



# Orchidacea

Newsletter of the  
Triangle Orchid  
Society  
Associated with Sarah  
P. Duke Gardens

## Speaker for January 9th 2006 "Brazilian Laelias"

### Stephen Champlin, Floralia Orchids

Steve and his wife Sandra, were married in 1991 and have two children. He started in orchids at Armacost and Royston, later Stewart Orchids, from 1983-91 where he became sales manager and Cattleya hybridizer. Steve moved to Brazil and started to work at Florália in 1991. Steve and his wife were co-chairpersons at the 1996 World Orchid Congress in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil and he is a Senior Judge in the AOS system. Sandra's family has owned Floralia for 50 years.

Florália was established in 1956 by Rolf Altenburg, who was intrigued by the cut orchid flowers his future son-in-law gave his daughter during their courtship. This interest soon developed into a passion and he formed his own orchid company, Florália. He was soon to become a pioneer Cattleya hybridizer in the country of Brazil, and imported top breeding plants from the entire world. His hybrids of Bc. Pastoral, Blc. João Antonio Nicoli, C. Sonia Altenburg and Lc. Jose Dias Castro still rank with modern hybrids, and are used extensively by breeders worldwide.

Today, Florália is run by Rolf's granddaughters making it a third generation family run business. Florália has two growing areas, the first is in the city of Niterói, about 30 minutes from Copacabana area of Rio de Janeiro or Rio's international airport. This nursery is more or less at sea level so the summers are very hot, and the winters temperate. Here they have their laboratory facilities, where they propagate species from Brazil and other countries as well as hybrids. Here they grow small seedlings and warmer growing species plants. They also process and ship all orders from this nursery.

Their second location is in the "Imperial City" of Petrópolis, about 2 ½ hours drive from central Rio de Janeiro. Petrópolis is located in the Organ Mountain Range, a spectacular set of granite rocks. The Nursery is located at an altitude of about 800 Meters (2500 ft.). Here it is much cooler than in Niterói, so they grow the majority of their plants there, especially intermediate and cool varieties and established seedlings.

They welcome visits to our nurseries, but they ask that you contact them first, if possible, and let them know when you are coming as their greenhouses are not normally open to the public.

Steve may be contacted at: FLORÁLIA, Estrada da Florália, 592, NITERÓI-RJ-24.001-970, BRAZIL  
ph: 55-21-2627-7733, fax: 55-21-2627-7802

**Have Dinner with the speaker. 5:30 PM, Monday before the meeting, at the Neo China Restaurant behind Staples at the South Square Mall.**

**4015 University Drive Durham. Call Alan Miller 969-1612 before 5PM**

#### Inside this issue:

<i>This Month's Speaker</i>	1
<i>Minutes of the Last Meeting,</i>	2
<i>Treasurer's Report</i>	2
<i>Transcription of Speaker remarks</i>	3
Jack Webster Show table Awards	4-5
<i>New Officers</i>	6
<i>Growing Tips</i>	7
<i>Map and Directions to Sarah P Duke Gardens</i>	9

**The Triangle**  
**Orchid Society meets**  
**at the Sarah P. Duke**  
**Gardens, Durham,**  
**NC**  
**The Second**  
**Monday of the**  
**Month**  
**at 7:30 PM**

**www.Triangle  
OrchidSociety.org**

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## Minutes of the Last Meeting

The December 2005 Meeting of the Triangle Orchid Society was held on Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> at Sarah P. Duke Gardens in Durham, NC. As traditional in December, the meeting started an hour earlier so that the TOS members could enjoy a pot-luck dinner together. The official part of the meeting commenced at 7:38 pm, and outgoing President Terry Moorhead gave a report on the society's activities during the past year. These included an import order, two successful auctions, an Orchid Faire, a full program of guest speakers, Grower's Day event, an Orchid Crawl, and a consistently excellent newsletter. Robin Gurlitz was then announced as the new Refreshments Chairperson, and she sent around a sign up list for the year.

Walter Off of Waldor Orchids, the speaker for the month, then presented the Show Table. He did a very thorough job, noticing every plant and offering many cultural tips. Jack Webster briefly spoke about the upcoming order of plants from the Philippines, and told everyone of a list of the best offerings that he had compiled, available for pick up at the Welcome Table.

After a break Walter gave his evening's presentation on Phrag. Besseae and its progeny. This brightly colored orange phrag was discovered in 1981 in Peru, then in Ecuador shortly thereafter. The Peruvian form is more round, while the Ecuadorian form has slightly more star shaped flower. Besseae has since been crossed with many other Phrag species to yield new interesting flowers, and Walter's Power Point presentation was designed so that the parents and the progeny were shown on screen at the same time. Walter also talked about Phrag kovachii, a huge pink flowered phrag discovered more

recently, which also is due to change the breeding of phrags significantly.

