



## Robert W. Marlin Sr.

By Bob Hodges

Bob Marlin was a long time member of SDCOS as well as the Palomar Orchid Society. He was president of the SDCOS in 1992-93. A great guy, well known by many of those in the Southern California area. He resided in Encinitas. I visited with Bob and Ardell just one month ago. There will be a memorial service later, in March.

## JANUARY 2004 NOVICE MEETING

January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004, 6:30 PM - CASA DEL PRADO - ROOM 104

By Lynn Ford, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

The Novice Group meeting is starting the new year out right. We are extremely fortunate to have a repeat speaker, this month. In fact our enthusiastic, entertaining speaker will be none other than Ivan Harrison, former 2nd Vice President and for several years, the fearless leader of this Novice Group.

Ivan's topic will be: Roots - Even Orchids Should Have Them!

I know you will all be interested and beguiled with the information that Ivan will share with us. Some real, concrete facts and suggestions to get your orchids growing - and keep them growing. We look forward to seeing you on January 6th, at 6:30 pm.

## JANUARY 2004 GENERAL MEETING

January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004, 7:30 PM - CASA DEL PRADO - ROOM 101

By Ivan Harrison, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

To start the New Year with a bang, I am delighted to announce that a fabulous orchid grower and one of our own members will be addressing the General Meeting in January. Loren Batchman of Casa de las Orquideas will be presenting a brand new talk on "The Hybridization of Spotted Cymbidiums".

Loren will also be providing the orchids for the plant table, so get ready for some wonderful Cymbidiums and probably a few Zygopetalums as well.

By the way, could you all start 2004 by helping the Society save money? If you can get your newsletter by e-mail, you will get it in color! The printing and mailing costs of the newsletter continue to rise, and for those who have a computer, email is much easier. If you can make the switch, please see Rosemary and she will make the arrangements for you.

See you on January 6th.

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If you have monthly meetings, classifieds, submissions of interest, or announcements related to orchids, **to be considered for publication in the upcoming February issue, please contact us by January 16<sup>th</sup>.**

You are encouraged to contact the editor by either email or phone from 2 pm to 8 pm only, Michael Orser at **619.269.3445** or [editor@sdorchids.com](mailto:editor@sdorchids.com)

**Advertisers:** please contact Marjorie Kuhlmann at **858.675.0885** or [kuhlmann@utm.net](mailto:kuhlmann@utm.net) under the same deadline as in bold above.

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**OUR PURPOSE:** *To promote interest in orchids and their cultivation, to educate by exchanging information and experiences related to successful orchid culture, and to support the conservation of orchids in the wild.*

SDCOS meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month at Casa Del Prado in **Balboa Park**. We invite you to join the society to receive the monthly newsletter and many other benefits.

**Beginner's Class:** 6:30 pm, Room 104  
**General Meeting:** 7:30 pm, Room 101

If you would like to join the society, please send your check for \$10\* for individual, \$12.50 for Dual membership, payable to SDCOS, to: **Vivian Folmer**, SDCOS Membership, 13127 Roundup, San Diego, CA 92129. Telephone: **858.538.6187**, email: [vfollmer@hotmail.com](mailto:vfollmer@hotmail.com)

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# U P C O M I N G CALIFORNIA EVENTS

#### January 3-4

Peninsula Orchid Society Show, Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt, Redwood City, CA. Contact: Rene Biggs, 1051 Riverton Dr., San Carlos, CA 94070; 650.593.4793

#### January 17-18

San Diego County Orchid Society is presenting another best of the best! This is the time for YOU, all of our members to bring in plants and show San Diego and the rest of Southern California what we can grow! No it's not the Spring Show, but the SDCOS Mini Show has been the best value in these hard times - it's free! Contact Robert Hodges 619.461.4915, Balboa Park, CASA DEL PRADO - ROOM 104

#### January 24

San Diego County Cymbidium Society Annual Orchid Auction, Woman's Club of Carlsbad, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad, CA. Contact: Warren Stehle, 3140 Canyon St., Carlsbad, CA 90008; 760.729.0467; [sstehle@msn.com](mailto:sstehle@msn.com)

#### February 5-8

Fascination of Orchids, South Coast Plaza, Crate & Barrel Wing, 3333 Bear St., Costa Mesa, CA. Contact: Roberta Fox, 2153 San Michel Dr. E #C, Costa Mesa, CA 92627; [roberta@orchidcentral.net](mailto:roberta@orchidcentral.net); [www.foshow.com](http://www.foshow.com)

#### February 7-8

Santa Cruz Orchid Society Annual Show, Soquel High School, 401 Old San Jose Road, Soquel, CA. Contact: Cheryl Wagner, 91 Mountain View Rd., Santa Cruz, CA 95065; 831.457.8393

#### March 5-7

Five Cities Orchid Society Show, South County Regional Center, 800 W. Branch St., Arroyo Grande, CA. Contact: Rosemary Bradshaw, 1656 La Mirada Dr., Nipomo, CA 93444; 805.929.1791; [orchidlady@earthlink.net](mailto:orchidlady@earthlink.net)

