



# The **Slipper Orchid Alliance Newsletter**

**Volume 3, Number 4**

**Fall 2002**

## **SOA and CSA Joint Meeting in Santa Barbara**

The 2003 SOA annual meeting, as previously announced, will be held as part of the Cymbidium Congress on Saturday, March 29, 2003, in conjunction with the Santa Barbara International Orchid Show. The venue will be the Holiday Inn of Goleta. The full-day program, the intimate setting, and the limited size allow informal discussions with attending experts and fellow slipper lovers. The evening plant auction presents a rare opportunity to obtain truly outstanding orchids and orchid memorabilia. This event should be stimulating as well as thoroughly enjoyable, and we urge you to join us. All SOA members will receive the registration form.

Consistent with the international character of the Cymbidium Society of America and the Slipper Orchid Alliance, the speakers for the 28<sup>th</sup> Cymbidium Congress are geographically diverse and represent wide-ranging interests. Because of CSA branches in Japan, New Zealand and Australia this major education effort reflects both its international membership and equal enthusiasm for slipper orchids. With this Congress being co-sponsored by the SOA, this interest in Paphs, Phrags and Cyps is particularly apparent.

Full registration includes admission to the special evening show party Friday, March 28, 6-9 p.m. (with hors d'oeuvres and no-host bar), and on Saturday continental

breakfast, six outstanding lectures, two expert panel discussions on culture, buffet luncheon, no-host cocktail party and auction, gala awards banquet, commemorative pin and unlimited entry to the Santa Barbara International Orchid Show (March 28-30). The Saturday events begin with a brief Cymbidium Society of America business meeting at 8:30 followed by the lectures at 9:00. A limited selection of plants will be for sale by the speakers during the Congress breaks.

The 2003 Lecture Program includes the following talks.

“Cymbidium Hybridizing Down Under” – Kevin Hipkins of Royale Orchids, Peats Ridge, Australia, both a Paphiopedilum and Cymbidium grower, will discuss his breeding and current trends in Cymbidium hybridizing, what are felt to be the best parent plants for standard Cymbidiums and his current best flowers, all from a down under perspective.

“The Evolution of New Types of Decorative Cymbidiums at Mukoyama Orchids in Japan” – Susumu Furuya, Managing Director of Mukoyama Orchids, Co., Ltd., Yamanashiken, Japan. Mr. Furuya’s career has included breeding, sales and culture of Cymbidiums. As a company providing beauty, Mukoyama Orchids nurtures new types of orchids so that a feeling of soothing co-existence with plant life may be incorporated into daily life. Since 1965 they have strived to provide many people with inspirational orchids, as well as answer to the specialized needs held by fanatics. The harmony of nature and technology is their motto.

“Judging for Perfection” – Tony Velardi began collecting Cymbidiums a little over thirty years ago. He has served as the president of the San Gabriel Valley Branch on two separate occasions and of the Orange County Branch, director on the San Gabriel Valley Branch Board and the CSA Board. He has been a CSA Judge for about ten years and serves on the CSA Judging Committee.

“Tracking Phragmipediums – a Slippery Business” – Stig Dahlstrom of Marie Selby Botanic Gardens, Sarasota, Florida, is a free lancer and a self-taught watercolor artist, botanical illustrator and orchid taxonomist. His scientific work, in addition to Phragmipediums, covers much of the Andean species of Oncidiinae, particularly the genera

### **DUES ARE DUE!**

**2003 dues should be sent to Steve Drozda,  
Treasurer,**

**\$25 for an individual or household**

**\$50 for a supporting (commercial) member**

**Your prompt response is greatly appreciated,  
as it will save the SOA the expense of mailing  
dues notices.**

Cochlioda, *Cyrtorchilus*, *Odontoglossum* and *Oncidium*.

“Biology and Culture of the Genus *Cypripedium*” – John Doherty of Zephyrus Orchids in Windsor, Canada, began growing orchids at the age of fifteen, inspired by the orchid successes of his father. John holds a Bachelor of Science in Plant Biology, is an AOS Judge, a Director of the Orchid Digest and has published many articles on slipper orchids.

“Breeding Complex Paphs Down Under” – Barry Fraser of Papa Aroha Orchids in Coromandel, New Zealand, bought his first Paph flasks in 1982 – complex Paphs. He was helped and guided in those early years by Andy Easton. Barry started his own breeding program in 1988 with a few tentative crosses, and slowly built up to its present level of about 300 crosses a year. About 50% of the crosses are complex Paphs – his stud plants are a broad range of American and English breeding lines. He supplies markets in Japan, Taiwan, Australia, South Africa and the United States.

The evening banquet is the SB International Orchid Show Awards Banquet where the big winners are announced. James Folsom, Director of the Huntington Library, Art Collections and Botanical Gardens, will be the banquet speaker.

