



# Orchidaceae

Newsletter of the  
Triangle Orchid Society

Associated with  
Sarah P. Duke Gardens

Speaker for July 12, 2010

Robert Marsh - *Barkerias*-

a survey of the genus and the species natural habitats, how to grow them and current progress in hybridization

Robert Marsh from his Associate Professor position at the University of Texas at Dallas 3 years ago and is now teaching part-time as a Senior Lecturer. He has been breeding *Barkerias* over 20 years and several of his hybrids have been given AOS quality awards. He was also awarded the AOS Botanical Trophy for 1985, which at the time was called the Nax Trophy.

In his windows he has mason jars, in which I have orchid seedlings. They are the result of about a 20-year breeding program. It represents an attempt to produce commercially viable cut flower and potted plants using a genus from Mexico that has not had much work done on it in the past, but offers lots of potential.

There are about 15 species of the genus, called *Barkeria*. It is related to the big, showy *Cattleya* orchids that used to be the big corsage orchids years ago". The first 10 years of his hybridization experiments produced some pretty good results, but came to a sterile dead-end. The offspring were female fertile but male sterile, and you can't get very far that way.

Now in the past few years there have been several awards to the crosses and the progeny of the crosses, both to Robert and to other growers. They've been tried and grown successfully in California, with some commercial experience in growing as well as hobbyist experience.

## Dinner with the Speaker

5:30 PM - before the meeting  
at the Neo China Restaurant  
4015 University Drive,  
Durham behind Target's  
at the South Square Mall.

Call Alan Miller at  
(919) 969-1612  
before 5 PM Monday  
to make your reservations.

**Speaker is bringing  
*Barkeria mericlones*  
And seedlings of hybrids and species.**



## Inside this issue:

<i>This Month's Speaker</i>	1
<i>Minutes of the Last Meeting &amp; Treasurers report</i>	2
<i>Last months speaker Notes.</i>	3
<i>Jack Webster Show Table Awards</i>	4-5
<i>Growing Tips by Courtney T. Hackney</i>	6
<i>Orchid Events, Speaker Dates, TOS Meeting Schedule Volunteer Schedule</i>	7
<i>Map and Directions to Sarah P Duke Gardens</i>	8
<i>Growers Day Announcement</i>	

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

**www.TriangleOrchidSociety.org**

## TOS Officers and Board Members

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## Minutes of the Last Meeting 6/14/2010

Lee Allgood, Acting Secretary

President Robin Gurlitz called the meeting to order at 7:40 pm. We welcomed four new members: Kathe Carrison, Karen Moss, Paul Welty, and Elmira Chopani.

Robin thanked Marie Crock for hosting the speaker Martin Motes and his wife and Lee Allgood for acting as secretary. Josh Gurlitz manned the Welcome Table. The minutes for April and May were approved. An announcement was made that we are on Facebook. Members can visit and comment.

We need to update email addresses if they have changed. Please let Robin know if there have been changes in your email.

Judith Goldstein let the membership know that Fresh Market donated cymbidiums from Zion Orchids for raffle plants to the TOS. They are healthy and being housed at Orchid Trails. Several were added to tonight's raffle plants.

Plans are moving forward for our annual Growers' Day on August 7 at J. C. Raulston Arboretum. At the present time Robin is the chair of that committee. She asked for volunteers to sign up for the registration table, refreshments, preparing the orchids for giveaway and other duties at the event. A sign up sheet was available on the Welcome Table at break for members to volunteer.

Robin introduced our speaker, Martin Motes.

After the speaker, we broke for refreshments provided by Sally Carpenter.

Bob Davidson and David Devine presented the orchids on our show tables for the Jack Webster Table Awards. See pages 4 & 5 for the beautiful plants that won awards.

The last event was the raffle which everyone enjoys. The meeting was adjourned at 9:35.