#### March 12-14

Malihini Orchid Society Show, Vallco Fashion Park, 10123 N. Wolfe Rd., Cupertino, CA. Contact: Barry Zimmerman, 685 Stirling Dr., Milpitas, CA 95035; 408.262.5782

# WHAT IS ORCHID JUDGING?

by Lynn Ford

Several months ago, San Diego County was granted its very own American Orchid Society Judging Center. Many of our members have already taken their prize orchids up to the AOSJC at Quail Botanical Gardens in Encinitas, to be judged by the some of the best accredited AOS Judges in the world. To better understand what this means for you and your beautiful home-grown orchids, I have asked Mr. Jesup for permission to print his article on AOS Judging from the AOS Bulletin magazine – with a few comments by me thrown in. I hope reading this will inspire you to bring your orchids up to the Judging Center, or perhaps, like me, to become a Clerk (to learn more about orchids), on the first Monday night of each month.

We will be very honored in March 2004 to have Accredited AOS Judge Loren Batchman (yep, our own dear Loren) speak to the Novice Group at our SDCOS meeting.

## WHAT IS ORCHID JUDGING?

By H. Phillips Jesup with inserted comments by Lynn Ford

Q. What is the purpose of judging?

A. Humans tend to tinker with nature to make it conform to their vision of the ideal – or the bizarre. Sometimes the result is grotesque, and sometimes beautiful, and often decided by the eye of each beholder.

Man is also a competitive beast. Inevitably, judging systems are developed as formal methods of comparison against an evolved standard. Awards recognize achievement by the breeder of degrees of perfection or testify to acquisition skills by the purchaser. They can be useful in identifying potential parents for future breeding. The AOS awards system is particularly helpful to hobbyists because the listing of a flower award as part of the clonal name of an awarded orchid cultivar (such as Blc. Norman's Bay 'Low'. FCC/AOS) that is offered for sale as a mericlone or division clearly denotes superiority. And to be grossly materialistic, an awarded plant has greater monetary (and trading) value.

Q. Who are those strange people . . . ?

A. AOS judges number in the several hundreds, and there are many additional orchidists who are in training to join the druid ranks. They are in some ways regular people, except that they have been perhaps more seriously smitten by the lure of the Orchidaceae than even most other aficionados. They have the audacity to cast judgment on the quality of an orchid by authority of their formal appointment as judges by the American Orchid Society.

Q. What qualifies them?

A. First and foremost, an intense and steadfast long-term enthusiasm for orchids. This could be said of many AOS members, perhaps most, but for a judge, orchids must play an important part in his/her life, because judgeship is a very long-

term, often lifetime, commitment. Sacrificial, too, because much of what might otherwise be leisure time is spent on monthly judging meetings, judging orchid shows, business and training sessions, and so forth. This cuts into time with one's family, repairing the screen door, and - - repotting one's orchids! There is also some cost, such as for travel. Judges serve without recompense or reimbursement.

There are other important qualifications, some of which are pretty obvious: ability to discern and compare and to make independent judgments; high standards of personal integrity; a good fund of knowledge and desire to expand it; ability to work with others; and of course, a good interest in all facets of orchidology.

Q. How does one become a judge?

A. First, by seriously considering the long-term consequences. A candidate for judgeship must complete a minimum of a total of six years of training, first as a student, then as a probationary judge, before becoming eligible for election to full accreditation. Not all who enter the system as students come out the other end of the tube as full-fledged judges for various reasons. Along the route are apt to be papers to present, discussions to lead, award slides to critique and many opportunities to display the depths or the shallows of one's knowledge. The wrong answer to the question, "Why do you wish to become a judge?" is "I want to learn about orchids." One should know a good deal about orchids before applying to judgeship; the thrust of training and observing after becoming a student judge is in learning how to judge orchids.

If you are not yet intimidated and are still inclined to apply, first express your interest to the Chairman of the Judging Committee in your judging region and offer to help with clerking duties. This will give you an opportunity to see what it's all about and give the judges a chance to get to know you if they do not already. The next step would be to apply formally through your region Chairman. If you think you might qualify, and have the time and interest, do consider it. The AOS welcomes promising new blood, and while being a judge can be arduous, it's also exciting and fun, with the reward of seeing many of the finest and most interesting orchids on a frequent basis.

Two important AOS publications address themselves to judging and the judged and are indispensable if judging interests you: 1) AOS Handbook on Judging and Exhibition, 11th Edition, obtainable for \$10. from the AOS offices, and 2) Awards Quarterly, the quarterly which contains illustrated description of AOS-awarded plants. A subscription costs \$45. per year. The Awards Quarterly is of interest to all who are enthralled with orchids, not just judges or candidates.

