



# Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

August  
2019

## Next Meeting

Date: Sat., August 10, 2019  
Time: **1:30-4:00**  
Place: Kamana Senior Center,  
127 Kamana St., Hilo  
Speaker: Larry Kuekes  
Topic: The Right Way and Wrong  
Way to Grow Orchids

Anyone who has been growing orchids for a few years has killed a bunch of orchids. It's part of the process of figuring out how to grow them. But, especially if you're a beginner, it can help to have someone tell you what you're doing right and wrong.

This month, former HOS President Larry Kuekes will do just that. Instead of just a list of do's and don'ts, Larry will talk about how orchids grow in nature and how that helps you understand the right way to grow them.



Larry started growing orchids on his windowsills in Connecticut in 1984, where he grew mostly cool and intermediate growing orchids. In 2010 he retired and moved to Hilo, where he started a small but diverse collection of mostly warm-growing orchids in a shade house near sea level. Although he grows some hybrids, he's a self-described "species nut".

Larry was President of the Hilo Orchid Society in 2014-2015 and is currently our Treasurer as well as our newsletter editor and webmaster.

Even if you know how to grow orchids, you'll be entertained by the songs and videos in Larry's multi-media presentation. Don't miss it!

## Fall Nursery Tour Sold Out

Our Fall Nursery Tour on Sunday, Oct. 13 is sold out. If you waited to join the tour, sorry, it's too late! If you are one of the folks who signed up and paid, we will send you more information about when and where to meet in the week before the tour.

## Contest Reminders



Above are two photos recently submitted to our HOS orchid photo contest. Submit your orchid photos by sending them to [info@hiloorchidsociety.org](mailto:info@hiloorchidsociety.org) before October 1. The orchids don't have to be yours. The only rule is that you must be the photographer. Check out the gallery of photos submitted on our website [www.hiloorchidsociety.org](http://www.hiloorchidsociety.org) under the Galleries menu.

And don't forget our other contest for the new member who brings in the most orchids to the Show Table at our meetings. Winners of both contests will be announced in November, and will each receive two tickets to our annual Holiday Party.

## CALENDAR OF ORCHID EVENTS

*The following events are held at Kamana Senior Center, Hilo unless otherwise noted*

Aug. 10	1:30-4:00	HOS Meeting
Aug. 10		AOS judging, 875 Komohana St.
Aug. 23	6:00 pm	AOS judging, 875 Komohana St.
Sept. 14	1:30-4:00	HOS Meeting
Sept. 14		AOS judging
Sept. 27	6:00 pm	AOS judging, 875 Komohana St.
Oct. 13		HOS Fall Nursery Tour – advance signup required
Nov. 16		Newcomers Group tour at the zoo

## Photos from the Show

Here are just a few photos from the Hilo Orchid Show in June. We have created a new photo gallery that has many more. It's under the Galleries menu on our website [www.hiloorchidsociety.org](http://www.hiloorchidsociety.org). Mahalo to Dana Culleney, Larry Kuekes, and Lori Aitcheson for contributing photos.



Left: Lottie Haspe and show chair Karl Mendonca in front of the Hilo Orchid Society exhibit. The outrigger canoe suggested a Polynesian voyaging canoe to depict the show theme "Orchid Odyssey".  
Right: Ainslee Smith's mini display won Best Mini in the youth division.



Left: The Orchid Isle Orchestra got rave reviews.  
Right: The Malika Orchids exhibit did a clever Alice in Wonderland/Jefferson Airplane twist on the show theme.



Left: Tom Mirenda borrowed plants from several growers to create this spectacular exhibit of specimen plants.  
Right: *Prosthechea radiata*, grown by Dorothy Imagire, won the orchid fragrance competition. It smells like root beer.



