

# Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

September 2016

## Next Meeting

Date: Sat., Sept. 10, 2016  
Time: **1:30-4:00**  
Place: Kamana Senior Center,  
127 Kamana St., Hilo  
Speaker: Jurahame Leyva  
Topic: Growing Masdevallias and  
Other Pleurothallids in Hawaii

This month, our own Jurahame Leyva will talk to us about a fascinating group of orchids that few of us grow but many should try – the pleurothallids. You may have seen Masdevallias, which are members of this group. (One of Jurahame's award-winning Masdevallias is pictured at right.) But there are thousands of other pleurothallids. Many are very small – great for those with limited growing space – but their flowers, viewed up close, are as intricate and beautiful as their larger cousins.

Jurahame flowered his first Cattleya when he was 6 years old, and he has been growing orchids ever since. He joined HOS at age 12 and became an active member, most recently giving a demo at the orchid show on how to repot Paphiopedilums (one of his favorite types of orchids).



He currently runs the OrchidFix Nursery in Kurtistown, where he offers orchids for both the wholesale and specialty retail markets. One of his plants is pictured among this month's AOS Awards.

Jurahame is co-author of the book *Growing Orchids, A Picture Guide*, available on Amazon.

If you'd like to find out more about some fascinating orchids that we rarely hear about, don't miss this meeting!

## Fall Nursery Tour

Our nursery tours are back! On Sat., October 29 we have scheduled a tour of three commercial orchid nurseries: Carmela Orchids, The OrchidWorks, and Hawaii Hybrids.

These tours are great opportunities to buy high-quality orchids at wholesale prices from nurseries many of which aren't normally open to the public.

To go on the tour, you must sign up in advance. The price is \$38 per person, which just covers the cost of the bus and the driver – HOS does not profit from these tours. If the price seems high, the fabulous bargains you'll be able to buy will more than make up for it. We'll provide water, but plan to bring your own lunch and wear comfortable shoes.

You can sign up at the next meeting or by sending a check to:  
Hilo Orchid Society  
P.O. Box 4294  
Hilo, HI 96720

Seating is limited, so don't delay!



## Calendar of Orchid Events

*All events are held at Kamana Senior Center, Hilo unless specified otherwise*

Sept. 9	7:00 pm	Singapore Botanical Gardens Talk at Univ. of Hawaii Hilo room UCB 100
Sept. 10	1:30	HOS Meeting
Oct. 8	1:30	HOS Meeting
Oct. 15	9:00-12:00	Orchid Workshop at Volcano Art Center
Oct. 22		New Members Group Tour
Oct. 29		Fall Nursery Tour
Nov. 12	1:30	HOS Meeting
Dec. 10	11:00-3:00	Holiday lunch and auction at Nani Mau Gardens

# August Members Choice Awards

Photos by Glory Garner



Above left: Hobbyist 1<sup>st</sup> Place: *Blc. Dora Louise Capon 'Lea'*, grown by Ruth Robison

Above right: Hobbyist 2<sup>nd</sup> place: *Miltonia Honolulu Spectacular*, grown by Jane Awa

Left: Hobbyist 3<sup>rd</sup> place: *Dendrobium limpidum*, grown by Thane Pratt

Below left: Commercial 1<sup>st</sup> place: *Ascovandaritis Parpin*, grown by Malika Orchids

Below center: Commercial 2<sup>nd</sup> place: *Bulbophyllum Jersey*, grown by Malika Orchids

Below right: Commercial 3<sup>rd</sup> place: *Phalaenopsis amabilis*, grown by Malika Orchids



## August AOS Awards

Photos by Glen Barfield



Left: (*Rlc.* Mem. Helen Brown x *Cattleya bicolor*) 'Orchid Eros' AM/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Eros  
Right: *Lc.* Bela Lugosi 'Blood Clot' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Eros



Left: *Paphiopedilum godfroyae* 'Top Heavy' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Hilo Orchid Farm  
Right: *Phragmipedium* Inca Embers 'Memoria Billy Keith Walker' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Fix

## Singapore Botanical Gardens Talk

Dr. Nigel Taylor, Director of the newly inscribed UNESCO World Heritage site, Singapore Botanical Gardens shares his favorite stories and photos from the more than 700 page dossier submitted for nomination. Taylor spent several years researching historic photos and uncovering mysteries like discovering what could be the oldest orchid in the world. Planted in 1861, the tiger orchid appears in

the same location in photos, steadily growing larger to this very day. The garden dates from 1859 and helped pioneer the urban greening movement that made Singapore the top garden city in the world. The Hawaii Island Palm Society is pleased to host this free event Friday, September 9th at 7:00 pm at the University of Hawaii, Hilo room UCB 100.