Early registration (by March 1, 2003) is \$100; late registration is \$125. Every member of the SOA will receive full information and the Registration Form in the mail. The chairmen, Albert and Sandra Svoboda, may be contacted at 231 Middle Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93108; 805-969-4536; stillisch@pol.net.

The Congress site is the Holiday Inn, 5650 Calle Real, Goleta, California. Special room rates are available for Congress participants for \$94 plus tax (805-964-6241) at the Holiday Inn or for \$110 plus tax at the Best Western South Coast Inn, 5620 Calle Real, Goleta, California (805-967-3200). Room reservations should be made by the close of the business day, March 8, 2003. Be sure to ask for the Cymbidium Society of America rate.

An Opening Night Preview Party on Thursday, March 27, will be sponsored by the Sansum Medical Research Institute of Santa Barbara. Enjoy the orchids before the crowds and support diabetes research. For information contact 805-682-7638, extension 203.

Sunday is a chance to attend the show again or visit orchid nurseries in the Santa Barbara and Carpinteria area; a map of grower locations is given to each registrant. However, the Slipper Orchid Alliance Board members will have to interrupt the fun to have a business meeting Sunday morning in the Holiday Inn.

Please plan to attend what should be an amazing weekend filled with beautiful orchids, education, good food and camaraderie. All of this, and the beautiful setting and weather of Santa Barbara. Don't miss it!

## The Brachypetalum Paphiopedilums

*Harold Koopowitz*

Among the tropical lady slipper orchids are several species that can be considered dwarves. They are low growing plants, often with relatively short leaves and smallish flowers born on short flower stalks. In general, the dwarves fit into one of two uniform groups, those belonging to the *P. insigni-* alliance and a handful of species that are called the brachypetalums. This latter group is so distinctive that Cribb (1998) retained them in their own sub-genus *Brachypetalum*.

In this article I deal with the species, *Paphiopedilum bellatulum*, *P. concolor*, *P. godefroyae*, *P. niveum* and *P. x concolor-bellatulum*. Their hybrids were discussed previously (Koopowitz and Hasegawa, 2000). There is a suite of characters that delineate this group. It includes: flowers with wide petals, a pouch that is in-folded at its anterior margin, waxy pollen and a relatively broad dorsal sepal. There may be one through four flowers on a short stem. Colors range from crystalline white through to rich yellow and several shades in between. Flowers may be speckled, heavily spotted or covered with reticulate markings, usually in dark burgundy. Albinistic forms which do not have markings are known for all of the species. The leaves in this sub-genus are succulent with finely tessellated markings; the undersides of the leaves usually, but not always, have dark purple markings. Succulence comes from an expanded single layer of water storage cells on the upper surface of the leaf.

### *Paphiopedilum bellatulum*.

This species has played a seminal role in the production of various hybrid slipper orchids and it is distinctive enough to stand apart from the other species. Among its distinctive features are the large discrete spots of rich wine-burgundy that cover the dorsal sepal and the petals. The spots on the pouch tend to be smaller in size. The basic background color of the flowers is a waxy white, but pale green and also soft yellow shades have been noted. Petals range in shape from being oval and pendant to circular and horizontally held. The pouch can be narrow and elongated. Unlike the other species this one has flowers born on short, weak stems so that the flowers are presented resting on top of, or next to the leaves. The best flowers of this species can be quite large and round. Efforts have been made to breed forms that are more heavily spotted, and these often have a misting of color between the spots. The goal here is to produce flowers that are solid burgundy, but the breeders are still some way from producing a solid vinicolored *P. bellatulum*.

## Upcoming Events

**47th Paphiopedilum Guild Meeting & Show**  
**Saturday, Sunday, January 18-19, 2003**  
**The Cliffs Resort, 2757 Shell Beach Road, Shell Beach, CA 93449. For more information, please contact Patti James, 805-528-1417 or email at orchid@orchidhouse.com.**

**5th Slipper Orchid Symposium**  
**Saturday, January, 18, 2003**  
**Kissimmee, FL. Contact Jamie Lawson at 888-619-7687 or jimorchids@aol.com**

**23rd Paphiopedilum Forum**  
**Saturday, February 15, 2003**  
**National Arboretum Visitor's Center**  
**Washington, D. C.**  
**Sponsored by the National Capital Orchid Society. Please visit their website for more information.**

**Santa Barbara International Orchid Show**  
**March 27-30, 2003**  
**Holiday Inn, Goleta, CA**  
**Joint meeting of Cymbidium Society of America and the Slipper Orchid Alliance.**  
**Contact Albert and Sandy Svoboda for more information. 805-969-4536 or email at stillisch@pol.net**

Pure white forms of *P. bellatulum* are known and recently have been made available in the trade. At one time they were quite pricey but with successful artificial propagation the price has dropped. Among the progeny of this group one occasionally comes across cultivars that retain the ivory-mint-green color of the buds after the flower has opened and matured. This may be a pathway to produce deeper colored pure green forms of *P. bellatulum*.