Q. Where and when does judging take place?

A. Each of the 28 judging regions and supplemental

*continued on next page...*

judging centers scattered throughout the U.S. meets monthly at the same place and time to pass judgments on plants submitted to it. Closest to San Diego is the Pacific South Judging Center at Quail Botanical Gardens, Encinitas. Every month the AOS magazine, *Orchids*, devotes a page to dates and locations for each center. In addition there are a great many orchid shows that are judged by AOS judges (San Diego County Orchid Society Spring Show & San Diego International Orchid Fair, Del Mar). If you have plants in the show, in your own exhibit or as a contribution to an orchid society exhibit, they will automatically be screened for AOS awards. San Diego shows, listed above, also invite any orchid hobbyist to enter single or a few plants in individual plant classes.

At this point a clarification is in order. AOS judges participate in noncompetitive judging at shows in the same manner as at the monthly judging at the Judging Centers. All the plants in the show are eligible to be nominated by the judges for this type of judging unless a plant is clearly marked "not for AOS judging." As with all noncompetitive AOS awards, winners are recorded and published in the Awards Quarterly with descriptions and often photographs under the name of the exhibitor.

Q. How do I have my orchid judged?

A. Aside from entering it in a show as described above, it is a matter of taking it to the regional judging center at Quail Botanical Gardens, the first Monday night of each month (7-9pm). If the trip to the center is a problem for you or a friend, often a judge who lives relatively nearby will be willing to take your plant to judging for you if you deliver to (and later pick it up from) his/her house.

Q. Is my orchid good enough to be judged?

A. As one becomes more familiar with the wide, wide world of orchids, one begins to form ideas of what constitutes a "good" orchid, both in flower quality and in cultural perfection. Seeing the slide shows at our SDCOS monthly meetings, observing plants on our societies monthly orchid exhibit tables, visiting orchid friends' collections, reading, visiting commercial orchid growers and particularly going to orchid shows, sharpens one's critical eye and broadens perspectives. Among our SDCOS members, we have several accredited AOS judges – ask them for a frank appraisal. There is also a computer program called Wildcatt Orchids database. This program lists both species and hybrid orchids and describes each plant's parents and lists what awards (if any) that each listed plant has received. Using Wildcatt, you can judge the quality of your plant in comparison to those who have already won awards.

Of course, the only real way to find out if your plant has a shot at an AOS award is to summon your courage and trundle it off to judging. The worst that can happen is that it is not awarded, but even that can be an educational experience, for you will be able to learn from the judges why it was not awarded. And if it is awarded, that will be a moment you will cherish forever!

## Major AOS Awards

FCC/AOS (First Class Certificate) The highest flower award, given by AOS judges to flowers scoring 90 or more points on a scale of 100 points.

AM/AOS (Award of Merit) A flower scoring 80 to 89 points of a scale of 100 points. This flower quality award is a fine achievement.

HCC/AOS (Highly Commended Certificate) The HCC is granted to a flower scoring 75-59 points on a scale of 100. The majority of awarded orchids receive this award, which implies that, while the flower being judged is outstanding, there is room for improvement.

CCM/AOS (Certificate of Cultural Merit) The beginning orchid grower may hope to attain this award because the award, rather than designating an individual flower of high quality, recognizes the grower along with the plant. The CCM may be given more than once if the plant continues to thrive and increase in both the size and number of flowers.

CHM/AOS (Certificate of Horticultural Merit) Awarded to a well-flowered species or natural hybrid with characteristics that contribute to the horticultural aspects of orchidology.

CBR/AOS (Certificate of Botanical Recognition) Granted to a species for characteristics of rarity, unusual interest and educational value, awarded by a 2/3 majority of the judging team without scoring.

AQ/AOS (Award of Quality) Granted to a flowering seedling population showing substantial improvement over the type, a minimum of 12 clones exhibited, granted unanimously without scoring.

AD/AOS (Award of Distinction) Granted to a cross which is a desirable new direction in breeding, one or more clones exhibited, granted unanimously without scoring.

JC/AOS (Judges' Commendation) Given to orchids for distinctive characteristics that the AOS judges, by affirmative vote of at least 75 percent, feel should be recognized but cannot be scored in customary ways.

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# Vice President's Report January 2004



According to the emails and phone calls that we, and other members of the Board received, most of you thoroughly enjoyed the Holiday party. I would especially like to thank everyone who helped set up the tables, serve the food and clean up afterwards.

The food that you all brought was fantastic. It was the best buffet that I've seen at one of SDCOS's parties, and there was lots and lots of food for everyone.

I would also like to thank Loren Batchman for helping us out with the plant table. He always treats SDCOS so well, and we received some wonderful flowering Cymbidiums and Zygopetalums.

The plant exchange was also one of the best I've seen, so I hope that some of you went home with some wonderful plants.

Everything is going well for the March Show. Genie and I are working hard to put everything in order, and we are pleased to report that all the vendor spaces have already been filled. We have some new and very interesting vendors coming, which should make the show even more enjoyable

than usual. Posters and tickets will be available at the January meeting.

We hope that you have happy holidays and we'll see you in the New Year.

Ivan



# January/February Orchid Checklist

Prepared by Ned Nash and James Rose.

