



Dear TOS Members,

Jan 2025 – The greenhouse heater has been working overtime this past month. Now, granted, we are in the midst of winter so cold weather is the order of the day, but it has been untypically bone-chillingly cold for long periods. On my morning walks along the Eno River, ice stretching across the entire width of the river has been a common sight where the water runs slow and deep.

No matter how cold it is, or how gloomy a day may be, there is nothing quite so cheery and uplifting as seeing orchids in flower, and there are plenty in flower, or coming into flower right now. Indeed, just the first hint of a bud or flower spike on a plant provides me with a wild buzz of anticipation of what's to come, especially when it's an orchid I've never seen flower before.

Business-related Matters from Jan 20 TOS Board Meeting

1. Balance of the checking account as of Dec 31 2024 was \$9,419. Total Income for 2024 was \$24,725 vs Total Expenses of \$23,515.
2. The TOS Board held its annual Retreat on Sat Jan 18 at the NCSU Phytotron. (Thank you, Carole Saravitz, Phytotron Director, for allowing us to use this ideal space.) It was several hours of lively discussion and decision-making on how we intend to continue moving TOS forward to best serve our growing membership in the coming year, and well beyond.

It has been several years since there was an increase in membership dues, so to keep pace with inflation, but being mindful of keeping costs affordable for all, the Board voted in favor of raising dues. Beginning 2026, the new annual dues will be \$30 for individuals, \$40 for couples, and \$15 for students. These modest increases will be applicable when signing up new members at our Fall Show this year, but membership for new members signed up at the show will be valid through to end of 2026.

3. Prior to the TOS Feb monthly meeting, all members will receive via email a proposed update of the TOS Bylaws. Article 3.8 is being included to cover Ex Officio TOS members serving on the Board.
4. Jan 20 Membership Report (Carole Saravitz, TOS Membership Chairperson)

Total Paid-up Members at end of 2024: 195+35 Partners

Total Paid-up Members thus far for 2025: 92+20 Partners

Members who have not yet paid their 2025 dues are kindly reminded to do so prior to, or at, our March meeting. Thank you,

In Reflection: Jan 13 TOS Monthly Meeting at JCRA



Jason Harpster (l in photo), an accredited AOS judge and TOS member, talking here with member John Barnes, gave an excellent presentation on angraecoid orchids.



The most well-known angraecoid orchid – famous for its exceptionally long nectary and Darwin’s prediction about the existence of a specific pollinator with an equally long proboscis - is *Angraecum sesquipedale* (r photo). It is commonly known as Darwin’s orchid and to my mind is without question the flagship orchid for the entire Angraecinae subtribe. Using great photos of other angraecoid species in flower, many of plants from his own collection, Jason educated us on representative species (and notable hybrids) from the key angraecoid genera, their tropical African native habitats, and the natural conditions under which they thrive. Knowing the latter, we orchid hobbyists can simulate these conditions so we may successfully grow them in our greenhouses and/or homes.

AOS provides a very good summary of the culture conditions for *Angcm. sesquipedale*, and for the angraecum alliance orchids in general.

<https://www.aos.org/orchid-care/care-sheets/angraecum-culture-sheet>

Prior to beginning his talk on angraecoids, Jason immediately got our attention by walking a large polystyrene box to the front, stating how he was going to first address our itching curiosity about what was inside. I thought he was surely about to perform a magic trick! Indeed, magic it was, for out of box came two beautifully flowering specimens of *Dracula chimaera** (below photos)



Draculas, known comically as monkey-face orchids, are not the easiest of orchids to grow. They require constant high humidity (75-90%), indirect light and cooler-intermediate temperatures (50-80°F) with a nighttime-daytime differential of 15-20°F. These conditions are typical of the montane cloud forests where they grow in Colombia and Ecuador. Jason is clearly able to simulate these humid conditions for he pointed out how the somewhat unkempt appearance of the two plants was because of algae growth on their leaf surfaces, something that would occur in their native habitats.

By the end of the meeting, the two flowering beauties had new owners. Hats off to the two TOS members for taking on a cultural challenge; I look forward to reporting on their success in a future newsletter. And, a big thumbs up to Jason for his opening magic act!

