

# Central Illinois Orchid Society Newsletter

February 2008

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## Contact Us

[http://ci\\_orchid\\_society.tripod.com](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 2008

Mitzi Williams, President & News Letter Editor

Jerry Steerman, Treasurer

Nancy Steerman, Secretary

Tim Bowers, AOS rep.

## Another successful show:

Hats off to Janet Jackson for coordinating a great show on January 26-27, 2008. Also thanks to everyone who helped with all aspects such as bringing the plants, food, door prizes, as well as staffing the show. The free raffle we held each day was well received, and would have been a good fund raiser, had we been able to charge for the tickets. Nevertheless, thanks go to Green View and Prairie Gardens who donated some of the raffle items.

Following some suggestions from last year, the show enhanced the educational display with a light fixture for growing orchids indoors. Another educational item added this year was a map of the world showing where some of the plants come from. The map seemed to have reminded some of the visitors of their home country and the orchids that grow there.

Our guess is that nearly 90 people visited the show on Saturday. The Sunday crowd was not as large but the people were just as impressed by the plants on display, and were amazed by the beauty and the diversity of them. The two day show was good in attracting more visitors to the show, and the ease of setting up and taking down the display for the members was also undeniable.

Though we have show and tell at each meeting, to see the variety of great blooms all at once was quite a treat. It always amazes me what a talented group of orchid growers we have in our Society. Great work, everyone! See page 2 for the images of the show.

Mitzi Williams

## Welcome to new members:

Our heartfelt welcome to the following new members. We hope you will enjoy learning about orchids with us.

Barry and Michelle Glassner  
Lynda Morgan  
Beth Stafford  
Nancy Urban



Top: Members at the end of the show on Sunday. L to R: Janet Jackson, Don McClure, Mitzi Williams, Carla Yambert, Mark Williams, Jerry Steerman, and Paul Yambert.

Bottom: Habitat Regions of Common Orchids map (L.); Visitors admiring the orchids (Center); Jerry by his Cattleya (R.).



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## Next meeting:

- The February CIOS meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on February 19, 2008 at the Urbana Free Library. The meeting will be in the Conference Room, which is located in the basement of the Library opposite from the Children's Department. Roger Jansen of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources will give a talk about Orchid Hill where several species of wild native orchids still grow. As usual, members are encouraged to bring blooming orchids for show and tell as well as ailing plants for consultation with other members.
- Mitzi Williams will be attending the Pacific Orchid Expo in San Francisco on Feb. 29-March 2, 2008. She will give a report on this event at the CIOS meeting on March 18, 2008.

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## Orchid of the month: 1



This *Rhyncostylis gigantea* has been in Don McClure's collection for about 20 years, and is one of the two oldest orchids that he has. Belonging to the *Vanda* tribe, it comes from the hottest and most humid part of South East Asia from the eastern strip of India through the eastern Philippines. *Rhyncostylis* does not tolerate stale conditions around the roots, but must have high humidity, so Don grows his in a clay pot filled with coconut fiber, and waters it every day. Others grow them in wooden baskets with barely any water-retentive materials in them. In order to keep the plant short, Don cuts the lower part of the stem below some fresh roots from time to time and repots the top. *Rhy. gigantea* comes in colors ranging from dark red form like this one to white.

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## Events in the area:

- Feb. 16 (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.) – 17 (11 a.m. – 4 p.m.), 2008  
Batavia Orchid Society Show,  
DuPage County Fairground  
2015 W. Manchester Rd., Wheaton, IL
- Feb. 22 – 24; Feb. 29 – March 2, 2008. 9:00 A.M. – 5:30 P.M.  
Orchids by Hausermann, Inc. Show and Sale  
2 N 134 Addison Rd.  
Villa Park, IL 60181  
2 Blocks north of North Ave (Rt. 64)  
Phone (630) 543-6855
- March 15-16, 2008  
54<sup>th</sup> Annual Michigan Orchid Society Palm Sunday Show  
MSU Management Education Center - 811 W Square Lake Rd  
Troy, MI 48098
- March 28 – 30, 2008  
Illowa Orchid Society Spring Show,  
Putnum Museum and IMAX Theater,  
1717 W. 12th St., Davenport, IA  
309-764-3160

