

Hilo Orchid Society Newsletter

November 2015

Next Meeting

Date: Sat., Nov. 14, 2015
Time: **1:30-4:00**
Place: Kamana Senior Center,
127 Kamana St., Hilo
Speaker: James Rose
Topic: Mexican Laelias

Laelias are relatives of Cattleyas that have been used extensively in Cattleya hybridizing, but they are beautiful in their own right. The Brazilian Laelias have been renamed as Cattleyas, but the Mexican Laelias are still Laelias. This month, James Rose from Cal-Orchid in Santa Barbara, CA will tell us all about them.

James and his wife Lauris began their orchid careers in the early 1970s, working at Santa Barbara Orchid Estate. In 1987 they purchased a two-acre cymbidium nursery, two blocks from the Pacific Ocean,



and transformed it into Cal-Orchid, growing a great variety of orchid species and hybrids. Cal-Orchid is noted for their breeding program.

James has published in Orchid Digest and the magazines of the AOS and the Cymbidium Society of America (CSA). He is a CSA judge, former members of the AOS Conservation Committee, and has judged each year at the Tokyo Dome orchid show.

Want to find out more about these beautiful Mexican orchids? Don't miss this meeting!

Sign Up for 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. 13 at the Hilo Yacht Club. Doors open at 10:30 a.m. to enjoy beverages and entertainment and talk story. At 12:00 will be a delicious buffet lunch, followed by the main event, an auction of donated plants. It's a chance to get together with old friends, perhaps make new ones, and obtain some special plants at bargain prices and benefit your Society at the same time. Guests are welcome.

You must sign up and pay in advance. The price is \$25 per person, which is less than the cost of the meal – the Society is subsidizing your ticket! If you're interested, please sign up and pay at the November meeting, or send your check to:

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

Election of Officers and Trustees

The election of officers and trustees for 2016 will take place at the November meeting. Board members serve two-year terms, with half the members up for election each year. For the 2016-2017 term, our Nominating Committee, consisting of Rick Kelley, Lisa Steinmeyer, and John Juszczak, has produced the following slate of officers and trustees:

President	Rick Kelley
Treasurer	Bill Rawson
Trustee	Ken Armour
Trustee	Shelby Smith

Additional nominations may be made from the floor. Any additional nominees must be present at the meeting and willing to run against the slate endorsed by the Nominating Committee.

The new officers and trustees will be officially installed at the holiday party on Dec. 13th.

October Members Choice Awards

Photos by Shelby Smith



Left: Hobbyist 1st place – *Bulbophyllum* Elizabeth Ann ‘Buckleberry’ FCC/AOS, grown by Dana Culleney
Center: Hobbyist 2nd place – *Cattleya maxima* ‘Chadwick’s Dark’, grown by Shelby Smith
Right: Hobbyist 3rd place (tie) – *Masdevallia herradurae*, grown by Vivian Ueoka



Left: Hobbyist 3rd place (tie) – *Bulbophyllum*, grown by Ruth Robison
Right: Hobbyist 3rd place (tie) – *Stanhopea oculata*, grown by Vivian Ueoka



Left: Commercial 1st place: *Habenaria regnelii*, grown by Karen Kimmerle
Center: Commercial 2nd place: *Vanda sanderiana*, grown by Karen Kimmerle
Right: Commercial 3rd place: *Habenaria Jiahoo Yellow Bird*, grown by Karen Kimmerle



Left: *Rlc.* Pamela Ann Oliveros 'Orchid Eros' AM/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Eros

Right: (*C. bowringiana* x *B. Jiminy Cricket*) 'Aka's Best' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Julie Goettsch



Left: *Blc.* Esbetts 'Heavenly Shogun' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Shogun

Right: *C. pumila* 'Gabriel Amaru' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Eros



Masd. herraduræ 'Serenity' HCC/AOS, exhibited by Orchid Fix

What do AOS awards mean?

In AOS judging, orchids are competing with all orchids of the same type in the United States, so winning an AOS award is quite an accomplishment. Awards are based on a judging score of 0-100 points:

Flower Quality Awards:

HCC Highly Commended Certificate: 75-79 points

AM Award of Merit: 80-89 points

FCC First Class Certificate: 90-100 points

Culture Awards:

CCM Certificate of Cultural Merit: 80-89 points

CCE Certificate of Cultural Excellence: 90-100 points

New Show Chair



Dana in the 2015 fashion show

We're happy to announce that Dana Culleney has agreed to be the Show Chairperson for the 2016 Hilo Orchid Society Show and Sale. Our show is the principal way that we engage the community and show people the wonders of orchids; it's our main venue for signing up new members; it's our principal source of income; it's a major sales event for local orchid growers, and more. And it's a big deal to put on, requiring dozens of volunteers. Luckily, HOS members have always stepped up to the challenge.

Because the show is moving to June, we need to get started on it earlier than usual next year. So when Dana or any of her Show Committee volunteers ask you to help, please say yes.

