



Orchidacea

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

Speaker for May 8, 2006:

Eric Christenson on Vandaceous Orchids

Eric Christenson was born in Westport, Connecticut, in 1956. Growing up he had a strong interest in gardening. This led to an interest in wildflowers, then wild orchids, and eventually tropical orchids. He began growing tropical orchids at age 14 and built a home greenhouse at age 16. He took this interest to the University of Connecticut where he received an undergraduate degree in Environmental Horticulture in 1977. His unofficial Advisor was Dr. G. A. L. ("Gus") Mehlquist. Under his guidance, Eric became more interested in genetics and plant breeding and continued on to receive a M.S. in Genetics in 1979. While an undergraduate, he had taken a two-semester course in plant taxonomy. During his M.S. work, Eric worked part time in the university herbarium. He realized that he was very good at the type of pattern recognition that is integral to taxonomy and that he had a natural rapport with the curator, Howard Wm. Pfeifer. So, after a short time off, he returned to UCONN in 1980 to pursue a doctorate in orchid taxonomy under Pfeifer. Eric chose an extremely difficult Asian subtribe and settled in on the genus *Aerides*. After reducing 160 published names to other genera and 19 species of *Aerides* (two of which are probably one-time natural hybrids), he received his Ph.D. in 1986. Along the way he clarified the even greater chaos in the genus *Saccolabium*, published in the Kew Bulletin. After earning his degree he accepted a post-doc at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and then was hired as Director of their orchid tissue culture laboratory, the Eric Young Micropropagation Center. Eric left Selby in 1991 and has been freelance ever since. He has written several hundred articles, several book-length treatments, co-authored 800 *Icones Orchidacearum Peruvianum*, and two books: "The Genus *Phalaenopsis*" for Timber Press and "Machu Picchu: Orchids" for PROFONANPE (the largest conservation NGO in Peru). Dr. Christenson is a research taxonomist with strong interests in the *Aeridinae* (*Sarcanthinae*), neotropical floristics, and the conservation of horticultural plants. He authored a monograph of *Phalaenopsis* for the International *Phalaenopsis* Alliance (IPA) in 2001. He has done field work in both Guyana and French Guiana and authored the orchid treatment for the Vascular Flora of Central French Guiana. He is also actively assisting David Bennett of Lima, Peru, with a modern inventory of Peruvian orchids. To date they have published 800 illustrations as *Icones Orchidacearum Peruvianum*, including more than 150 new distribution records and more than 100 new species from Peru. His bilingual florula *Machu Picchu: Orchids* was published in 2003. A prolific author of more than 300 publications, Dr. Christenson is known for his articles that attempt to bridge the gap between taxonomy and horticulture as well as his in-depth book reviews. He is a strong advocate for orchid conservation, particularly *ex situ* propagation, and actively works with commercial growers to that end. Learn more activities at: <http://www.andesamazon.org/> Eric may be contacted at: 4503 21st Ave. West, Bradenton, Florida, 34209 Phone: (941) 795-5086, Email: orchideric@juno.com

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

Bring up to 5 flowering orchids for the show table and get up to 5 free raffle tickets.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

TOS Officers and Board Members

President

Judith Goldstein
(919) 732-7622
OrangeGr@earthlink.net

Vice President

Miriam Sagasti
(919) 942-9839
Miriamsagasti@bellsouth.net

Secretary

Jaimie Graff
(919) 530-1806
Graff.jaimie@epa.gov

Treasurer

Michael Wagner
919-692-3965
mjwagner@bellsouth.net

Board of Trustees: 2006

Past President

Terry Moorhead
(919) 688-9235
Transichun@aol.com

At Large Trustees 2006

Michael Joehrendt
919-8473598
Joehrendt@bellsouth.net
Jack Webster
(910) 692-3965
JWebster@pinehurst.net

At Large Trustees 2007

Paul Virtue
(919) 846-1245
pvirtue@prodigy.net
Peggy Bloodworth
(919) 732-1639
grapib@mindspring.com

At Large Trustees 2008

Nick Plummer
(919) 969-9741
Nickplummer@nc.rr.com
Robin Gurlitz
Robing@l-gga.com
(919) 929-9717

Minutes for the Triangle Orchid Society, April 10, 2006.