In the wild, *P. bellatulum* ranges from Myanmar (Burma) through northern Thailand and into southwestern China. Plants occur at mid altitudes and are usually associated with

steep limestone outcroppings. One visitor to Myanmar, however, described a meadow festooned with large clumps of *P. bellatulum* (C. Butcher, personal communication).

### *Paphiopedilum concolor*:

This is the step-child of the group. It is a yellow species that routinely carries several flowers on the scape and was the first of the *Brachypetalum* species to be described, but the flowers are usually smaller and less distinctive than its sister species and plants are not usually considered of equal desirability. This is a pity because it is the easiest to cultivate, and a well grown specimen in flower is quite charming. The color in this species ranges from a rare ivory through to cream and deeper yellows. Sometimes, flowers of the deepest yellow may even have a slight orange flush. This base color is overlaid with a relatively uniform coating of tiny purple speckles. In the wild type petals are mostly narrow and somewhat pendant. The pouch tends to be pointed and upturned reminiscent of the shape of a cashew nut. In this species the staminode's shape is quite variable.

Geographically, *P. concolor* is found over a very large area, and it is the most widespread of the *Brachypetalum* species. Plants from China are generally known as *P. x concolor-bellatulum* and thought to be a hybrid swarm between *P. concolor* and *P. bellatulum*. These range in size and shape between the typical *P. concolor* and *P. bellatulum*, but most of the forms do carry flowers that are much larger than typical *P. concolor*. There are forms with large *bellatulum*-shaped flowers with a yellow background and large spots that can be mixed in with others that are more typical of *P. concolor* in shape and size, covered with small speckles. Phillip Cribb (1993) appears to lump all of these into *P. concolor*. Z. J. Liu and J. Y. Zhang (2001) recently described *P. x concolor-bellatulum* as a separate species *P. wenshanense*. Whether or not this name will gain acceptance remains to be seen. The man-made crosses of *P. Concolor-bellatulum* nearly always have whitish flowers with larger sized spots than the average for wild *P. x concolor-bellatulum* that are nearly always yellow.

### *Paphiopedilum godefroyae*:

A good *P. godefroyae* can be a most imposing flower. Although the stem is short it usually supports the weight of the flower and the bloom is presented well. Flowers can be relatively flat with round large broad petals. The base color is white through rich warm yellow. This range of color can be found within single populations. Markings are quite variable and range from speckles to coalesced reticulations of rich red-burgundy color. As with *P. bellatulum* there has been intense breeding work to intensify the colored markings and breeders have achieved wonderful results. Usually, the slipper in this species is unmarked but forms with spotted pouches have been described and even line-bred flowers from parents with clear pouches can produce progeny with variable

amounts of spotting on the pouch. There is a tendency to separate the clear pouched forms as *P. godefroyae* var. *leucochilum* or even sometimes as *P. leucochilum*. As Cribb states, the original, type specimen of *P. godefroyae* had a pure white unspotted labellum. These plants should all be referred to as *P. godefroyae*.

This species is known from peninsular Thailand. There have been reports of its occurrence from as far away as China but photographs I have seen of those flowers are more obviously those of *P. x conco-bellatulum*.

Within this species is a subgroup of smaller white flowers with dense spotting or reticulation. The flowers are borne on strong stems intermediate in height between the short stem of *P. godefroyae* and the much taller stems of *P. niveum*. In some respects these flowers look very similar to the painting by Matilda Smith published in 1885 of a plant from the original importation. These plants have been labeled in the trade as *P. keyesianum*, *P. schneiderianum*, *P. niveum* var. *ang-thong* (with or without a hyphen) or simply as *P. x ang-thong*. For a while they were also considered to be the natural hybrid between *P. niveum* and *P. godefroyae*, which is called *P. Greyi*. That name is also frequently used for these plants. Cribb (1998) has also sunk them into *P. godefroyae*. Yet they are a distinctive taxon and probably should receive varietal status under *P. godefroyae* or else be recognized as a separate species. Unfortunately, many of the plants that were distributed as forms of *P. niveum*, were used to breed "improved" forms of *P. niveum* when they were crossed to true members of that species. Several of these plants were then awarded under the American Orchid Society judging system and used again for breeding.

### ***Paphiopedilum niveum*:**

In my opinion this is one of the few slipper orchid species that is actually pretty. Others are more fit by epithets such as interesting or handsome. *Paphiopedilum niveum* bears small white flowers on the tallest stems in the sub-genus. Flower stems can reach over 30 cm (1 ft) in height. The flowers in wild types are quite small and most lack the rounded symmetry that judges appreciate. Modern line-bred flowers are much more circular and can be substantially larger than most of the wild types. Flowers are a crystalline white powdered with the smallest of rose-purple speckling. On viewing flowers from a distance the markings are not usually noticeable. (Flowers with *P. x ang-thong* in their ancestry will have darker markings.) The staminode in *P. niveum* is usually as wide as the base of the pouch and thus can be used to tell pure *P. niveum* apart from *P. x ang-thong* or hybrid plants where the staminode is substantially narrower.

