



Dear TOS Members,

**Aug 2024** – Apparently, Aug is (was) National Wellness Month, something new I learned. The focus is upon one's well-being, which encompasses both the physical and emotional aspects of living. And, what better way is there to relax and reduce stress in our lives than by devoting time to tending to orchids each day. But, let us not stop with the month of Aug! There are another 11 months in a year when we can, and should, do the same for the sake of our year-round well-being and that of our orchids.

### **Business-related Matters from Aug 19 TOS Board Meeting**

1. Balance of the checking account as of Aug 19 was \$4,766.
2. Significant expenditure this past month relates to our upcoming show in Sept. The overall TOS budget remains on track.
3. A Committee will be formed this coming month for nominating members to the Board for 2025. Should any member have a personal desire to join the Board to help steer TOS into the future, please contact me directly. If you wish to nominate a member, please seek their agreement first.
4. In recognition of the TOS Trophy sponsors, Sunny our VP will photograph all Trophy-winning orchids at our Fall for Orchids show. Phil will compile a special edition Newsletter of the photographs for distribution to all members.
5. The new TOS website has been launched and will be updated and further revised based on feedback from members. So, please visit and provide feedback!
6. Aug Membership Report (Carole Saravitz, TOS Membership Chairperson)

Current Total Paid Members: 158+25 Partners

Last Month's Total Paid Members: 156+25 Partners

New Members since 2023 Show: 92+15 Partners

6 in Jun (plus 1 partner)

4 in Jul (plus 2 partners)

2 in Aug

## In Reflection: Aug 12 TOS Monthly Meeting at JCRA



Bridget Uzar's presentation on Tropical Slipper Orchids attracted a good-sized audience (58). Her focus was mostly on the two genera *Paphiopedilum* (paphs) and *Phragmipedium* (phrags), these being the most commonly grown slippers by orchid hobbyists. Paphs are native to SE Asia and phrags to S. and Central America.



The genus *Cypripedium* was discussed a little which was appropriate because it contains the very beautiful Moccasin orchid, *Cyp. acaule*, a native I see in the woods around here (r photo). Please do not be tempted to dig and transplant this slipper from the wild. It truly belongs in its native habitat and by leaving it undisturbed you will be helping preserve a beautiful native species whose numbers are in decline because of habitat loss due to urban development.

The genera *Mexipedium* and *Selenipedium* also mentioned by Bridget are not grown so much by hobbyists as they tend to be more finicky about their cultural needs, water quality especially, which makes them less forgiving compared to paphs and phrags. But, these two genera do include some very beautiful species so be on the lookout for them at shows



or at specialist nurseries if you wish to give them a try once you have mastered growing the paphs and phrags. *Mexipedium* is actually a monotypic genus, i.e. a genus of only one species, which is *Mexipedium xerophyticum* native to Mexico as its genus name implies.

Rather than my rehashing what Bridget presented about cultural requirements for the different slippers I refer you to the excellent cultural sheets freely available on the AOS website, <https://www.aos.org/explore/alliance/slipper-alliance> What I will say is paphs and phrags can be grown on a suitable windowsill indoors (I've grown both successfully to flowering on an east-facing sill). Phrags need more water than paphs. Bridget mentioned this point, emphasizing that phrags should not be allowed to dry out. So, perhaps consider putting a plastic pan underneath the pot of a phrag so that it sits in a little water (something I did when growing indoors and still do in the greenhouse). Plus, like all orchids, slippers prefer rainwater to city water.

As an aside, a nice selection of Maudiae-type paphs will be on sale at our Fall for Orchids show, Sept 13th (begins at 1.00 pm) -15th at JCRA.



TOS thanks Bridget for a donated raffled plant, which was a beautiful flowering specimen of *Cattleya harrisoniana* that understandably delighted the member who won it! And, TOS also thanks our immediate past President, Kelly Nipp, for a donated raffled specimen of *Bulbophyllum sikkimensis* (currently accepted RHS\* name is *Bulb. roxburghii*), which had been superbly grown on a fern fiber slab (r photo above).

