



# Orchidacea

Newsletter of the  
Triangle Orchid Society

Associated with  
Sarah P. Duke Gardens

## Speaker for Nov 10, 2008

### Glen Decker - Phragmipediums

Glen Decker began growing orchids at the age of 15 and holds the degree of Associate in Applied Science in Ornamental Horticulture. Glen is presently the owner of Piping Rock Orchids in Galway, New York. He was the previous chair of the American Orchid Society's Publications Committee and is still a member of the committee today, and also serves as a director of the Orchid Digest Corporation. Glen has won numerous AOS awards, including the Butterworth Prize, Nax Trophy, WW Wilson Award and the Carlyle A. Leer Award. He has appeared in Martha Stewart's Better Living Magazine and in the PBS TV special "Orchid Delirium". He recently rewrote the Slipper section of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's "The Best Orchids for Indoors" and was the technical editor for the book, "Orchids for Dummies". Glen will be bringing plants for sale.

Piping Rock Orchids, 2270 Cook Road, Galway, NY 12074  
518-882-9002 , e-mail: [PipingRock@aol.com](mailto:PipingRock@aol.com)  
web site: [www.pipingrockorchids.com](http://www.pipingrockorchids.com)

## TOS Returns to the State Fair 2008

Thanks to Robin Gurlitz for organizing the return of the TOS exhibit at the Flower & Garden Show during the State Fair 2008! Many thanks to all the volunteers that gave their time during the 10 day event. Lots of positive feedback was given by the members of the State Fair. Several of the attendees that passed the booth were quite interested in the TOS. We

look forward to seeing new members join the society in the coming months. Hopefully, you all had a chance to see the beautiful exhibit while visiting the State Fair. We are very enthusiastic about being a part of the State Fair in the years to come!



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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**

**www.Triangle  
OrchidSociety.org**

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## Minutes of the Last Meeting 10/13/08

The meeting was called to order by President Paul Virtue at 7:30 PM on 13 October 2008. The minutes from the September meeting and the Treasurer's Report were approved.

### Announcements:

- John Myhre will be handling the AOS calendar sale this year, but has not received any information on it yet.
- Jeremy and Debbie Bueter were recognized for staging the Welcome Table. Vicky Brawley and Cricket Taylor were recognized for hosting the Hospitality Table.
- Judith Goldstein announced the slate of officers for 2009. Nominations from the floor and the election will take place next month.

President – Phil Warner,  
VP – Alan Miller,  
Secretary – Bob Meyer,  
Treasurer – Leo Sagasti,  
Board of Trustees –  
2009 – Marie Crock,  
2011 – David Devine  
& Melissa Bullard

- Robin Gurlitz spoke about our upcoming participation in the State Fair. The display will be put in this Wednesday, with take down on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. All volunteers should meet with Robin during the break to receive maps, admission tickets, and parking passes.
- David Pickett spoke about the Fall Auction. There were 45 bidders with gross receipts of about \$4600. A special thanks to Heather Schneider for

cataloging the auction plants. The use of OrchidWiz by Paul Virtue to project pictures of the orchids in bloom significantly spurred bidding.

- Our December meeting will not have a speaker, but will have a potluck dinner, show table, and silent auction.

The Show Table was presented by Nick Plummer and Paul Feaver. Member orchids and Jack Webster estate orchids were available for sale. After refreshments, Marie Crock introduced our speaker, Carson Whitlow, who gave his talk on "The World of Cypridiums".

### Jack Webster Show Table Award Plants

#### Greenhouse Grown Category:

1st place ribbon *Vanda denisoniana* grown by Olivine Virtue, 2nd Place ribbon: *Dendrobium* Stephen Batchelor grown by Lee Allgood, 3rd Place ribbon: *Cattleya* Angel Bells 'Suzie' grown by Olivine Virtue.

#### Non-Greenhouse Grown Category:

1st place ribbon: *Miltassia* Charles M. Fitch grown by Lee Allgood, 2nd place ribbon: *Psychopsis* Kalihi grown by Melissa Bullard, 3rd place ribbon: *Zygonisia* Cynosure 'Bluebirds' grown by Lee Allgood.