The President, Judith Goldstein, opened the meeting at 7:31 pm, and welcomed Mindy Rambo as a guest to the TOS. A motion was made to approve the January minutes as published in the newsletter. The motion was seconded and accepted. A motion was made to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded and accepted. Announcements: The Philippines orchid order is in, and most people have picked up their plants. The instructions for initial care and the list of nursery substitutions were tucked into each box with the orchids. Extra copies were available at the Welcome Table. There were 60 extra plants from the Philippines. These were available as raffle plants, along with 3 potted orchids contributed by Nick Plummer.

The TOS will be holding the Spring Orchid Auction on Saturday, May 20th at the same Apex Community Park facility as last year's Auctions. There will be a potluck at 12 noon, and the Auction will start at 1 pm. Please bring your friends and family, and invite anyone else you think might enjoy the auction. This is one of the TOS' primary fundraisers, and is NOT limited to members only. Also, donations of healthy plants to be auctioned are welcome, and do qualify as tax credits. A map to the site of the Auction will be included in the newsletter. The TOS is confirmed for a 50 ft display at the Blue Ridge Orchid Show in Roanoke, Va. The set up is on May 4, tear down is on May 7. We are in need of volunteers to help with both set up and tear down, and in need of plants for the display. Please contact Judith Goldstein or Michael Wagner if you can help in any way. There is an Orchid Festival on April 29 at Seagrove Orchids, which also happens to coincide with the International Phalenopsis Association (IPA) Meeting at the same location. There are speakers and vendors. The event, located in Seagrove, NC, should be interesting and informative. Also of interest is joining the IPA itself. The IPA is 12 years old, 800 members strong, and has an excellent quarterly publication.

Tom Harper, the speaker, did a fine, informative job presenting the show table. The President announced a 15 minute break for refreshments. Following the break, precisely at 8:30 pm, Vice President Miriam Sagasti introduced the speaker, Tom Harper. Mr. Harper started off his talk with a handout of important Phal. species, and announced that there would be a test at the end of the evening. He gave an excellent talk, and there was no exam.

He began by saying he has about 35 years experience growing orchids. He gave a handout to accompany a slide presentation. He said the program is about species. Phals were first jungle collected and not of the highest quality. Hybridizers took these species and they were selfed (crossed with their self) and sibbed (crossed with a like species) to improve the quality. The offspring had a better definition of quality. Modern day species are a much better quality than those early species. They are much better than what we had 100, 50, or maybe even 30 years ago. He has slides of high quality species resulting from selfing and sibbing. Some exceptional species he mentioned were ambionesis that has a nice flat flower. It is useful in breeding yellow hybrids. It has a white eye that comes through generation after generation. Another characteristic of concentric circles on the petals. The yellow core typically does not fade as much as that of some other species. This persistent yellow is desirable. Golden Buddha is one of the top 10 hybrids in the phalaenopsis world. It was a breakthrough species that really resulted in a good red color. It was an off the wall cross. When it was sibbed and selfed a solid red resulted. Some hybrids will not give consistent quality offspring because of the large gene pool that will not settle down. Another fine red is Summer Wine "Stones River" and blooms 3x/year. The most beautiful white phals owe their heritage to aphrodite (also known by several other names). After much hybridizing, Phal Doris resulted. It is larger, thicker, flatter, rounder, and the reason is it was a chance tetraploid. It is another of the top 10 used in breeding. Other interesting whites are from celebensis. They are desirable because flowers bloom 360 degrees around the stalk. They are difficult to grow. The species comingiana is a major contributor to red flowers. They are small and showy. One problem with some hybrids is they will not breed. The phal equestris is one of the easiest to grow and is the number one hybrid for breeding. A new development is pink flowers bred from equestris. There is also a white form. One hybrid 'Carmela's Pixie' is a multiflora. It branches and produces many inflorescences. He said it is undesirable to have all the flowers on the stem end as some other hybrids may have. The species philippinensis is noted for its mottled foliage. The species stuartiana is probably number 2 for how much it has been bred. He responded to a question about culture saying lindenii despises for its roots to be disturbed in any way while equestris doesn't care. Equestris grows many leaves but lindenii has few. Many phals peak in vigor of flowers at 3 years of age. After that they seem to decline. They will bloom again but not as well as at the peak 3 year age. He mentioned Doritis pulcherrima for its beautiful cerise colored flowers. Some do not consider them to be phalaenopsis. Dtps. Lonnie Morris 'Nationwide' is one of the best crosses with a good flower count. It is difficult to breed. You can breed it but do not always get good offspring. He concluded saying two new species have been added to the Phalaenopsis family. The first is floescens with a creamy yellow color. The second is tetraspis which produces about 5 or 6 flowers on a stalk. It may be good in breeding. He challenged people to grow and breed some species. (Transcription by Cara Hayes, Secretary, Sandhills Orchid Society)

The Jack Webster awards for best show table plants were selected after Tom Harper finished speaking. Plants were raffled off and the meeting adjourned shortly before 9:30 pm.