**Cattleya** Watering and fertilizing will be at a minimum, as will potting. Be on the lookout for senescing sheaths on your winter-into-spring bloomers. Careful removal of the dying sheaths will still allow buds to develop without the danger of condensation-induced rot. Low light will lead to weak spikes, so, and as noted above, staking is critical. If you have a chance to get out to nurseries, there may still be a chance to acquire good plants in sheath for spring bloom. Getting them now not only ensures that you'll have them, but allows them to acclimate to your conditions and bloom at their best.

**Cymbidium** We are well into the flowering season now. Outdoor growers should be cautious of freezing temperatures. Damage starts to occur below 30 F. Be diligent about tying the inflorescences for best arrangement of the flowers. Also watch closely for slugs and snails. If weather is quite wet, protect the plants from the rain and this will help to reduce the risk of botrytis spotting.

**Lycaste** The most glorious of all orchids, Lycaste, will be moving toward their flowering season. Make sure the palm-like leaves do not interfere with the emerging inflorescences. Tying them loosely together often is helpful. Some growers cut the leaves off at the pseudobulb, but this removes part of the attractiveness of this elegant orchid. Resist picking up the plant to inspect those beautiful buds and then setting it down in all different directions as the flower buds will be forced to re-orient themselves to the light source each time and will not open as nicely as they should. Keep plants a little drier during the shorter days.

**Odontoglossums** Odontoglossums and their intergeneric hybrids offer a great splash of color now. Though once thought of as being difficult to grow and requiring cool temperatures due to the emphasis on odontoglossum breeding, the new intergeneric hybrids made using Oncidium and Brassia, for example, are just the opposite. These plants are quite content in more intermediate

conditions. New growths generally emerge in the spring, later forming beautiful plump pseudobulbs. Look for the flower spikes to emerge from the inner sheath of the pseudobulb. If your plant's pseudobulbs are shriveled, then the plants have been kept too dry or too wet. Inspect the roots to determine which condition prevailed. If the lead pseudobulb is large, plump and green (and back bulbs are shriveled) but no flower spike is evident, the plants may have been kept too dry.

**Paphiopedilum** The standard Paphiopedilum insigne-derived hybrids, which are called "bull dogs" and "toads," are at their peak. Unlike most other orchids, they can even be potted while in bud. There really is no wrong time to pot a paphiopedilum, and no other orchid responds so favorably to fresh mix and a cleanup. Keep an eye on watering until roots begin to grow.

**Phalaenopsis** Now is the peak of spike development, with the first plants in full flower. Staking and plant preparation is a must for those all-important spring shows. Correct staking now will give a better display and also make it much easier to transport to your society meetings and shows. Care with watering is vital to avoid mechanical damage to the flowers, as well as rot-related problems. Keep spent blooms cleaned up to avoid botrytis inoculation. Do not repot this month. Now you'll be seeing lots of phalaenopsis at orchid shows and sales.

**Zygopetalum** For the most part, the flowering season will have ended for this group, providing the grower a chance to do some repotting. The plants will then have a chance to become well established before the hotter months of summer arrive. Most growers use bark mixes, but some exceptional results have been seen lately using rock-wool blends. You may want to try this mix, but do not change your whole collection over to this new media until you are sure it is right for you. First, experiment with a few plants to see how they respond.

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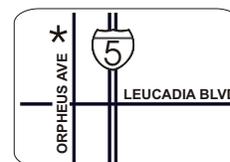
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## Unearth the Treasure!

by Ron Kaufmann

Buried within the pages of Sander's List of Orchid Hybrids and Awards Quarterly lies a wealth of information invaluable to breeders of orchids and collectors alike. Using these two publications, breeders can discover what the breeding trends are in his particular area of interest, and what breeding lines are particularly successful. Similarly, the collector interested in obtaining and exhibiting awardable plants can determine which new crosses are potential winners, valuable information when choosing which plants to buy.

Accessing this information, however, is not always simple. Digging through all seven volumes of Sander's to trace a genealogy can be a daunting and time consuming task. To trace just one plant in this manner can take hours. To cross reference this data with the awards data contained in Awards Quarterly in any meaningful way can quickly become a job of mammoth proportions.

Add to this the fact that the early volumes of Sander's books are virtually unavailable, and this "wealth" of information truly becomes a buried treasure. Now that the personal computer has become commonplace and affordable, the technology is here to put all this data at your fingertips.

Wildcatt Orchids is the most comprehensive orchid database

available. It incorporates all the data contained in Sander's and registrations published through August 2002, as well as awards data published through Summer 2002 and going back to 1970, volume 1 of the Awards Quarterly publication, combining these facts into a full featured database program. This program allows you not only to access data about individual orchids, it lets you explore entire breeding lines.

Ron Kaufmann has been hybridizing orchids for six years and has used Wildcatt extensively during that time to evaluate breeding lines, research awarded orchids, and study trends in hybridizing. He will conduct a hands-on tutorial for people interested in learning how to use this powerful software. Please plan to bring a laptop computer to this meeting or be prepared to share with someone who brings one. If you bring a computer, please install the Wildcatt software before you come to the meeting. More information about Wildcatt can be found at [www.wildcattdata.com](http://www.wildcattdata.com).