*Paphiopedilum niveum* is known from southern peninsular Thailand and northern peninsular Malaysia. I visited two sites, one inland where the plants were growing on the top of a marble massif and the other on the limestone

protuberances that make up the Longkawe Islands. At the former site plants had rather scruffy flowers and very tall stems. These were being grown by local orchid enthusiasts. On the islands the flowers from the islands were larger and better formed. None of those flowers, however, matched the average quality one now finds in artificially propagated plants. On the islands, plants were often growing in natural seepage areas about 3 meters above the high tide level. In the past plants must have been collected in great numbers for the plant trade but they are still common and easy to find.

### **Culture:**

The brachypetalums have a reputation for being difficult and finicky plants to grow. They seem to be quite susceptible to a variety of soft rots and most growers lose their plants to those diseases. We have found that the following cultural hints help to cut back on the incidence of rot.

1. Cluster all the brachypetalum hybrids and species together. This allows one to keep note of their growth and recognize problems as soon as they arise. It allows one to water the plants on a different schedule compared to the other plants in the greenhouse.
2. Practice good hygiene. If a plant becomes infected remove it promptly and wash your hands before touching other plants. The spores that initiate rot can be splashed from plant to plant when watering or after handling foliage.
3. If rot does occur and is in the crown, cut off the entire growth and dust the cut rhizome surface with a good bactericide/fungicide. If rot is merely a spot on a leaf carefully tease off the entire leaf without touching the infected portion and then dust it.
4. Do not use oil-based phytochemicals on brachypetalums; oil often induces severe dieback and rot in the leaves. Always test new chemicals on an experimental plant and examine it for a week to ten days before using wholesale applications of the new agent. *Paphiopedilum bellatulum* seems to be more sensitive than the other species.
5. Because these are succulent plants, watering should be decreased during the colder winter months when plants are not in growth. Frequency of watering can be increased in late spring and early summer when the plants are in active growth and producing flowers. We tend to keep pots small as those dry out faster. In damp climates clay pots may be better than plastic.
6. We are reluctant to divide plants because they frequently get infected through cut surfaces and damage to roots produced during the repotting process. Unlike other paphiopedilums that need frequent repotting we tend to repot at very long intervals (several years).
7. High air circulation where the plants dry off fairly

- quickly also seems to cut back on the incidence of rot.
8. Use a general well balanced fertilizer at half strength or less. High nitrogen, especially under low light levels, leads to large leaves that are more susceptible to rot than harder grown leaves.

These are all plants that appreciate good water quality. *Paphiopedilum bellatulum*, in particular, is intolerant of high salt content in the water. Leaf -tip die-back is a sure indication of either over-fertilization or use of the wrong fertilizer. The *Paphiopedilum* species all occur either on limestone or associated with limestone, although they may be growing on acidic soils in the crevices of limestone rocks. Most successful growers incorporate sources of limestone into the potting medium. We use powdered dolomite in the proportion of 1 cup to 10 gallons of mix. Eventually this will leach out, and plants can be top dressed in the early spring if they are not being repotted. Other people use more durable marble chips, crushed oyster shell, etc. Seedling plants are often more vigorous than old adult plants and we have found that seedling are best deflasked when they are still young and in rapid growth and before there is any brown-off in the flask. They should be barely dampened and maintained on the dry side for several weeks after coming out of the flask.

#### **Conservation Status.**

Only four species are currently recognized but there are other groups that are sometimes considered to be either natural hybrids or possibly separate species. None of the four species discussed here is unusually rare and some are quite common. One species, *P. niveum*, features on Malaysian lists as being threatened, but there is little census data to demonstrate the true conservation status of that species. No doubt wild populations were over-collected in the past, but this species is still relatively easy to find in the wild. The various brachypetalum species have all been in cultivation for a great deal of time; they are routinely subjected to artificial propagation and have now been line bred through many generations. All species have a measure of protection from CITES, and collection pressures on the brachypetalum species seem to be minimal with one exception. The Chinese forms known as *P. x conco-bellatulum* still appear in the black market trade and have been subjected to more drastic collection than the others.

In part, the reduced pressures on the wild plants also come from artificial breeding programs. The original wild collections had few plants of what could be considered fine quality from an orchid judge's point of view, but now the modern line-bred species contain a very high percentage of desirable forms. Artificially propagated plants are also a better product in that they are easier to grow and are better adapted to greenhouse cultivation than the wild plants. There are usually high losses in establishing jungle plants to

artificial conditions, but similar losses are rare in propagated species. With the brachypetalum slipper orchids there is no need to go back to the jungles for fresh material as we can make superior plants at will.

#### **Additional readings.**

- P. Cribb. 1993. *The Genus Paphiopedilum*. Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew in association with Collingridge. 222 pg.
- P. Cribb. 1998. The genus *Paphiopedilum* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Nat. History Publications (Borneo) in association with The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. 427 pp.
- H. Koopowitz and N. Hasegawa. 2000. A short history of *Paphiopedilum* breeding. *Orchid Digest*, 64: 180-207.