## Treasurers Report Melissa Bullard

May-June 2010

### INCOME

Triad reimburse.....	\$85.31
Membership dues.....	\$119.00
Auction.....	\$3,060.00
Plant Raffle.....	\$62.00
<b>TOTAL INCOME.....</b>	<b>\$3,326.31</b>

### EXPENSES

Refreshments.....	\$106.65
Raffle Plants.....	\$45.00
Speaker Expense.....	\$755.79
Auction Plants .....	\$781.31
Books & Supplies.....	\$182.41
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES.....</b>	<b>\$1,871.16</b>
<b>NET INCOME (LOSS).....</b>	<b>\$1,455.15</b>

## Martin & Mary Motes

When you invite Martin and Mary Motes to speak at your orchid society meeting you get much more than a talk about orchids. You get Martin explaining the moral lesson contained in a Hindu myth, you overhear husband-wife conversations in Serbian as they negotiate how much to drop the cost of the remaining plants, and you get veiled references to cloak and dagger intrigue among the Florida orchid growers. You also get Mary explaining that it is very hard to write about sex, but that romance runs rampant throughout her latest book. I found Martin and Mary to be very amusing!

Martin explained that most Vandas used in modern hybridizing programs are referred to as “strap leaf Vandas”. The foliage of these Vandas is flat and often rather tough and fibrous. At our latitudes, strap leaf Vandas are relatively efficient gatherers of light. The position of the sun is such that light coming into our windows or greenhouses enter at an angle, higher in summer and significantly lower in winter. The light available to most Vandas is therefore highly variable, depending upon the time of year, but the flat surface of Vanda foliage provides maximum exposure to whatever light source is available

V Sanderiana however has tough leathery foliage that forms a deep V shape. This is an adaptation to their native tropical environment where the sun is directly overhead all year. The V form of V Sanderiana provides a self-shading mechanism, a truly remarkable adaptation. However, V Sanderiana is very inefficient at light gathering at our latitudes. The lesson here is that if you are growing V Sanderiana, or even one of its primary hybrids, in this area, you may need to supplement your light source to achieve maximum flowering.

One of the characteristics Martin considers when selecting hybrids for his crosses is cold tolerance. Although this may not be a consideration in Florida, this may be consideration for us in North Carolina. V sanderiana, for example is definitely cold sensitive. Other cold sensitive species V dearii, V tricolor, V denisoniana and the miniature V cristata. Most of these come from Himalayan areas. The more warm growing varieties include V lamellate, which is found from Borneo to Japan., V luzonica from the Mt Pinatubo area in the Philippines, and V merrilli, also from the Philippines. With the cost of heating greenhouses and other growing areas an increasingly salient consideration for hobby and commercial growers alike, the cold tolerant varieties are certainly worthy of consideration. Being able to reduce the temperatures in a growing area by even 5 – 10 degrees can have a significant impact on the monthly heating bill.

Vandas, says Martin, are fairly resistant to insects. Most require high light conditions and copious amounts of water daily. Martin indicated that Vandas need magnesium to bloom well. Plain old fashioned Epsom salts, he said, is a great source of magnesium and can be easily added to any watering regime. He feels that any fertilizers touted as a Bloom Boosters actually retard blooming because they contain high amount of Phosphorous, which Vandas cannot utilize. Any well balanced fertilizer with high Nitrogen seems to be more effective. According to Martin, the hobbyist should read the labels and list of active ingredients. Look for fertilizers that contain “magnesium sulfate” and “potassium nitrate”. Martin also endorsed the starting of bare root Vandas and seedling in Cypress chips. He says that the Cypress has a natural built-in antifungal property making it superior to some other mediums for initiating root development.

Clearly Martin is passionate about his Vandas. I was impressed with his closing comment when he said “Much is still to be done and much to be discovered in Vanda hydration”. Clearly he has found his life’s work.