The meeting will be held in the Shiley Science and Technology Center at the University of San Diego. Directions to the university can be found at [www.sandiego.edu/about/usd\\_visit.shtml](http://www.sandiego.edu/about/usd_visit.shtml), and a map of the campus is located at [www.sandiego.edu/parking/images/map.gif](http://www.sandiego.edu/parking/images/map.gif). The Shiley Center is located in the southwest corner of campus on the site marked "Lower Olin Lot". We will meet in the fourth floor conference room in the southwest corner of the building. Enter the building on the third floor, take the elevator to the fourth floor, and head west (left) to the conference room. If you run into problems that morning and need to contact me, please call my cell phone at 619.994.7584.

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- (5) It comes in color!
- (6) The SDCOS Newsletter was voted fourth best  
orchid newsletter in 2003 by the AOS

# Quail Botanical Gardens Update:

November AOS Judging at our new center  
Story and photos by Loren Batchmann



The AOS judging at Quail Botanical Gardens was held on November 3 with one CCE/AOS, one AMVAOS and one HCC/AOS award granted out of about eight plants entered for judging. November is not the prime season for most orchids, but Richard Franklin from Phoenix, Arizona brought in a magnificent *Oncidium onustum* to show us how it

should be grown. The plant was about 1.2 meters (4 feet) across. A search of the records showed its flowers to be as large and well formed as any of the previous awarded cultivars of *Onc. onustum*, and with 1626 flowers and 120 buds on nearly 50 spikes, it had four times as many flowers as the highest cultural awards granted to the species. The brilliant sulphur yellow color was the as good as the judges had seen, and the net result was a 95 point Certificate of Cultural Excellence and an 83 point Award of Merit. Overall, this was the best *Oncidium onustum* any of the judges had seen.

The other plant was an example of a new line of *Zygopetalum alliance* breeding for new colors. *Neopabstopetalum Adelaide*, a hybrid of *Neogardineria*, *Pabstia* and *Zygopetalum*, was brought in by Loren Batchman. This was the first example of a clear green zygo, and was as large and better formed than either of its parents. The sepals and petals were a bright green with almost none of the spotting characteristic in most zygo hybrids. The lip was clear white with a lavender blush and veining at the base. This plant received a 76 point Highly Commended Certificate.

The October 6 summary of awards is as follows:

Plant Name	Varietal Name	Award	Exhibitor
<i>Oncidium onustum</i> (species)	not given	CCE 95	Richard Franklin, Phoenix, AZ
<i>Oncidium onustum</i> (species)	not given	AM 83	Richard Franklin, Phoenix, AZ
<i>Neopabstopetalum Adelaide</i> (Zga. Adelaide Meadows x <i>Neopabstopetalum Beverly Lou</i> )	Jade Dragon	HCC 76	Loren Batchman, Solana Beach, CA

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# Improving Hopeless Judging Standards

Roger Cole

The present judging standards are hopeless and the AOS effort to improve them is a waste of time and effort. The whole approach to judging the standards now reflect is inadequate, and no number of bandaids will be sufficient. To understand this, we need to return to the 1950s when the standards were written. The judging problem was far different. Only one volume of *Sander's* was available; the second, which split registrations into part one and part two was only published in the early 1960s. The *Cymbidium* used most frequently in hybrids was *Cymbidium Alexanderi*, followed by *Cymbidium Pauwelsii* and *Cymbidium Pearl*. Polyploids were not yet generally understood. Paphiopedilums were called *Cypripediums*, and the most often-used hybrids were *Paphiopedilum Diana* Broughton, *Paphiopedilum Grace Darling* and *Paphiopedilum Mildred Hunter*. What we know as the classic Paphiopedilums had not yet been registered. From 1945 to 1960 there were no hybrids registered between *Paphiopedilum callosum* and another species. *Cattleyas* were king, and the most often-bred hybrids were *Cattleya Enid*, *Cattleya Fabia*, *Cattleya Remy Chollet* and *Cattleya Bow Bells*. During the 1950s there were no hybrids with the rupicolous *Laelias*. In *Phalaenopsis*, the most frequently used hybrid was *Phalaenopsis Doris*, followed by *Phalaenopsis Grace Palm* and *Phalaenopsis Reve Rose*. *Phalaenopsis Zada* had just been registered, and from 1945 to 1960 there were no hybrids with *Phalaenopsis amboinensis* or *Phalaenopsis equestris*. It was a much simpler world, where one standard for each major alliance made sense because there was barely more than one line of breeding to consider in each alliance.

