



Orchidacea

Newsletter of the
Triangle Orchid Society

Associated with
Sarah P. Duke Gardens

November 10, 2014

David Off

Collecting Antique Cattleyas

David Off was born into the family orchid business in 1979. He grew up in a home on property adjacent to the greenhouses. Dave has been taught in a hands-on environment from an early age. He is currently Assistant Greenhouse Manager for Waldor Orchids. The Off family has been growing plants since 1925. In addition to his personal collection, David oversees the care and maintenance of Waldor's renowned classic cattleya collection.

David married his wife Sarah in 2002. They have two sons, Daniel and Clayton, who are being cultivated as the fourth generation of orchid growers.

David will be bringing plants to sell.

Pre-orders will be accepted until Thursday, Nov. 6.

View plants on David's website, www.waldor.com

then send him an email at dave@waldor.com with the plants you want to order. Remember to indicate that you are in the Triangle Orchid Society

Dinner with the speaker

5:30 PM - **before the meeting** at the Carrabba's Restaurant

5312 New Hope Commons Drive, Durham, across from New Hope Commons Shopping Center at the intersection of I-40 and US 15/501.

Call Alan Miller to reserve a seat at 919-969-1612 All are welcome

Inside this issue:

This Month's Speaker	1
<i>Meeting minutes</i>	2
<i>Nominating Committee</i>	3
<i>NC State Fair Exhibit</i>	4
<i>TOS Calendar</i>	5
<i>Speakers notes</i>	6
<i>Monthly Checklist, Nov.</i>	10
<i>Show table</i>	12
<i>Announcements</i>	14
<i>Future meetings</i>	15
<i>Map and directions To Sarah Duke Gar- dens</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 2014

Officers

President

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October 13, 2014 Membership Meeting Minutes

The October 13 2014 membership meeting of the Triangle Orchid Society was called to order at 7:30pm by Nancy Harvey, the TOS President. Five guests were present. Approximately 45 people attended the meeting this night. Anne Williams was recognized for covering the Welcome Table and selling raffle tickets. Everyone was encouraged to purchase raffle tickets. (Raffle tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5.00.) Members receive a free ticket for each plant they bring for the show table (maximum of 3 free tickets).

All members were reminded to volunteer for the many activities that need support including the raffle and welcome table. All members were encouraged to support the TOS exhibit at the North Carolina State Fair. Some orchids for the fair were supplied from the show tables. We need volunteers to stand by the TOS show table during the fair.

The nominating committee introduced the slate of officers and trustees. The committee slate is included in this newsletter. The society will vote on the officers and trustees at the November meeting.

The presentation for this meeting was "Phalaenopsis Orchid Culture". The presenter was Tom Harper of Stone River Orchids in Tennessee.

Paul Feaver and Nick Plummer discussed the orchids on the show tables this month. The Jack Webster Award Plants were:

Greenhouse Awards were:

- 1st Place: Bulbophyllum Doris Duke 'Bills Best' AM/AOS, grown by Nancy Harvey
- 2nd Place: Bc Nakornpathome Silver 'Olivene' AM/AOS, grown by Paul and Olivene Virtue
- 3rd Place: Paph. (Vera Pellechia x praestans 'Sunda Isles'), grown by Melissa Bullard

The Non-Greenhouse awards were:

- 1st Place: BI Morning Glory 'Raman' HCC/AOS, grown by Lee Algood
- 2nd Place: Epidendrum magnolia, grown by Charles Walker
- 3rd Place: Blc Purple Magic 'Valley Isle' x C Haiku Rose 'Lavender Dream', grown by Sidney Cox

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30. Meeting notes submitted by Sidney Cox, TOS Secretary.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The nominating committee of the Triangle Orchid Society respectfully recommends the following society members for board and trustee positions for the year 2015:

For Officers:

Nancy Harvey.....President
Sidney Cox.....Vice President
Anne Williams.....Treasurer
Louanne and Chrissy Shea.....Secretaries

For Board of Trustees for the 3 year term expiring in 2017:

Steven McAllister.....2017
Sarah Patterson.....2017

The following trustees continue in position until the end of their terms:

Suzi Hens2015
Harry Gallis.....2015
Kelly Nipp.....2016
Pei fen Liu.....2016

Trustees Gerry Bowater and David Devine terms expire this year and will be leaving the board. The nominating committee extends a real thank you to these two wonderful board members,

The membership of the Triangle Orchid Society will vote for the 2015 Offices and new Trustees at the regular November meeting of the Society. Nominations from the floor are also welcomed. Please come to this important meeting and cast your vote.

