collection of his A.O.S. Bulletin articles.

Dodson's *Catasetum* definition is that a *catasetum* should have a pollinia-ejecting mechanism based on sensitive projections from the side of the column. These are commonly in the form of slender,

antenna-like things, so placed that they guard the entrance to the hollow part of the base of the lip; and a division of the genus has been proposed, based on whether these antennae are bashfully crossed (or one even curled up behind the other), or run parallel to each other (or even lightly spread apart). The bashful ones form the *Anisoceras* Section¹, the others the *Isoceras* Section. The orchids previously dealt with in this note (*Ctism. pileatum, splendens, macrocarpum*) are all *anisocerases*, if one may coin such a word. *Catasetum sanguineum* and *Catasetum costatum*, are *isocerases*.

The moderately rare *Catasetum sanguineum* is to be found in the east or



A fine awarded example of the dark, or sanguine, color form: **Catasetum sanguineum** 'Kia-ora' AM/AOS, grown by Georgia Tasker and Sandy Schultz.

east-central part of the northern section of Venezuela and also in the extreme west where it lives in the low country between Lake Maracaibo and the Perija range that here forms the border with Colombia. From here it ranges further north to Costa Rica and west to Ecuador. The inflorescences vary from suberect to arching, and bear a dense, generally rather few-flowered raceme at the end of a ten-inch peduncle. In line with its sanguine name, the two-inch flowers of *Catasetum sanguineum* are mainly red and

are characterized by a very interesting and complicated lip with a deeply cup-shaped base overhung by fimbriate, lateral lobes and ending in a very thick, apical lobe which is sometimes wide and spade-like and in other flowers may be narrow and pointed.

As I sit writing this on the third day of September, our plant is about a week away from opening its greenish flowers. The World Checklist of Monocotyledons shows two varieties of *Catasetum sanguineum*: var. *sanguineum* and var. *viride*. While these names apparently represent the red and green color forms, the species may be more variable than either suggests and there are plants that produce flowers intermediate between the two, some seemingly bi-colored with greenish sepals and petals and a red-

brown lip. Dunster-ville's drawing shows not only an arching inflorescence, but also a single resupi-



Here a plant of *Ctsm. sanguineum* is growing on rocks and leaf litter in the filtered light below woody shrubs.

nate flower. He states the inflorescence to be "suberect to arching" in his description above. None of the plants that I have seen, nor any of the photographs I find on the internet display anything other than an erect inflorescence so his observation may be based on the light/culture his reference plants received, or if studying wild plants, the sheer mechanics of pushing a flower spike through the dense bramble in which the species can be found.

Where I saw this species growing near **Humocaro Alto** in Venezuela, it was growing in a dense, shrubby thicket along a roadside overlook-

ing a valley. The plants were growing hemi-terrestrially in leaf litter with the roots extending down into the clay topsoil. In March, the plants were well into new growth but had not yet initiated new roots. Even at our altitude here (about 900m/3000ft), this close to the equator growth cycles in *catasetums* are triggered by wet-dry seasons more than temperature or day length. In March, we were still a month away from the beginning of the rainy season that would signal plants to start pushing new roots.

We grow *Catasetum sanguineum* in a plastic pot using New Zealand sphagnum moss as a media. A few chunks of charcoal or styrofoam (you can use washed landscape-grade river rock for better stability of the pot on a flat surface) are placed in the bottom of the pot and then the moss is added around whatever roots we have left. The media should be neither too tight or too loose, but firm enough to help anchor the plant, yet still springy. If you have divided a plant and have one or two rootless pseudobulbs,



The *catasetums* were found growing in a thicket across the road behind me.



In March, new growths were well under way but plants had not begun growing roots. Note how last year's roots extend down in to the clay substrate.

a straight or ring stake should be used to stabilize the pseudobulbs. Don't allow the newly potted plant to wobble. The fat pseudobulbs of a catsetum can sustain a plant without water for several months so do not be in a hurry to begin watering them early in their growth cycle. Read the last sentence in the preceding paragraph again. Wait until growth is several inches high and new roots have extended two or more inches into the media. Watering catsetums too early in their growth cycle can result in new leads rotting away. Should you experience that unfortunate situation don't despair. These plants are survivors and will often develop new leads from

nodes midway up the pseudobulb.