Gradually we have gotten into a deeper and deeper mess. Where in 1960 our one Paphiopedilum standard referred only to the judging of complex hybrids trying to be round, Paphiopedilums now consist of well over several dozen types, possibly as many as 200. Consider *Paphiopedilum Dollgoldi*, *Paphiopedilum Angel Hair*, *Paphiopedilum Ito*, *Paphiopedilum Muriel Constance*, *Paphiopedilum Norito Hasegawa*, *Paphiopedilum Macabre*, *Paphiopedilum Mt. Everest* and *Paphiopedilum Brecko Sukwiss* — can you find two for which you can clearly state the same requirements for the expected shape in an awardable plant? With slight effort I could triple the list of types. Moreover, in a decade, the problem itself doubles or triples as hybrids are made between *Paph. Dollgoldi* and *Paph. Angel Hair* and between *Paph. Macabre* and *Paph. Muriel Constance*. Orchid breeding is expanding the scope of judging at far more than a linear rate.

So how do we cope? When I look at a Paphiopedilum to score it, I draw on experience to tell me what the 40 points for shape should measure, the judges next to me draw on their experience to create their standard, and so forth. My experience and my shape expectations are different from that of the judge next to me and from that of all of the other judges. When we get to the next Paphiopedilum, one of a different type, what I create for a standard for the 40 points for shape is totally different from what I had for the first plant, and the same is true for all of the other judges. The supposed standard is a fraud. It changes from plant to plant and from judge to judge. It changes even more from judging center to judging center and from one part of the country to another. It is a wonder that we have any consistency at all. We are creating our judging standards on the fly, with little or no discussion of the differences rooted in

personal memories. Our supposed standard is only a system of weights on an empty shell and no amount of refinement will make it anything else. This is why we can have 12-point spreads in large teams and small teams can produce truly aberrant awards. It is why weaker judges fasten on one feature of a flower where they can see a fault and ignore the rest of the flower. It is also why we have waves of judging fads and most awards go to plants in the area of fad interest. It's a matter of knowledge and comfort.

Our real problem is that judging is 10 or 20 or 80 times as complex as it was half a century ago and the approach that worked then does not work now. Even the most knowledgeable judge now occasionally encounters a plant for which he knows he lacks the personal knowledge to judge well. The weaker judges lack a clue as to what they are doing once they leave their main genera. We can no longer do adequate, consistent judging by the seat of our pants, mentally creating standards in our own minds every time we need them. I believe the unavoidable solution is to go to a system of real standards. Here is how we can do it.

- One, two, or several judges create a proposed standard for a line of breeding they define. They clearly state expectations for shape, color, size and so forth, and identify real, existing awards as benchmarks for HCC, low AM and possibly higher awards (see example, next page).
- They give the proposed standard to their judging center for consideration, and when the Center decides it acceptable, the Center votes to endorse it and forwards it to the AOS as a nominated standard.
- The AOS sends nominated standards to all judging centers for endorsement on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. The judging centers can vote to endorse some of the standards and for others can suggest improvements to the nominating judging center. When over half of the judging centers endorsed a nominated standard it would become the AOS Judging Standard until another standard was endorsed to replace it.
- The AOS would publish the AOS Judging Standards on CD-ROM annually, in the form of an HTML web that used hierarchal branching to allow the standard sought to be quickly found. It could be read with any browser and even projected onto a wall or viewed on a portable PC in a mall show. The benchmark plants would have pictures inserted next to their discussion. The public could buy the Standards CD-ROM.
- When a judge felt that a standard could be improved upon, the judge would simply prepare a replacement proposed standard. The only requirement would be that a replacement standard(s) has to replace all parts of one or more existing AOS Judging Standards. Replacement of parts of standards would create too much of a mess.

My guess is that between several hundred standards could be created in the first year with a concerted effort by the centers. An expert judge in an area could prepare a standard in a day and less expert groups of judges could prepare proposed standards at the rate of one every three months. The major incentive for the more expert judges to go to the work of creating standards is to get the types of orchids they particularly like judged better — it is very annoying to see good plants

## JUDGES FORUM

screened out because the team isn't comfortable judging the genus or to see a rather ordinary plant awarded highly. Other capable judges will write standards to establish their expertise while still others will do it out of a sense of duty. By the end of the second year enough standards could be in place to cover 80 or 90 percent of the plants seen for judging, enough to start using the system while refining it. Even if it takes longer to get started, very little is lost because judging will only get more difficult and erratic until we solve the problem.

What would this system of standards accomplish? It would improve judging in numerous ways:

- More uniformly sound judging. Now we have many erratic results. Any team of judges would have the basic knowledge they needed to reasonably judge a plant.
- Better judging through reflection and discussion. The standards would be much more sound than the mental gymnastic judgments on the fly we now must do. Dozens of judges working together over months will do much better sorting out what matters than any of us can do alone in a few minutes.
- Judging would be much more uniform from one part of the nation to another. We would literally all get on the same page. Now judges sitting next to each other can be on very different standards.
- Fewer problems with point spreads. Using the same standard really helps keep point spreads down. We see this now where the range is small when we deal with plants we know the standard for. Judging would be quicker for having information and not having regular re-scoring.
- The consideration of whether to endorse a standard would give fine continuing education for the accredited judges who resist it so. Accredited judges would feel that their role in approving standards was important, but it would require their learning and thinking.
- The standards would give students a more tangible body of knowledge to address. The present black art approach can be difficult to grasp.