The only truly sustainable solution to orchid conservation over time is to keep orchids in an intact ecosystem. When preserving animals, one can easily envision zoological parks as permanent "arks", keeping large animal species alive for perpetuity in a wholly ex situ setting. Orchids do not follow the same pattern because of their complex interaction with symbiotic fungi and specialized pollinators. Even if they were available, no amount of human resources and funding could hope to maintain the degree of biological complexity seen in orchid relationships in nature. -- Eric Christenson, 2003. Machu Picchu: Orchids. PROFONAPE, Lima, Peru.

Have Dinner with the speaker

5:30 PM, before the meeting, at the Neo China Restaurant, 4015 University Drive, Durham, behind Target at the South Square Mall. Call Miriam Sagasti at 942-9839 before 5 PM Monday to make your reservations.

The Spring TOS Auction will be at Apex Community Park, Cary (see enclosed flyer) on Saturday, May 20th. Pot Luck Dinner at 12 noon, Auction starts at 1PM. We will auction off over 200+ orchids. We have ordered 20 Miniature Cymbidiums from Oak Hill Gardens and mixed genera from Carmela Orchids. Jack will have Divisions of his recently awarded **Calanthe Gores var 'Jean Webster 4 N' AM/AOS**.

Please bring your extra divisions or an orchid that you haven't been able to flower (without bugs) and your checkbook. Bring a friend. This is open to the public not just TOS members. Last year's average bid was \$ 17.50 about 40% cheaper than retail prices.

Timber Press Book Order: Bring your Book Order Forms back with a Check to the May meeting for the Timber Press Books. 40% off the published price will apply to all the books in their catalogue not just orchid books. If you weren't at the April meeting to get a Order Form. You can go out on the Web to Timber Press.com and look at their catalogue. Send your selections and a check to Jack Webster or bring to the meeting.

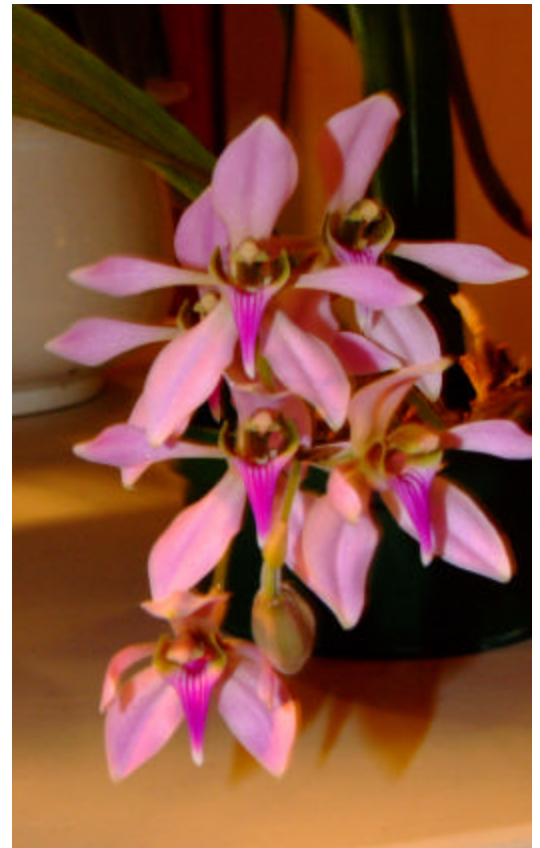
May Meeting: Member Plant Sale

Our speaker will not have plants for sale. Orchid Supplies have been donated to TOS by John Barns, former Member and Past President of TOS. Jaimie Graff will be at a sales table for pots, baskets, potting mix and other stuff.