Raffle tickets were drawn and raffle plants were awarded. Name tags were drawn with the winners being able to select one of the remaining Jack Webster estate plants. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Minutes submitted by Bob Meyer, Secretary.

## Transcript of Last Month's Speaker

Carson Whitlow is the developer of the ORCHID MALL ([www.orchidmall.com](http://www.orchidmall.com)) the internet site that provides sources and informational links for numerous orchids supplies and information. He is also a world renowned hybridizer of *Cypripediums* and *Telipogons*. His presentation to us consisted of an overview of *Cypripedium* species, natural hybrids from around the world, as well as examples of some man-made hybrids.

*Cypripediums*, said Carson, are deciduous plants that are found on virtually every continent except Antarctica. Typically *Cypripediums* emerge from dormancy early in the spring. They send up new growth, set flower and (hopefully) their seed pods, then die back and become dormant again until their next growing season. Generally, they grow and set their flowers very quickly, sometimes within a few short weeks. Once dormant, the plants are very difficult to locate as they dry up and virtually disappear.

Carson grows his *Cypripediums* in sandy beds outside his home in Iowa. He pointed out that many species grow in very poor soil conditions, with little humus or other plant material. Some, like *Cyp acaule* like acid soils, and flourish in cultivation if water with a vinegar solution. Carson said that he found *Cyp acaule* very difficult to grow, until it was realized that they like a soil of only Ph of

3 1/2 - 4, a very acidic condition. *Cyp acaule* has a large pink pouch and green sepals and petals overlaid with dark brown. The pouch is split and appears tubular.

Another species, *Cyp formosanum*, needs snow cover to prevent premature breaking of dormancy. These Carson grows in wooden boxes in a cold room in his farmhouse, under grow-lights. When all danger of frost is past he moves the boxes outside where the plants emerge and complete their growth cycle. *Cyp formosanum* is a relatively large flower and can measure four inches across. Its foliage is very distinctive in that it is pleated like a Chinese fan. It is white with dark purple spots, and the stem is generally about 10 inches high.

Surprisingly, there is even a species that grows inside the Arctic circle. *Cyp paaerinum* thrives under very severe conditions, growing into thick clumps that are often more than 12 inches in diameter. This flower has a cream colored pouch the size of a wren's egg. The sepals and petals are white but the dorsal is green. Another cold growing species is *Cyp guttatum*, which can grow as far north as British Columbia and Alaska. It is only six inches high, and its leaves grow very close to the ground. It is generally white with purple blotches. The dorsal tends to overhand the pouch.

Carson stated that there are numerous species of *Cypripediums* that are native to the US and Canada. The most species however, are found in China, Taiwan and Japan. One of the most difficult species to grow in cultivation is *Cyp japonicum*, a small flowered species from Japan. It has a pink pouch and green sepals and petals.

There are a number of natural hybrids that Carson believes have developed when natural populations grow in close proximity to each other. The species that seem to be most

### Have Dinner with the Speaker

5:30 PM - before the meeting at the  
Neo China Restaurant, (969-1612)

4015 University Drive, Durham  
behind Target's at the South Square Mall.

Call Ann Myhre (919-740-4030)  
before 4:45 PM Monday  
to make your reservations.

*Continued page 6*



**Jack Webster Awards  
Non Greenhouse Grown**



**1st place ribbon:**  
*Miltassia Charles M. Fitch*  
grown by Lee Allgood

**2nd place ribbon:**  
*Psychopsis Kalihi*  
grown by Melissa Bullard



**3rd place ribbon:**  
*Zygonisia Cynosure 'Bluebirds'*  
grown by Lee Allgood



**Jack Webster Awards  
Greenhouse Grown**

**1st place ribbon:**  
*Vanda denisoniana*  
grown by Olivine Virtue



**2nd Place ribbon:**  
*Dendrobium Stephen Batchelor*  
grown by Lee Allgood

**3rd Place ribbon:**  
*Cattleya Angel Bells 'Suzie'*  
grown by Olivene Virtue



*Speaker Notes continued*

susceptible to this natural cross pollination include *Cyp pubescens*, *montianum*, *parviflorum*, *regina*, *kentukiense* and *candidum*. These are all native to the US and Canada.