**Jack Webster Awards  
Non Greenhouse  
Grown**



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Miltoniopsis Hybrid  
grown by Mildred Howell



**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Paph. Armeni White  
grown by Alan Miller

Anyone who feels qualified and is interested in teaming up to do the plant table for the monthly meeting, please get in touch with Bob Davidson, at [bob@cattleya.us](mailto:bob@cattleya.us)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Paph. Hsingying Maru X Incantation  
grown by Phil Warner





**1<sup>st</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Ascofinetia Cherry Blossom  
**Grown by Bob Meyer**

**Jack Webster  
Awards  
Greenhouse  
Grown**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Cattleya gaskelliana  
**grown by Bob Davidson**



**3<sup>d</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Ascocenda John Debiasy  
**Grown by Paul Virtue**

## Growing Tips for July

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

This summer has been not only hot, but hot with low humidity. If you provide the proper air movement required to keep your orchids from overheating in this weather, you are also accelerating the loss of water from your orchids. If the orchid's loss of water exceeds its ability to acquire water your orchid experiences water stress, usually indicated by shriveled leaves or bud drop. Some of my orchids that typically love high light that are near the glass even have burned leaves because they do not have enough water in their leaves to keep the leaf cool. Most plants, including orchids, have stomata or microscopic openings on the bottoms of leaves. Stomata open, allowing water to evaporate and cool the leaf. If the orchid does not have enough water it cannot keep its leaves cool.

Over the years there are many experienced growers, many commercial growers of orchids, that told me they routinely violated one of the cardinal rules found in most books on growing orchids. Most books suggest watering orchids early in the morning so that they will be dry by nightfall. Failure to do so, according to the books, will cause rots. During the middle of summer, however, I routinely violate this paradigm.

Whenever nights are warm, I heavily water my orchids near or just after sunset. The object is for them to be soaked all night. The next morning, I water heavily again and often fertilize at this time. When I go out to water in the morning, vanda roots are swollen and green, as are the visible roots of my cattleyas and phals. Rots are very rare and almost always on newly purchased orchids or plants that have already had problems.

My orchids had been looking water stressed, but a week after starting this regimen, bulbs have become plump and new leaves abound. There are even newly branching roots.

If you decide to try this approach keep the days between watering the same as you did before. Apply only water in the evening and fertilize only in the morning. If you live in an area where night temperatures get lower than 60 F be sure you never fertilize at night. In the morning, plants are well hydrated and there is no risk of fertilizer toxicity, even at high levels. Roots are also ready to take up fertilizer as their surface condition has changed from hard and stiff to soft and pliable. If you live in an area with hard water, salts that accumulate on the medium, pots and roots will become soluble overnight, allowing them to be flushed out the next morning.

If you ever visit the tropics where many cultivated orchids originated, it is surprising to read the prohibition to never water at night. In their natural habitat, orchids are soaked at night by rain or dew. Rarely, will you ever find an orchid with rot in nature. In the wild, orchids grow very slowly and are very limited by nutrients. Their leaves are thick and hard; even immature plants.

Bacteria require nutrients to grow and the presence of water laden with nutrients in and on leaves is an invitation for bacterial and fungal invasions that cause rots. Orchids can grow quickly if pushed with lots of fertilizer. However, cell walls are thin and soft on these orchids making it easy for fungi and bacterial invasion. Cells also are loaded with excess nutrients providing fuel to any invader.

Growing under lower nutrient conditions does cause slightly slower growth and causes orchids to put more energy into root growth. This produces a better rooted orchid, less susceptible to disease, even if you water at night.