By early summer new growth should be well under way and a short-season vegetable garden approach is called for. These are greedy feeders and during their growing season should be kept moist and well fed. We use a balanced time release fertilizer as a top dressing and feed plants weekly with liquid fertilizer along with the other orchids. After *Ctasm. sanguineum* finishes flowering water is reduced slightly for a few weeks. Then we gradually decrease watering until we see our first cool weather. Here in South Florida that is usually between Halloween and Thanksgiving. When the weather turns decidedly winter, we

move the plants under cover and allow them to dry completely.

Being deciduous orchids, the leaves will drop when plants go dormant. In years past, some growers would actually unpot the plants, trim all the roots, and set them on a dry bench until roots appeared in the spring. We do not practice such a severe regimen and simply allow the plants to experience a dry and cool winter. If it looks like the newest bulbs are shriveling we will pass a hose over the pot without soaking the media. As spring nears, we may repeat that process more frequently especially as the growths emerge, being careful to not get water in the tender new leafy growth. But this is just a passing of the water wand, not a thorough watering. Leafless Catsetum pseudobulbs can withstand freezing temperatures without damage but of course, you do not want to allow the bulbs themselves to freeze. So a safer bet would be to try to not allow dormant bulbs to experience temperatures below the 40-45° F range.

Whether you decide to grow plants on to multi bulb specimens or divide them yearly is up to you, but we do not leave plants in the same media for more than two years. *Ctasm. sanguineum* is adaptable to a wide range of light intensities and somewhere between 2000-3000 foot candles is probably about optimum. Filtered to bright light as indicated on our light chart will do. Although brighter light tends to produce female flowers in many catsetums, I have not yet seen this happen with *Ctasm. sanguineum*. Temperature range during the growing season should be intermediate, 70-80° F daytime and 55-65° F nights. Here in Florida we grow the plants somewhat warmer and they do fine.

References: Dunsterville, G.C.K. and E. 1988. *Orchid Hunting in The Lost World (And Elsewhere in Venezuela)*. The American Orchid Society. West Palm Beach

Greg Allikas - September 2010

54th Annual Orchid Show

The Sarasota Orchid Society will present their 54th Annual Orchid Show & Sale on January 8th & 9th, 2011. This American Orchid Society sanctioned show will be held at the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium, 801 N. Tamiami Trail, US #41, Sarasota, Florida 34236. Show hours are Saturday and Sunday 9 am to 5 pm. Admission charge is \$5.00 children under 8 are free.

“Wild About Orchids” the theme for Sarasota Orchid Society’s 2011 Celebration, will showcase thousands of award-winning orchids in the displays created by orchid vendors and local orchid societies. A variety of orchids and orchid related accessories will also be available for purchase from expert orchid growers and artists from



the state of Florida, including American Group Travel, Byrd Orchids, Canaima Orchids, Chapman’s Orchids, Featherstone Orchids, Florida SunCoast Orchids, Hicks Orchids Supplies, Jone’ Ritchie Artist, Judy Robertson Orchid Ceramics, Krull-Smith Orchids, Marie Selby Botanical Book Store, Marie Selby Botani-

cal Garden, Nature on the Rocks, Odom’s Orchids, Orchids Etcetera, Plantio La Orquidea, Stig Dalstrom Botanical Art, The Orchid Specialist, and much more. Breathtaking displays of orchids will be showcased by Sarasota Orchid Society, and many other local orchid societies and Marie Selby Botanical Gar-

dens. Throughout the two show days, visitors will have the opportunity to interact with the growers, purchase orchids and related items, and to immerse themselves in the beauty of orchids. There will also be educational classes given by our local growers. Hibbs Farm & Garden Supply & Marie Selby Botanical Gardens are proud sponsors of the Sarasota Orchid Society 54th Annual Orchid Show.