Sincerely, the Nominating Committee:

Paul Virtue [past President],
 Melissa Bullard [past Treasurer] and
 Robin Gurlitz [past President].



Triangle Orchid Society exhibit
North Carolina State Fair, 2014

Volunteers designed, assembled and loaned their wonderful plants to make this exhibit one of the best. The volunteers included: John Martin, Sarah and Dustin Patterson, Anne Williams, Bob Davidson, Nancy Harvey, Louanne and Chrissy Shea, Bob Meyer, David Pickett, Ruth Stanton, Dianne Parks, Charles Walker, Sidney Cox, Paul Welty, Lee Allgood, Michael Wagner and Josh and Robin Gurlitz.

Thanks to Dustin Patterson for the exhibit photograph

Triangle Orchid Society 2015 calendar

TOS has assembled and published an orchid calendar for 2015 and they go on sale at our November meeting. With photos from the private collections of some of our very best growers you **won't want to miss getting one of your own.**

The cover below just gives a hint of what is inside. Thanks go out to all those who sent in photos so we could have this lovely calendar ready for the Holiday Season and the New Year!

The following members responded to the call for photos: Mark and Kim Webster, Sarah and Dustin Patterson, Dr. Harry Gallis, Nicholas Plummer, Paul and Olivene Virtue, Ralph Belk, Tom and Kathy Wiles, Melissa Bullard, Kelly Nipp and Steven McAllister, Charles Walker, Harriett Stubbs, and Nancy Harvey.



For those whose photo did not make it into the calendar, check out the website to see if your picture is there instead. Some of the lovely, vertical photos just wouldn't fit the calendar format

Tom Harper

Phalaenopsis

Tom has been growing orchids for forty-six years. He retired from his day job in 2002 and **began his business, Stone's River Orchids. He travels extensively, always on the look-** out of interesting plants that he can incorporate into his hybridizing program. Over the years he has made numerous contacts here in the US as well as abroad. Attending the Taiwan Orchid **Grower's Show seems to have become an annual event for him. This has put him in contact** with a number of the Taiwanese growers and hybridizers, giving him a firsthand opportunity **to see, and acquire, some of the latest crosses. Tom's specialty has always been Phalaenopsis.** He probably knows more about their history and culture than any other grower in the US today. It was a real treat for us, therefore, to have him speak to our society and share his experience as a grower.

Tom began by listing the fundamentals – light, water, fertilizer, temperature, and humidity.

Light. He stated that Phals do best in natural light. A home windowsill grower, therefore, will do well by placing plants in a West or East facing window. Windows with southern exposure, Tom said, are generally too hot. If a phal leaf feels warm to your touch, that plant is getting too much light. A south facing window can be okay if it only gets morning light. In nature, Phals grown under the canopy, in dappled light. This is significantly less than required by Catts, for example. Artificial light, especially from e-glass, knocks the heat out of direct sunlight but allows the light to pass through. No shading is required as the sun light passes directly onto the plants.

Watering. Many orchid growers kill plants by overwatering. Tom explained that plants that sit in water are vulnerable to bacteria and fungus infections. Especially during the winter months, the plants are prone to root and crown rot from overwatering. Tom recommends allowing the medium to dry out between waterings, and only use water that is at room temperature.

Phals need fertilizers. Tom pointed out that most fertilizers are essentially salts, and that they can build up in the medium and around the roots of plants. It is the buildup of these salts that destroys roots. Tom recommends a flushing every 3 – 4 weeks to prevent fertilizer buildup in the pots. Tom cautioned us to read the labels carefully so that we can understand how we are feeding plants. He uses a Michigan State University (MSU) formulation, which is thirteen parts nitrogen, three parts potassium and fifteen percent phosphorous. However, he states that any brand of fertilizer works, but just be sure to keep the concentration level at half to one third of the dose recommended on the label. Tom does recommend that a water soluble product, not granular, as it may be difficult to dissolve the granular product.