*N.B. Some of you may have seen *Drac. gorgona* on the label of the one plant, as I did, but post meeting, Jason told me that both plants were in fact *Drac. chimaera* - he just had not gotten around to replacing the original label that came with the plant. One distinguishing feature of *Drac. chimaera*, when compared to *Drac. gorgona*, is the base of the lip is inflexibly attached to the column foot, making it immobile (Luer 1993)

Upcoming: Feb 10 at 7.30 p.m., TOS Monthly Meeting at JCRA

Members' Clinic with a TOS panel (Harry, Ralph, Elena, Kelly & Phil) "What is wrong with my orchid? Concerns and solutions."

Bring your ailing plants and the panel will do its best to diagnose what lies behind their ailments and provide advice on corrective measures to try. A show table will also set up in the room in a different location for those members wishing to bring their flowering

orchids for all to see and discuss. Please be very attentive to which table your orchid is placed on!

Also, there will be some donated pieces of various named bulbophyllums for sale at rock-bottom prices at this meeting so bring a few dollars.

Upcoming: Away Shows

TOS will be entering a display into the Virginia OS Show, which will take place at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond, VA.

Thurs Feb 27, show set up.

Fri Feb 28, starting 1.00 p.m. through to Sun Mar 2 until 3.00 p.m., show is open to the public.

Sun Mar 2, starting at 3.00 p.m., show break down.

Closer to the date, an email will be sent out requesting volunteers to help with set up and break down, and for the loan of flowering orchids for the TOS display.

The full show schedule for 2025 is as follows:

Virginia Orchid Society Show – Richmond, VA

February 28 – March 2, 2025

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, 1800 Lakeside Ave, Henrico, VA 23228

2025 Asheville Orchid Festival (Western NC Orchid Society Show) – Asheville, NC

March 28th – 30, 2025

North Carolina Arboretum, 100 Frederick Law Olmsted Way, Asheville, NC 28806

South Carolina Orchid Society Show – Columbia, SC

April 25 – 27, 2025

Garden Clubs of Greater Columbia, 1605 Park Circle, Columbia, SC 29201

Triad Orchid Society Show – High Point, NC

May 9 to 11, 2025

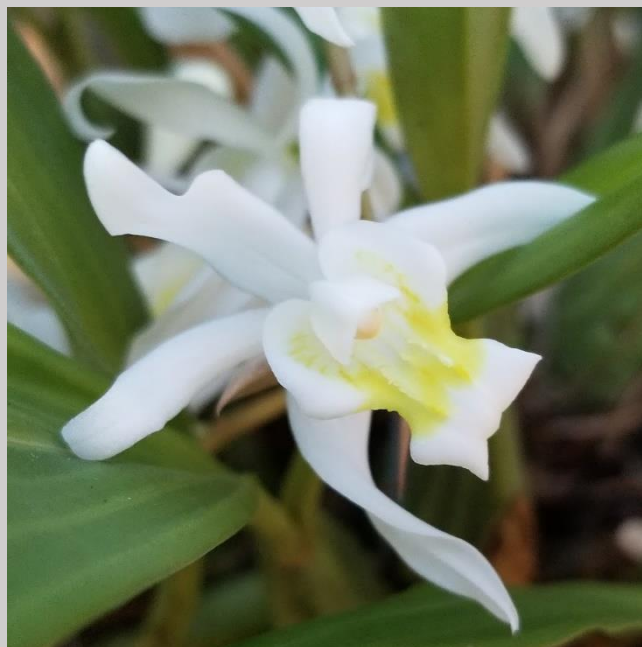
Caine Conservatory in High Point University, 1 N University Parkway, High Point, NC 27268

TOS Fall for Orchids 2025 - Raleigh, NC

September 12 – 14, 2025

JC Raulston Arboretum, 4415 Beryl Rd, Raleigh, NC 27606

Monthly Feature



The orchid above may well hold the trophy for being the most mislabeled orchid ever! It is a pale variation of *Coelogyne* Unchained Melody, a hybrid that more often than not gets labeled as the species, *Coelogyne mossiae*. The coelogyne expert, Kevin Dawes, tagged a similar pale variation of the hybrid as *Coel.* Unchained Melody ‘Mossiae’¹. I understand his reason for tagging it - to distinguish it from the normal hybrid and to keep track of it - but it is not a cultivar name I would have chosen for this purpose as it has potential for being misinterpreted by an uninformed grower at repotting time. Read on because *Coel.* Unchained Melody is for sure a beautiful hybrid, one shrouded in doubt and confusion. I have compiled information from what I believe to be reputable sources to aid me in making an informed decision about the labeling of this orchid, but I encourage you to draw your own conclusions.