First Place Ribbon was won for Brassia Rex grown by Judith Goldstein

**Jack Webster Show
Table Awards Non
Greenhouse Grown**



Third Place Ribbon was won by Terry Moorhead for *Ancistrochilus rothschildiannus*



Second Place Ribbon was won by Amy Marshall for Eplc. Charlie Brown



**Jack Webster Show
Table Awards Green-
house Grown**

**First Place Ribbon was won by
Paul Feaver for *Sarcochilus
hartmannii***

**Second Place Ribbon was won by Jeff Blood-
worth for *Aerangis modesta***



**Third Place Ribbon was won by Alan
Miller for Dpts. *Soroa Corozan* x
*Phal. Tungku Afzan***

Growing Tips for May 2006

By Courtney T. Hackney EMAIL at Hackneau@bellsouth.net

Got Milk? – For many years there has been a rumor that milk was an effective agent for killing viruses on tools used to repot orchids. It turns out that firms in Europe have been using this method exclusively in their everyday work with plants. Now, a 2004 scientific paper published in the journal *Plant Disease* confirms that a 20% (wt/vol) solution of non-fat dry milk, killed 100% of the viruses on contaminated cutting instruments if soaked for 1 minute. This is great for both metal tools and tools, such as potting sticks, which do not respond well to flaming. Milk was superior to heating with a propane torch and worked as well as a concentrated solution of Tri Sodium Phosphate (cleaning agent) or a 10% Clorox solution. Mom was right! Milk is good stuff. It does not, however, kill bacteria.

Spring Checklist

Spring is the busiest time of the year for Orchid growers. Given the recent weather in the Carolinas it may be difficult for us to tell that spring has indeed arrived, but your orchids know. Cattleyas have begun to put out new growths and roots in response to increasing day length. Vandas too are starting to grow because high daytime temperatures convince them that they are at home in the tropics. What you do in the next month will have a lot to do with your success as Orchid growers for the next year. Much of this is just common sense, but that is usually what we usually forget.

1. Clean Growing Area - Greenhouses have been cramped, as have windowsills and space under lights. Remove Orchids from your growing area and remove all dead material as well as algae. Some hobbyists spray growing space with a 5% Clorox solution to kill bacteria, fungi, and just about everything else. Physan or RD-20 will work as well. Repair benches or replace surface if it is needed while you have the area clean and open.

2. Organize - Straighten growing space by moving some plants outside or by eliminating non-performing plants. Remove weeds and ferns from pots.

3. Plant Inspection – If your collection is small, future problems can be avoided by carefully examining each plant. Use 10x-reading glasses even if you do not need them for reading. Look for scale, mites, or any signs of damage to leaves or roots. If you find damage on an Orchid look for the culprit that caused it. Tiny nicks on roots or under Phal leaves suggests snails while large chunks and slime trails indicate slugs. These pests have been relatively dormant during winter, but will now feast in summer's warmth. Repotting will eliminate snails and help you find slugs. If you find only minor damage try stale beer for slugs and snail bait for bush snails.

What you do in the next month will have a lot to do with your success as orchid growers for the next year.

4. Clean Plants - Remove dead tissues around Cattleya bulbs and/or dead leaves. Check the base of dead tissues for sign of scale, especially if leaves died but did not fall from the plant. If scale is found use a soft tissue to wipe them off and then spray with insecticidal soap or light oil. If a major infestation is found the plant should be repotted. When the plant is out of the pot, use a fine jet of water to clean the underside of rhizomes in Cattleyas and around the base of Phals. If you find heavy infestations on many plants, you may have to resort to harsher pesticides. Bayer's Rose and Garden spray (blue bottle) is very effective and available at Lowes.

5. Straighten Plants – Orchids tend to lean towards the light in winter. Some growers prefer to tie plants up with either wire rings or bamboo stakes if they have fallen over because erect plants are easier to spray and water, and take up less room. In addition new growths and leaves will grow better.

6. Repot – Repot all plants whose media has decomposed and those that have reached too far from the pot. Rapid summer growth will quickly replace lost and damaged roots. Newly damaged roots are also less likely to be infected by fungi and bacteria in your now clean growing area in the less humid air of spring. Fungi and bacteria will become a problem in mid-summer. Newly repotted Orchids need a convalescence period while they recover. Accomplish this simply by giving them a little extra shade and humidity.

7. Water More – Orchids will use more water in the next month than they will in the heat of summer because of the lower humidity. Water thoroughly when you water and review the moisture requirements of the different groups of Orchids that you grow. In general, Cattleyas and Dendrobiums need to dry thoroughly before being watered, while Phals and Paphs like to dry some but need constant moisture. Phrags and Bulbophyllums crave moisture while most of the Vanda group wants high light, abundant water, and lots of air movement. Air movement is just as important for Orchids in summer as during the winter, but for different reasons. Now it is important to keep leaves from overheating while in winter it was to keep bacteria and fungal infections at bay.

