Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

July 2026

Date: Sat., July 11, 2026
Time: **1:30** Informal "talk story"
2:00 Meeting starts
Place: Kamana Senior Center, 127 Kamana St., Hilo
Speaker: Daria Souvorova
Topic: Orchid Displays for the Common Gal

Daria Souvorova is a painter, designer, and orchid grower. Born in Belarus, she immigrated to the U.S. with her family at age 9 and settled in Maryland. She has a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and her work has been exhibited in many states as well as Australia. She now teaches art at the University of Houston. Daria also an AOS student judge.

Her talk will tell us how to design a super orchid show display, whether it's an individual display (like the mini displays at our show) or a larger display, focusing on the design principles that judges are looking for. As an artist, she knows what works.

Want to know what makes a great display for the common gal (or guy)? Don't miss this meeting!

August Potluck Picnic – August 15

Instead of a regular meeting, we will have a potluck picnic in August. We are meeting at Nani Mau Gardens on the THIRD Saturday of the month, Aug. 15, not the second Saturday. It will be a potluck, so bring your favorite picnic dish. We will also have a Silent Auction featuring the orchids which we bought to enhance the HOS Show Display. More details (including a map) will be in our August Newsletter.

Please Lend Us Your Orchids for the Show

We need your orchids for our HOS orchid show exhibit. (It's just a loan; you'll get them back!) The big growers have their own displays. We're counting on you, the little growers. Even one or two beautiful orchids make a difference, and if enough people bring them, the result will be spectacular!

If you have some nice orchids in bloom at the time of the show, and they're pest-free, please lend them to our display.

Bring your orchids to the Edith Kanaka'ole Stadium on **Weds., July 22 between 9:00 and 4:00**. Plan on picking them up promptly at **1:30 p.m. on Sunday, July 26** when the show closes. Mahalo!

The Show is Almost Here

The 72nd Hilo Orchid Society Show and Sale, "Orchids: Legends and Lore", is coming on July 24-26 at the Edith Kanaka'ole Stadium, Hilo.

We're counting on you, our members, to:

1. Come see the show, and tell your friends about it.

2. Sell or give away tickets. You can sell show tickets to friends and neighbors for $3 each, a bargain price (admission is $6 at the door), or buy them yourself and give them away. Of course, you're not obligated to buy or sell the tickets, but if you can, it's a great way to help the Society.

3. Lend us your orchids. See the article above.

4. Pick up show posters at the meeting and put them up where people will see them.

5. Bring in empty boxes to the meeting. We need them for the Plant Hotel to store people's orchids.

6. Volunteer. Our show can only succeed because Society members volunteer to help. If you're asked to help out, please say yes. It will only take a couple of hours of your time, and it'll make you feel good! If you've already volunteered, thank you! Please see page 3 for details about volunteering.

Orchid Stories
Clones

Left: *Vanda* Pachara Delight 'Pachara' AM/AOS is an awarded mericlone.
Right: *Vanda sanderiana* ('Monina' x 'Dr. Bunphot') is not a mericlone and doesn't have any awards, but I liked it, so I bought it.

To most people, the word "clone" has a sinister science-fiction ring to it. But in real life, clones are nothing new. A clone is simply an organism that is genetically identical to another. When you propagate a plant from a cutting or a division, you've just made a clone.

If you're an orchid breeder, and one of your seedlings turns out to be exceptionally nice (maybe it won an AOS award), you might want to make and sell a lot of copies of it. But there's a problem. Orchids grow so slowly (many kinds only grow one leaf a year) that accumulating thousands of copies by division would take forever.

The solution is a process called *mericloning*. It starts by taking a growing shoot and dissecting the tip of the shoot under a microscope. Inside the tip is a small region of cells that have not differentiated, that is, they haven't turned into leaf cells or root cells or whatever. They can still become any kind of cell. In plants these are known as *meristem* cells, and they're the equivalent of human stem cells, which you've heard so much about.

These meristem cells are then put into a nutrient solution inside a sterile flask, like the method I described in an earlier article for growing orchids from seed. And if that were all that happened, the clump of meristem cells would grow into a plant and would yield one orchid.

But there's a trick. If the flask is gently tumbled end over end, the little clump of cells doesn't grow into a plant. Normally, gravity influences how the cells grow. Roots grow down; stems and leaves grow up. But when the cells are tumbled, they literally don't know which way is up. They don't know whether to become roots or stems or leaves. So instead the clump just grows into a larger clump of meristem cells, called a *protocorm*, which looks like a little green pea.

When the protocorm gets big enough to handle, it can be cut into pieces. These pieces are then put back in the flask and tumbled some more, and each piece grows into a bigger protocorm. By repeating this process, you can make as many protocorms as you want. When you stop tumbling, each one then grows into a plant, and voila! Thousands of identical plants.

The first time I actually saw the mericloning process at work was years ago on a visit to the Rod McLellan Co. in South San Francisco. They had a room full of what looked like miniature Ferris wheels, each one holding six or eight flasks. As the wheels slowly turned, the flasks got tumbled round and round.

The end result of this process is that growers can grow thousands of identical copies of an exceptional orchid about as cheaply as they can grow orchids from seed, so you can buy a clone of an awarded plant for a very reasonable price. With one exception.

That exception is the genus *Paphiopedilum*. For some reason, the cloning process has never worked for Paphs. So exceptional Paphs still have to be propagated by division, which means they're rare and expensive.

As a hobbyist grower, should you buy awarded mericlones or un-awarded orchids grown from seed? There are pros and cons to both. With a mericlone, you know what you're going to get, and it's usually very good – otherwise they wouldn't have bothered to clone it.

