



The Orchid Society of the Triangle (Durham, Raleigh, Chapel Hill) and surrounding area of North Carolina
Associated with Sarah P. Duke Gardens

Orchidaceae

Monthly Newsletter of the Triangle Orchid Society

June 2016

June 13, 2016 at 7:30 PM

Speaker: Mark Reinke, The Exciting Encyclias



Mark Reinke had a passion for plants from the time he was a child growing up in a small town outside of Chicago. When his family moved to Florida in the 1960's he got his first orchid plant as back bulbs while helping out a neighborhood lady who had a large orchid and bromeliad collection. Since then, orchids have always been one of his major interests.

Mark will be selling plants!

In 2004, he and his partner Gary Collier sold their business in Atlanta and moved to the Blue Ridge Escarpment area of South Carolina to grow plants full time under the business name Marble Branch Farms. They constructed a large greenhouse and seed laboratory so they could focus on creating new orchid hybrids, concentrating especially on miniature and compact cattleya types, with an emphasis on new and unusual breeding lines. They now have a thriving online business and are challenged to produce plants quickly enough to keep up with demand. In addition to orchids, Marble Branch Farms currently raises hybrid daylilies and carnivorous plants and produces honey. (bio continued on next page)

Inside this issue:

June Program	1 - 2
May Meeting Summary	3
May Meeting: Show Table Awards	4 - 5
Glen Decker on Phragmipediums	6 - 8
Upcoming Events	9
Meeting Agenda, Future Meetings, Map and Directions to Sarah P. Duke Gardens	10

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www.triangleorchidsociety.org

Dinner Before the Meeting

5:30 pm at Carrabba's Italian Grill

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

If you plan to attend the dinner, please contact Allan Miller at (919) 969-1612 to reserve a seat. All are welcome.

The Triangle Orchid Society meets at the Sarah P. Duke Gardens
420 Anderson St.
Durham, NC
The Second Monday of the Month
at 7:30 pm



Mark is active in the Western North Carolina Orchid Society and has served as President of the Atlanta Orchid Society twice.

Mark's program is an overview of a genus of fascinating orchids that are generally easy to grow and rewarding in the Southeast USA. Mark highlights a dozen species out of the vast Encyclia range from Florida to Brazil, explaining how to grow them and showcasing some of the surprisingly impressive hybrids made from them. He ends with examples of the Encyclia breeding taking place at Marble Branch Farms and will have seedlings of some of these crosses among the plants he will bring with him to sell at the meeting.



Item# z018

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**Triangle Orchid Society
May 9, 2016 Meeting Summary**

Our May 2016 meeting had a great presentation by Glen Decker, talking about *Phragmipediums*. He had great photos including Phrags in the wild. He sold plants during the meeting. Total attendance was 53 with several guests present. A great turnout.

Volunteers for this meeting:

Welcome Table: Axel Elling

Raffle Stand: Anne Williams

Lights and Stand: Suzanne Hens

Others: Kelly Nipp and Stephen McAllister

Show Table Discussions: Harry Gallis and Anthony Curtis

Jack Webster Award Plants:**Greenhouse Grown:**

1st - *Encyclia bractescens*, grown by Melissa Bullard

2nd - *Chysis laevis*, grown by Paul Welty

3rd - *Paphipedilum Deena Nichol*, grown by John Martin

Non-Greenhouse Grown:

1st - *Aerangis luteo-alba* var. *rhodosticta*, grown by Charles Walker

2nd - *Epilaeliocattleya Golden Sunset*, grown by Crawford Wilson

3rd - *Chilochista exuperei*, grown by Charles Walker

Meeting Summary was submitted by Sidney Cox.



May 2016

Jack Webster

Awards

Greenhouse Grown

1st Place: *Encyclia bractescens*, grown by Melissa Bullard



2nd Place: *Chysis laevis*, grown by Paul Welty



3rd Place: *Paphiopedilum* Deena Nichol, grown by John Martin





May 2016

**Jack Webster Awards
Non-Greenhouse Grown**

1st Place: *Aerangis luteo-alba* var. *rhodosticta*, grown by Charles Walker



2nd Place: *Epilaeliocattleya* Golden Sunset, grown by Crawford Wilson



3rd Place: *Chilochista exuperei*, grown by Charles Walker





Glen Decker on *Phragmipediums*
Triangle Orchid Society
May 9, 2016

Phragmipediums have only recently come into their own and claimed a place in home orchid collections. Although *Phrag caudatum* was described in 1840, it was not until 1989, when all Phrags were taken off the Cites Endangered Species List, that they began to get the attention of hobby growers. Interest was certainly enhanced with the introduction of *Phrag besseae* and *Phrag kovachii*. Today, new hybrids with larger flowers and vibrant colors are becoming increasingly popular and are being incorporated into more and more collections.

