



Dear TOS Members,

**Nov 2024** – It is Nov 21 as I settle in to write and still no first frost in the Durham area – I visited a friend this morning who was happily harvesting green beans, peppers and even the odd ripe tomato in his unprotected garden. The mercury (rare today) is forecasted to just touch 32°F tonight so I shall bring in my plants of *Dendrobium kingianum* which are still being exposed to a prolonged cold spell to initiate their flowering. They look robust and healthy, so hopefully they will bloom in a month or two's time.

### **Business-related Matters from Nov 18 TOS Board Meeting**

1. Balance of the checking account as of Nov 17 was \$9,024.
2. There was a shortfall of \$2,023 for Expenses vs Income for our 2024 Fall for Orchids Show. This loss was principally because we rented the tent that covered the outside patio area at JCRA where the AOS judging and the TOS presentations took place, plus less vendor contributions were received compared to 2023. The tent rental will be re-thought next year; it must be anyway because the fire marshal had a few safety concerns such that erecting a tent so close to the JCRA building will not be allowed in future. The deputy marshal was very understanding, loaned us a fire extinguisher, and cut us a break for the occasion; he seemed genuinely interested in the orchids so I gave him a whirlwind tour around the show, for which he was very appreciative.
3. The overall 2024 TOS budget is in very good shape with income standing at \$22,850 vs a budget of \$21,990.
4. Nov Membership Report (Carole Saravitz, TOS Membership Chairperson)

Current Total Paid Members: 187+30 Partners

Last Month's Total Paid Members: 185+30 Partners

New Members since 2024 Show: 27+5 Partners

November: 2+0 Partners

## Past Events



### Nov 9, TOS Day Trip to Chadwick & Son Orchids, Powhatan, VA

Cattleyas, Cars, Chandeliers, Camaraderie, Conservation.....Chadwick had it all when 21 TOS members recently visited his greenhouses. What a splendid event!

Art led us on an eye-popping tour of his eight orchid-filled greenhouses, and during our picnic lunch in his fabulous, chandelier-lit, "events" barn he related family history of how Chadwick & Son Orchids came into being.

For old car enthusiasts, a couple of classic Studebaker automobiles (mid 1900s) add a nice touch of nostalgia to the property; one sits right at the entrance sporting the Chadwick name, the other sits by the barn. Sorry, I'm not sure of the models, though Google shows that the 1939 one at the entrance (photo from First Ladies and Their Orchids by A.A. & A.E. Chadwick) might be a Commander which, if so, would be most fitting for Art, a real cattleya commander! (There actually is a *Cattleya* Commander, a hybrid registered by Rod McLellan Co, 1974)





To the left are Art's prized historic cattleyas (species and hybrids) hanging high above a sea of oncidiums being boarded for clients. NZ sphagnum in clay pots is the method of choice that Art prefers to propagate the cattleyas.

Another important cultural tip Art shared is to let rainwater from an outside rain barrel, or well water, equilibrate to ambient greenhouse or house temperature before watering. He saw a big improvement in growth when he started doing this.

To the right, Art describes a blooming specimen of *Cattleya tenebrosa* (formerly *Laelia tenebrosa*), a beautifully-colored species from Brazil that has coppery brown petals and sepals, and a striking purple lip. It has been used quite a lot in breeding. Perhaps a downside of this orchid for the hobbyist is that the species can become quite tall, as Art is indicating.





To the left is *Rhyncholaeliocattleya* Hausermann's Holiday 'Christmas' AM/AOS. Should you like this holiday-bloomer, and who would not love this corsage-type catt, I'll let you into a little secret: there will be the cultivar named 'Ishpeming' of the same grex in our Dec 9 auction.



In the sales display area, sitting in full splendor and adorned with yellow "pollination labels," there was an incredibly beautiful specimen of *Angraecum longicalcar* 'Chadwick.' The plant had been recently awarded an AOS Certificate of Cultural Excellence of 96pts (left photo from AOS OrchidPro). Art had hand-pollinated several flowers of this angraecum species in

the hope of producing seed pods. Excitedly, he pointed out a few of the ovaries directly below their withering flowers that were beginning to swell, a sure sign that fertilization had occurred (two are





visible in photo to the left). The mature seed capsules will be sent to horticulturists at Longwood Gardens who will germinate the seed *in vitro* under aseptic conditions in a “clean” lab. Art, more than most, knows the importance of preserving the orchid species that are in cultivation today (all originally collected from the wild), and he is playing his part to conserve these plants, especially the genome of this critically endangered angraecum species. What a rewarding and satisfying activity - kudos to Art!

### **Nov 11, Online TOS Monthly Meeting**

Christopher Satch presented, “Explaining Why Orchids Do What They Do.” We opened the live webinar to our NC sister orchid societies and the event was well attended (38).

