



# Orchidacea

Newsletter of the  
Triangle Orchid Society

Associated with  
Sarah P. Duke Gardens

## Speaker for June 11, 2012 GERALDINE POWELL

I have been growing orchids for over thirty years and have been involved in the orchid business for over twenty-five years. I have lectured extensively on various topics from Paphs., Phrags., Masdevallias, Miltoniopsis and other topics.

My first orchid was a Cattleya. I bought it because it smelled wonderful. The rest is history. My interests have changed over the years from Catts. to Paphs. And Phrags. to weird species and so on. I have always liked Masdevallias and Miltoniopsis but hesitated to try many of them because of their reputation for being cool growing. I grew a few of the warmer growing types but I really wanted coccinea and yungasensis and the like.

When we opened our nursery in Brooksville, Florida I set up a small greenhouse specifically for cool growers. My partner thought I was nuts. I guess she was right. But our cooler growing plants started to receiving AOS awards. When we moved to Signal Mountain in Tennessee I continued with the cool growers. It might be a little cooler on the side of the mountain but I still had problems with the coolest growers. Over the first 2 years in Tennessee I developed Cool Pots. These have allowed us to grow a much wider variety Masdevallias. We began marketing Cool Pots about four years ago. Over the years I have learned a lot about growing Masdevallias and other cool growing orchids in a warm climate.

I'm looking forward to sharing what I've learned with your society.

Thank you for inviting me.

## **Geraldine will have plants to sell**

### **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



**June Grower of the Month**

**-Sarah Patterson-**

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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**

## TOS Officers and Board Members

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## A Word From The President

June, 2012

Greetings Everyone!

It has rained a lot in the past few weeks. If you moved your orchids outside, the rainwater is the best way to flush the accumulated fertilizer and salts in the pot and medium. Now let's hope for some drier weather so the roots can dry up and not rot!

The speaker this month, Geraldine Powell, will talk about the ABCs of Cool Weather Orchids. Some of the most exotic flowers can be found in the cool growers group so this should be a very interesting program.

We have our annual Growers Day coming up on August 4, Saturday, and we need volunteers to help with the logistics, refreshments, plant transportation and many other activities. We would appreciate having you involved, so please contact us at [info@triangleorchidsociety.org](mailto:info@triangleorchidsociety.org) and let us know how you can help make this a successful event.

Best Regards and Happy Growing!

Armando Neves  
 TOS President 2012



### **Meeting Minutes 05/14/2012**

The May 14, 2012 membership meeting of the Triangle Orchid Society, Inc. was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Armando Neves, President. Everybody was welcomed and we had a new member join. Approximately 41 people attended the meeting. The minutes of the April membership meeting were approved.

The President expressed his thanks to Sally Carpenter for all of the work that she did in putting together our Spring Auction. Ralph Sears thanked Paul Virtue for flashing pictures of auction orchids on a screen.

The President also thanked Robin & Josh Gurlitz for taking charge of our exhibit at the Sandhills Orchid Society Show and thanked those who either contributed time to set up and take down the exhibit or who loaned orchids for the exhibit.

Mark your calendars for Grower's Day. It will be held Saturday, August 4, 2012 at the Raulston Arboretum at N.C. State University in Raleigh. A chairperson and other volunteers are needed to help with the event. Please contact the President to volunteer.

The repotting workshop held at the Orchid Trail was a success. The Society extends many thanks to John Stanton for providing the facility and to Paul Feaver for his lecture on repotting.

Thanks to Josh and Robin Gurlitz for providing refreshments for the evening, to Nancy Harvey and Lee Allgood for manning the Welcome Table, and to Paul Welty for hauling the lights and stands.

Raffle tickets were available at \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Bring a plant for the show table and receive a free raffle ticket up to a maximum of five tickets.

Ralph Sears, our Vice-President, introduced Gene Crocker, our speaker, whose talk was on Cattleya hybrids. Following the speaker's presentation, there was a short time for refreshments.

Thanks to Paul Feaver and Nick Plummer for an excellent show table discussion. While time may prevent the discussion of every plant, please raise your hand if you have a question about a specific plant not mentioned.

The Jack Webster Showtable Awards are as follows:

GREENHOUSE:	1 <sup>st</sup> place to Nick Plummer for <i>Ascocentrum garayi</i> ;
	2 <sup>nd</sup> place to Michael Wagner for <i>Rodriguezia venustra</i> ; and,
	3 <sup>rd</sup> place to David Pickett for <i>Paph.Greyi</i> ,
NON-GREENHOUSE	2 <sup>nd</sup> place ties to Suzanne Hens for <i>Den. Hiroshi Tokunaga</i>
	<i>Don Marie x Efundia</i> , and
	Sarah Patterson for <i>Mystacidium capense</i> ;
	3 <sup>rd</sup> place to Nancy Harvey for <i>Trichopilia Charles</i> .