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Our thanks go to *The Orchid Review* and its Editor, Isobyl la Croix, for permission to reprint this article. *The Orchid Review* comes out every other month (six times a year) and, for overseas subscribers, costs 33 British pounds airmail and 28 British pounds surface mail without the New Hybrid List. The Hybrid List is now separate from the main journal and lists all the hybrids registered in the past two months. The address for subscribers is: The Orchid Review, RHS Subscription Service, PO Box 38, Ashford, Kent TN25 6PR, United Kingdom. The e-mail address is [orchidreview@aw.cix.co.uk](mailto:orchidreview@aw.cix.co.uk).



**Paph. leucochilum**



**Paph. bellatulum 'Leopard King'**



**Paph. niveum 'Marriott Quintessence' AM/AOS**



**Paph. concolor 'Massive'**

Photographs courtesy of Hadley Cash  
Marriott Orchids  
Kernersville, NC  
Used with permission



**Phrag. fischeri 'River Valley' CHM/AOS**



**Paph. (Cyberspace x Black Spectre)**

Photography by Sam Tsui  
Used with permission

## SOA Trophy Winner

Sam Tsui of Orchid Inn is the proud owner of the winner of the Slipper Orchid Alliance Trophy presented at the A.O.S. meeting in Houston. His unregistered hybrid, Paph. (Cyberspace x Black Sceptre) 'Black Diamond' captivated the judges. The plant was a seedling from the Orchid Zone, and Sam's well-known fine culture brought it to its outstanding presentation.

Sam came to the United States from Hong Kong at the age of 22. He subsequently graduated from Illinois State University, received an MBA and is currently an application software specialist with Country Companies Insurance and Investment Group, based in Bloomington-Normal, Illinois. He began growing orchids in 1983, and after trying many types of orchids he became a serious Paphiopedilum grower in 1985. In 1991 he began hybridizing with Paphs and currently makes over 200 crosses per year. He started the Orchid Inn in 1995. He fills orders from around the world and attends approximately 15 orchid shows/conferences a year. He also gives several programs/lectures every year in the U.S., Canada, and overseas. Hybridizing is Sam's passion. He emphasizes the Parvisepalum, Brachypetalum and multifloral groups in his latest breeding work. Numerous AOS and CSA awards have been bestowed on his plants, including two FCCs and a CCE presented by the American Orchid Society



**Phrag. schlimii 'Veronica Jane' HCC/AOS**

Photographs courtesy of Eric Sauer  
River Valley Orchids  
Used with permission

## 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Slipper Orchid Symposium

Do you think it is difficult or impossible to grow slipper orchids in Florida or other parts of the South? Find the answers on Saturday, January 18, 2003, when the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Slipper Orchid Symposium under the aegis of the Slipper Orchid Study Group of Florida will present a one-day symposium, **SPRING BREAK – Where the Slippers Are**, in Kissimmee, Florida. Speakers will be Marilyn LeDoux, Dennis D'Alessandro, and Yves Aubrey. The day will open at 8:00 a.m. with registration, and the first speaker starts at 9:30 a.m. Another speaker and coffee break fill out the morning, followed by lunch in the courtyard. The afternoon session includes two speakers, a soda break, and a panel of renowned slipper growers who will reveal their cultural secrets for growing award-winning slippers in a lively round table discussion. A real down-south Florida Champagne BBQ in the evening at the World of Orchids Gazebo (available for \$10 for registrants or \$15 for non-registrants) will be followed by an auction. (This is the Symposium started by Paul and Mary Phillips, and they are still involved.) An Open House at Ratcliffe Orchids LLC, 2501 Sand Hill Road, Kissimmee, will round out the weekend. The nearby Orlando attractions will provide additional activities for other family members.

The timing of this Slipper Orchid Symposium was scheduled to coincide with the Fort Lauderdale Orchid Show – one of the best in Florida. Judging is Thursday, and visitors may attend the Preview Party Thursday night for a cost of \$45. This gives one the opportunity to see all the displays without the crowds, mingle with other orchid lovers, get first crack at the best plants being sold, and wine and dine on Fort Lauderdale's haute cuisine. Friday can be a day of leisure before you head to the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Kissimmee for Friday night fun and to be there bright and early for the Slipper Symposium Saturday morning.

Registration is \$100, with a discount of \$25 if you are among the first fifty registrants or if you are paying before Christmas or \$25 off for groups of ten or more from a society or judging center. Registration is limited to 100. You may call Jamie Lawson to get on the list early.

For more information and registration form, contact Jamie Lawson, 1301 Welser Ave. NE, Palm Bay, FL 32907; 888-619-7687; or e-mail jimorchids@aol.com. Please make your own hotel reservation at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, 7470 Highway 192 West, Kissimmee, FL 34747, phone 407-396-4400, fax 407-396-4320. A special rate of \$55 per room per night has been arranged, available until December 18, 2002. Thereafter, reservations will be taken on a space and availability basis. Quote "Ratcliffe Orchids" when **making** your reservation.