**Announcements & Upcoming Orchid Events**

**August: Growers Day Saturday August 7 from 10:00 AM to 4:15 PM at J.C. Raulston Arboretum. See the notice on the back page of this newsletter for specifics. Don't miss this great annual event!**

**September: Get ready for our fall Auction. Hundreds of beautiful orchids at auction prices...plus bring your favorite dish to pot-luck lunch.**

**TOS Member News, Passings:**

**TOS Member, Faye Granberry Hardy passed away recently. We all send our condolences to her husband**



**Eria cristata**

**Triangle Orchid Society Meeting Agenda:**

7:00-7:30 Set Up Show Table and Chairs  
 7:30-7:40 Business Meeting Announcements  
 7:40-8:30 Program  
 8:30-8:50 Refreshment Break  
 8:50-9:20 Show Table Review, Show Table Awards  
 9:20-9:30 Raffle

Calendar 2010	Speaker	Topic
July 12th	Robert Marsh Plants for Sale	Barkeria Species & Hybrids
August 9th	Kurt Studier Plants for Sale	Paphs
September 13th	Walter Off	Classic Cattleyas reinvented

**Welcome Table**

**Refreshments**

<b>July</b>	Need Volunteers	Jeremy Beuter
<b>August</b>	Need Volunteers	Wanda Wilkins



# Learn How to Grow Orchids Growers Day 2010



**RAULSTON ARBORETUM  
RALEIGH, N.C.  
SAT. AUGUST 7 th, 2010  
10:00 AM TO 4:15 pm**

**Check in starts at 9:30 AM**

*Associated with*

**Sarah P Duke Gardens**

**PUBLIC IS WELCOME  
PRE REGISTRATION REQUIRED  
REGISTRATION IS \$25.00  
REGISTER BY AUGUST 2d**

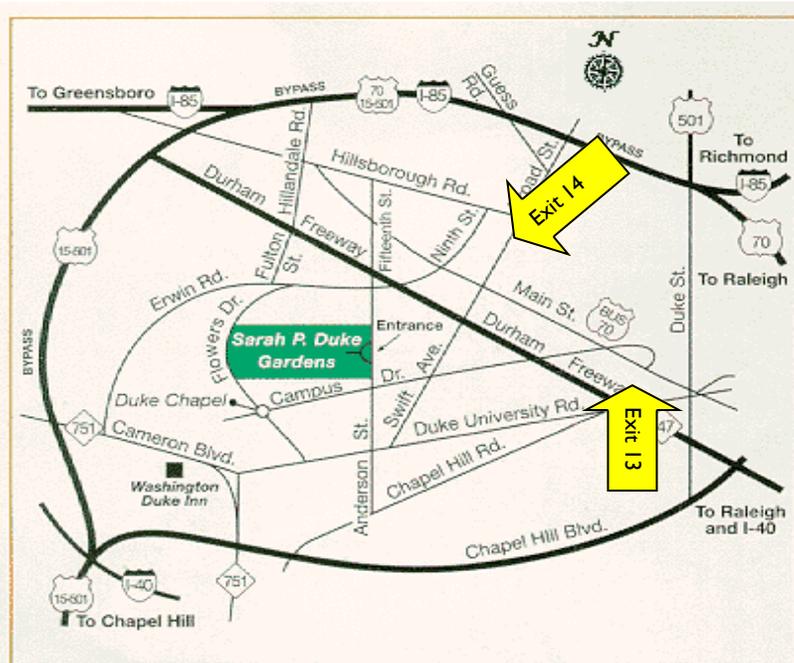
Interim Newsletter Editor  
Robin Gurlitz

Phone: (919) 929-9717  
E-mail: [robing@i-gga.com](mailto:robing@i-gga.com)

Registration includes morning and afternoon lectures, lunch, a souvenir orchid and membership in the Triangle Orchid Society for the remainder of the 2010 year.

**To register for Growers Day please contact:  
Robin Gurlitz 919-929-9717 or [robing@i-gga.com](mailto:robing@i-gga.com)**

Checks payable to Triangle Orchid Society sent to  
Robin Gurlitz, 208 Spring Lane, Chapel Hill, NC 27514



**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: **Melissa Bullard, Treasurer** 510 North Street Chapel Hill, NC 27514