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by David Pickett, Secretary.

## Gene Crocker May Speaker Unusual Orchids I Have Known

When I saw the title of Gene's presentation I knew it was going to be a fun evening. After all, Gene has been in the business for more than twenty-five years, he's seen it all. He's probably grown more unusual orchids than anyone in our club. And, true to form, Gene delivered. His presentation was a wonderful overview of the weird, the bizarre, the fragrant and the repulsive.

Gene began with two members of the **Angraecum** family – **Aerangis punctata** and **Angraecum sesquipedale**. These are like the Mutt and Jeff of the **Angraecum** family, the **Aerangis** is a miniature plant barely one and a half inches high, while the **Angraecum** can easily reach three feet or more. The **Aerangis** has larger than life blooms, often more than four inches across. The **Angraecum** on the other hand has a spur that can be up to 14 inches long. Both are native to Madagascar and both have white or ivory flowers, sometimes tinged with pale green. **A sesquipedale** is the plant Darwin made famous by predicting the existence of a moth with a tongue long enough to reach to the bottom of the nectary.

Gene moved on to **Paphiopedilums**. He focused on only two – **P sanderanum** and **P hirsutissimum**. **P sanderanum**, a native of Borneo, is recognized by its long, twisting, ribbon like petals that can grow to 35 inches. Some have speculated that the twisting, elongated petals function as a ramp for pollinators. To achieve maximum length of the petals, stack the pot with the opening flowers on another tall pot, taking care that the petals float freely and do not touch the pot. The petals will continue to grow until they encounter resistance, such as the table top or bench. **P hirsutissimum** is native to northern India and Myanmar (Burma). It grows at extremely high elevations and can tolerate nearly freezing temperatures. The foliage is spotted purple on the bottom, and the stem is covered with dense dark hairs. The petals are also hairy.

**Bulbophyllums** appear to be some of Gene's favorite plants because he discussed several. **B barbigerum** is a miniature plant with red flowers and a hinged, hairy lip. It appears to be in motion all the time as the hairs on the lip wiggle and jerk and bob in the breeze. It's from Africa, and a warm grower. **B medusa** has masses of pale ivory or white umbels that are tightly packed in a ball. It has always reminded me of a really bad hair day but was actually named for the Indian goddess with the snake headdress. It grows best in a basket or on a mount, and hails from Thailand and the Pacific Islands. **B frosti** is known as the Dutch shoe orchid because the individual flowers resemble little wooded shoes. It too is a miniature plant, is native to Viet Nam, and is extremely adaptable as it can be grown hot or cold. **B barbigerum** and **B medusa** both foul smell but **B frosti** is noted for smelling very nice.

Having spent twenty five years making *Cattleya* hybrids, it is not surprising that Gene included a number of *Cattleyas* on his list. He reported that Carter and Holmes has a plant of **C trianaei** that was collected in 1888 but not awarded until 1989. This species can carry three to four flowers per stem, each of which can be six to nine inches across. You can imagine what a well grown plant must look like when it is fully flowered!! There are numerous color forms of **C trianaei**, varying from white to rose to amethyst. It is widely distributed throughout Columbia. **C dowiana** is another spectacular Columbia species. Its sepal and petals are bright golden yellow,

flecked with crimson. The exceptionally broad lip is crimson, veined with gold. It carries two to three flowers normally, but can have up to seven. The flowers are five to seven inches across. There are conservation efforts under way to grow **C dowiana** from wild collected seed in an effort to capture some of the original color forms that have disappeared from cultivation. **Rhyncholaelia digbyana** can be recognized by its distinctive silvery foliage. When it receives adequate light, the foliage may develop a maroon cast on the back of the leaf. This species is native to the Mexican Yucatan and Belize and can be found growing on scrubby trees with full sun exposure. The flowers are apple green with a large fuzzy lip, and have an over powering night time fragrance. It has been used for years by hybridizers seeking to replicate a ruffled lip.

**Catasetums** are noted for their ability to produce male and female flowers, sometimes on the same plant. There exists ongoing controversy as to why a plant may produce male flowers one year and female flowers the next, and frankly I don't buy any of the theories. The female flowers of virtually all the species are green and hooded. They remind me of little green Martians! The male flowers are distinctive and varied. Many have a fringed lip. All have the hinged mechanism that can catapult pollinia up to ten feet across the room. The last ten to fifteen years has seen a resurgence of interest in **Catasetums**, with many new hybrids becoming available. **Fredclarkeara After Dark** is probably the most famous and received national attention when marketed as the first truly black orchid.

Gene included **Trichopilia tortilis** in his list of favorite unusual plants. I would include **T marginata** and **T sauis** is some of the most rewarding plants I have flowered. These are small plants, happily grown in baskets with well drained medium. I killed several before realizing that they require a winter rest period. They are found from Mexico to Brazil growing in wet forests in moderate to hot conditions with filtered shade.

