



# Orchidacea

Newsletter of the  
Triangle Orchid Society

Associated with  
Sarah P. Duke Gardens

## Speaker for May 9, 2011 Clark Riley

Clark Riley has been an active orchid grower since 1957. At the age of six, he got his first plant, a [probably collected] *Cypripedium pubescens* from a perennial nursery. The plant died a miserable death in a short time, but not before blooming and cementing a love of orchids that has lasted over half a century. He has labored ever since to make amends by promoting the sound cultivation of *Cypripedia*.

Clark grows a wide range of orchids, including several thousand terrestrials, hardy species, and ladyslippers, Brazilian *Laelias*, and specialty *Phalaenopsis*, often from seed. He was the producer for the book and CD of *Proceeding of the North American Native Terrestrial Orchid Conference*. Clark is a member of the Maryland Orchid Society, the American Orchid Society, the International *Phalaenopsis* Alliance, and a frequent contributor to the *Orchid List Digest*. He can be reached at [driley@aol.com](mailto:driley@aol.com) or visit his web site at <http://cyps.us>.

***The speaker will be bringing orchids to sell  
so come prepared to see some great plants.***

### 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 to reserve a seat, at  
919-969-1612  
All are welcome

**! DON'T FORGET !**  
**COME TO THE TOS**  
**ORCHID SHOW**  
**THIS WEEKEND.**

THERE WILL BE MANY  
WONDERFUL BLOOMING  
ORCHIDS WITH GREAT  
VENDORS AND GREAT  
EXHIBITS - SEE THE  
ANNOUNCEMENT ON  
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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.TriangleOrchidSociety.org**

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## Minutes of the March TOS Meeting 4/11/2011

The April meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm by the president of the TOS, Leo Sagasti. Members and guest were welcomed. The financials were accepted and approved. Raffle tickets were available for \$1 each. Bring a plant for the Show table and receive a free raffle ticket for up to a maximum of 5 tickets. Remember, if you purchase 5 raffle tickets, you will receive a 6th one for free.

Thanks to [??] for providing refreshments, Lee Allgood for hosting the Welcome Table and Paul Feaver for setting up the show tables.

Leo Sagasti announced the TOS show in May 5-8, at the Raulston Arboretum, and asked for volunteers. A request form was passed among the present members to sign for volunteer work at the show. There is a need for various types of work such as setting up the exhibits, taking it down, clerks, host the judges, reception table, selling tickets, giving out door prizes, etc. Also, a request for donations was made. A list of contacts for the show was passed along. Vendors at the show will be Orchid Trail, Seagrove Orchids and J&L Orchids. Societies participating are Piedmont, Richmond, Triad, Triangle, Cape Fear and South Carolina. Plants for the judging - if possible, please send the correct plant names in advance to Michael Wagner ([mjwagner@bellsouth.net](mailto:mjwagner@bellsouth.net)). Plants can be brought to Orchid Trail by Wednesday May 4<sup>th</sup> or to the show on Thursday May 5<sup>th</sup> before 10AM. Judged plants can be picked up at the show on Sunday evening or on Monday at the regular meeting.

Ralph Sears announced the trip to the Green Swamp, May 21<sup>st</sup>, and a list was passed along for signing up. Ralph Sears introduced our speaker, Dr. Harry Gallis, who discussed the genus Dendrobium.

Dr. Gallis did an excellent job of discussing the beautiful plants on the Show tables. Time prevented every plant from being discussed. (You may bring to the attention of the presenter a question about a specific plant if that plant has not been discussed.)

The Jack Webster Award Plants were: Greenhouse Grown Awards:

1st Place: Cattleya mossiae – Paul Virtue;

2nd Place: Brassia NOID – John Myhre;

3rd Place: Mtdm. Issaku Nagata "Volcano Queen" HCC/AOS – Michael Wagner.

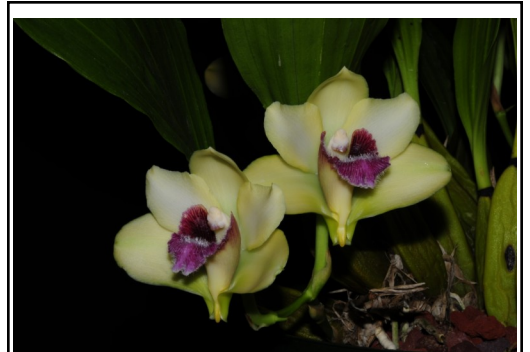
The Non-Greenhouse Grown Awards:

1st Place : Brasia Rex 'Sakata' HCC/AOS – Bob Molter;

2nd Place: Mediocalcar verstigianum "Mountainside" – Allan Miller;

2nd Place: Paph. delatanii – Noland Newton

The meeting adjourned 9:30 pm. Minutes submitted by Armando Neves, Secretary, TOS.



