

Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

February 2007

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Contact Us

http://ci_orchid_society.tripod.com

Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter is published irregularly. Subscription is through membership in the Society.

Membership is \$10/person with \$5 for each additional family member. Checks payable to CIOS should be sent to Jerry Steerman, 507 N. Coler, Urbana, IL 61801.

CIOS Officers for 2007

Mitzi Williams, President

Jerry Steerman, Treasurer

Nancy Steerman, Secretary

Fun at the show:

The show we held at the Urbana Free Library on January 28, 2007 was a great success by everyone's measure. We had about 50 plants ranging from miniature *Polystachya aconitiflora* grown by Don McClure to a large pot of fragrant white *Cattleya* grown by Jerry Steerman. The *Phalaenopsis* Carla Yambert brought were amazing and varied in color, while the *Paphiopedilums* grown by Janet Jackson were sleek and exotic. The bark-grown *Brassavola nodosa* by Tim Bowers looked very natural, hanging on the ivy-disguised IV pole. Mitzi's *Angreacum veitchii* received nods from visitors who saw the PBS program on moths with long proboscis. There was even one orchid-wanna-be African violet! The best part was that we all had a lot of fun seeing everyone's plants and talking to visitors. Though we did not count the total number of visitors, some of them showed strong interest in joining our Society. Hopefully, we'll welcome many of them in future meetings. The visitors, regardless of experience in orchid growing, seemed to be most impressed by the variety of flower colors and shapes. The culture sheets were very popular and so was the supply display of pots, potting media, and humidity tray.

The success of this show tells us that there are many orchid enthusiasts in the community and that our Society can do a lot to facilitate sharing of orchid growing knowledge, experience, and fun.

Thanks to Sandy Mason of UI Extension for providing the opportunity to announce the event on the Channel 3 morning show on Thursday Jan. 25. Also thanks go to Barb Lintner of Urbana Free Library for allowing us to set up the show before the library opened.

Scenes from the show:



Left: Jerry (4th from left) fields the questions from visitors.



Right: Janet (left) explains to a visitor how she grows her plants.

Scenes from the show (cont'd):



Visitor (in blue): "...so the orchids really get you bad?" Jerry: "yes, once caught, the orchid fever never goes away."

Orchid of the month: 1



Paphiopedilum grown by Carla Yambert sat quietly among other show orchids, but watched intently at all the people that filled the room. With its eyeball-like column, Carla aptly calls this one "My monkey". This was one of the 2003 Christmas plant and has and bloomed every year ever since.

Paphs can be grown well under artificial light or without bright sunny windows, along with Phalaenopsis and (if we must mention) African violets. Those with mottled leaves are particularly attractive even when not in flower.

Paph's lack of pseudobulbs (to store water) requires the potting medium to stay moist so it may be suitable for people who tend to over water, as long as the potting medium does not remain soggy.

Notes, tips, Q & A:

- How to increase flower size and count:

About the 30-10-10 Miracle Grow fertilizer use on Phalaenopsis, Y.T. Wang says the following:

“Phalaenopsis grows well vegetatively with low potassium when there is optimal nitrogen and phosphorus; but, once they start to spike and flower, the lower leaves turn yellow and die. Application of adequate potassium during the period of vegetative growth guarantees high flower count and large flower. In addition, pay attention to you fertili8zer label and see what percentage of the 30% nitrogen is from nitrate. Phalaenopsis requires at least 50% of the nitrogen applied being in the nitrate form. If more than 50% of the applied nitrogen is in the ammonical form, then expect smaller plants and reduced flower count and size.” He also notes that potting media made no difference. (Orchids Jan. 2007, p. 14)

- Watering: Keep watering your phals if in bloom! Many plants are dormant now and require less water, but plants in full bloom or in bud need enough moisture. “Many Lycaste species and hybrids are blooming now and need a slight increase in watering...” Nobile-type and Australian dendrobiums need increased water once buds have differentiated. Don’t forget to give the aerial roots of vandas, ascocendas, and angrecoïd types enough moisture to prevent desiccating. (Orchids Feb. 06, p. 96)

Editor’s note: After carefully providing cooling and drying time in early December, I was excited to see a lot of buds on the leafless canes of Dend. nobile. What a disappointment it was to see almost all of them shrivel and fall because I did not switch to normal watering at the right time.

- Hardy orchids:

Van Bourgondien (www.dutchbulbs.com) lists several hardy orchid species for sale for under \$10 for one plant (2-3 eye tuber). Would anyone care to try?

1. Pleione Formosa (zone 8-10)
2. Bletilla striata (zone 6-8) is lavender pink. This species also comes in varieties ‘Rosea and Alba.

- 2007 membership payment is due. Please make a check payable for CIOS and send it to Jerry Steerman, 1507 N. Coler, Urbana IL 61801.

Next meeting:

The next CIOS meeting will be at 6:30 pm on February 20, 2007 at the Urbana Free Library Conference Room. Bring your plants for show and tell. Jim Sternberg will talk about city water pH, and how to adjust it for orchids. We will also discuss programs for the coming months.

Orchid of the Month: 2



This *Angreacum veitchii* 'White star' (*A. sesquipedale* x *A. eburnum* or *eburneum*) has been in Mitzi's collection for about 6 years, and bloomed the last 3. The nectary (spur) is 5-6" long and the scent is intense only at night. The culture is similar to that of *Cattleyas*, but careful misting is required once the spikes develop. The flowers last about a month.

Events in the area:

- Now until 3/11, '07 The Art of Orchids. Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis, MO. 9 am to 5 pm daily
Admission plus \$3 for adults and children. Free for members.
www.mobot.org/events/annualorchidshow/annualorchidshow.asp
- 3/23-25, '07 32nd Illowa Orchid Society Spring Show, Putnam Museum and IMAX Theatre, 1717 W. 12th St., Davenport, IA. Contact: 563-441-0824
- 4/27-29, '07 Illinois Orchid Society Spring Show in conjunction with the spring Mid-America Orchid Congress, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe, Illinois. About 30 vendors including 2 from Peru and Ecuador will be participating. In addition to the show and general sale, the event offers demonstrations, lectures, corsage making and sales, raffles, and sales of supplies. The featured speaker, Alfredo Manrique from Peru is from one of two nurseries in Peru authorized to grow and sell *Phrag. kovachii*, "the most talked about species" that was discovered in the last 50 years.

The show will be open to the public from 10:00 am until 5:00 pm on Saturday and Sunday (28 and 29). For details, visit www.midamericanorchids.org/.

Corrections:

According to Don McClure, the correct spelling of the parent plants for the *Stenosarcos vanguard* 'Fireball' shown in the January issue of CIOS newsletter are: *Sarcoglottis speciosa* (not *speciosus*) and *Stenorhyncos* (not *Stenorhyncos speciosum*). □