**Zygopetalum mackayi** is native to Brazil. I can appreciate why Gene put it on his list. Like so many other **Zygopetalums**, **Z mackayi's** flowers are lime green and purple and have an incredibly sweet fragrance. Zygos grow like Cymbidiums and due to recent hybridizing advances come in a spectacular range of very subtle colors.

These are just a few of the Orchids that Gene discussed. The broad scope of his knowledge and his enthusiasm is certainly infectious. Although he has focused so much effort on hybridizing Cattleyas, he is also clearly captivated by other species. I for one can't wait for him to come back!

THANK YOU JOY LEMIEUX FOR TRANSCRIBING GENE'S TALK AND SHARING YOUR COMMENTS WITH US.



Dendrobium tanii

## TWO OF GENE'S ORCHIDS

Doritaenopsis Anna-Larati  
Soekardii Lenette # 3 x Redlands



## Sarah Patterson.....June 2012 TOS Grower of the month

I have had my own collection for about 7 years, but have been working with my mother's plants for longer. I was introduced to orchid keeping by my mother, Nancy Harvey (also a TOS member). Way back when I was in middle school, she got her first orchids. From then I learned more about them, helped her with regular maintenance, and even helped her build her greenhouse. During graduate school, I was finally able to start a collection in my own home, and it has gradually grown since then.

I was fortunate that I learned about orchids from my mother and her collection prior to really starting my own. I learned early that there are far more orchids out there than you can actually keep yourself, so I have always tried to be selective in picking out my plants. It is always a good practice to research whether your growing style (over-watering worrier is mine) and space will work for an orchid before you get it! At the same time, don't be afraid to try something new every once in a while!

Well, one thing I really love about orchids is their roots. Not only are they interesting to look at, but they also help to indicate plant health. So, I really like growing things in baskets or on mounts when possible. After studying the first orchid baskets my mother and I brought home, my father quickly figured out how to make wonderful cedar wood baskets of all shapes and sizes for us. Ever since then, I've always been able to get a basket to fit my needs. I like using mixes of bark, tree fern pieces, coconut chips, and perlite in many of my baskets. To line the baskets and on mounts, I prefer to use coconut fiber pads rather than sphagnum.

### **Tell us more details about the orchid growing space**

On the south side of the house, I have a sunroom that is essentially dedicated to my orchids (and my little parrot). I keep the humidity high in this room, and run a ceiling fan to maintain constant air circulation. It has both east and south facing windows. Many of my plants I keep inside all year round, others move outside on my back deck during the warmer season. I collect rainwater in barrels and use that for all my watering.

### **List any other genera not included above that you think it's worth mentioning**

The genus I have the most of is *Aerangis*. I also enjoy other smaller *Angraecoids*. In general, though, I lean toward compact or miniature plants: *Sarcochilus*, *Barkeria*, jewel orchids, to name a few other odd interests. The smaller the size, the more plants I can fit in my growing space!

### **What has been your least successful plant(s) growing so far? What were the challenges and why?**

Growing on windowsills does not allow for certain orchids to get as much light as they would prefer, so I have to recognize the limitations of this type of growing. I have had to re-home a few plants that have just outgrown my space, or I felt needed more light. I also think I am a bit of an over-waterer, so that is another reason I prefer baskets to pots.

### **What has been your most successful plant(s) growing or blooming so far? How did you accomplish it?**

For the November meeting of last year, I brought in my *Aerangis distincta* - which had 15 flowers on four inflorescences. I am still thrilled with that showing. The plant seems happiest grown in an east-facing window with frequent watering and high humidity. Since that bloom, I made the decision to remove it from the large bark media it was growing in and shift it to growing in a larger basket with just a coconut fiber pad for moisture retention. It has taken off and grown tons of new roots, so I am crossing my fingers for the next bloom!



PHOTOS OF SARAH'S GROWING AREA & PLANTS



Aerangis distincta



WINDOW GROWING AREA WITH SHELVING



OUTDOOR SHADED GROWING AREA  
'SUMMER CAMP' FOR ORCHIDS



Phal. MiniMark "Holm"



Zygolum Louisedorf



**2nd Place tie Ribbon:**  
Den. Hiroshi Tokunaga Don Marie x  
Efundia  
**Grown by Suzanne Hens**

**Jack Webster Awards  
Non-Greenhouse  
Grown**



**2nd Place tie Ribbon:**  
Mystacidium cepense  
**Grown by Sarah Patterson**



**3d Place Ribbon:**  
Trichopilia Charles  
**Grown by Nancy Harvey**



**Jack Webster Awards  
Greenhouse Grown**



**1<sup>st</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Asctm. garayi  
**Grown by Nick Plummer**



**2<sup>nd</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Rodriguezia venusta  
**Grown by Michael Wagner**



**3<sup>rd</sup> Place Ribbon:**  
Paph. Greyi  
**Grown by David Pickett**

## Courtney Hackney..Growing Tips for June 2012

Dept. of Biology, Univ. North Florida

Email: [Hackneau@comcast.net](mailto:Hackneau@comcast.net)