8. Fertilize - Now is the time to apply Nutricote (sold as Dynamite at Home Depot). If you prefer liquid fertilizer this is the time to liberally apply your favorite brand.

**TOS Annual Growers Day will be held at
Durham Tech on August 5th**

**TOS Will put in a 50 sq ft exhibit at the Blue Ridge Orchid Society Show in Roanoke,
Virginia on May 4th to the 7th.**

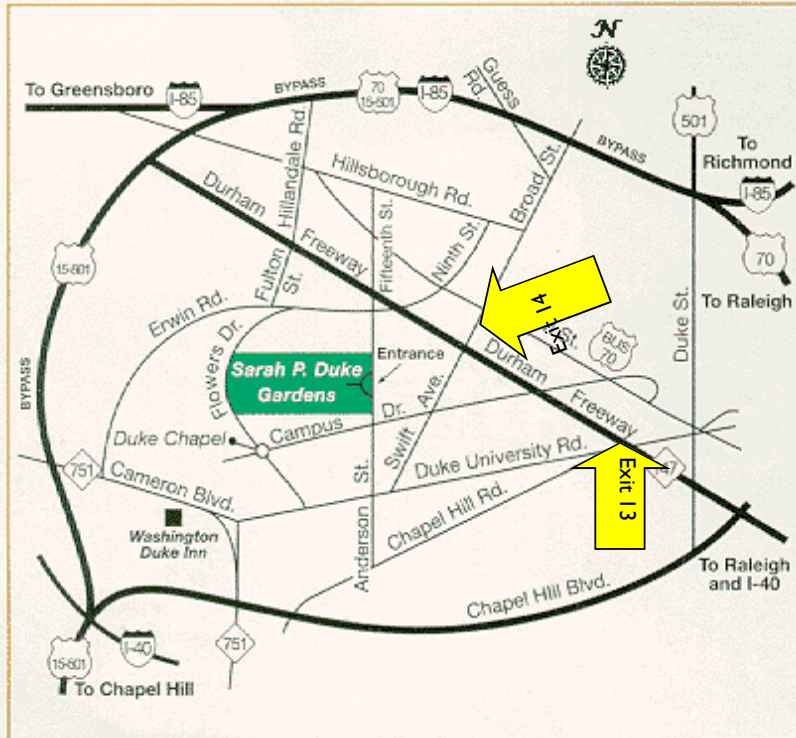
**The AOS website has monthly checklists for various types of orchids—see
<http://www.aos.org/aos/orchids/default.aspx>**

Some orchids benefit from being placed outdoors for the summer. Before their return indoors in the autumn, thoroughly inspect each specimen to prevent any unwanted guests from entering the growing area.

Once indoors, populations of aphids, mealybugs, spider mites and other insects increase dramatically in the warm and moist environment. Inspect the container's sides, drain hole, developing buds and all of the foliage, especially the undersides of leaves, where insects often lurk (from www.aos.org).

Triangle Orchid Society Monthly Meeting Agenda:	Meeting Calendar - 2006	Speaker	Topic
7:00-7:30pm Set up Show Table and Chairs	June 12th	Michael Sinn Canaima Orchids Ellenton, FL	Venezuelan Cattleyas and their Habitats
7:30-7:45pm Business Meeting, Announcements			
7:45-8:10pm Show Table Review	July 10th	Paul Storm Meke Aloha Orchids Sarasota, FL	Schomburgkias and Their Hybrids
8:10-8:30pm Refreshments			
8:30-9:20pm Program			
9:20-9:30pm Show Table Awards, Raffle and Door Prizes	August 14th	Doug Kennedy Orchids in our Tropics Gormley, ON, Can.	Lycastes—Description and Cultivation
9:30pm Meeting ends			

Month	Welcome Table	Refreshments
May Meeting	Marlene Kinney	Jaimie Graff
June Meeting	Alan Miller	Lori Chapman



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.

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)

Program for May 8th
Eric Christenson
Vandaceous Orchids



Associated with Sarah P Duke Gardens

Alan J. Miller, Editor
5703 Orange Grove Rd.
Hillsborough, NC 27278
Fax (253) 550-5038
Phone (919) 969-1612
Email:Orchidacea @att.net

Triangle Orchid Society Dues are:

\$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
Please mail your 2006 dues or give Michael a check at the next meeting!