For more information, please contact 2011 Orchid Show Co-chairs, Jo Davis at 941-228-5501, email srqjd@verizon.net or Monroe Kokin at 941-586-7795, email orchidpix@comcast.net

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Pleurothallis pterophora

Although it is an uncommon species in its native habitats in Brazil, *Pleurothallis pterophora* has much to offer and should be more widespread in contemporary orchid collections. This miniature plant produces a charming cloud of cupped white flowers that have the fragrance of lily of the valley. As each new leaf develops, it has distinct dark spotting on the back that fades over time.

This species is noted for being easy to grow, and because flowers can be produced from a leaf every year for four or five years, it is also floriferous. The inflorescence can be up to 6 inches (15 cm) tall and is slightly longer than the leaves. The flowers, which are held on a zigzag spike, open all at once and last about three weeks. The lateral sepals are fused for nearly their entire length, forming a spoon-shaped structure that is notched at the apex. Winged keels on the back of both the dorsal and lateral sepals give the species its name *pterophora* (the initial P is silent) which means "bearing wings."

Pleurothallis pterophora grows as an epiphyte in widely scattered colonies at 2,400 feet (732 m) in the coastal mountains of southeastern Brazil from



Pleurothallis pterophora

São Paulo to Espirito Santo. While an intermediate temperature range, with 55 to 60° F (13 to 16° C) minimum nights and 75 to 80° F (24 to 27° C) maximum days, is ideal, it will also grow well under cool conditions with minimum winter nights of 50° F (10° C). *Pleurothallis pterophora* is an excellent candidate for growing under lights or windowsill culture. As with many species of *Pleurothallis*, grow it in moderate shade (where a hand held 18 inches (46 cm) above the leaves casts a diffuse shadow) with good humidity and even moisture year round. The plant shown here is growing well in 1/4-inch (6-mm) coconut chunk (well washed to remove excessive salts before using). I have had success using 1/4-inch (6-mm) fir bark mixed with some perlite, tree-fern fiber and charcoal, but any fine-grade epiphytic mix that is open and fast-draining should

work well. Fertilize with one-quarter- to one-



half-strength fertilizer at every second or third watering in spring and summer and less often in autumn and winter.

For miniature species that flower from the same growth in successive years, it is always a good idea to groom the plants each time they go out of bloom. The old spikes, when dry, are easy to twist off. As I am reminded every year, if you wait until the new spikes are emerging, some of them will inevi-

tably be broken off in the grooming process.

If the leaf tips of *Pths. pterophora* begin turning brown and papery, there are several things to consider. Poor water quality or over-fertilization are possible causes, but frequently the condition results from an inadequate root mass to support the needs of the plant. Overwatering and bush-snail damage, as well as soggy or stale media will cause the fine roots to die back. The effect on the plant is the same as

being underwatered. If the root system is poor, it can take quite some time to get the plant back into good condition. Repot with fresh potting medium into as small a pot as possible and water so that the mix approaches dryness between waterings. When dividing plants of *Pths. pterophora*, it is my experience that they do best if kept in clumps of at least eight to 10 leaves.

Bhutan Report, 8-24-2010

In May of 2010, the Wild Orchid Man (WOM) Stig Dalström visited Bhutan for the third time, together with fellow naturalist Thomas Höijer of Jakobsberg, Sweden. The purpose for this year's trip was to further explore the eastern part of Bhutan in search for orchids and orchid habitats. This project is referred to as the "Dragon Orchid Project" (DOP), and is a collaboration between the team of Dalström-Höijer and the government of Bhutan, through the National Biodiversity Center (NBC) in Serbithang, Thimphu, Bhutan.