Chris, a professor of plant biology and pathology who teaches at the New York Botanical Gardens, provided a good overview of how an orchid’s cellular structure and physiology influence growth, and he offered suggestions of how to grow better orchids by keeping these facts in mind.

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### **Nov 28 at 7.30 pm Online Show 'n Tell**

The ZOOM meeting this month is **CANCELLED** because of it falling on Thanksgiving Day. Enjoy your turkey!

### **Dec 9 at 6.30 pm TOS Monthly Meeting at JCRA**

Our End-of-Year Meeting at the JCRA on Monday Dec 9 will start at 6.30 pm with a Potluck feast so please bring a seasonal dish to complement and/or follow baked ham that TOS will provide. At 7.30 pm a fundraiser auction of 32 top-notch plants from Orchids by Hausermann Inc will start. The latter is one of the country's finest orchid nurseries. Also, non-blooming, labelled Maudiae-type Paphs remaining from our Fall for Orchids Show will be sold at bargain prices.

Should you wish to donate any orchids for the Silent Auction table to help this fundraiser, please bring them along, preferably with flower photos.

We shall also have a Members' Display Table so please bring along your blooming babies for all to "ah and coo" over!

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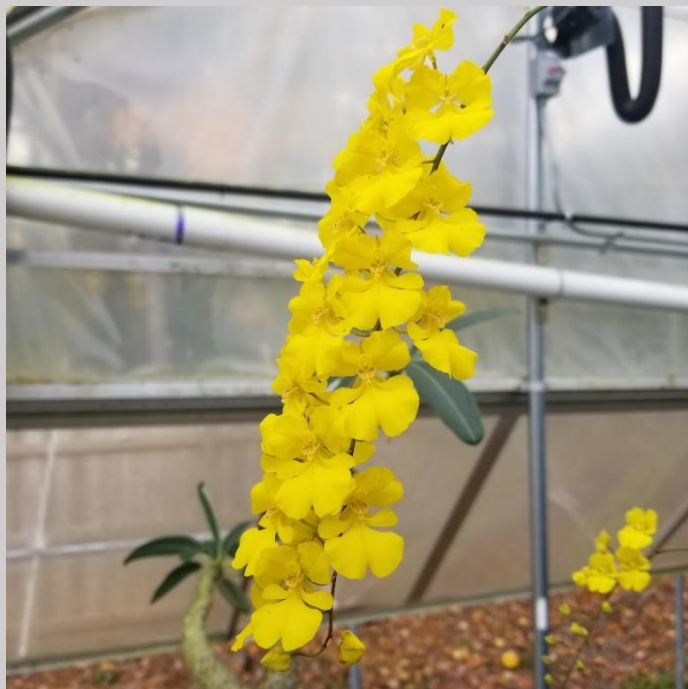
## Members' Features



### Two Brightly Colored Dancing Lady orchids: a Species and a Hybrid

We grow epiphytic orchids in pots using various types of loose potting media, or occasionally mounted on bark pieces. This is for our convenience in managing our collections, mostly of course to conserve space (living host trees get big!), rather than it being ideal for the orchids. The actual growth habit of epiphytic orchids in their native habitats is something few orchid hobbyists ever get to see. Admittedly, with the ease of international air travel and all the ecotourism companies

operating today, excursions to tropical rain forests and montane regions around the world are more available than ever before. But in reality few of us get to experience such wildlife adventures as they can involve strenuous hikes, and be on the pricey side for the annual vacation budget. A local trip to a notable botanical garden is a more likely “habitat” for us to visit to see epiphytic plants doing their thing on host trees, but even then, the chance of seeing an epiphytic orchid growing on a living host tree is slim; seeing an epiphytic form of a bromeliad is much more likely.



So, there is little wonder I snapped the above photos to share with you. They show superb specimens of *Zelenkoa onusta* (formerly *Oncidium onusta*) growing on an equally superb specimen of the Madagascar palm (*Pachypodium lamerei*), and they are one of the finest

examples of the epiphytic growth habit of an orchid you will find in cultivation – even the tropical house at Kew would be hard-pressed to equal it! John Stanton, the proprietor of the former Orchid Trail Greenhouses, mounted three specimens and over the years they have become intricately anchored to their living host; the inseparable duos now stand proudly in a back corner of the greenhouse of Riverwood Orchids Farm in Durham.

