

# Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

January 2014

Date: Sat., January 11, 2014  
Time: **1:30** Informal “talk story”  
**2:00** Meeting starts  
Place: Kamana Senior Center,  
127 Kamana St., Hilo

**Note: we are in the meeting room to the right of the usual room.**

Speaker: Ron Kaufmann

Topic: Conserving Orchids In The Wild

Orchid conservation is an issue that isn't going away. Tropical rain forest, the native habitat of most orchids, is being destroyed at an alarming rate, resulting in the disappearance of the animals, birds, insects, and plants, including orchids, that live there.

Well, as Mark Twain said, everyone talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it. So is anyone doing anything about conservation?

The answer is yes. The Orchid Conservation Alliance (OCA) is an organization whose focus is specifically on preserving orchid habitat. Our speaker, Ron Kaufmann, is a founding director of OCA. He will tell us what OCA has been doing to protect orchids in the wild. Ron is a professor of Marine Science and Environmental Studies at the University of San Diego. He has been growing orchids for nearly 20 years and has a diverse collection of mostly species.



If you're curious about where the orchids that we grow come from, and how we can save them, don't miss this meeting!

To find out more about OCA, visit their web site [www.orchidconservationalliance.org](http://www.orchidconservationalliance.org).

## Dues Are Due

Your membership dues for 2014 are due. Dues are still only \$20 for individual membership or \$25 for family membership. In return, you get a year of interesting speakers, newsletters, and activities, plus the chance to get together with folks who share your interest in these beautiful and fascinating plants.

We're sending you a renewal form in the mail. Please fill out the form and mail it in with your payment (address is on the form), or you can pay at the meeting. Thanks!

## President's Message



I'm excited to be the new President of your orchid society. Yes, your society – this organization exists to serve you. So if there's something that you think we ought to be doing differently, or you have any suggestions to make things better, let me know.

Some people have asked me whether I will still be doing the newsletter, now that I'm President. Yes, I will; for me it's a labor of love. But I welcome newsletter contributions. I don't want to be the only one providing content. If you have something you'd like to contribute, even if it's just a short letter to the editor, or a photo that you've taken of an orchid on a tree in a neighbor's yard, please send it to me – I'd love to include it.

New for 2014, we'll be redoing our Hilo Orchid Society web site [www.hiloorchidsociety.org](http://www.hiloorchidsociety.org). We're going to take the opportunity to revise and expand our web site to include more content, such as pictures of members' orchids. What would you like to see on our web site? Let me know.

Larry Kuekes

## December AOS Judging Awards

Photos by Glen Barfield



Left: *Laelia anceps* 'Kathleen' AM/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Eros.

Right: *Masdevallia* Tiger Bay 'Lehua Stripes Galore' AM/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.



Left: *Paphiopedilum* Irish Stone Lovely 'Mysteriously Lehua' AM/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.

Right: *Paphiopedilum* Lippewunder 'Joyce' AM/AOS, exhibited by Hilo Orchid Farm.



Left: *Paphiopedilum* Stella Scope AQ/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.

Right: *Paphiopedilum farrieianum* 'Red Dragon' AM/AOS, exhibited by Hilo Orchid Farm.



Left: *Paphiopedilum* Stella Scope 'Lehua By Starlight' AM/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.  
 Right: *Paphiopedilum* Petula 'Lehua Downtown' CCM/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.



Left: (*Paphiopedilum sukhalukii* x *Paph.* Taisuko America's Aromas) 'Golden Leopard' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Hilo Orchid Farm.  
 Center: *Paphiopedilum* Fred's Magic 'Lehua Highlights' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.  
 Right: *Paphiopedilum* Irish Love Stone 'High Flying Lehua' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.



Left: *Paphiopedilum* Irish Love Stone 'Lehua Emerald Gem' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.  
 Center: *Paphiopedilum* Irish Love Stone 'Lehua Green Glow' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.  
 Right: *Paphiopedilum* Irish Love Stone 'Lehua Green Lord' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Lehua Orchids.

## What Do The Awards Mean?

AOS flower quality awards are given to orchid species or hybrids based on a 100-point scale.

- **HCC** (Highly Commended Certificate) – for an orchid scoring 75 to 79 points.
- **AM** (Award of Merit) – for an orchid scoring 80 to 89 points.
- **FCC** (First Class Certificate) – for an orchid scoring 90 points or more.
- **AQ** (Award of Quality) – awarded to a cross exhibited as a group of at least 12 different clones.

AOS cultural awards are given to the grower, not the plant, for growing a well-flowered specimen plant.

- **CCM** (Certificate of Cultural Merit) – for a specimen plant scoring 80 to 89 points.
- **CCE** (Certificate of Cultural Excellence) – for a specimen plant scoring 90 points or above.