Phals especially like the same temperatures that humans like so they are very comfortable in our homes. Tom pointed out that many Phals are now bred thrive in normal household temperatures of 72 degrees. If Phals are not happy in their environment, especially if they are too cold, they simply will not rebloom. While it is true that Phals like cooler evenings, they cannot tolerate extremes in temperature overnight. Tom said that most Phals bloom best



with a ten degree drop overnight, anything more extreme can result in insect infestations such as thrips. Any sudden, precipitous drop in temperature can set disease mechanisms in motions leading to pitting on foliage or crown rot.

Air Movement is critical to Phals. Tom recommends directing fans away from Phals. Pointing the fan directly at the plants can cause the plants to dry out too quickly, leaving the plant vulnerable to diseases.

Humidity is another important factor to consider when growing Phals. They appear to be happiest when the surrounding temperatures are about sixty degrees. Humidity naturally rises at night and combines with the air movement, rising at night. When the humidity is too high, Phals in particular, will be too wet which frequently leads to their decline. Tom recommends that Phals be watered early in the day, allowing time for the plants to dry out thoroughly before nightfall. Plants left in standing water, or with water left in their crowns after dark are the most vulnerable, as they can develop crown rot. Tom recommends that Phals be grown on the **dry side**. **When asked about Phals that require a “down time”, Tom responded that this is best answered** by checking with a good orchid nursery to determine the culture for that particular plant, with the caveat that some species always bloom during a specific time. Just when this is can be determined by checking growth charts and seasonal monsoonal patterns where these plants come from.

To rebloom a Phal, Tom recommends cutting the stem once the flowers have fallen off. Initially cut at the second node if the stem is green and still viable. If a plant is strong enough, it will throw out a new stem at the end of the cut. Expect the second flowering to be smaller and fewer than those from the original flowering. Generally, when your Phal has finished blooming, it is best to cut the stem one and a half or two inches from the trunk. This helps to reduce the spread of diseases. When the stem has died and turned brown, you can simply break it off.

Phals appear to be willing hosts to a number of “critters”. Tom recommends keeping sprayers available in your growing area so plants can be sprayed as soon as you find them. Although hydrogen peroxide and alcohol are not specifically labeled for orchids, they are safe to use. If you are using hydrogen peroxide, buy the label that says three percent concentration. Alcohol can be used at seventy percent. You will know that your hydrogen peroxide is fresh and viable, when you pour it out of the bottle and it foams. It does decompose when exposed to sunlight so **don't store it too long**. **After spraying plants with hydrogen peroxide, follow up with a dusting** of cinnamon, also a disinfectant, which will dry out the wound. If using alcohol, dilute it to half and half with water. It does kill bugs, but it also evaporates very quickly and may require several applications to wipe out an infestation.

Orthene is another highly effective product when first used, but insects do become immune to its use. Also, it does smell bad! It is critical to remember that not all of these products will be effective on all insects. Also, repeated use of one product can cause your insects to develop resistance. Tom sOil based products are best for treating mealy bugs and scale. It coats the insect, and virtually smothers them. Like hydrogen peroxide and alcohol, it is safe for human use. Neem oil is readily available, but does smell bad. There are several horticultural oils that are readily available either through your local home center or hardware, or on the web. If you are using Neem oil, use one teaspoon per one quart of water, and stir to combine well. You can add a squirt of liquid dish soap to help the oil stick to the foliage of your plant.

If you want something stronger, Tom recommends the Bayer products available at all local hardware and home center stores. Bayer Complete acts as a systemic as well as on contact. Merit is an effective Mitecide but it must be used outdoors and you must suit up to protect **yourself when handling it. Tom recommends buying this as a hose attachment because it's so easy to use.** he suggests staggering or rotating the products you use to keep them effective.

Some of the most common insects to affect our orchids include Mealy bugs, Scale and Mites. Mealies are easily identified as they are white cotton masses that cling to the back of a flower or a leaf. They kill plants by sucking the juices from the plants. Scale acts in much the same way. They can be brown or white with reddish spots. When spraying for scale or mealies, be sure to spray the backs of foliage and flowers and into the joints. Mites are microscopic in size and not visible to the naked eye. However, their presence is made known by the fine webbed material they produce on the back of the leaf. Also, if you wipe the back of the leaf with a white paper or cloth, you will produce a reddish material on your wipe. They are not affected by the Bayer products. While not entirely effective, washing and wiping off the underside of each leaf with a soap solution provides some control.