Glen Decker has been a recognized authority on Phrag breeding for years. He was one of only two growers who was licensed by the Peruvian government to grow *Phrag kovachii*. He has introduced multiple Phrag hybrids into the current market, including the first *Phrag kovachii* hybrid, which he named 'Haley Decker' after his daughter. So, when Glen talks about Phrags, you know you are getting the latest advice from one of the world's most respected experts.

Glen began his presentation with a discussion of the various sections of the genus *Phragmipedium* and the most notable species within each section. The first section he described was Himantopetalum, which contains *Phrag caricinum*, *Phrag christiansenianum* and *Phrag pearcei*. These are small growing, with grass-like foliage and heavy rhizomes. These are the high altitude plants from the Peruvian Andes. They grow along streams, clinging to rocks, and often have their roots submerged for weeks at a time.

In the section Platypetalum, the two best-known species are *Phrag lindleyanum* and *Phrag sargentianum*. These species appear very similar and are difficult to distinguish. *Phrag lindleyanum* has small flowers with short, straight, narrow petals. It is notable for blooming without a pouch, but it does not pass this trait on to its progeny. Its hybrids all flower with standard pouches. The inflorescence is branched and can be three feet tall. These two species introduced some color into early hybrids due to their red petals. They have been used extensively with *Phrag besseae* to produce vibrant, brightly colored hybrids. The most notable hybrid using *Phrag lindleyanum* is *Phrag Andean Fire*. *Phrag sargentianum* is notable for its hybrid *Phrag Memoria Dick Clements*, also made with *Phrag besseae*.

The Lorifolia section has tooth-like protuberances on the sides of the pouch. These are terrestrial plants, and often self-pollinating. The best-known species in this section is *Phrag longifolium*, which has large green flowers with brown markings. It, too, is extremely variable and imparts vigor to its progeny. The plants are exceptionally long-lived, with some plants known to have been in collections for 75 years or more. These are generally large plants and very floriferous. Glen called *Phrag bossieranum* the dandelion of Phrags because it is so prolific in the wild. However, he did caution that it can be difficult to grow in a greenhouse.

The section Phragmipedium contains the species with the exceptionally long petals. *Phrag caudatum* flowers on single, non-branching inflorescences, with up to seven flowers that are generally all open at the same time. The petals are twisted and continue to grow until they come into contact with a hard surface. The petals can be up to 25 inches long and are what makes these plants so distinctive – and coveted! The plants have thick, hard fans of foliage. They are extremely variable in color and size. These grow in very wet ground but actually attach themselves to dry rocks. *Phrag caudatum*, *Phrag wallisii*, and *Phrag warscewiczianum* are now being used more often in hybridizing programs and pass on the long, twisting petals.

Section Micropetalum contains *Phrag schlimii*. It has been included in orchid collections since the



1800s. It is prized for its color, which was considered unique until *Phrag besseae* came along. *Phrag besseae* is cooler growing, thriving on the cold water that seeps over its roots and rhizomes on the cliffs where it is found. Its introduction produced a surge in hybridizing. Glen noted that no new hybrids had been produced with *Phrag schlimii* in 75 years, so *Phrag besseae* injected new enthusiasm into the orchid community. There are numerous varieties of *Phrag besseae*, including yellow and peach color forms.

Phrag kovachii is included in the section Schluckebieria. It grows in full sun, with water running over its roots on cliff faces. The flowers can measure up nine inches across, and Glen said that it is not unusual for an inflorescence to hold up to four flowers.

Glen spoke extensively on culture. He reminded us that the species in this genus need pure, clean water because they are so sensitive to salts or any impurities. They prefer water with a pH between 6 and 7, so they thrive on rainwater. Most tap water has a pH over 7, often as high as 9, which will cause plants to languish and eventually die. Hybrids are admittedly easier to grow and not so sensitive. All Phrags need lots and lots of water. Glen said they are the only orchids able to stand in water. In their native environments they frequently grow on rocky cliffs above streambeds and are subject to seasonal flooding. It is not uncommon for the roots to be submerged for weeks at a time.

Glen recommended either the University of Michigan or Jack's Cal-Mag fertilizer. He said that traces of calcium and magnesium are essential, and that both elements are available in these two brands. He also recommended the use of fish emulsion, despite its offensive odor. He said plants "love it!"

Addressing the issue of insects, Glen noted that Phrag plants actually have limited natural predators. However, the inflorescences are more vulnerable. Aphids especially love the flowers, as do mealybugs and scale. Ants will also attack the flowers, seeking the sugar they exude. Glen said he uses Dr. Bonnie's Magic Soap, 4 Tbsp per quart, to spray plants when needed. He also sprays with a weak solution of wood alcohol but cautioned that this tends to dry out the plants. He said he uses various oil-based sprays as well. He likes them because he can mix them with water, and the solution does not degrade within a limited period of time. They are also relatively safe to handle. It means a lot when you don't need to suit up in your Martian gear! Glen cautioned growers to always test the spray on a limited area before widespread use and to never dip the entire plant in an oil solution. He also recommended spraying only on cool, cloudy days. He cautioned against leaving puddles of oil standing on foliage, noting that when direct sunlight hits the plant, the oil will become hot enough to burn the foliage. For slugs and snails, Glen recommended utilizing rough gravel around the plants, as the sharp edges discourage these soft-bodied animals' travels.