The NBC consists of three divisions; the National Herbarium, the National Genebank and the Royal Botanic Garden, and is located in Serbithang near the city of Thimphu. The DOP focus on orchid related programs administrated by the herbarium and the botanical garden. The programs include an inventory of the orchid flora of Bhutan, development of live and preserved collections for conservation, display and scientific purposes, the education of staff, general promotion and capacity building, and the development of sustainable ways to utilize natural resources (mainly



Stig zeroing in on *Chiloschista usneoides*



Closeer view of *Chiloschista usneoides*

orchids) without depleting the wild populations.

During the 2010 trip, many different habitats in the provinces of Punakha, Trongsa, Mongar and Trashiyangtse were visited, in the company of NBC botanist Ngawang Gyeltshen, driver Lotey Tenzing and our chilipepper-addicted cook Sangey. Numerous orchids were discovered in flower and added to the growing collections at the NBC, and a large number of flowerless bulbophyllum species were brought for cultivation at the newly restored orchidarium, where they will be analyzed and identified once they flower. We expect some interesting discoveries in this lot!

record for Bhutan. It was discovered in a remote area in the province of Mongar, growing in deep shade among leaf litter. We saw approximately 20-30 flowering specimens, varying in height from 4 to an amazing 20 inches.



Epigogium roseum

We were also able to collect several species that were previously seen in Bhutan but remained scientifically undocumented, such as *Dendrobium porphyrochilum* and *Thrixspermum japonicum*, as well as add new locations for many others. The most exciting find, however, was the discovery of the chloro-



Stig photographing the chlorophyll-less *Epigogium roseum*

phyll-less saprophytic (fungus dependent) terrestrial orchid *Epigogium roseum*, which is a new

Another interesting find was a population of the deciduous *Chiloschista usneoides* (a *Phalaenopsis*



Dendrobium porphyrochilum

relative) displaying its glistening white flowers. Data from this discovery will be most helpful in an ongoing scientific treatment of this poorly known group of orchids. *Chiloschista usneoides* was originally discovered in Nepal some 180 years ago and constitutes the type (basis) for the genus. This species is probably not in cultivation outside its natural habitats, despite the occurrence in private collections of chiloschista plants labeled “usneoides”, which at least in some cases represent an undescribed species of uncertain origin (probably Thailand).

The exciting Dragon Orchid Project will continue as long as funds can be located to support it. In order to step up to the next level we need help with funding the constantly increasing travel costs as well as the construction, expansion and maintenance of

new growing facilities at the botanic garden. The intention is to establish a propagation facility (laboratory and greenhouses) that will allow a future exportation of artificially propagated native Bhutanese orchids and other exciting plants, provided with full CITES and phytosanitary documentation.

Work has also begun to gather information for the publication of a book that will fill the gap between the existing scientific treatment, and briefly illustrated field-guides to the orchid flora of Bhutan.

The team of Dalström, Höjjer and Ngawang Gyeltshen will give a power-point presentation of the Dragon Orchid Project at the next World Orchid Conference in Singapore, November of 2010.

The Wild Orchid Man Stig Dalström graciously thanks the government of Bhutan for supporting



NBC botanist Ngawang Gyeltshen and our chilipepper-addicted cook Sangey



Stig Dalstrom, Ngawang Gyeltshen, and Thomas Höjjer

the DOP; the Governor of Trashiyangtse, Dasho Ugyen Tshewang; the staff of the NBC, particularly programs director Dr. Tashi Dorji and botanist/conservationist Ngawang Gyeltshen.

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Picnic—9/06/2010



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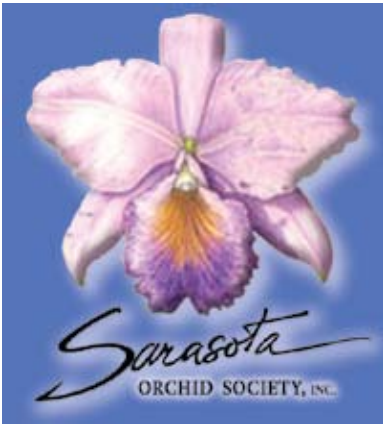
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All picnic photos by Monroe Kokin



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