Carson registered his first *Cyp* hybrid in 1953. This was *Cyp Genesis*, a cross between *Cyp regina* and *Cyp pubescens*. He believes that it is remarkable that this was the first *Cypripedium* cross, considering that other orchid crosses have been registered since 1857. This cross was not particularly successful in that he began with only 160 seedlings out of flask. After four years of cultivation he had four plants left, and two years later he only had two plants. I find it remarkable that *Cypripediums* should be so difficult. *Paphiopedalums* (which at one time were classified as *Cypripediums*) are very close relatives, yet they are primarily tropical and tend to far less specific about their growing conditions.

Since 1953 Carson has registered an impressive number of hybrids. He says that the driving force behind his efforts is to create hybrids with good form and color. His primary motivation however is to get these plants out into your garden. While they seem to do better in Europe than in some areas of the US, he believes that they do better along the East Coast than in his area of Iowa where the soil is too rich. If you are interested in trying these little gems, you can order them from Caron through his website (<http://c-we.comp/cyphaven/>). He will only ship plants between Aug. 1<sup>st</sup> and Sept. 15<sup>th</sup> when most of the plants are dormant. When planted outdoors in the fall, he says, the plants have the fall and winter to acclimatize and will emerge at the appropriate time in the spring. If planted in the spring, however, they tend to emerge too early and are killed by frost.

- Joy Lemieux, Sandhills Orchid Society

## Growing Tips for November

By Courtney T. Hackney EMAIL at [Hackneau@comcast.net](mailto:Hackneau@comcast.net)

Most orchids grown by hobbyists are tropical in nature. That term was once thought to mean "hot and steamy" and tens of thousands of orchids imported to Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century perished as a result. Many tropical orchids prefer cool nights because they or their ancestors evolved in higher tropical elevations or were subjected to cool breezes during the day. There are some species that do come from hot and steamy places and the challenge for orchid hobbyists is to grow them all in one place, whether it is a windowsill or greenhouse.

Commercial orchid nurseries and large private collections often have individual growing areas devoted to orchids that derive from different tropical habitats. *Cymbidiums* prefer and even require cool temperatures to flower well. Many claim that they flower best when nighttime temperatures reach near freezing. *Laelia anceps* also prefers these cool night temperatures and it is common to find them with *Cymbidiums* in California. While *L. anceps* and members of the *Cymbidium* genus are not related, they come from similar habitats and so require similar growing conditions.

At the other end of the spectrum are species that come from tropical lowlands. Many *Phalaenopsis* species come from parts of the world where temperatures are always warm to hot and these species not only tolerate, but grow best when both day and night temperatures are warm. There are, however, other members of the *Phalaenopsis* genus that come from the foothills of the Himalayas and do not tolerate hot steamy conditions. Some would grow best with *cymbidiums* in a cool house. Thus, simply knowing the name of a group of orchids does not always inform one of the best temperature in which to grow an individual orchid.

This time of year most hobbyists are temperature conscious, especially those who grow outdoors for part of the year. How much cold will my orchids tolerate is a common question? Of course, there is no simple answer to that question given the previous discussion. No tropical orchid though should be allowed to freeze or be exposed to freezing conditions. Even those few species that come from climates where freezes are common suffer. In Nature, these species often have protected tubers or bulbs under the soil or dead leaves. A hobbyist in North Carolina once reported finding an equitant *oncidium* flowering in spring among leaves where it had fallen the previous summer during a hurricane; surviving a winter with temperatures below 20 F protected by dead leaves that had accumulated.

*Growing Tips continued*

Cymbidiums are often seen with frost on their leaves, but frost can occur at temperatures much warmer than the freezing point. When the temperature within an orchid leaf goes below the freezing point, water in leaves forms crystals that tear plant cells, killing them. The next day when the temperature warms, leaves turn to mush as bacteria and fungi invade the broken cells. Obviously, other types of plants can survive freezing temperatures and do so by adding substances to their cells that either prevent crystal formation or lower the freezing temperature.