Species orchids are usually grown from seed, not mericloned, but that's OK because species tend to be fairly uniform. With hybrids, there's much more variation. So a hybrid grown from seed is a gamble. But that's part of the fun. Chances are the flower will be nice but not of award quality. But there's always the possibility of getting something really exceptional. And, of course, if you buy an orchid in bloom, there's no gamble. If you like what you see, go for it!

Larry Kuekes

Orchid Isle Project

Our Orchid Isle project places orchid plants in various places around this island where the public can see them, helping to cement our reputation as the Orchid Isle.

On June 19, 2026, Lori Fuller and Ellen Train volunteered for an Orchid Isle Project function at the SCP Hotel in Hilo, working along with SCP's Uncle David. They placed over fifty orchids from Ellen's personal collection into two garden areas. Lori Fuller, new to orchids, was happy to learn how to mount orchids outside.

The SCP Hotel already had Cattleyas and Dendrobium orchids. Oncidiinae, Bulbophyllums, and Phalaenopsis orchids were placed onto hapu'u surrounding the pool and the walkable garden. These varieties will provide pretty blooming orchid flowers almost all year round under Uncle David's knowledgeable care. He's been at the former Seaside Hotel, now the SCP hotel, for 60 years.

The SCP Hotel will be donating to our silent auction at this year's show. Please support the SCP Hotel in Hilo. They were pleased to know the orchids were for the SCP Hotel's gardens and won't go away. Another Orchid Isle Project success!

How to Volunteer for the Show

If you'd like to volunteer to help us out, please look at this list of stations and the schedule to decide where you would like to help. The stations are:

- Front Gate – takes tickets
- Plant Hotel – stores people's purchased plants
- Membership Desk – signs up new members
- Silent Auction – sets up items and distributes items to winners
- T-Shirt Sales
- Keiki & Ohana Orchid World – helps with activities for keiki

The schedule for volunteers is:

- Friday, July 24: 9-11; 11-1; 1-3; 3-6
- Saturday, July 25: 9-11; 11-1; 1-3; 3-5
- Sunday, July 26: 10-12; 12-1:30

We also need help with Green Plants for the HOS Display as well as Set-up and Break-down before and after the Show.

If you can't sign up at the meeting, please email us at hiloorchidsociety@gmail.com with your preferred times and stations. We will reply to your email.

T-Shirt Treasure Hunt

I have seen so many great Hilo Orchid Society Show themes and T-shirt designs over time, it got me asking... when did the HOS Show themes and T-shirt designs begin?

So my quest began – the "T-shirt Treasure Hunt". Larry had a record of what the HOS show themes were since 2003, but I also would like to have an online photo collection that includes each year's T-shirt design since they first became available. So far, we have photos from every year from 2004 to date.

So I am asking members who have a T-shirt prior to 2004, please take a photo of the T-shirt design (it can be just the artwork, not the whole T-shirt) and send to Larry at hiloorchidsociety@gmail.com.

There is no deadline, just go on the treasure hunt, find old HOS T-shirts in your closets, and send in a photo of each one. It will be amazing to see what HOS came up with over the years.

Jan Anderson

Note: the gallery of T-shirt photos is on our website www.hiloorchidsociety.org under the Galleries menu.

Orchids on the June Show Table

Photos by Dana Culleney

Bratonia Shelob

Bulbophyllum Meen Garuda

Bulbophyllum dearei

Dendrobium. bracteosum 'O. C. White'

Cattleya guttata coerulea ‘Okika’

Dendrobium hercoglossum

Cattleya purpurata var. *carnea*

Miltonia spectabilis

Miltonidium Bragelone x
Miltonidium Pink Lady,
grown by Glen Barfield

Miltoniopsis Frosty Meadow ‘Okika’, grown by Glen Barfield

Miltoniopsis Rubenesque ‘Brennan The Great’ AM/AOS,
grown by Glen Barfield

Miltoniopsis vexillaria ‘Okika’

June AOS Awards

Photos by Glen Barfield

Left: (Prosyclia Memorial Young C Lott x E. tampensis h.f. alba) 'Island Sun Orchids' AM/AOS, grown by Island Sun Orchids
Right: Cattleya purpurata 'Harold Does Hawaii' AM/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros

Left: Dendrobium maccarthiae 'Island Sun' AM/AOS, grown by Island Sun Orchids
Right: Dendrobium maccarthiae 'Island Sun' CCM/AOS, grown by Island Sun Orchids

Phragmidedium QF Pomakai ‘Sunstalker’ AM/AOS, grown by Matt Sylva

Left: Bulbophyllum Crazy Clown 'Hamakua Summer's Charm' AM/AOS, grown by Daniel Bark
Right: Paphiopedilum Randy Booth 'Shogun's Clown Show' HCC/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii

Left: Paphiopedilum Reverend Canon Mari 'Slipper Zone Light Twirls' AM/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids
Center: Paphiopedilum Reverend Canon Mari 'Slipper Zone Philip' AM/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids
Right: Paphiopedilum Shin Yi's Pride 'Shogun's Koenigin' AM/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii

Paphiopedilum Reverend Canon Mari AQ/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids

Left: Paphiopedilum Tempting Philip 'Slipper Zone Matthew' AM/AOS. Grown by Lehua Orchids
Right: Paphiopedilum Tempting Philip AQ/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids

Left: Phalaenopsis bellinia f. chloraceae 'Mathias' Joy' AM/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii
Right: Phalaenopsis bellina f. chloraceae AQ/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii

Hilo Orchid Society Officers and Trustees

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