## Pictures from the Holiday Party

Last month's Holiday Party and Auction was quite a success. The food was good, the company was good, and the auction raised the most money for our Society in years, thanks to the generous donations of high-quality plants by our commercial growers. We also want to thank our peerless auctioneer, Glen Barfield, and to everyone who volunteered to help make the event a success.



Left: Auctioneer Glen Barfield works the crowd. Right: Attendees paying close attention to the bidding. Photos by Julie Goettsch.



Officers and Trustees for 2014. From left: Julie Goettsch, John Juscak, Rick Kelley, Larry Kuekes, Ben Oliveros, Vivian Ueoka, Shelby Smith, Bill Rawson, Susan Forbes, Gerrit Takasaki. Absent: Aimee Takamoto. Photo by Dana Culleney.

## Orchid Stories

### Darwin's Orchid

After Charles Darwin published *The Origin of Species*, his groundbreaking book setting forth the theory of evolution, his next book was, of all things, a book on orchids, called *On the Various Contrivances By Which Orchids Are Fertilised By Insects*. Was this the work of a dilettante, flitting from one subject to another? Not at all. In fact, this book presents supporting evidence for the theory of evolution. Darwin happened to pick orchids as the subject, perhaps because orchids were popular in Victorian England.

I have read this book, but I don't recommend it, because frankly, it's very dull – descriptions of minute flower structures of species after species, genus after genus, for 300 pages. But there is one passage that has become famous:

*"The Angraecum sesquipedale, of which the large six-rayed flowers, like stars formed of snow-white wax, have excited the admiration of travellers in Madagascar, must not be passed over. A green, whip-like nectary of astonishing length hangs down beneath the labellum. In several flowers sent me by Mr. Bateman I found the nectaries eleven and a half inches long, with only the lower inch and a half filled with nectar. What can be the use, it may be asked, of a nectary of such disproportionate length?"*

Darwin went on to explain that there must exist a moth with a tongue at least ten inches long that pollinates the flower. He found that if a moth merely inserted its thin proboscis into the nectary (the nectar spur or tube), it would not remove the pollen; the moth needed to actually press its head up against the flower in order for the orchid to be pollinated. The orchid forces the moth to do that by keeping the nectar at the bottom of the tube, so the moth has to insert its tongue as far as it can.

Now comes the interesting evolutionary observation. Darwin knew that in all creatures, variation occurs that can be inherited, though he didn't know why (we now know it's due to genetic mutations). He reasoned that some of the moths that pollinate this orchid may have shorter tongues and some longer. The ones with longer tongues will be able to reach more food, so more of them will survive. And some plants of this orchid species may have shorter nectar spurs and some longer. Remember that if the moth doesn't stick its tongue



*Angraecum sesquipedale* with its nearly foot-long nectar spur. Photo by Larry Kuekes.

all the way in, the orchid doesn't get pollinated. So only the orchids with the longer spurs will set seed. The result is a kind of "arms race", where over time, both the moth's tongue and the orchid's spur keep getting longer and longer. This idea of two species evolving together is now called co-evolution. Separately, the orchid's long spur and the moth's long tongue just seem silly. Together, in the light of the theory of evolution, everything makes sense.

Some entomologists ridiculed Darwin for predicting a moth with a ten-inch tongue, but twenty years after Darwin's death, the moth was found. In 1992, 130 years after Darwin predicted it, the moth was finally observed pollinating *Angraecum sesquipedale*, now fittingly called Darwin's orchid.

Larry Kuekes

## CALENDAR OF ORCHID EVENTS

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

Jan. 11	1:30	Hilo Orchid Society meeting
	4:00	AOS Judging
Feb. 8	1:30	Hilo Orchid Society meeting
	4:00	AOS Judging
Mar. 8	1:30	Hilo Orchid Society meeting
	4:00	AOS Judging

## Hilo Orchid Society Officers and Trustees

President – Larry Kuekes 860-380-7964  
lkuekes@me.com

President Elect – Rick Kelley 756-8145  
rickkelley@att.net

Vice President – Ben Oliveros 345-1371  
oliveros@orchideros.com

Treasurer – Bill Rawson 934-0552

Recording Secretary – Susan Forbes 286-6130  
sksforbes@gmail.com

Corresponding Secretary – Aimee Takamoto

Past President – Julie Goettsch 333-5989  
juliegoettsch@gmail.com

Trustee 2013-2014 – Gerrit Takasaki 981-5500  
[lotaka81@aol.com](mailto:lotaka81@aol.com)

Trustee 2013-2014 – John Juszczak  
jjuszczak@aol.com

Trustee 2014-2015 – Vivian Ueoka

Trustee 2014-2015 – Shelby Smith 408-966-5924  
skelatenphish@yahoo.com

Hilo Orchid Society  
P.O Box 4294  
Hilo, HI 96720



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[hiloorchidsociety.org](http://hiloorchidsociety.org)