The only exception to orchids dying when frozen seems to arise when orchids are dehydrated. Under these conditions sugars and other dissolved materials within the cells are concentrated and prevent crystals from forming. There are numerous accounts of hobbyists returning home, after a sudden emergency to find their orchids still alive, despite no heat in sub-freezing conditions. A number of Chinese wholesale nurseries even intentionally dehydrate blooming sized phalaenopsis to the point where they can be rolled up and placed in small tubes for shipping to Europe and the U.S. This not only greatly reduces shipping costs, but almost eliminates the danger of freezing in the unheated cargo areas of jets. Once they arrive, they are potted in sphagnum and re-hydrated without damage to tissues.

<b>Triangle Orchid Society Meeting Agenda:</b>	<b>Calendar 2008</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Topic</b>
7: 7:30 Set Up Show Table and Chairs	<b>November</b>	<b>Glen Decker</b>	<b>Phragmipediums</b>
7:30-7:45 Business Meeting, Announcements		<b>Piping Rock Orchids, Galloway, NY</b>	
7:45-8:10 Show Table Review	<b>December</b>	<b>Christmas Party</b>	<b>Member Covered Dish</b>
8:10-8:30 Refreshment Break			
8:30-9:20 Program			
9:20-9:30 Show Table Awards, Raffle and Door Prizes	<b>January 2009</b>	<b>Bill Mathis</b>	<b>Gardening with Hardy Terrestrials</b>
9:30 P.M. Meeting Ends		<b>Wild Orchid Company</b>	

**Welcome Table****Refreshments**

<b>November</b>	<b>Tom and Marsha Jepson</b>	<b>Marsha Tai</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>Judith Shapiro</b>	<b>none</b>

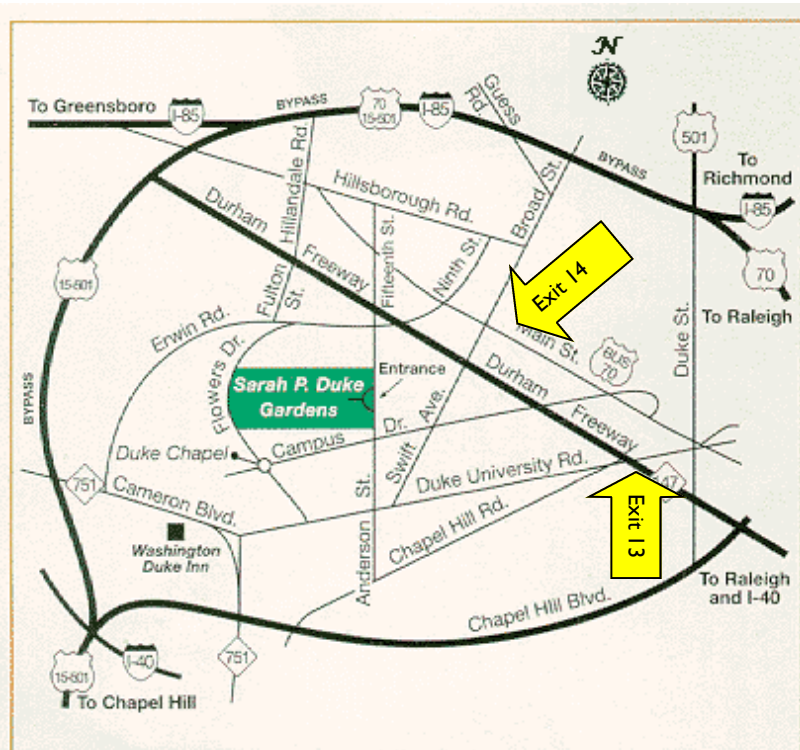




**Associated with Sarah P Duke Gardens**

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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.TriangleOrchidSociety.org](http://www.TriangleOrchidSociety.org)**

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

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

**Triangle Orchid Society Dues are:**

\$18 per year single, or \$24 per year for two persons living at the same address.

Mail to: Leo Sagasti, Treasurer 2306 Damascus Church Rd Chapel Hill NC 27516