The Jack Webster Awards were as follows: For Non greenhouse grown, First Place Ribbon went to Dendrobium Alexandria x Den Nellie Slade grown by Allison Finch. Second Place Ribbon went to Bc Marikai Mayumi grown by Jaimie Graff. Third Place Ribbon went to Den Meesangnil 'Robert' grown by Jaimie Graff. For Greenhouse grown. First Place Ribbon went to *Coelogyne Rochussenii*, grown by John Stanton. Second Place Ribbon went to *Neolauchea pulchella* grown by John Stanton. Third Place Ribbon went to *Pleurothallis longissima* grown by Nick Plummer.

Judith Goldstein, Secretary

## SPEAKER PRESENTATION:

Our speaker was Walter Off speaking on Phragmipedium besseae and Its Progeny. He showed two primary forms of besseae, one from Peru and one from Ecuador. It grows on the eastern slopes of the Andes at about 3800 feet. You get some cloud effect and cooler temperature. It also likes a little more light than other Phragmipediums. The discovery and publication of the species in 1981 created quite a stir. Everyone wondered why it took so long for such a brilliant flower to be discovered. The Peruvian form has larger petals when compared to the Ecuadorian star-shaped one with slender points. The Peruvian form is being used more in breeding. He showed several awarded besseae examples. Besseae has been the backbone of almost all of the Phrag breeding for the past 25 years. If you see reddish or peach color it is most likely to have besseae as a parent or grandparent.

.Many grow along riverbeds with roots in mossy material or even down into the riverbeds

As far as culture goes, they grow best in cooler temperatures and are not tolerant of high temperatures. Too much above 80 degrees for an extended period of time can be fatal to plants. They like abundant pure water—either distilled, rain water, or reverse osmosis water. They don't like the minerals you get from tap water. They are suited for semi-hydroponic culture. He has members of his local orchid society growing them successfully in such media. Humidity should be about 50-60 %. If it is higher you should be careful to increase air movement, otherwise you could have fungal or bacterial problems. Light: they like filtered light, somewhere between 1200-1500 foot candles. Basically, this is the way you grow phalaenopsis, as far as the light goes. Potting media: It should retain plenty of moisture but also allow good drainage and air movement. Various combinations of Aliflor, rock wool, sponge rock, diatomite, and sometimes even fir bark are used.

When seen in their natural habitat are terrestrial and may have roots that penetrate the mosses and inorganic material, extending into the running water itself. He showed some of the first generation hybrids first registered in 1991, even though they were discovered in 1981. It took that long for people to learn how to grow and secondly, to grow well enough to hybridize them. One of the finest, in his opinion, was besseae by schlimii, giving a hotter pink color. You pick up the color from besseae and the nice shape from schlimii.

He showed a page of awarded hybrids. One was besseae x lindleyanum, 'Indian fire.' You get a lot more production in inflorescence. 'Indian fire' has 5-6 whorls on one stem. Besseae x Cardinale gives another really good color of pink. Besseae x Eric Young gives Don Wimber, probably one of the most highly awarded of the hybrids with really wide petals. When treated with colchicines, you end up with a lot of Tetraploid forms. He showed slides of several awarded plants, outstanding either for petals or color.

Some bicolor hybrids have been discovered with pink on the top and white on the lower part of the petals. 'Warlock' showed the bicolor effect.

Another great cross was besseae by Dick Clements that made Jason Fischer. He thinks to date, Don Wimber and Jason Fischer have been the two best phrag hybrids. He showed one where it had wide form and solid red color in the petals. There are a large number of FCCs for Jason Fischer. Another hybrid is besseae by Sorcerer's Apprentice (has a lot of longifolium in the background which gives much longer wider petals). He likes the yellow flaring throughout the petals and the sepal. Some others shown were noted for red coming through (Dick Clements). Rachel Kirk was a hybrid with slight increase in petal width.

Pink to bright red hybrids are produced from besseae hybrids. Some yellow ones are produced. Some czerweikianum hybrids give curled petals, some of which get more of a twist to them as petals age. Barbara Lee Ann and Mem. Dick Clements made 'Sherman's March,' a really nice red one. He showed many Eric Young hybrids and explained that whenever you cross a green with the peach or orange you end up with a fairly hot pink. One hybrid, 'Elizabeth Castle' has won many awards. One really good grower in their area is Nancy Volpe who grows some of the finest phrags in the country. He also had a handout featuring her culture methods. She has gotten CCMs and a CCE.