## Orchid Collection Conservatorship

Ex-situ conservation of orchids brings not only great rewards in growing and blooming beautiful, diverse, and exotic plants, but also responsibilities. There should be a commitment to the proper care of plants, responsibility for the long term up-keep of your collection, and selection of genera or species that will do well under your growing conditions or limitations. Growing well implies motivation to learn and share information about successful plant culture and lessons learned from knowledge of plants' natural habitats. The AOS, local orchid societies, and regional and national shows with associated congresses and expert lecturers are invaluable resources.

The American Orchid Society in its publication "Conservation is Everyone's Responsibility" suggests several steps that can help to preserve orchid species and plant collections. The following attempts to expand these remarks.

### **Purchase only artificially propagated plants.**

#### **Grow your plants well.**

Will Rhodehamel, former AOS Conservation Committee Chair, has suggested that if certain genera or species consistently die under your care, you should show mercy and concentrate on those you grow well. Hilda Belman has reported on the Greater New York Orchid Society's "Species Rescue Project" whereby plants which are going downhill, or those that were in good growth vegetatively but had not bloomed for a number of years are donated to the care of volunteer "nurses." Successfully rescued plants are sold for a nominal fee that goes to support the conservation aspects of the society.

#### **Share your plants.**

The best insurance for a rare clone or species is a division of it given or traded to another expert grower. Consider sharing seed or pollen for storage or propagation. For select and rare plants, especially species, there are resources available for both pollen and seed banking and cryopreservation and for free flasking and distribution.

#### **Protect your collection.**

Depending on your location you may need back up for cooling, heating or water. As rolling backouts swept through California recently, one could imagine systems that relied on electricity failing, especially during extremes of temperature. There should be alarms to notify of system failures.

You should have a back-up caregiver familiar with your collection to call upon for any extended periods you are away. Amateurs and hobbyists generally have no set arrangement



for personnel to assist in case of absence or emergency and it is in such situations your local orchid society or grower friends can assist. One recent article suggested that you enlist a young person interested in gardens and plants who could be trained and paid (possibly in plant divisions), who can gain knowledge and skills to earn responsibility for collection care and who might well develop into an orchid enthusiast. He/she would know your collection's cultural requirements and could step in when needed.

### **Plan ahead for emergencies.**

Carlo Balistieri (in *Think Globally, Act Locally*, AOS Bulletin, July 1994, p798) has expressed so lucidly feelings engendered by the loss of a prized or cherished collection that I quote the opening paragraphs. "There is no sight more devastating to an orchidist than a collection ravaged by neglect. Often this is unintentional and no one is more affected by the sight than the plant owner. Too many times orchidists have been laid low by sickness or disease and are thus deprived of the ability to care for their plants. To have one's passion destroyed in this way may cause psychological and emotional hurt equalling the physical pain that created the disability."

Unexpected death has also accounted for the loss of wonderful collections of plants. The family, often uninvolved in orchids, is left with growing areas chock full of plants in which they may have little interest. In many cases they lack even the most rudimentary knowledge of how to care for the plants. If they are not immediately pitched on a compost pile or in the trash, the plants are sentenced to a slow lingering death by starvation and dehydration. So often – too true.

### **Recommendations for emergency planning include:**

1. Clearly visible and easily available written instructions should be posted. The AOS conservation committee is developing a decal for a greenhouse window or a growing area. This should include a contact person or local group to be called for immediate care. Local orchid societies are invaluable for the short term. Having such people visit your collection allows them to be informed of all growing areas and plants requiring special care.
2. There should be posted information near the collection as to frequency of watering, contact persons for heat, electricity, water purification, etc., and who should be contacted relative to disbursement of plants or sale of the collection. The conservation committee is planning a vividly colored, attention attracting sign or decal to be distributed with the journal **Orchids**.
3. In planning for plant disbursement or collection sale, accurate records are imperative. Records of rare, important plants, or those of historical interest are imperative since these are of particular value to the specialty grower or public and research garden. Ideally all data on plants should be kept in duplicate and in separate

sites. For plants leaving the country such records could be required for CITES documentation.

4. For those of us who enjoy hybridizing, many flasks, compots, or seedlings are identified only by letters and numbers referring to the grex or the flask number. Obviously without available reference information, their value is significantly reduced.

### **Think carefully and take time to develop a living will or Collection Protection Trust for your collection.**

As pointed out in the report of The Orchid Estate Planning Committee of the Southwest Regional Orchid Growers Association, a collection is not only living orchid plants but memorabilia such as art, books, magazines, collectibles, china, pictures, slides, needlework, etc. The value of these may equal or exceed that of plants and frequently should be kept as a unit to maximize value. I would also mention correspondence invaluable to documenting historical facts on growers, hybridizers, orchid societies at all levels and defining events (such as the impact of WWII on European collections.) The AOS archives committee is a knowledgeable resource for evaluation of the worth of such items and as a possible repository. The Huntington Botanical Gardens can serve a similar function.