\*RHS = Royal Horticultural Society

## **Upcoming: Sept 9 at 7.30 p.m., TOS Monthly Meeting**

Since our Sept meeting happens the same week that several of us will be setting up our Fall for Orchids show, we shall be presenting an educational AOS webinar via ZOOM in lieu of a live meeting at JCRA. **Best Practices for Buying Plants** by **Erik Sauer** has been selected. This outstanding webinar describes what to know about an orchid label or what a seller's blurb is describing, and I promise there is something for everyone, newbie orchid growers and experts alike. Erik Sauer is a renowned orchid hobbyist, so settle in at home with a beverage of your choice (and pizza!) and enjoy what Erik has to say. A link for signing into the ZOOM meeting will be emailed a few days prior to the event.

## **Members' Day Trip to Chadwick & Son Orchids, Powhatan, Virginia**

Dust off ye olde picnic baskets and set aside Sat Nov 9 for a day trip to visit the esteemed Arthur E. Chadwick and his famous greenhouses in Powhatan. Art is a cattleya grower/breeder extraordinaire and you do not want to miss this opportunity to meet him and see his remarkable historic collection of classic cattleyas – all those wonderful species that are found in the background of today's best catt hybrids. Art is truly a keeper of great things past! There is a barn on the property where we shall eat our picnic lunch. Look for more information as the date approaches. Carpooling will be arranged as much as possible once we get an idea about numbers.

## **Members' Feature**





*Dendrobium crumenatum*, commonly known as the Pigeon or Thunderstorm orchid, has flowered for me for the first time after being put outside for the summer. I got it about 3 years ago at an end-of-year TOS auction. It is a beautiful, unusual species, but has a disappointing downside, which I will come to in a minute. First though, its beauty. This is reflected by its common name the Pigeon orchid for its flowers resemble white pigeons (doves) in flight (r photo above). Now for its unusualness, which is described by its other common name, the Thunderstorm orchid. This name aptly captures the fact that its

flowering is brought on by heavy rain, reportedly exactly 9 days after heavy rain. Remarkably, this turned out to be true for me. It is a wonderful example of how small, almost imperceptible, dormant buds develop rapidly into full flowers via a precisely tuned physiological response triggered by the onset of heavy rain and a temperature drop. And lastly, now for its disappointing downside: once opened, the flowers only last for one day! Even stanhopeas do better in my experience. But I like *Den. crumenatum* and I shall continue to grow it.

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This magnificent, highly fragrant primary hybrid above is *Cattleya Triumphans* flowering at Riverwood Orchids Farm, a place I visit regularly to get my orchid fix. It is a remake by TOS life-member John Stanton (former owner of the now closed Orchid Trail

Greenhouses) of a cross first made and registered by the French grower/breeder Charles Maron in 1904. Maron's cross was *C. dowiana* [var. aurea] (seed parent) x *C. rex* (pollen parent) and it proved something of a triumph at the time because breeders using *C. dowiana* up to that point were having no success at seeing its yellow color transfer to the progeny of crosses, seemingly because of its recessive nature. But the discovery and introduction of *C. rex*, a large-flowered catt from Peru changed everything. The latter has cream-yellowish sepals and petals, and when crossed with *C. dowiana* var. aurea, it yielded progeny with distinctly yellow sepals and petals, plus the fantastic gold streaking in dowiana's lip. (see more at <https://chadwickorchids.com/content/cattleya-triumphans>)



For this remake, John's second remake in fact, he chose to do the reciprocal of Maron's cross using the cultivars *C. rex* 'Imperial' (seed parent) x *C. dowiana* var. aurea 'Orchid Trail' (pollen parent). John laments that the cultivar *C. rex* 'Imperial' he used (1 photo) is now a case of R.I.P.

John's first remake of *C. Triumphans* - his best in his opinion - yielded a progeny of spectacular plants (photos below). If you happen to have one of these in your collection, you are a very lucky orchid hobbyist!



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I close on the most important note of the year! **I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING Y'ALL AT OUR 'FALL FOR ORCHIDS' SHOW** on Sept 13th (opens 1.00 pm)-15th at JCRA

Phil Brindle, TOS President

<http://TriangleOrchidSociety.org>

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