Once again, I find that I have misjudged how quickly my orchids are drying out. The humidity has been low for the past few months with lots of bright sunny days, but it still surprises me how quickly pots dry each year when these conditions persist. This year, the wakeup call occurred when I began to repot cattleyas from a crowded bench. Despite watering earlier that morning, some of the pots were very dry. Clearly, I was not getting water into the interior of the bench. No matter what the time of year, it is important to thoroughly drench your orchids each time you water. The more plants you have, the more difficult this can be.

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 and not wash through the medium. 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. Soaking the medium is necessary if you are going to deliver adequate water to roots.

Some growers have a formula they use to decide when it is time to water, which takes into account temperature, light, air movement and especially humidity.

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. When humidity is high and air movement low do not water at night.

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 re-potting is necessary.

My experiments using sphagnum showed me that tightly packing sphagnum in the pot worked best for that medium, at least under my growing conditions. 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 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.

**GROWERS DAY  
2012**

TOS has scheduled our Growers Day for August 4, 2012 at the Raulston Arboretum. This is always a great event for beginning and advanced growers alike. Mark your calendars now and plan to attend. This a great event to volunteer for—you can get an education while helping out TOS.

**MORE ORCHID EVENTS**

Our **TOS FALL AUCTION** is now being planned. Contact **Armando Neves** to volunteer for THIS wonderful event.

The **Triad Orchid Society** will be having their show in the fall of 2012. We will keep you informed

<b>Triangle Orchid Society Meeting Agenda:</b>		<b>Calendar 2011</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	<b>Topic</b>
7:00-7:30	Set Up Show Table and Chairs	<b>June 11</b>	<b>Geraldine Powell</b> Will sell plants	<b>The ABC of cool weather orchids</b>
7:30-7:40	Business Meeting Announcements			
7:40-8:30	Program	<b>July 9</b>	<b>Michael Coronado</b> Will sell plants	<b>Vanda Culture</b>
8:30-8:50	Refreshment Break			
8:50-9:20	Show Table Review, Show Table Awards	<b>August 13</b>	<b>Courtney Hackney</b>	<b>Tips for growing Orchids</b>
9:20-9:30	Raffle			

<b>Welcome Table</b>	<b>Refreshments</b>
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<b>June</b>	<b>Connie Howard</b>	<b>Anesha Johnson &amp; Jeanette Massengill</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>Sue Morand</b>	<b>Suzanne Hens</b>





Associated with

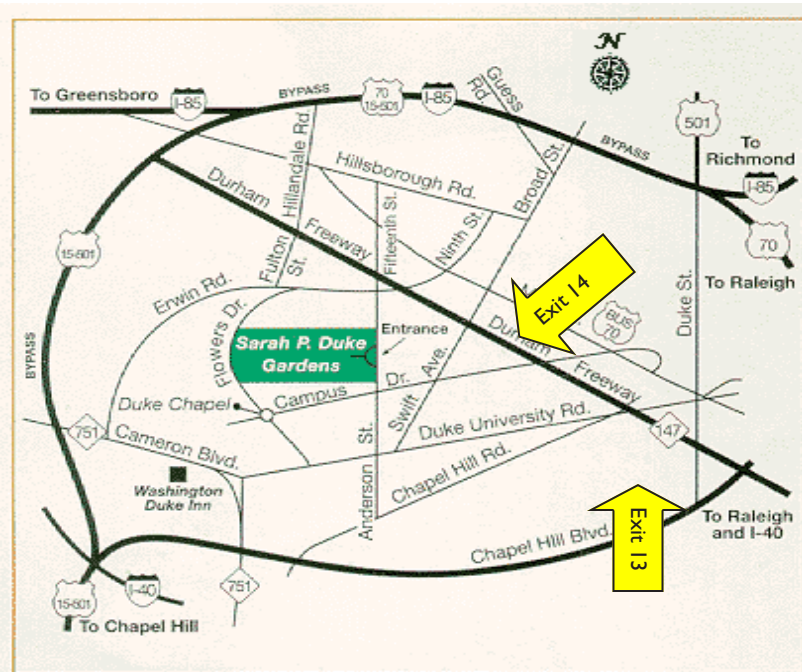
**Sarah P Duke Gardens**

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**Bifrenaria inodora**



**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:**

**\$20** per year single, or **\$26** per year for two persons living at the same address.