May specialty collections should be considered a unit and not broken up. At some point the value of the whole collection supersedes the value of the individual plants. The owner of such a collection should make arrangements, temporary and permanent, for appropriate continued care and transfer of the collection in case of emergency, disability, or death of the caretaker.

If you consider leaving your collection to a botanic garden or herbarium, it is important to determine in advance whether they are interested in all or part of your collection and what special rules apply. Each organization has different accession policies, dependent in part on whether the plants are a pure donation or a value is set for tax exemption purposes. In the latter case two separate independent appraisals might be required or plants may require virus testing, etc. Occasional trips to the garden to judge the quality of orchid care are warranted. Good culture frequently depends on the special interest of a single employee.

### **A final note on the value of the amateur grower is warranted.**

The amateur can help conservation by becoming fully committed, expending whatever time, care, and funds necessary to maintain a collection in optimum condition. An amateur can spend far more attention on a rare plant in precarious condition to restore it to health or even just grow it well than can an institution or even a commercial grower. This is particularly valuable to the ex-situ conservation process because the rare plants are frequently in small

quantities and require specialized care that commercial and botanical facilities are unable to provide for extended periods.

The vast majority of members of the American Orchid Society are amateur growers or hobbyists. Their collections give them great joy and pride, but also have value for orchid conservation and deserve the time and thought needed for their protection.

Examples of living wills, collection protection trusts and other documents are available through the American Orchid Society Conservation Committee.

*Al Svoboda, M. D.*

*Vice Chair, Conservation Committee*

## **23rd Annual Paphiopedilum Forum**

The 23rd Annual Paphiopedilum Forum, sponsored by the National Capital Orchid Society, will be held on Saturday, February 15, 2003 at the National Arboretum Visitor's Center in Washington, D. C. Co-chairmen Gordon Slaymaker and Bill Goldner have arranged an exciting program featuring Dr. Leonid Averyonov as the Keynote Speaker. Dr. Averyonov will be speaking on the natural history of the newly discovered Paphiopedilum species from Vietnam and Southern China. If you have not seen Dr. Averyonov's presentation, expect wonderful images of slipper orchids in their natural habitats.

Joining Dr. Averyonov at the 23rd Paph Forum will be Dr. Norito Hasegawa, who is the owner of Paphanatics and has been at the leading edge of novelty Paphiopedilums for more than a decade. Norito will bring us up to date with new occurrences in this area. Finally, in answer to many requests, we are going to have a presentation on growing award-winning Paphiopedilums and Phragmipediums from Mr. Tom McBride, The Little Greenhouse, and Mr. Steve Shifflett, Floradise Orchids. Both Tom and Steve are renowned for their cultural excellence, and will share an interactive perspective on how to get the most out of your favorite plants

As in the past, growers are encouraged to bring in their best blooming Paphs, Phrags and Cyps for the spectacular Show Table, which has featured nearly 300 plants each year. There will be ribbon and trophy judging (including gorgeous trophies provided by Lynn Evans-Goldner), the presentation of the Slipper Orchid Alliance People's Choice Trophy (chosen by balloting by the attendees) and American Orchid Society judging.

Pre-registration is required and is limited to the first 150 registrants. Lunch is included.

As always, the sales area will also be the focus of keen attention!

For registration information, please visit the Paphiopedilum Forum web site at:  
[www.geocities.com/RainForest/vines/5097/forum\\_info.html](http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/vines/5097/forum_info.html)

## **Phragmipedium schlimii and fischeri**

Two Phragmipedium species, although small, are quite dominant in their genetics. *Phragmipedium schlimii*, first described as *Selenipedium schlimii* in 1854, is a small plant with wonderful pink flowers from Columbia and Ecuador. *Phragmipedium fischeri*, which was first described recently in 1996, is another small plant also with pink flowers found in Ecuador. There has been much discussion as to the validity of *fischeri* as a separate species or simply as a variety of *schlimii*. I am not a taxonomist; however, I have grown both plants; I am of the opinion that they are separate species. Culture for both species is similar, but variations in the plants and flowers tend to convince me that they are correctly split as two species.

*Phragmipedium schlimii*, the older of the two species in terms of the original description, is the larger of the two species. *Schlimii* has also been improperly identified and awarded, adding to the confusion surrounding this species. The true *schlimii* has long narrow leaves forming an upright growth approximately twelve to fourteen inches across. The inflorescence produces successive blooms and, on some clones, will branch, allowing several flowers to open together. The blooms are four to six centimeters across. The petals and sepals are white with some pink blush. The nearly perfectly round pouches range from pink to almost entirely white. The blooms also are quite fuzzy with short white hairs over all flower segments. The staminode is white with a strong yellow center, in some cases almost covering the entire surface. The flowers each last a couple of weeks with the entire flowering inflorescence blooming for several months, usually in the late spring; however, it may flower at other times of the year as well. *Phragmipedium schlimii* has been awarded and occasionally described as having much larger flowers, up to three inches across. These larger "*schlimiis*" are actually *Phragmipedium* Cardinale, a hybrid of *schlimii* and *Sedenii*. Awarded clones of *schlimii* including 'Wilcox' and 'Birchwood' are examples of Cardinale posing as *schlimii*.