- The process would be continuous; standards wouldn't become 50 years out of date again. The continual replacement and extension of the standards would keep things current.
- The use of real plants as benchmarks would deter "fuzzythink." Sometimes judges can confuse their hopes with what realistic standards might be. Benchmark plants with pictures would help keep us anchored in reality.
- Anyone could use the standards to learn about the plants and judging. The CD-ROMs would have great educational value. Exhibitors could also easily check to see if their plant was worth taking to judging.
- We could escape the box of six concepts and fixed weights. With line-specific standards we could at least think about whether fragrance should be considered, or whether the relative plant-to-flower-size matters. We could also decide that in *Brassias* both shape and color should not get many points and that size and flower placement should get more points.

While creating these AOS judging standards would take a major effort, the advantages of moving to a modern system of judging are immense. We would judge better and more consistently. Read the examples and ask yourself if it is not a more solid basis for judging an orchid in its scope than most judges would have dealing with a plant unaided. The system would be more open and educational. It should go a long way toward helping orchid growers to understand what makes one orchid better than another. The system would be flexible and would not become outdated like our present system. Whenever a judge didn't like a standard, they would have an open invitation to make a better one — no more stone-tablet standards handed down from on high. But most of all, we don't have a choice. AOS judging will get worse and worst until we fix our present pretense of a system. Is it bad enough yet?

**Roger Cole** is a Certified Judge with the National Capital Judging Center. 13200 Chestnut Drive, Bowie, Maryland 20720 (e-mail [rogercole@erols.com](mailto:rogercole@erols.com)).

The previous article was submitted by Rosemary Harrison. It is an unauthorized, reprinted copy of an article from the following:

Cole, Roger, "Improving Hopeless Judging Standards" *ORCHIDS*, September 2003: 193-194.

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# Get out your digital cameras!

by Michael Orser

photo credits in bold type

*Paphiopedilum chamberlainianum*



**Linda Gardner**

*Paphiopedilum gratixianum*



**Linda Gardner**

*Zygopetalum mackeii*



**Mel Ochs**

*Potinara "Leomar"*



**Ivan and Rosemary Harrison**

*Laelia autumnalis* hybrid



**Ivan and Rosemary Harrison**

*Schomburgkia tibinicensis* hybrid



**Ivan and Rosemary Harrison**

# Water: Some waters are more equal than others.

Peter Tobias

We all use water to water our orchids. We all worry about using too much or too little. But, what about water quality? I use a water deionizer from Thomas water for most of my orchids. Many that I have are native species from somewhere or other that are used to rainwater, which is a lot purer than what comes out of my tap from the Colorado River. Using deionized water gets me a lot closer to rainwater and I never have salt buildup in pots or on roots to affect my

orchids. Sure it costs, but so do my plants and a plant saved by good water, or better growth allowed by good water, is probably cheap when you consider how much a plant costs. But is deionizing the only way to go? Some members of the society have used magnetic deionization. Others have probably used other methods. Here is a website that discusses some of these methods and has a lot of good water info: <http://www.chem1.com/CQ/>



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## SDCOS SHOW REMINDER

January 17-18

San Diego County Orchid Society is presenting another best of the best! This is the time for YOU, all of our members to bring in plants and show San Diego and the rest of Southern California what we can grow! No it's not the Spring Show, but the SDCOS Mini Show has been the best value in these hard times - it's free! Contact Robert Hodges 619.461.4915, Balboa Park, CASA DEL PRADO - ROOM 104

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# SDCOS Board of Directors Meeting

Submitted by: Romy Reyes

Dec. 9, 2003: Meeting called to order at 8:03PM

**Present:** Gary Pierwola, Ivan Harrison, Genie Hammond, Bob Clark, Charlie Fouquette, Sam DeMaria, Barbie Mays, Dave Mays, Lynn Ford, and Romy Reyes

**Others Present:** Ro Harrison, Candy Kalman, Peter Tobias, Loren Batchman, Rose & Joe Alesi, Tess Taylor, Harry & Andy Phillips, and David Brown

## Reports

1. Minutes of the October meeting was read and approved by motion.
2. Treasurer Barbie Mays- Reports for October & November were read and approved by motion.
3. First Vice-President Ivan Harrison- Our own Loren Batchman will be the guest speaker at the January, 2004 general meeting. TOPIC: Hybridizing Spotted Cymbidiums
4. Second Vice-President Lynn Ford- The Beginners Class will have Ivan Harrison as the presenter. TOPIC: Roots: Why Orchids Need Them