The species of the 21st century is kovachii discovered in Peru. The flower is over six inches across and we are just waiting for it to be made available legally, he said. We should have these in about two years. This will open up a whole new breeding world to the hybridizers where they can use kovachii and some of the other phrag species to create a whole new realm of good hybrids

*Transcription by Cara Hayes, Secretary,  
Sandhills Orchid Society..*





**First Place Ribbon went to Dendrobium  
Alexandria x Den Nellie Slade grown by  
Allison Finch**

## **Jack Webster Awards Non Greenhouse Grown**



**Second Place Ribbon went to  
Bc Marikai Mayumi grown  
by Jaimie Graff**



**Third Place  
Ribbon went  
to Den Mee-  
sangnil  
'Robert'  
grown by  
Jaimie Graff**



## Jack Webster Awards Greenhouse Grown



**First Place Ribbon went to  
*Coelogyne Rochussenii*, grown by  
John Stanton**



**Second Place Ribbon went to *Neolauchea  
pulchella* grown by John Stanton**



**Third Place  
Ribbon went to  
*Pleurothallis  
longissima*  
grown by Nick  
Plummer**





## New Officers for TOS 2006



**Secretary Jaimie  
Graff**

**President Judith  
Goldstein**



**Vice President Miriam  
Sagasti**



**Board of Trustees  
Robin Gurlitz**

**Board of Trustees  
Nick Plummer**





## Growing Tips for January

By Courtney Hackney

Each fall, fire ants slip quietly somewhere into the back of my greenhouse and take up residence. Usually, I do not notice them until I pick up a pot and get a few nasty stings. For those that have not experienced this garden pest, fire ants are an imported species that has gradually spread across the South-eastern U.S. They have a very nasty sting, which they tend not to use until a large number of individuals have swarmed onto a pant leg where they all sting at once. They are easily eliminated with available pesticides. Many people are allergic to their stings, so, it is best to get rid of them whenever they are found in an orchid pot. Otherwise, they can get carried into the living room inside a prized flowering orchid.

This year something interesting occurred when fire ants took up residence among a group of paphs that have been in my collection for many years. These paphs are nothing special from an award standpoint, but have sentimental value, because I used them to learn how to grow paphs. They are usually the last to be repotted or cared for unless I am using them for a new experiment. I had noticed the vigor of these plants this fall because the leaves were especially large and colorful. While watering heavily one day, I noticed that the base of the plant was covered with fine soil that I

washed away. The next time I watered it was there again and I realized there were ants in the pot. Fire ants had taken up residence among these old paphs and every paph was growing extremely well.

Paphs are one of the few orchid groups that prefer continual repotting to keep them growing well. These paphs were in a mix of fine bark, peat, lava rock, and perlite that had exceeded its lifespan. Usually, newly repotted paphs in this medium grow very well for 4-6 months then growth slows until they are repotted. If not repotted by the end of a year growth stops and the plant declines or dies. The ant infested pots had reached the end of the annual cycle and were scheduled to be repotted. These paphs were growing in clear, plastic pots so it was obvious what had happened. The Fire ants had increased aeration and drainage within the pots. Their droppings also likely increased the available nitrogen within the pot as well. The lesson here is not to import Fire ants into your growing area, but that paphs need good aeration to grow well.

In general, the problem with growing all orchids is that the medium tends to compact after several months leading to less aeration. The more dense and fine the medium, the faster compaction occurs. In nature, roots are

attached to the outside of trees in the case of most epiphytes. Orchids growing among the decaying leaves and stems on the ground, have earth worms and other insects to rework the medium in which they grow, as well as a constant supply of new material added as leaves and twigs fall onto the soil below. These are the conditions we try to replicate in our culture. Good culture recognizes the natural environment and cues found in the environment where orchids grow.

When the sun is low on the horizon and solar radiation weak, many tropical orchids do not receive enough light to grow or flower well. Shading can now be removed with little danger of leaf burn except on the South side of the greenhouse or South-facing windows. Each growing area is a little different, so it may take a few years to get the optimum shading required for maximum growth without burning. I usually remove all shading around the Winter Solstice (21 December) when the days are shortest and sunlight least intense and add shading in late February or March as the sun gets higher.