*Phragmipedium fischeri* was found in a group of plants from Ecuador in 1996 by Jerry Fischer of Orchids Limited.

The flower used in the original description had an odd extra segment between the synsepal and the pouch. This segment has not repeated in other flowerings or in other plants of *fischeri*. The plants differ from *schlimii* in that they are much smaller in overall leaf span and also are much less upright, similar in habit to *Phragmipedium besseae*. The leaves are narrow similar to *schlimii*, but held more horizontally. The flowers are held on much thinner inflorescences than *schlimii* and are also successive blooming. So far, however, no branching has occurred on any of our plants. The flowers are slightly smaller in size, but tend to be more solid pink on all segments. The flower form tends to be less round, but with the nice spherical pouch similar to *schlimii*. The staminode is typically asymmetrical and has a strong yellow overlay.

Despite the differences in the two species, I have found that the culture is very similar for both. In general, these plants must be kept evenly moist, or the plants will show signs of stress very rapidly. Both *schlimii* and *fischeri* seem to do well in intermediate temperatures and good bright light. I actually grow the plants next to each other on the bench. Both species benefit from regular repottings using any of the mixes I described in the previous issue. Both species require good clean water and good air movement to help prevent bacterial rots. As is typical with most *Phragmipediums*, they are light feeders, enjoying the application of a light feeding on a regular basis.

The results of breeding with both *schlimii* and *fischeri* can guarantee one typical trait. Both plants are very dominant in terms of color and will almost always produce some type of pink flowers. *Schlimii* has produced many wonderful hybrids including Hanne Popow (*x besseae*), Sedenii (*x longifolium*), Silver Eagle (*x czerwiakowianum*), and Cardinale (*x Sedenii*). All of the hybrids are easy to grow and produce nice pink flowers in a multitude of shapes and sizes. *Fischeri* has just recently been used for new hybrids including Barbara LeAnn (*x besseae*) and Purple Wave (*x Mem. Dick Clements*). These hybrids are also generally pink to fuchsia in color with more rounded overall shapes due to the parentage. Future hybrids will produce many forms and sizes of flowers in various shades of pink. If you are looking

for pink flowers, look no further than hybrids using these two species.

*Phragmipedium schlimii* and *fischeri* are wonderful species to complement any orchid collection. They are both ideal for windowsill and under light culture and don't require much bench space in the greenhouse. Both species merit attention, and despite their small stature, are quite dominant in the *Phragmipedium* family.

Eric Sauer, ASLA  
River Valley Orchids  
Lebanon, Ohio

## SOA Receives Tax-exempt Status

Last April at its meeting in Chicago, the SOA Board voted to apply for incorporation and tax-exempt status. The Slipper Orchid Alliance in May was officially recognized as a Nonprofit Corporation, registered in the state of Pennsylvania. With that designation, President Barbara Tisherman went through the arduous process of applying to the Internal Revenue Service for status for the SOA as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3). We are happy to report that our application was approved on October 29, with the effective date being May 1, 2002, after which all donations that have been made and will be made in the future to the SOA may be deducted as a charitable contribution on your income tax return. It is very gratifying that our efforts and activities have been recognized as serving an important educational function in such a short period of our existence.

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## With Special Thanks to our 2002 Supporting (Commercial) Members

(see bold type entries in the alphabetical directory for contact information)

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 Sam Tsui, Orchid Inn  
 Rod Knowles, R. K. Gems

## Dues Notice

Ahhhhhh! The end of another year. Time to put past shortcomings behind us and look forward to a new year and a clean slate. But then those terrible things keep arriving in the mail....tax forms from the IRS, tax bills from local and state governments, and renewal notices from every organization to which you belong. Sorry, but we are no different. Got to pay the bills, you know. Please use the enclosed form to mail your check to our treasurer, Steve Drozda. We like to double check your information and keep our records up to date and it really helps if you will return the membership form with your check.

We are currently looking into using Pay Pal as a means of renewing memberships. If this is of interest to you, please check our website ([www.slipperorchid.org](http://www.slipperorchid.org)) for current information.

All current memberships will run through April 1, 2003. If you have not renewed by that time, your name will be removed as a member. Your prompt response using the enclosed membership application is greatly appreciated as it will save us the expense of mailing individual dues notices.

Just in case the membership form fell out of your newsletter as you were reading and you can no longer find it, Steve's address is: 661 Harrogate Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15241. Now you don't have an excuse.



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