

Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

December 2014

Note: In lieu of a December meeting, we're holding our annual Holiday Party. The event is sold out – sorry, we can't take any more reservations!

Date: Sun., December 14, 2013
Time: **10:30** Doors open to talk story
12:00 Luncheon buffet
Place: Hilo Yacht Club
77 Laehala St., Hilo
Program: Holiday Party and Auction

Holiday Party and Auction

There will be no regular meeting in December. Instead, we're holding our annual Holiday Party and Auction on Sunday, Dec. 14 at the Hilo Yacht Club. Seating is limited, and the event is already sold out. Only those who signed up and paid in advance can be admitted. Sorry!

The event features a social hour and sumptuous buffet lunch at the scenic oceanside Hilo Yacht Club, providing a chance to get together with old friends and maybe make some new ones. Then comes the auction, an opportunity to obtain top-quality donated orchid plants at bargain prices and benefit your Society at the same time. This event is not open to the public, but is open to Hilo Orchid Society members and their guests by reservation only.

For those who signed up, doors will open at 10:30 a.m. to enjoy beverages and talk story, followed by the installation of officers at 11:45. Lunch will be served at 12:00, followed by the orchid auction at about 1:00. If you can't be there by 10:30, no problem – come later and enjoy the lunch and auction.

New Board Members

The slate proposed by the nominating committee was unanimously approved at the November meeting. We want to thank retiring Board members Aimee Takamoto, Gerrit Takasaki, and John Juszczak for their dedication and service to the Society, and to welcome new Board members Joe Bush, Lillian Paiva, and Barry Yamada. We couldn't do it without volunteers like you!

Did You Know?

Over 150,000 orchid hybrids have been registered, and thousands more are added each year. The official list is maintained by Britain's Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) and is recognized internationally. This list is by far the largest and most complete such compendium in all of botany, going back to the very first orchid hybrid, *Calanthe Dominii*, which was made in 1853.

Usually the person who made the hybrid gets to choose the name. The name has to be non-Latin and unique within the genus. Many hybridizers combine the names of the two parents, which has produced some interesting results such as *Paph. Stone Lovely* x *Paph. fairrieanum* = *Paph Fairly Stoned*.

CALENDAR OF ORCHID EVENTS

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

Dec. 14	10:30 Holiday Party at Hilo Yacht Club
Jan. 10	1:30 HOS meeting 4:00 AOS Judging
Feb. 14	1:30 HOS meeting 4:00 AOS Judging



Paphiopedilum Saigon Pink 'Lehua's Pink Phantom' AM/AOS, grown by Lehua Orchids



Left: *Paph. godefroyae* 'Gold Fish' HCC/AOS, grown by Hilo Orchid Farm



Right: *Paph.* Irish Love Stone 'Lisa' HCC/AOS, grown by Alawaena Orchids

Orchid Stories

Percy Summit

When I moved from Connecticut to Hawaii, I didn't bring any of my orchids. I didn't want to deal with phytosanitary certificates and other red tape, and I didn't have anything that was that rare or irreplaceable. Besides, almost all of my orchids were intermediate- to cool-growers, and I was looking forward to building a new collection of warm-growing orchids.

Nevertheless, there were a few favorite orchids that I hoped to re-acquire in Hawaii. One of these was *Cattleya percivaliana* 'Summit' FCC/AOS. Though the flowers are not as large as some *Cattleya* species, they're good-sized (4 to 5 inches), and the shape is very nice, with petals much larger and fuller than average for the species. This shape is all the more amazing since this clone was jungle-collected, not artificially line-bred for generations to achieve a full shape like some other species have been. This clone didn't win an FCC award for nothing.

In addition, the plant is compact, growing to about a foot tall, so it will fit on a windowsill, unlike most of the large-flowered *Cattleyas*. Each growth makes a cluster of two to four flowers. The plant tends to make multiple leads, so it's not hard to grow into a beautiful specimen plant. And the icing on the cake – it bloomed reliably at Christmas time!

Some reference books describe its smell as "musty", but that's not right. It has a spicy fragrance like scented soap. It's not a conventional floral scent, but it's certainly not unpleasant.

C. percivaliana 'Summit' has a history. The late Dr. Ben Berliner was an AOS judge who used to liven up Connecticut Orchid Society meetings with his inexhaustible supply of orchid stories. One story he related was about *C. percivaliana* 'Summit'. It was originally jungle-collected in 1922 and imported by the Lager and Hurrell nursery in Summit, New Jersey. For years, divisions of the plant were passed around the Northeast from one grower to another (I got my plant as a division from a friend). It became familiarly known as "Percy Summit". Dr. Ben knew that 'Summit' had an AM/AOS award, but he believed that it deserved better. After growing his plant in his Bloomfield greenhouse as perfectly as possible, he brought it to judging in 1986, and sure enough, it finally got the FCC/AOS award it deserved, more than 60 years after it was introduced



C. percivaliana 'Summit' FCC/AOS. Grown by Bill Rawson. Photo by Rick Kelley.

to cultivation! Shortly afterwards Dr. Ben brought it in to the Connecticut Orchid Society show table where I saw it. It was growing in a wooden basket with perfect drainage, one of Dr. Ben's favorite tricks of the trade. But I can attest that my division grew just fine in a plastic pot.

So when I moved to Hawaii, I wanted to re-acquire "Percy Summit". That was easier said than done – most mainland orchid nurseries don't ship to Hawaii, and I couldn't find a Hawaii nursery that offered it, but I finally was able to buy a plant from one of our Hilo Orchid Society speakers. In Connecticut I grew it intermediate, like a normal *Cattleya*, but like many *Cattleyas*, it's temperature-tolerant and will grow in anything from warm to cool conditions.

In Connecticut it always bloomed at Christmas time, but in Venezuela, where the species is native, Dunsterville recorded it as blooming any time between July and November¹. So I was curious as to when it would bloom in Hawaii. This year I got the answer when my plant bloomed in November. Bill Rawson's plant (pictured) also blooms in November. So it's not a Christmas orchid here. But it's still a very fine plant. If you happen to find one for sale, grab it!

Larry Kuekes

¹ Orchid Hunting In The Lost World (And Elsewhere in Venezuela), G.C.K. & E. Dunsterville, p. 75

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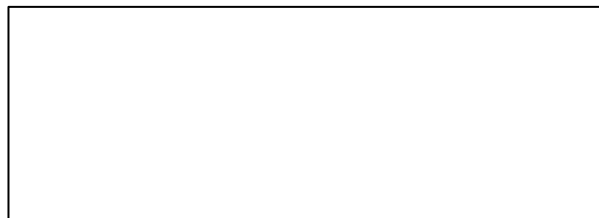
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