Another problem specific to Phals, and common to many other orchids, is the multiple bacterial and fungus infections that travel through a collection. The bacterial infections cause sunken areas on the leaf where the cell structure has collapsed. Removal of the affected foliage is the only cure. Bacterial infections also affect the roots when the plant has been kept too wet, or the medium is breaking down. Blackened or brown, spongy roots need to be cut away. Once into a plant, bacterial infections spread rapidly through the plants vascular system, and if you are not vigilant, the plant can die. Tom recommends treating spots on foliage by cutting a cross hatched pattern on the leaf and then cleaning the wound with hydrogen peroxide followed by a dusting with cinnamon. Be careful to only use new or sterilized tools when repotting or treating plants as sap on your cutting instruments can spread infection from one plant to the next.

There are a number of virus that infect orchids and these are basically untreatable. They quickly spread from plant to plant through contaminated repotting tools, recycled pots, or even recycled medium. When repotting, discard all the medium in the old pot. Do not be tempted to reuse it!! When reusing pots, wash them thoroughly in hot soapy water and then soak in a bleach solution before putting another plant into that pot. There are several types of virus, the most common being the tobacco mosaic. There is also the *Odontoglossum* ring spot virus, identified initially by rings of discolored material on the foliage. Another is the *Cymbidium* mosaic which causes streaking on the foliage. There are kits for home use that you can use to identify these virus, but they only work for one or two of the most common varieties, and there are hundreds out there. The safest thing to do if you suspect a plant is virused is to steel yourself and throw it away. Do not put the plant material in your compost as that will only spread it through your entire garden.

Most Phals should be sending out spikes now. To initiate spiking, Phals need nighttime temperatures to be a minimum of fifteen degrees colder than their daytime temperature for a period of ten days to two weeks. This applies to most species. Hybrids are bred for household use and can tolerate sustained indoor temps but may not rebloom as well as their initial blooming. Once in bloom, Phals will often stay fresh for three months or more.



Repot your Phals when the roots become exposed, or before the medium begins to break down. Tom recommends repotting every two years. The best time to do this is when new growth is initiated, when you see new leaves developing, or new root growth. Be sure to cut away all dead roots. Select pot size based on the size of the root ball, making sure the roots fit snugly **into the pot. If the pot is too big, and the roots don't fill the pot, there is a higher risk of water retention and root rot.** Always use the smallest pot possible, regardless of the size of the plant itself.

Potting medium should hold moisture and breath. Tom made the point that most mixes found in the big box stores should be avoided as they contain long leaf pine bark and decompose quickly. Also these mixes may contain unevenly sized particles and small rocks. As the smaller particles wash out during watering, the remaining media may shift and disturb any new roots that are developing. Commercial mixes also causes water retention which can cause root rot. Be careful not to break any of the roots when handling the plant, as water can get into the wound and leave the plant vulnerable to bacterial infections. Scoop your medium into the pot around the roots, and tamp it gently until the roots are held firmly. Tom recommends soaking media before use.

Tom keeps his Phals in sphagnum moss. He likes it because it retains moisture longer than bark, therefore requiring less watering and less frequent fertilizing. However, the cost of sphagnum has gone up significantly in recent years. Tom said that the moss he buys is from Chile, and feels it holds up as well as the more expensive variety from New Zealand. The disadvantage of using sphagnum is that it can stay wet too long. When repotting with sphagnum, wet the material first, then squeeze as much moisture as possible out of it before putting it in the pot. It is slightly acidic when wet and if it is too wet it retards the plants adaptation in the pot.

Tom feels that bark retains moisture unevenly in the pot and that it requires watering more frequently. But, like sphagnum, it is slightly acidic. The advantage of using bark is that it is less expensive than sphagnum, it drains quickly, but it may be more difficult to handle when repotting. Tom recommends wearing gloves when working with bark as it can stain your hands and fingernails. Currently, many commercial growers are recommending a pine bark from New Zealand. It is extremely hard and is said to last seven years before it decomposes. It is sold under the trade name Orchiata. This is the brand Eliot had available. It is also available through the Orchid Trail in Morrisville.