It is hard to fathom how the confusion arose in the first place, but the mislabeling of *Coel.* Unchained Melody is a common occurrence within the orchid community, not just within TOS, but worldwide. It is the primary hybrid of the cross *Coel. cristata* x *Coel. flaccida*², so even those annoying situations where a barely legible label or only part of a label/name is found at repotting time, would not seem to account for *mossiae* appearing in its name (except under the situation mentioned above where the tag ‘Mossiae’ had been added to designate a pale form of the hybrid!)

Another puzzling thing, at least to me, is that although the hybrid *Coel.* Unchained Melody shares characteristics of the species *Coel. mossiae* (below photo³), just based on a visual comparison of the flowers it does not particularly resemble it. *Coelogyne mossiae* was described by the Kew botanist Robert Allen Rolfe in 1890, having been discovered



in the Nilgiri region of India, but unfortunately it is a species thought not to be in cultivation today, or if it is, then only in a few remote collections, most likely in India. Now admittedly, *Coel. mossiae* has suffered something of an identity crisis itself, but this centered around the discoveries and botanical descriptions of similar yet slightly different coelogyne species, or forms of these species (i.e. *corrugata*, *glandulosa*, *hirtella* and *nervosa*)^{4,5}, not around the hybrid Unchained Melody, which as the renowned late orchid taxonomist E. Christensen pointed out is a completely different entity⁵.

The fact that there are not any awarded specimens of *Coel. mossiae* in the AOS OrchidPro database attests to its rareness (absence?) in collections. So, how the hybrid ends up being commonly labeled with the

specific epithet *mossiae* remains something of a mystery. The real problem of course is changing an engrained belief is not an easy thing to do. And, as long as orchid nurseries continue to sell the hybrid as *Coel. mossiae*, the misnomer will persist. Indeed, there are plants out there labeled as *Coel. mossiae* 'Mendenhall' CHM/AOS; again, you will not find such a plant in AOS OrchidPro, despite the AOS award.

So, now for my own conclusion: when the time comes for the plant featured at the outset to be divided and shared, the divisions will go with a label stating *Coelogyne* Unchained Melody (pale form). It is an easy orchid to grow, is slightly fragrant in the morning sun, and is forgiving of neglect.

References:

¹<http://coelogyne.com/Hybrid%20Coelogyne%20Unchained%20Melody%20'Mossiae'.html>

²Registered by David Banks in 1995, originator unknown

<https://apps.rhs.org.uk/horticulturaldatabase/orchidregister/orchiddetails.asp?ID=101160>

(The hybrid appears to have occurred naturally, but Banks is reported to have successfully reproduced the cross as per Ref ¹ above)

³Photo reproduced from <https://www.orchidspecies.com/coelmossiaee.htm>, though photo credit goes to Kalyan Varma as appears in Ref ⁵ below

⁴<https://powo.science.kew.org/>

Coel. corrugata Wight: synonym of *Coel. nervosa* A.Rich, as per Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, POWO database

Coel. glandulosa Lindl: synonym of *Coel. nervosa* A.Rich, as per POWO

Coel. hirtella J.J.Sm: accepted species by POWO

Coel. mossiae Rolfe: accepted species by POWO

Coel. nervosa A.Rich: accepted species by POWO

Coel. nervosa Wight: synonym of *Coel. mossiae* Rolfe, as per POWO

⁵André Schuiteman and Malcolm Perry, The true *Coelogyne mossiae*, The Orchid Review, March 2011, pp. 32-41

Wishing y'all a great February. If you're a bit short on flowering orchids to enjoy indoors, enjoy the daffodils which will be bursting forth in full glory outdoors very soon. And, stick around as we roll out interesting events, trips, shows, and monthly meetings. I strongly recommend you to get involved as a volunteer because there is no better way to feed your orchid addiction, and have a lot of fun in the process!

Phil B.

<https://triangleorchidsociety.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/TriangleOrchidSociety/>