*Bifrenaria harrisonae* 'Hebrita'  
 AM/AOS



## **Dr. Harry Gallis—April Speaker**

Because the genus *Dendrobiums* is so large, and so varied, it is virtually impossible to provide any hard and fast rules for growing these plants. There are well over 1,200 species in the genus. These plants are so variable that there is no way to compare growth habits or cultural needs. Harry stated that the grower must do his/her research. You must learn where the plant is from and what the natural habitat is like, then attempt to replicate those growing conditions.

Harry broke *Dendrobiums* down into five sections – *Phalaenopsis*, *Spatulata*, *Latouria*, *Formosae*, and *Dendrobium* (or *Nobile*). This is perhaps a simplification and other writers and taxonomists would divide them up differently. The two best known species in the *Phalaenopsis* section are *Den bigibbum* and *Den compactum*. These are warm growers who need high light, heavy watering while they are in active growth, and need to be fertilized regularly. They like being rootbound in ridiculously small pots, or being mounted. Blooms can last up to two months. *Phalaenopsis* section hybrids are widely available, and come in an infinite variety of colors. They tend to be fairly tall plants, and can be very top heavy and unstable on the bench.

*Spatulata Dendrobium* includes *Den canaliculatum* and *Den carronii*. These are generally short, compact plants and vigorous growers. They are often very floriferous, with even the youngest plants throwing up 2 – 3 long arching spikes of small, multicolored flowers. The petals are often twisted, like an antelope horn, hence the name “antelope” orchid. They too like to be tight in their pots and will not flower well if they are loose in their containers.

The *Latouria* section contains the extreme warm growers from New Guinea and surrounding tropical islands. The one we see most often is *Den spectabile*, a weird contorted flower that resembles some type of sea creatures. There are only 57 species in this section. They tend to like shade and lots of water. Often they have soft black hairs that cover the canes. The nodding blooms last 3 – 4 months. Roy Tokunaga from Hawaii has done a lot of work breeding these, trying to get the flowers to hold their heads up so they are easier to see. He named the best known of his hybrids after himself, another after his wife Nora. Another well known hybrid Roy made is called *Den Andree Millar*, a pretty rose colored flower that does in fact hold its flowers erect.

Harry did not address the *Formosae* or *Nobile* sections directly. He said he does not grow the *Formosae* because they tend to be very large plants and he does not have room for them in his greenhouse. Additionally, the flowers are very short lived, at times only lasting a day or two. I think it is unfortunate that Harry attempted to cover such a large group of orchids in one lecture. I personally would have preferred that he break his presentation down into five sections, and return to us with five different lectures. Even then he would have over a tremendous amount of information to cover!

**Our thanks to Joy Lemieux for transcribing Dr. Gallis' comments.**

**Dr. Gallis will be the head judge at our show this weekend-  
Come visit the show!!!!**



**Jack Webster Awards  
Non-Greenhouse  
Grown**

**1<sup>st</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Brassia Rex 'Sakata' HCC/AOS  
Grown by Bob Molter



**2d Place Ribbon:**  
Paph. Delatanii  
Grown by Noland Newton



**2nd Place Ribbon:**  
Mediocalcar verstigianum  
'Mountainside'  
Grown by Alan Miller



**Jack Webster Awards  
Greenhouse Grown**



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
*C. mossiaii*  
**Grown by Paul Virtue**



**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
*Brassia*  
**Grown by John Myhre**



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Mtdm. Issaku Nagatu "Volcano Oven"  
**Grown by Michael Wagner**

## Growing Tips for May

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

Once again, I find that I have misjudged how quickly my orchids are drying out. While the humidity has been low for the past few months with lots of bright sunny days, it still surprises me how quickly pots dry each year. This year, the wakeup call occurred when I began to repot cattleyas from a crowded bench. Despite a heavy drenching earlier that morning, some of the pots were very dry. Clearly, I was not getting water into the interior of the bench.

Many years ago, an old-time commercial grower demonstrated how his growers were instructed to water. It seemed silly at the time, but his method of watering at a sharp angle really does work. When cattleyas are placed on a bench and allowed to grow, their leaves will cover the surface above the pot to maximize light capture. Watering directly onto these plants from above allows water to flow around the pot. A good drenching means that the water flows generously through the pot. Watering at an angle can accomplish such a drench and soak the medium.

This time of year, soaking orchids is necessary if you are going to deliver adequate water to the roots. Later in the year, when air humidity is high, it is much easier to get pots soaked. The same is true for vandas and other orchids hanging in baskets. It is necessary to water more frequently and to make two trips across the benches to really wet plant and their roots.

Watering at night or late afternoon is strongly discouraged in most "how to" books. However, this is what happens in Nature and is practiced by many commercial growers, especially in the tropics. It also works for me here in Florida if I can meet the following criteria. The daily humidity is relatively low, my greenhouse is open with great air movement, and night temperature is above 60 F. I water late afternoon and plants are still wet in the morning when I water again with a dilute dose of fertilizer. As soon as I began the practice this spring my orchids immediately perked up. Once humidity gets high again, usually in May or early June, the rate of drying declines and I begin the normal early morning soaking practice.