Our thanks to Joy Lemieux for transcribing Tom Harper's
presentation

MONTHLY CHECKLIST FOR NOVEMBER & DECEMBER

Cattleya

Growers of just about every level of expertise will have begun to notice autumn conditions by now. Days are becoming shorter, hence cooler; the sunlight has less intensity as a result of the sun's lowering angle, nights are longer and generally cooler. Plants are responding by slowing and ripening their growth in preparation for winter.

The first cultural change noticed should be a reduced frequency of watering, as the plants dry out more slowly. This is a function of both the reduced day length and lower temperatures, as well as the plants' slowing growth rate. Reduced water needs signal a reduced need for fertilization. Note that the key word is reduced, not eliminated. Feed less frequently and at lower dosage, but feed. Growths, made during summer's heat, and relatively soft and green, will be ripening -- hardening -- in preparation for a brief period of rest (in many cases).

Many of these ripening growths will have a sheath, presaging the coming winter or spring flowering season. In some cases, these sheaths will have been evident since as early as July. (Early sheath development does not mean early flowering on plants with winter-spring seasons.) You may notice that some of these sheaths are showing signs of yellowing. This is not abnormal. Autumn's more pronounced temperature fluctuation can lead to water condensation inside the sheath, hastening the normal process of senescence, so yellowing sheaths can be left on the plant only so long before they must be carefully removed to preserve the bud primordia within. Water condensation left unchecked can rot the bud primordia. The sheaths can be safely removed by slitting open and peeling down toward the pseudobulb.

Cool-Growing Orchids

One can almost hear a sigh of relief from all of the cool-growers, from masdevallias to odontoglossums. As day temperatures decline, one can see a noticeable improvement in these plants. Shorter days and lower light levels do not seem to bother them. Repot before winter arrives.

Cymbidium

Finally we begin in earnest the main cymbidium season. *Cymbidium ensifolium* can give some early and fragrant hybrids, but it is now that the bulk of the crop will be flowering. The season lasts for about seven months, adding color to any collection. Miniature varieties will peak for the next three to four months. There are three important things to do: stake inflorescences ramrod straight for best presentation, watch for slugs and snails (especially just after a rain), and fertilize with a mild balanced formula regularly.



Cymbidium ensifolium produces delicate flowers with a delightful citrus fragrance.

Oncidium crispum Complex

This is the season for plants in *Oncidium* section *crispum* from Brazil to shine. Extremely vigorous hybrids come in wide varieties of markings dominated with chestnut and brown and butter yellow. Give plants high light to produce strong upright inflorescences. The pseudobulbs should be plump, so do not let the plants dry out while they are in bloom. Later, plants will enter a dormant period.

there .

Paphiopedilum

The flowering season for the "toads" or "bulldog" paphs is just getting underway. These cannot be grown everywhere, but where cooler summer nights allow their growth, is no longer-lasting or more exotic display than these. Paphiopedilums are, in general, not heavy feeders, and it is especially important with this type to reduce nitrogen levels now for best flowering and spike length. Be watchful for water accumulating in the growth around the sheath, or for the late-season warm spell, either of which can lead to the sheath's rotting. As the spikes emerge, do not change the orientation of the plant toward the light, as this can lead to a crooked or twisted spike

While paphiopedilums rarely like to dry out entirely, water needs are significantly reduced beginning now. Overwatering at this time of year can quickly lead to root rot or erwinia problems. Now is the time to practice good sanitary practices in your greenhouse or growing areas, as pest and disease problems have a way of multiplying rapidly in the darker and more crowded conditions that generally mark the winter growing area. With paphiopedilums, especially, "cleanliness is next to godliness" and if the growing area is littered with old foliage, weeds and dying flowers, keeping the plants alive and flowering will be next to impossible.

Phalaenopsis

Shortening days and cooler nights are the signals for inflorescence initiation in phalaenopsis. In more northern climates, or on the west coast, growers have already begun to see the early inflorescences that may be ready for Christmas. In the eastern areas, nights in the greenhouse will now be in the low to mid 60s, depending on the thermostat setting, so the first of our phalaenopsis will not begin to bloom until Valentine's Day at the earliest.