Rick Kelley

## August Orchid Sale at Prince Kuhio Plaza



Left: Gerrit Takasaki in his colorful Hawaii Hybrids sales booth. Photo by Larry Kuekes.

Right: Donna Barr, Larry Kuekes and Julie Goettsch were among the volunteers who publicized the Hilo Orchid Society and our Orchid Isle project. Photo by Dana Culleney.

## Two Schools Win Orchids Every Month



Dorothea Fendenz presents Grammatophyllum orchids to (left photo) Dennis O'Brien, principal of E. B. deSilva Elementary School, and (right photo) Kelley Lacks, principal of Malamalama Waldorf Elementary School. Photos by Rick Kelley.

Principals of two local elementary schools were delighted to find out that their schools will receive a blooming orchid every month of the school year in recognition of the number of their students who made use of the free family orchid show tickets that we distributed to local schools.

Dorothea Fendenz presented a Grammatophyllum to Dennis O'Brien, principal of E. B.

deSilva Elementary School, the school with the largest number of students who attended our show.

Dorothea presented another Grammatophyllum to Kelley Lacks, principal of Malamalama Waldorf School, which had the highest percentage of students attending the show.

Mahalo to Rick Kelley and Dorothea Fendenz for organizing the student ticket program.

## Orchid Stories

### Going to Pot, Part 4 Divide and Conquer

So you're repotting one of your orchids. Should you divide it at the same time? Like everything, it depends.

*Monopodial* orchids such as *Phalaenopsis* keep growing upward, not across the pot, so they never need to be divided. *Sympodial* orchids such as *Cattleyas* have rhizomes that grow sideways across the pot. Don't divide them before they reach flowering size; just keep potting them into bigger pots as needed. After they reach flowering size, though, you can't keep potting them in bigger and bigger pots forever. Eventually they need to be divided or trimmed back.

**Just a trim?** First check to see whether, by chopping off a few of the oldest pseudobulbs, the plant will fit back into the same size pot with room to grow for a couple more years. This is often the best option if the plant only has one lead (active growth).

If the plant has multiple leads that have grown in different directions, it may not be possible to fit it back in the same size pot (see upper photo). If there are many leads and the plant is compact, you may want to put it in a bigger pot and grow it into a showy "specimen" plant. Otherwise, consider dividing the plant into multiple, more compact plants.

**Preparing for surgery.** Let's assume that you've already removed the plant from the pot and removed the old medium (we'll talk more about that process next time). The next step is to determine where to cut the rhizome to get the size pieces that you want. How big should the divisions be? Each division should generally have least 3 pseudobulbs, including at least one active growth, in order for it to be flowering size. A smaller division will live, but it may take a while to grow back to flowering size.

**Cut to the chase.** How do you divide the plant? It's easy. Just cut the rhizome with a sterilized knife and gently pull the pieces apart to disentangle the roots (see bottom photo). Before using the knife on another plant, make sure to sterilize it, either with a flame such as a propane torch, or by dipping it in a 10% bleach solution or a saturated solution of trisodium phosphate (TSP).

This prevents spreading virus from one plant to another.

**Back to the future.** After dividing, you may have some older pseudobulbs, not attached to an active growth, left over. These are called backbulbs. As long as they're green and haven't rotted, even if they have no leaves, they can produce a new plant. Just put the backbulb into an empty pot in a shaded location and sprinkle it with water from time to time. (Some authorities tell you to

put the backbulb in a plastic bag, but every time I tried that, it rotted. I prefer the empty pot technique.) If the bulb still has any dormant growth buds, a new growth will eventually sprout and make roots, at which time you can pot it into normal medium. A backbulb may take a few years to grow into a flowering-size plant. Don't feel guilty about throwing the backbulbs away, if you have no use for all those extra plants.

**Too many orchids?** Even without backbulbs, if you divide all your orchids, you'll have twice as many plants. What to do with them? Give them to friends. Sell them at

HOS meetings. Donate them to our Orchid Isle project (see Julie Goetsch) or to be mounted at the zoo (see Eric Guttormsen).

Next time: the joy of potting.

Larry Kuekes



## Hilo Orchid Society Officers and Trustees

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