1<sup>st</sup> place: *Catyclia* Serena's Tinkerbell 'Paradise', grown by Bill Rawson



Left: 2<sup>nd</sup> place: *Dendrochilum filiforme*, grown by Jeff Fendentz



Right: 3<sup>rd</sup> place: *Stanhopea oculata*, grown by Jeff Fendentz

# July AOS Awards

Photos by Glen Barfield



Left: *Catyclia* Serena's Tinkerbell 'Paradise' CCM/AOS, grown by Bill Rawson  
Right: *Cattleya* A Miracle Everyday 'Attics of My Life' HCC/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Encyclia* Cindy 'Caldicott's Hawaii' CCM/AOS, grown by Bill Rawson  
Right: Rlc. (Hey Song x Edisto) 'First Sister' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros



Left: *Paph.* Odette's Beguilement 'Paph Zone Color Wins' AM/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids  
Right: *Paph.* Presidential Moon 'Paph Zone Sorry' HCC/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids

# Orchid Stories

## Name That Orchid



Have you ever had an orchid-growing friend show you an orchid with no label and ask you to identify its name? It happens to me all the time.

If it's a species, then either I can identify it, or I can try to look it up, or I can refer the friend to someone more knowledgeable than me who will know.

But if it's a hybrid (as is usually the case), it's hopeless. With very few exceptions, a hybrid orchid without a label can't be identified, even by an expert. Why can species be identified but not hybrids?

Orchid species are described by scientists called taxonomists. A taxonomist decides that all orchids that have a certain unique set of characteristics (usually referring to the shape and configuration of flower parts) are defined to be this particular species. Since it's a matter of definition, any scientist in the world who has access to the species description can look at an orchid and say whether this orchid belongs to this species.

Even if you're not a scientist, you can learn to identify many orchid species just by sight, because species are remarkably uniform-looking. For example, all flowers of *Rhyncholaelia digbyana* look pretty much the same, light green with a fantastic long fringe on the lip, and no other species looks like it. Different plants of *Rhyncholaelia digbyana* may vary slightly, but only slightly.

With hybrids the situation is entirely different. Unlike a species, different plants of the same hybrid cross may look very different. They have the same

parents, and the same name, but hybrid orchid siblings look different from each other, just like you look different from your brothers or sisters.

Consider Slc. Hazel Boyd, a famous mini-Cattleya. It's a cross of Slc. California Apricot x Slc. Jewel Box. Flowers of different plants of Hazel Boyd can be yellow, red, orange, yellow with an orange lip, orange with a red lip, yellow with orange flares on the petals, etc. etc.

To make things worse, hybrid orchids with different names can look the same as each other. Over 160,000 orchid hybrids have been registered. The registration does not include a photo or description of the orchid. How many red Cattleya hybrids are there? Hundreds, perhaps thousands. Who knows?

Now look at the two photos above and suppose someone asked you to identify them. Which one of the hundreds or thousands of red Cattleya hybrids are they? Are they perhaps siblings of the same cross, or two different crosses? The task is impossible.

The answer, by the way, is that they are different crosses, with different names, even though they look almost identical – same size, same shape, same color, same ruffled lip.

The one on the left is Slc. Hazel Boyd, and the one on the right is Slc. Little Hazel, which is a hybrid of Slc. Hazel Boyd x Sl. Psyche.

The moral of the story: don't lose the labels on your orchids. If they're hybrids, once the label is gone, nobody can identify them.

Larry Kuekes

## Hilo Orchid Society Officers and Trustees

President – Dana Culleney 430-6653

[hilo.okika@gmail.com](mailto:hilo.okika@gmail.com)

President-Elect Tom Mirenda

Vice President – Ben Oliveros 345-1371

[oliveros@orchideros.com](mailto:oliveros@orchideros.com)

Treasurer – Larry Kuekes 860-380-7964

[lkuekes@me.com](mailto:lkuekes@me.com)

Recording Secretary – Lise Dowd [lisedowd@aol.com](mailto:lisedowd@aol.com)

Corresponding Secretary – Joe Bush

Past President – Rick Kelley 756-8145

[rickkelley@att.net](mailto:rickkelley@att.net)

Trustee 2018-2019 – Ken Armour 808-963-6233

Trustee 2018-2019 – Nathan Sherwood 808-365-5824

[nathan@akatsukaorchid.com](mailto:nathan@akatsukaorchid.com)

Trustee 2019-2020 – Lillian Paiva

Trustee 2019-2020 – Dorothy Imagire

[dorothy.imagire@icloud.com](mailto:dorothy.imagire@icloud.com)

Hilo Orchid Society

P.O Box 4294

Hilo, HI 96720



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