Obviously, if other media are being used, e.g. sphagnum, it is relatively easy to wet your medium. While it is easy to wet sphagnum, some media that hold water well most of the year may be hard to wet. Media (and soil too) become hydrophobic if they are dry too long under low humidity. Fir bark is vulnerable, especially if a white mold appears on the surface. Once this appears, it becomes almost impossible to adequately wet the bark and repotting becomes necessary.

Soaking all media is best, even if it wets easily. My experiments using sphagnum showed me that tightly packing sphagnum in the pot worked best for that medium. If packed properly, water will actually sit on the surface and only slowly drain through the medium. If you are growing in sphagnum, which is a common medium for pot plants, be sure you flush the pot at least once a month or high levels of salts will accumulate. This may require two passes through the greenhouse or in your sink.

Air conditioning has or will become necessary throughout the South soon. If you grow inside under lights or in a window, you will experience what those of us growing in a greenhouse have been experiencing, low humidity and rapid drying of pots and plants.

If there are spikes with a few flowers left on your phals, consider cutting the spikes off. First bloomed orchids will appreciate this and start their growth cycle earlier, if you remove remaining flowers.

You should already be applying fertilizer so that increased light levels can be converted into more roots and leaves by your orchids. Remember, fertilize weakly weekly, using just  $\frac{1}{4}$  the recommended fertilizer concentration. This remains one of the hardest things for most new orchid hobbyists. If you are using Nutricote, also known as Dynamite, no additional fertilizing is necessary, but continue to flush once a month.

## Announcements & Upcoming Orchid Events

### Green Swamp Field Trip

May 21 : Wonderful trip to see native orchids led by David McAdoo. Sign up with Paul Welty, [pwelty@averillpark.net](mailto:pwelty@averillpark.net)

### Growers Day

August 6th Raulston Arboretum, Raleigh, NC. This is one of our signature events. Be prepared to come learn about orchid culture and volunteer to help out.

### Fall Auction

Sunday Sept. 25 : At Lake Crabtree County Park, Morrisville. Beech Pavilion. Noon pot-luck lunch and auction begins at 1:00 PM. More information later, but put this on your calendar

### Triangle Orchid Society Show

May. 6,7 & 8 :



Bl. Morning Glory

### 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 2011

May  
9th

June  
13th

July  
11th

### Speaker

Clark Riley  
Will have plants  
For sale

Steve Frowine

Bill Toms  
will have Plants  
and books for sale

### Topic

Cinderellas Slippers  
Found.  
The Cypripediums  
and Selenipediums

Phals

General 'How to'  
and orchid problems  
diagnostics

### Welcome Table

### Refreshments

March

Lee Allgood

Michael Arner

April

Need Volunteers

Need Volunteers





**Associated with**

**Sarah P Duke Gardens**

Interim Newsletter Editor  
Josh Gurlitz

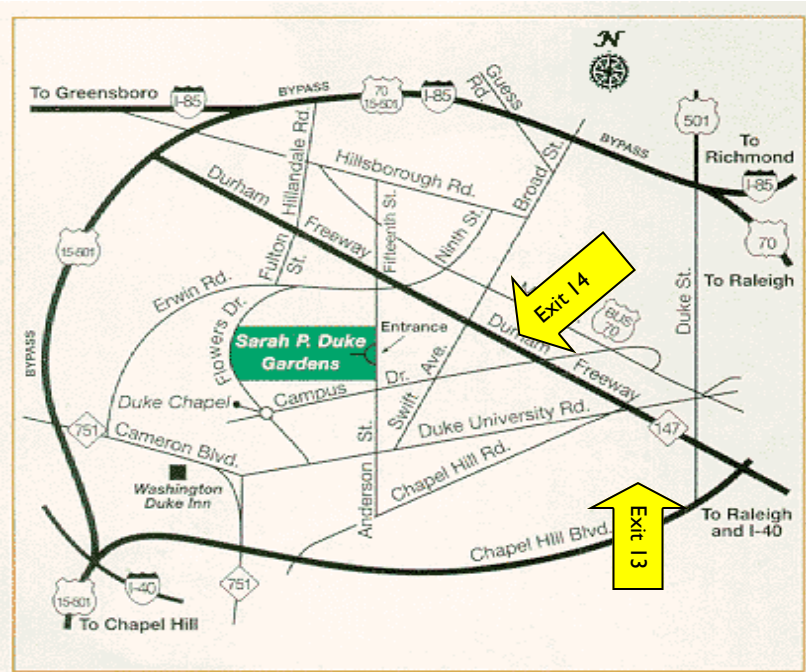
Phone: (919) 929-9717  
E-mail: robing@i-gga.com

**Our TOS Show Poster  
has been designed  
and produced by  
Miriam Sagasti**



**Contact co-chairs Bob Meyer, Leo Sagasti or Robin Gurlitz  
to volunteer for this show.**

**Working at a professionally judged show is great fun and one of  
the best ways to learn about Orchids. Try it!!**



**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**