



Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

March
2026

Date: Sat., March 14, 2026
Time: **1:30** Informal “talk story”
2:00 Meeting starts
Place: Kamana Senior Center,
127 Kamana St., Hilo
Speaker: Ken Cameron
Program: The Power of Movement in
Orchids: Fast Action Trap
Flowers of Porroglossum

Many orchids have amazing mechanisms to improve their chances of getting pollinated. Certain Porroglossums, in the Pleurothallid alliance, have evolved a “snap trap”. When an insect lands on the lip, the lip moves upward and pushes the insect against the column, ensuring pollination.

This month, Ken Cameron will talk about this, showing high-speed video that he took of the flowers snapping shut. He will also give us some tips for growing Porroglossum in terrariums and converted wine coolers.



Ken Cameron is a professor at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He was director of the Molecular Systematics Laboratory of the New York Botanical Garden for ten years before moving to the University of Wisconsin, where he is also director of the Wisconsin State Herbarium, a collection of 1.2 million specimens.

Ken is considered a world authority on Vanilla orchids and their relatives.

Please Pay Dues – Last Chance!

Your membership dues for 2026 are due by March 31. If you have already paid, thank you. New members who joined at our Orchid Show at Edith Kanaka’ole Stadium last July and members who joined in September 2025 or later are considered paid through 2026 and do not have to pay.

For the rest of you, 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.

There are three ways you can pay:

- (1) Go to our website www.hiloorchidsociety.org, click on Membership and pay online.
- (2) Pay us at the meeting (cash, check, or credit card).
- (3) Fill out the form on page 5 and mail it in with your payment (address is on the form).

Mahalo!



A Cattleya orchid at Hilo’s Pana’ewa Rainforest Zoo and Gardens. Could you help water the zoo orchids if we have another dry spell? Contact Eric Guttormsen at the meeting or at read4mulch@yahoo.com.

Orchid Stories

Eros & Psyche

The story of Eros and Psyche is one of the classic Greek myths. Psyche (Greek for “soul” or “spirit”) was a princess so beautiful that the people began neglecting to worship Aphrodite, goddess of beauty. This infuriated Aphrodite, so she commanded her son Eros, god of love, to punish Psyche.

Meanwhile, an oracle prophesied that Psyche’s husband would be no human. Everyone interpreted this to mean a monster, and she was left exposed on a rocky crag for the monster to carry her off.

However, Eros fell in love with the maiden. She was carried by the wind to a beautiful palace. Eros came to her every night and they made love in the dark, but he told her that she must never see his face, and by dawn he was always gone.

Later, her two jealous sisters visited her and, hearing her story, declared that her lover must be a monster because he wouldn’t let her see him. One night, after Eros fell asleep, Psyche armed herself with a dagger and lit an oil lamp to look upon her lover. She saw he was no monster, but the most handsome of men. But she accidentally let a drop of hot oil fall on Eros, waking him up. Saddened by her lack of trust, he flew away.

To get him back, she had to perform a series of seemingly impossible tasks set by Aphrodite, who was still peeved at her. For example, she had to unmix a huge heap of tiny mixed seeds, sorting them out in a single night. But the ants came to her aid and separated the seeds. After two more such tasks, Eros appealed to Zeus, who decided enough was enough. He made Psyche a goddess and she and Eros lived happily ever after.

Now, what does any of this have to do with orchids? Quite a bit, as it turns out. First, the genus *Psychopsis* is named after Psyche. In art, Eros (the same as the Roman god Cupid) was represented with wings in ancient Roman mosaics. So was Psyche, but she had butterfly wings, so she became associated with the butterfly.

Psychopsis orchids look like butterflies, at least to human eyes. The name *Psychopsis* comes from *Psyche* + *opsis* (resembling), i.e. “resembling Psyche”, who resembled a butterfly. The species epithet *papilio* is Latin for butterfly. So the species name *Psychopsis papilio* has a double dose of butterfly in it.

What about Eros? Well, we have Eros right here on the Big Island as the orchid nursery Orchid Eros, owned by Ben Oliveros. Of course, “eros” is part of Ben’s name, but in addition, Eros was the god of love, desire, passion – so Orchid Eros connotes “orchid lover” or “passionate about orchids”, which couldn’t be more appropriate.

Psychopsis papilio and its hybrids are wonderful orchids to grow. When the species was first brought to England in 1823, it created a sensation. The flowers are large, over 6 inches high. It blooms sequentially, one flower at a time, and the flower spike keeps making buds. Never

cut off the spike, because it will keep blooming almost indefinitely year-round.

It’s hard to find the species *Psychopsis papilio* for sale, but a hybrid of it called *Psychopsis* Mendenhall ‘Hildos’ FCC/AOS is commonly available. The hybrid looks almost identical to the species, which is not surprising because its ancestry is $\frac{3}{4}$ *Psychopsis papilio* and $\frac{1}{4}$ another related species. It likes warm conditions and does well here in Hawaii.



Psychopsis papilio. Photo by Larry Kuekes.

Larry Kuekes

Orchids on the February Show Table

Photos by Dana Culleney



Angraecum sesquipedale



Cattleya Big Dipper



Lycaste Rev. Canon Mari 'Proudly Red'



Bulbophyllum (no ID)



Maxillaria elatior, grown by Sherry Partlow



Medicalcar decoratum



Bulbophyllum sumatranum 'Pete's Pick' HCC/AOS

HILO ORCHID SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Please print this form, fill it out, and mail with your dues payment to:

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

Dues are \$20 for individual membership, \$25 for family membership.

Please print clearly:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email for receiving newsletter: _____

Check one:

- Individual membership (\$20)
- Family membership (\$25)

Check one:

- I grant permission to publish this information in the Hilo Orchid Society Directory.
- I do not grant permission to publish this information in the Hilo Orchid Society Directory.

Signature: _____

Optional:

Are you interested in volunteering to help with any of the following activities? Check as many as you like.

- Monthly meetings
- Annual Orchid Show
- Orchid Isle Project (mounting orchids on trees in public spaces)
- Orchids at the Zoo
- Serving as an officer

February AOS Awards

Photos by Glen Barfield



Left: *Cattleya lueddemanniana* 'Jewel Box' HCC/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii
Right: *Cattleya x dolosa* 'Karen' HCC/AOS, grown by Matthew Sylva



Left: *Paph.* Hawaiian Magnificence 'Slipper Zone Red Approaching' AM/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids
Right: *Paph.* Oriental Sincerity 'Slipper Zone Yellow Approaching' AM/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids



Lycaste Birthday Girl 'St. Patrick's Day' HCC/AOS, grown by Matthew Sylva



Left: *Dendrobium* (Winter Pixie x *atroviolaceum*) 'Shogun's Winning' AM/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii
Right: *Phalaenopsis bellina* f. *chloracea* 'Music in the Air' CHM/AOS, grown by Shogun Hawaii



Left: *Laelia anceps* 'Mauna Kea' FCC/AOS, grown by Orchid Eros
Right: *Phalaenopsis* Bredren's Bacchanal 'LHC Valentine' AM/AOS, grown by Leslie Hayes Cullins

Hilo Orchid Society Officers and Trustees

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www.hiloorchidsociety.org

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