## Old Business

1. The Holiday Party was a success. A huge thanks to ALL!!!

## New Business

1. Peter Tobias presented the Board a certificate and a check in the amount of \$500.00 from the AOS. This award was given to the Conservation Group in recognition for the work that they have done.
2. Peter Tobias also submitted 8 grants to the Board for approval. The Board approved 6 of the 8 grants.
3. A proposal to increase the membership dues to \$15.00 for single and \$20.00 for couples was approved by motion. This increase will take effect on January 2004.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01PM

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# HELP HOTLINE

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Paphiopedilums  
Ann Tuskes - 858.274.5829  
Bob Hodges - 619.461.4915

Phalaenopsis, Cattleyas, and Dendrobiums  
Bob Swanson - 619.465.2297

Vandas, Ascocendas  
Edith and Leno Galvan - 619.441.7503

Encyclias, Epidendrums, Laelias  
Tom Osborn - 760.787.0282

Pleurothallids  
Don van Kekerix - 619.224.4938

Cymbidiums  
Loren Batchman - [casa@orquideas.com](mailto:casa@orquideas.com)  
Sam DeMaria - 619.295.2951

Northeast County, all types  
Dave Reid - 760.728.7996

San Diego West County, all types  
Jean Beck - 619.435.8211

San Diego Central, Outdoor, all types  
Jim Wright - 619.276.5295  
Fred Tomaschke - 619.276.3235

San Diego East County, all types  
James Masst - 619.443.2800  
Bud Close - 619.444.8839

South County all types  
Genie Hammond - 619.426.6831  
Ed Marty - 619.470.7175

# DATES TO REMEMBER...

January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:00 am  
SDCOS Species Group Meeting  
First Saturday each month  
Paul or Ann Tuskes 858.274.5829

January 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm  
Quail Botanical Gardens Judging Center  
First Monday each month Encinitas. Bring plants in!  
Make those judges work!

January 6<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm  
Beginner's Class  
First Tuesday each month  
Room 104, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park  
Ivan and Rosemary Harrison 619.448.3312

January 6<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm  
General Meeting  
First Tuesday each month  
Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park  
Gary Pierwola 619.426.9108

January 13<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm  
SDCOS Board Meeting  
Second Tuesday each month  
Balboa Park  
Romy Reyes 619.328.6578

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 10 am - 2 pm  
San Diego Zoo  
Orchid Greenhouses Open House  
Third Friday each month  
Janette Gerrity 619.231.1515 ext. 4306

January 16<sup>th</sup>, 6:45 pm  
Palomar Orchid Society Meeting  
Third Friday each month  
The Carlsbad Women's Club.  
Wayne Preston, 760.727.7255

January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2004  
Hybrid Orchid Group  
Third Saturday each month  
Shiley Science & Technology Center, USD  
Speaker: Ron Kaufmann on Wildcatt  
Info: 619.994.7584

January 21<sup>st</sup>, 6:30 pm  
Cymbidium Society Meeting  
Third Wednesday each month  
Carlsbad Women's Club  
Info: 760.451.1472

# AOS Representative News

Submitted by Siv Gerrod

Dear AOS Representatives,

At the recent AOS meeting in Sacramento some decisions were made that I would like you to pass on to your society members. Members of my committee (The Affiliated Societies Liaison Committee) were assigned a region of the country to communicate with by e-mail on a monthly basis - or whenever there is a need - so that we can better address your needs and concerns. Randy Young of Atlanta was initially assigned as your contact, but he is in the process of moving and was unable to take on this task. So, I took on his group though, living in the Denver area, I'm not exactly local.

The first decision made in Sacramento greatly simplifies the affiliation process. The only requirements for your society to remain affiliated with the AOS are that you maintain a membership in the name of your society and that you appoint a representative who also maintains a membership. Our goal is to keep it simple for everyone while insuring that we keep an updated contact address for your society. Some societies had a problem with sending in copies of their roster and with keeping the percentage of members at the 25% level. So, those items are no longer necessary. We would still appreciate receiving a copy of your roster and your newsletter if you'd like to share them and if your members are comfortable with this.

If your society does not have space for a library, a great way to

use the copy of "Orchids" that will come with your society membership is to have everyone who attends your meetings, who is not already an AOS member, enter their name for a drawing. Once these new people read the magazine they are usually hooked - this will mean increased membership for both your society and the AOS.

Another item, which will be of interest primarily to members of the smaller societies, is the availability of a CD called "Orchid Show in a Box". This CD, created by members of the Information Committee, contains all the files necessary to run a successful orchid show and saves a great deal of work for show chairs. It can be obtained by contacting Pam Giust at [pgiust@aos.org](mailto:pgiust@aos.org). There's a great deal of material on the CD so allow plenty of time to check it out before your show date.

I'm responsible for preparing the material for the "Society Page" which appears in "Orchids" every third month. If there are any topics you would like to see covered please let me know.

I hope that this extra communication tool will allow us to better serve the affiliated societies by forwarding items of interest in a timely manner. You will, of course, continue to receive the quarterly newsletter.

Please let me know if you do not wish to receive e-mail or if there are any questions I can answer for you.

Sincerely, Marion Allen



Membership Chairman - [Vivian Follmer](#)  
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