John told me he rooted the Madagascar palm from a six-inch cutting in the late 1970s. The cutting came from a Californian commercial cactus grower, Henrietta's Nursery, that sold bare rooted plants and cuttings. The *Zelenkoa onusta* seedlings used for the mounts were from a cross that John made in the late 1980s. He had about two hundred of them and they sold very well and were of high quality. The cultivars used for the intra-species cross were *Zel. onusta* 'Orchid Trail', an imported plant from Ecuagenera in Ecuador, and *Zel. onusta* 'Tom Wiles' from an orchid collector and past member of TOS. He mounted three of the seedlings onto the Madagascar palm in the 1990s and they took off growing. Many thanks John for sharing the history of this fascinating living wonder.

A couple of additional points:

1. Madagascar palm (*Pachypodium lamerei*) is native to Madagascar, but it is not a palm, it just resembles one with its foliage sitting atop a spiny, cactus-like trunk. It belongs to the Apocynaceae (dogbane family). Furthermore, it is not a native host tree for *Zelenkoa onusta* because the latter is found in the drier regions of countries such as Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru. But as is evident, *Zel. onusta* grows nicely on this spiny “palm” when the right environmental conditions are provided; it actually does grow on cacti in its native countries!
2. *Zelenkoa onusta* is the only species in the genus *Zelenkoa*. From the time of its discovery in 1833 through to 2001 it was classified as an oncidium. The creation of the new genus for this single species, named to honor the orchidist Harry Zelenko (1928-2024), was based on DNA.

<https://powo.science.kew.org/taxon/urn:lsid:ipni.org:names:1021294-1>

### And now for the hybrid.

To the right is *Oncidium*\* Sweet Sugar ‘Kalendar’, another showy Dancing Lady orchid currently flowering at Riverwood Orchids Farm.

I think you can see that orchids of the oncidium alliance grow and flower very well in pots with an open medium of loose bark chips.

\*RHS-accepted genus name for this hybrid is *Oncidesa*, as it is an inter-generic hybrid containing ancestors of an *Oncidium* species and a *Gomesa* species.



<https://apps.rhs.org.uk/horticulturaldatabase/orchidregister/orchiddetails.asp?ID=87544>

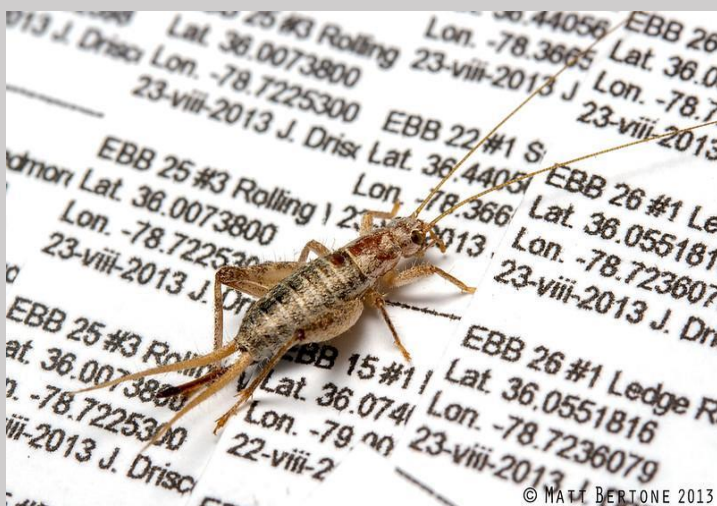
### A Pesky Orchid Story: the Scaly Cricket

Quick facts:

Crickets are related to grasshoppers and katydids.

Crickets are usually active at night.

Crickets are not considered a serious pest.



They do not cause major property damage and are usually just a nuisance.

For those of us who grow our orchids inside during the cool months and then “summer” our orchids outdoors this is one critter (see image) that I find troublesome. This is commonly called a scaly cricket or wingless bush cricket in the Mogoplistidae family. It is one of 20 species in 4 genera in North America

listed in the Singing Insects of North America. Listen to the [Cricket song](#)

This little bugger jumps out at me when I water. He is 5-13 mm (0.2 – 0.5 inch) in length, with a slender body, wingless and covered with translucent scales that rub off easily. They live mostly in the southern United States on bushes or under debris. They also like to be near water. Their diet is omnivorous, meaning they feed on plants and animals. They seem to like to eat the new leaves on my phals, dendrobiums, and oncidiums.

Thankfully they quickly jump off my orchids when I water and I have never knowingly brought them indoors.

Submitted by Cyndi Lauderdale, TOS Secretary

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And lastly, in the words of Bugs Bunny, “That’s All Folks.” I wish you a wonderful Holiday Season, and hope to see you at our Dec 9 meeting and auction (orchids make great gifts for orchid lovers). Remember, moderate your intake of all the seasonal sweet stuff that’s around at this time of year. I find just one of those small chocolate bars, sized for a kindergartener’s lunch box, to be quite sufficient each day..... once I’ve eaten my first daily sackful of chocolate! By the way, the nighttime temp on Nov 21 did reach 32° F.

Phil Brindle, TOS President

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