Glen stated that he re-pots his species annually and his hybrids every 2 to 3 years. He currently uses 6 parts fir bark, 12 parts sphagnum moss, 3 parts charcoal, 4 parts sponge rock, and 1 to 1.5 parts cracked oyster shell. He cautioned growers not to wait until their mix turns to "mud." He said there is no "miracle" mix and that growers should not be influenced by the claims others make. He encouraged each grower to use whatever works for that grower personally. He did encourage the addition of cracked oyster shell in any mix used specifically for Phrags to provide calcium they would normally receive from the water that runs over the limestone cliffs in their native environment. He uses the charcoal as an anti-stagnation agent, as it prolongs the life of the mix.

Glen stressed that "its all about the roots!" He explained that decaying, mushy roots are not able to absorb nutrients, no matter how much you apply. Because Phrags like such wet conditions, any mix is bound to break down much faster than it would with a drier growing plant. Glen said not to wait until the plant climbs out of the pot! When repotting, select a pot sized for the root ball, not the foliage. Don't be too careful when handling the plant! Glen said you should break the root ball open so



you can trim off all the dead roots. He stressed the need to remove all the bad roots, as they will continue to decay and can lead to bacterial infections. When repotting, put the lead growth towards the front of the pot while leaving room for new growth. Place the new lead near the surface of the mix. Positioning it too deep will cause it to rot.

We thank Joy Lemieux for providing the transcript.



Upcoming Orchid Events

Breezy Hill Orchid Festival

June 24 - 26, 2016

Graniteville, NC

www.steveauthorchids.com

Native Orchid Conference

August 1- 4, 2016

www.nativeorchidconference.org

Need more orchid events?

Watch AOS Webinars (public and members)

Greenhouse Chat, June 14

North American Orchid Conservation, June 21

[Watch on demand previous webinars](#)

**Growing Under Lights, Steven Frowine
and more...**



DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
JULY 11	John Stanton The Orchid Trail Morrisville, NC	National Orchid Shows
AUGUST 8	Courtney Hackney	Orchid Growing Tips
SEPTEMBER 12	Steven Frowine	TBD

Triangle Orchid Society Meeting Agenda

7:00-7:30	Set Up Show Tables
7:30-7:40	Business Meeting and Announcements
7:40-8:30	Speaker's talk
8:30-8:50	Break
8:50-9:20	Show Table Reviews and Awards
9:20-9:30	Raffle
9:30 P.M.	Meeting Ends Take down show tables

Welcome Table

JUNE	Axel Elling, Anne Williams	See a Board Member to volunteer.
JULY	Axel Elling, Anne Williams	See a Board Member to volunteer.

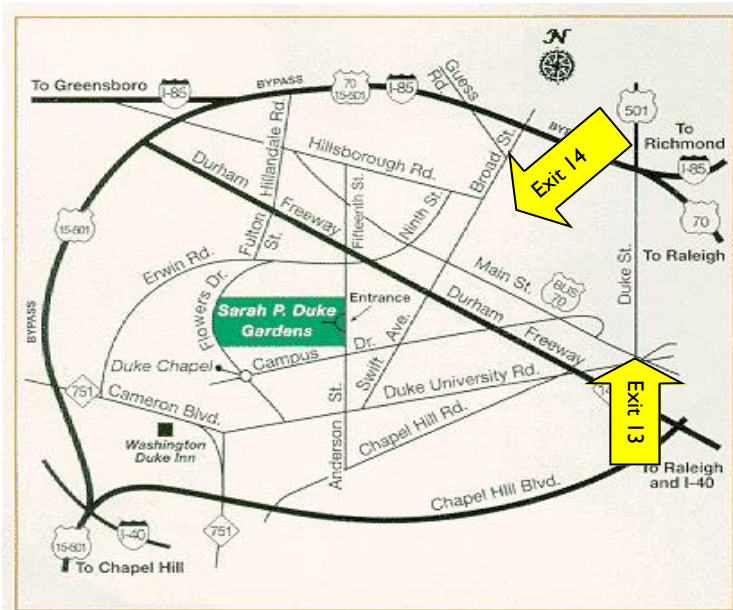
Refreshments



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From the East:

Durham Freeway (#147) to Exit 13.
 Right on Chapel Hill Rd.
 Right on Anderson St.
 Sarah P. Duke Gardens (420 Anderson) on left.

From the West:

Durham Freeway (#147) to Exit 14.
 Right on Swift Ave.
 Right on Campus Dr.
 Right on Anderson St.
 Sarah P. Duke Gardens (420 Anderson) on left.

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Thank You
 Charles Walker
 for proofreading the newsletter.

2016 Triangle Orchid Society Dues

\$22 per year single, or **\$30** per year for two persons living at the same address.

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