

Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

May 2015

Next Meeting

Date: Sat., May 9, 2015
Time: **1:30** Informal “talk story”
2:00 Meeting starts
Place: Kamana Senior Center,
127 Kamana St., Hilo
Speaker: Glen Barfield
Topic: Stelis



This month, our own Glen Barfield will talk about Stelis, a genus of over 500 species that is unknown to most orchid hobbyists. Part of the Pleurothallid alliance, Stelis bloom profusely, but the flowers are tiny, which is why they haven't caught on with the general public.

Glen is an AOS judge and orchid expert, but he doesn't take himself too seriously. In the photo above, he says, “I'm the one on the right.”

In the 1980s Glen had a nursery in California called Okika Ltd. The name was a clue about his love for Hawaii – it means “orchid” in Hawaiian. Glen also loved surfing (he was a surfer since age 16), so it was only a matter of time until he moved here, which he did in 1995. Glen has a small nursery in Mountain View, still called Okika, where he pursues orchid breeding, primarily in the Oncidium alliance. Over the years he has won numerous AOS awards.

Many Stelis are cool-growing, but some grow warm. Want to know if they're worth trying? Come to the meeting!

Come To Our Show Committee Meeting – Everyone Is Welcome

Our next meeting to plan for our big show in August will happen Monday May 4 at 5:00-6:30 at the Kamana Senior Center. We will meet at the picnic tables in the lanai area.

Everyone is encouraged to attend and see how they can fit into show plans. Over 100 HOS volunteers contribute their time for various jobs both large and small. Come to the meeting and join the fun.

Show News

Show Chairman Rick Kelley has announced the theme of this year's show: Orchids Avant-Garde. Rick says, “I hope it will stimulate exhibitors to let their creative juices run wild designing displays. Historically, the entire history of orchids from the 19th century has been a quest for the newest species found in remote tropical jungles or striking new hybrids created by all those folks with toothpicks. It also aligns with our goal this year to attract younger visitors.”

Lisa Steinmeyer has announced that we will be selling polo/golf shirts as well as men's and women's T-shirts. We will also allow members to custom-order shirts in June and July if we don't have them in your size.

Our show committee is considering allowing “mini” orchid exhibits of just 2 feet x 2 feet, for individuals or organizations who may not have enough orchids in bloom to fill up a larger exhibit, but who could do something artistic in a 2x2 space. Let Rick know if you're interested, and come to the show committee meeting on May 4 if you can.

April Members Choice Awards

Photos by Shelby Smith



Left: Hobbyist 1st place – *Paph. lowii*, grown by Sherry Partlow



Right: Hobbyist 2nd place (tie) – *Dendrobium Yellow Song*, grown by Jane Awa



Left: Hobbyist 2nd place (tie) – *Lycaste* unknown, grown by De Hull



Right: Hobbyist 3rd place (tie) – *Taeniophyllum pusillum*, grown by Larry Kuekes



Commercial 2nd place – *Bulbophyllum lobii* 'Kathy's Gold', grown by Malika Orchids

April Members Choice Awards (continued)

Photos by Shelby Smith



Left: Hobbyist 3rd place (tie) – *Aerangis luteo-alba* var. *rhodosticta*, grown by Joe Bush
Center: Commercial 1st place – *Paph. philippinense*, grown by Malika Orchids
Right: Commercial 2nd place (tie) – *Paph. Erica Potent*, grown by Lehua Orchids

April AOS Awards

Photos by Glen Barfield



Left: *Paph. Cascade Creek 'Elegance'* AM/AOS, exhibited by Hilo Orchid Farm
Center: *Paph. Hsinying Anita 'Lisa'* AM/AOS, exhibited by Alawaena Orchids
Right: *Paph. Johanna Burkhardt 'Shogun's Pride'* AM/AOS, exhibited by Shogun

April AOS Awards (continued)