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## Mid-winter orchid care:

Just when we noticed a rise in outdoor temperatures and increased brightness of sunshine, we were hit by above-average precipitation earlier this month. Hopefully the worst is behind us, and as far as I can tell, no one in the area lost power during the storm. Winter time requires special TLC of your plants as follows:

1. Look for emerging inflorescences on Phalaenopsis. When the spike is about 3-5 inches tall, guide them away from the leaves using stakes. Bamboo skewers, wires, or even straws work well for this purpose, at least for a while. Do not move the plants or change its orientation to the light source once the spikes form—they will twist otherwise.
2. Position the Cattleya with the lead facing the direction of the principal light source. Re-tie each Cattleya to support the newly produced growths.
3. Bud blast happens during cold months. This is the condition in which the flower buds that were healthy just a few days ago turn somewhat darker one day (darker pink, darker yellow, etc.). Within the next few days, they shrivel, droop, and eventually drop off. This problem is reported often for Phalaenopsis. Bud blast can occur when the plant was moved from one environment to another, i.e., from store to your home, or exposed to sudden increase in temperature that caused loss of humidity. Plants with poor root system can also show bud blast. In such cases, increase in humidity will help the plant to maintain the buds until repotting time.

You may also find the following information given by Yin-Tung Wang, Texas A & M U, useful. Dr. Wang is a frequent respondent to the Q & A section of Orchids.

”The phals grow 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 under potassium deficient conditions. Application of adequate potassium during the period of vegetative growth guarantees high flower count and large flowers. Pay attention to the label and see what percentage of the nitrogen is from nitrate. Phals require at least 50% of the applied nitrogen in the nitrate form. If more than 50% of the applied nitrogen is in the ammonical form, expect smaller plants and reduced flower count. The potting medium had no influence on the matter.” (Orchids, Jan. 2007, p. 14)

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## Notes and tips:

- The Central Illinois Orchid Society is one of over 400 affiliated societies of the American Orchid Society which celebrates its 85th anniversary this year. The earliest affiliated societies were formed in the 1950's, even though many local groups seem to have existed in the early 1900's. The Central Illinois Orchid Society was established and became AOS affiliated in January, 1958. Our official communication with AOS is through one of the members of the Committee for Affiliate Societies.
- Free posters put together by the Illinois Rare Plant Task Force will be made available at the February 18 meeting. The poster is entitled “When we're gone ... we're gone.” includes several species of wild orchids facing extinction. If you cannot make the meeting, contact Mitzi at 344-5762 or mwillms1@uiuc.edu.

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## Prairie State Orchid Society Show and Sale:

The PSOS Show and Sale was held on Saturday Feb. 9 – Sunday Feb. 10, 2008. Janet Jackson and Mitzi Williams also belong to that Society, and worked at the event. Several CIOS members visited the show. Here is what Jerry Steerman said about it:

“When Jim Sternberg and I arrived we were glad to see Janet Jackson there. She stayed with us the whole time. It was nice to see Mitzi's beautiful blooms that received awards. We were aware that there would be orchids for sale. That was mainly why we went. We were surprised and most appreciative of the fact they had a large selection and wide variety of plants purchased from Hawaii for sale.

I bought a Den. Burana Sapphire, #2. The exterior of the bud was a rosy color. Therefore, I was surprised upon opening up to see the blooms were a deep, deep blue. Jim Sternberg bought a variety of really lovely  
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blooms. We were glad we went on Saturday instead of Sunday which was a bitter cold day. Saturday was a beautiful day and we did not have to worry about getting the plants home safely.”

Editor's note: For images of Den. Burana Sapphire #1 and #3, see <http://newmanshi.com/Content/d1.asp>

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## Orchid of the month: 2



Above: Can you believe this Phalaenopsis? It was awarded the Third Place in the Phalaenopsis group at the 2008 Prairie State Orchid Society Show. The plant is about 15 years old and is planted in a 2-foot long rectangle plastic box that may be used as an insert in a window box.

Below: *Dendrobium aggregatum* var. *majus*

This compact plant was also at the PSOS show.