In winter, most phals need to be staked to keep the weight of newly opened flowers from breaking the bloom spike. Stakes can also be used to guide spikes if light direction is causing spikes to orient poorly. This can be a serious problem in window culture



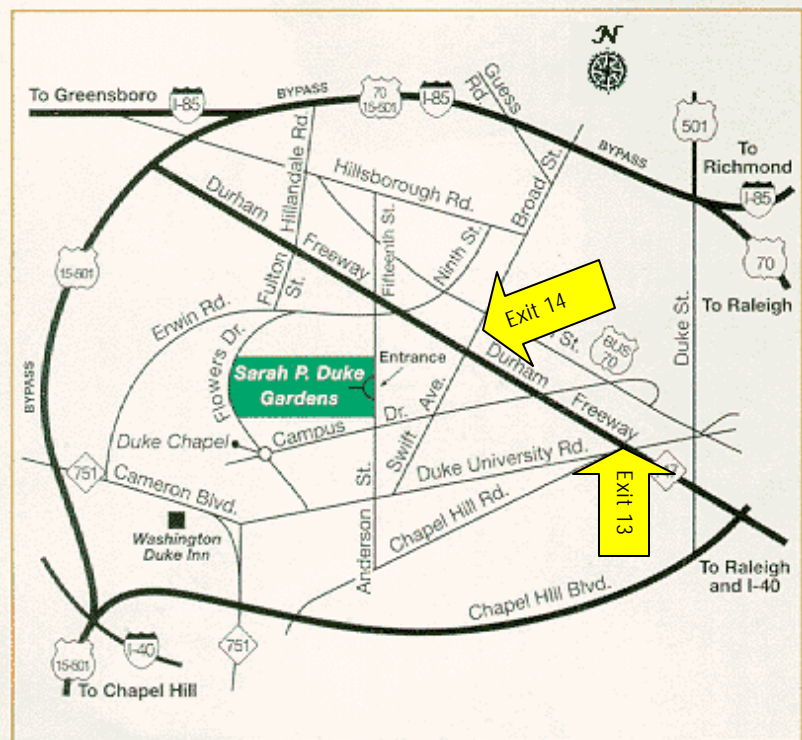
and even in greenhouses this time of year. The spike should be securely staked, almost to the first bud before it matures. The goal is to produce an inflorescence that arches gracefully away from the stake with each flower almost touching the previous one on both side of the spike, an orientation known as shingling. Multifloral phals should be staked differently. The objective is to stake the main spike vertically, so that the flowering branches can hang down and not touch flowers on the main stem. In locations, such as windows where there is little room for an arching bloom spike, standard phals can also be tied using this method.

If older flowers drop as new flowers open every 3-4 days, there may be either a cultural problem, i.e. no roots, lack of water, etc, or an environmental one such as low humidity or un-vented combustion gases.

<b>Triangle Orchid Society Meeting Agenda:</b>	<b>Calendar 2006</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Topic</b>
7: 7:30 Set Up Show Table and Chairs	<b>January 9th</b>	<b>Stephen Champlin, Floralia Brazil</b>	<b>Brazilian Laelias How to grow them</b>
7:30-7:45 Business Meeting, Announcements			
7:45-8:10 Show Table Review	<b>February 13th</b>	<b>Park Ranger Weymouth Nature Preserve</b>	<b>NC Native Orchids</b>
8:10-8:30 Refreshment Break			
8:30-9:20 Program	<b>March 13th</b>	<b>TOS Members</b>	<b>Growing Orchids in NC</b>
9:20-9:30 Show Table Awards, Raffle and Door Prizes			
9:30 P.M. Meeting Ends			

<b>Welcome Table</b>		<b>Refreshments</b>
<b>January 9th</b>		Jeanne and Michael Wagner
<b>February 13th</b>		Cricket Taylor and Vicky Brawley





From the East. **Exit 13 on the Durham Freeway (#147)** South on Chapel Hill Rd. right on Anderson St. Gardens on left.

From the West. **Exit 14 on the Durham Freeway (147)** South on Swift Ave right on Campus Drive, right on Anderson St. Gardens on left.



*Associated with Sarah P Duke Gardens*

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**The Triangle**  
**Orchid Society meets at the**  
**Sarah P. Duke Gardens, Durham, NC**  
**The Second Monday of the Month**  
**at 7:30 PM**  
**Visitors are Welcome!**

[www.TriangleOrchid  
Society.org](http://www.TriangleOrchidSociety.org)

**Speaker for January 9th 2006**  
**Stephen Champlin,**  
**Floralia**  
**Orchids, Brazil**

### **Triangle Orchid Society Dues are Due:**

\$18 per year single, or \$24 per year for two persons living at the same address.  
Mail to : Michael Wagner, Treasurer, 15 Wysteria Way, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-1637