Neofinetia falcata

A reduction in nitrogen levels will go a long way to giving the best possible spiking, as will a boost in potassium and phosphorus. In other words, a "bloom booster"-type fertilizer is definitely indicated in the next few months. Disease and pest problems are best dealt with now, especially as mealybugs hide in the bracts and flower buds. Once they have established themselves, they are difficult to eradicate, and flower damage or crippling results. Potential disease problems can be dealt with by the application of a copper-based compound to control/alleviate rot problems before they start. There is nothing more frustrating than to have shepherded your plants through a growing season, only to have them decline before your eyes.

Vandaceous Genera

Whereas the general decline in temperatures is beneficial to cool-growing orchids, it is not for vandaceous plants. The only cold-hardy member is *Neofinetia falcata*. Orient your plants in such a way as to take advantage of as much light as possible. This can be a problem in northern latitudes. Reduce watering and feeding schedules.

This checklist was published by the AOS and was written by Ned Nash and James Rose for this essay. A great benefit of membership in the AOS



Jack Webster
Awards
Greenhouse Grown



1st Place Ribbon:
Bulbophyllum Doris Dukes
'Bills Best' AM/AOS
Grown by Nancy Harvey



2nd Place Ribbon:
Blc Nakornpathome Silver
'Olivene' AM/AOS
Grown by Paul & Olivene
Virtue



3d Place Ribbon:
Paph. (Vera Pellechia x
praestans 'Sunday Isles')
Grown by Melissa Bullard



Jack Webster
Awards
Non-Greenhouse

1st Place Ribbon:
Bl Morning Glory 'Ramen'
HCC/AOS
Grown by Lee Allgood

2nd Place Ribbon:
Epidendrum magnolia
Grown by Charles Walker



3^d Place Ribbon:
Blc. Purple Magic 'Valley Isle'
X C. Haiku Rose 'Lavender Dream'
Grown by Sidney Cox

Thanks to Alan Miller For taking these showtable photos

Paul Feaver Volunteers

Paul is a frequent volunteer. He is a knowledgeable show-table commentator, helps set up lights and showtable plants; and gives programs at our Growers Day events. Paul has helped many of us better understand our orchids.

PHOTO BY TED JOHNSON



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 2014	Speaker	Topic
Nov. 10, 2014	David Off	Collecting Antique Cattleyas
Dec, 2014	Holiday Party	Auction
Jan, 2015	TBA	TBA

Welcome Table

Refreshments

Nov.	Anne Williams	
December	Anne Williams	Bring a covered dish

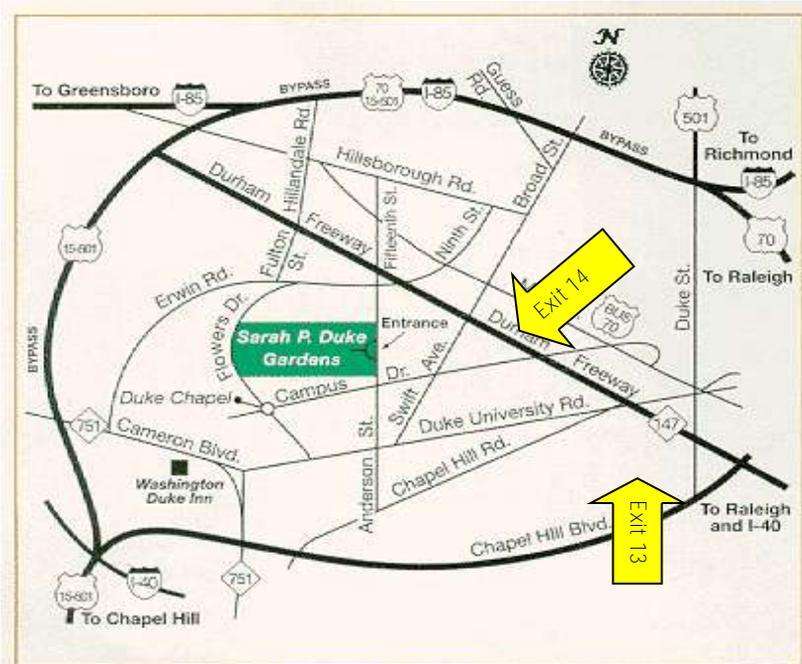


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Bifrenaria harrisonae 'Hebrita' AM/AOS



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

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.

Send your dues to: Anne Williams, TOS Treasurer, 1506 Kent St. Durham, N.C. 27707