Photos by Glen Barfield



Left: *Paph. primulinum* 'Rina Marie' AM/AOS, exhibited by Peter Wiggin

Right: *Paph. delenatii* v. *alba* 'Maha' AM/AOS, exhibited by Alawaena Orchids



Cattleya schilleriana 'Cinco Estrellas' AM/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Eros

Orchid Stories

My First Orchid

I bought my first orchid in December, 1982, when I lived in Connecticut. It was *Vuylstekeara* Cambria ‘Lensing’s Favorite’ AM/AOS. My mother had hinted that she wanted an orchid for Christmas – not a corsage, but a live plant. I grew some houseplants, but I knew nothing about orchids. I had no idea where I could even buy one. Luckily, a friend at work happened to grow orchids and pointed me to a local nursery that sometimes carried orchid plants. I found a *Phalaenopsis* in bloom, and Mom was delighted.

Then I thought I’d like to try growing an orchid, too – after all, I was pretty good at growing other houseplants. We discovered that J&L Orchids was only a few miles from where my parents lived at the time, so we paid them a visit, and there was ‘Lensing’s Favorite’ beckoning to me from the crowded benches. Its blooms looked incredibly exotic to me – wine-red petals splotted with white, and a ruffled white lip.

I took home a plant in bud, and it bloomed nicely on my windowsill for a few weeks in January. Next month Mom and I went back to J&L and each bought an *Slc.* Jewel Box ‘Dark Waters’ in bloom – its red flowers nicely timed for Valentine’s Day – and we were both well and truly bitten by the orchid bug.

My *Vuylstekeara* Cambria bloomed again for me the following year, though *Slc.* Jewel Box didn’t. I hadn’t learned yet to put Jewel Box outside for the summer, because it wasn’t getting enough light on my windowsill. In Connecticut you can’t grow your orchids outdoors all year, just in the summer. Later that year I repotted the *Vuylstekeara*. I didn’t know much about potting and I used fine tree fern, which was a mistake, because it held so much water that the roots rotted, and that was the end of ‘Lensing’s Favorite’. At least I learned how not to repot.



Vuylstekeara is a hybrid genus, a cross of *Odontoglossum*, *Miltonia*, and *Cochlioda*. It was named in honor of the Belgian horticulturalist Charles Vuylsteke, who was a pioneer in making inter-generic orchid crosses. The overall starchy shape of *Vuylstekeara* comes from *Odontoglossum*, the relatively large lip from *Miltonia*, and the red coloring from *Cochlioda*. All of its ancestors are intermediate- to cool-growing, so it’s not as tolerant of warm weather as many other *Oncidium* alliance hybrids.

Vuylstekeara Cambria is a famous hybrid, especially the clone ‘Plush’ FCC/RHS, which is more solid red than my clone ‘Lensing’s Favorite’. British orchidists Brian and Wilma Rittershausen wrote about *Vuylstekeara* Cambria ‘Plush’: “It is no exaggeration to say that this is the most famous plant among the *Vuylstekearas* and indeed among the whole family of orchid hybrids.” Actually, this is an exaggeration (I’m sure that *Paph. Maudiae*, for example, is a more famous hybrid that *Vuylstekeara* Cambria), but perhaps it’s true in England, where *Odontoglossum* hybrids have always been popular – they’re easier to raise in England’s cool climate than in America, where summers can get

hot. Of course I didn’t know any of this when I bought my plant. I just bought it because I liked its looks. That’s still not a bad way to pick an orchid.

Larry Kuekes

CALENDAR OF ORCHID EVENTS

Hilo Orchid Society meetings and AOS Judging are held at Kamana Senior Center, Hilo unless otherwise specified.

- May 4 5:00 HOS Show Committee meeting
- May 8-9 Kona Orchid Society Mothers Day Sale, old airport events pavilion, Kona
- May 9 1:30 HOS meeting
4:00 AOS Judging
- June 13 1:30 HOS Meeting
4:00 AOS Judging
- Aug. 7-9 HOS Orchid Show, Afook Chinen Civic Auditorium

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