A Thanksgiving Note

Our meetings don't just happen by themselves. We are blessed with a host of generous volunteers who take care of things to make our meetings possible. We tend to take them for granted, but we shouldn't. So, in this month of Thanksgiving, let me thank all the people who helped out behind the scenes this year:

- Set up tables and chairs, clean up, and take away trash: George and Gail Crosthwaite, Dorothea and Jeff Fendentz, Eric Guttormsen, Nora James, Sandra Rambault, Jim Walker, Barry Yamada, Steve Gollis, Rick Kelley, Joe Bush, Normand Goupil, Kenji Oshita
- Food and beverages: Gloria Myklebust, Gail and George Crosthwaite, David Hertzberg, Ron Ting, Jim Walker
- Welcome new members and visitors: Rayna Armour, Lisa Steinmeyer
- Bring projector and screen: Ben Oliveros
- Bring laptop for presentations: Bill Rawson

- Show table lights and poles: Shelby Smith
- Show table plant slips, Members Choice ballots and photography: Glory Garner, Vivian Ueoka, Shelby Smith
- Obtain Opportunity Plants: Ben Oliveros
- Sell Opportunity Plant tickets: Vivian Ueoka
- Silent Auction plant sale table: Pauline Brault, Rick Kelley

If I've left anyone off of this list, I apologize – everyone who helps us deserves credit and is appreciated. And of course, we thank everyone who brought food for the refreshment table or orchids for the show table. To all of you, mahalo nui loa!

Larry Kuekes

HOS Donates to Orchid Conservation Alliance

Our Board believes that supporting orchid conservation is one of our Society's fundamental purposes. In light of this, the Board voted to donate \$1000 to the Orchid Conservation Alliance (OCA), as we did last year. Because if we don't support orchid conservation, who will?

There are many conservation organizations, but the OCA is the foremost one dedicated specifically to protecting orchid habitat.

If you're interested in the OCA, check out their web site at www.orchidconservationalliance.org. In addition to supporting the OCA's work with their dues, members are eligible to go on Orchids In The Wild trips arranged by OCA to see orchids in their native habitat.



CALENDAR OF ORCHID EVENTS

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

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|----------|-------|----------------------------------|
| Nov. 14 | 1:30 | HOS Meeting |
| | 4:00 | AOS Judging |
| Dec. 13 | 10:30 | Holiday Party at Hilo Yacht Club |
| Jan. 9 | 1:30 | HOS Meeting |
| | 4:00 | AOS Judging |
| Feb. 13 | 1:30 | HOS Meeting |
| | 4:00 | AOS Judging |
| June 3-5 | 1:30 | Hilo Orchid Show and Sale |

Orchid Stories

Going to Pot, Part 2: Potting Mix

Perverse plants that they are, most orchids will grow in anything except soil. This has generated endless discussion on the “ideal” potting mix. Various substances are extolled by different authors as if they had found the Holy Grail. The truth is that orchids respond to a combination of factors including potting mix, frequency of watering, fertilizer, and others, so which mix works best for you depends on the rest of the culture you provide.

What to Use. As a beginner, use bark (medium-size) to start with. You can experiment later with other mixes.



Medium fir bark

Bark. Orchids grow naturally on bark on tree limbs, of course, but in pots bark behaves differently. Paradoxically, the advantage of using bark is the same as the disadvantage: it decomposes. Brand new bark absorbs hardly any water. However, after a month or two the surface of the bark starts to break down, resulting in a rich, organic, free-draining mixture that is ideal for orchid roots. In a few years, however, the bark completely decomposes into compost, which holds too much water and will rot the roots. Plants like Cattleyas will grow over the side of the pot and need to be repotted before that happens, anyway.

Commercially available orchid bark is made from fir bark that has been sterilized to kill insects and pathogens. Medium-grade bark works best for most orchids. Fine-grade bark holds more water and can be good for plants that like it a bit more damp. Don't try to use bark mulch from a garden center as a substitute for fir bark.

Many commercial growers add other substances to a bark mix, such as sphagnum moss to make it

hold more water, or perlite to make it more free-draining. Feel free to experiment. But in my experience, plain bark works just fine.

Tree Fern. Orchids also like to grow on hapu'u, or tree fern, so tree fern provides a good growing medium. Although chopped tree fern is commercially available, in Hawaii you're more likely to find large chunks of tree fern, which frankly work better for mounting orchids than for placing in pots.

Sphagnum Moss. Some orchids, such as Bulbophyllums and many Pleurothallids, like their roots to stay damp and never dry out. Such orchids do very well potted in sphagnum moss. Sphagnum moss decomposes faster than bark, though, so plants will need to be repotted more often.

Between a Rock and a Hard Place. People have grown orchids on lava rock, gravel, styrofoam peanuts, even chunks of rubber tires. The advantage of these substances is that the mix never breaks down, so you only have to repot when the plant outgrows the pot. The disadvantage is that you have to use a complete fertilizer that provides all the nutrients the plant needs, including micro-nutrients that normally would be provided by the decomposing medium. Also, gravel can make the pots very heavy; conversely, styrofoam is so light that the pots may tip over too easily.

Many orchid growers put a layer of gravel or plastic peanuts in the bottom of the pot to help keep the drainage holes from getting clogged. Then they fill the rest of the pot with their normal medium such as bark.

Thin Air. Some orchids, such as Vandas, can be grown in wooden baskets with no medium at all, with the roots clinging to the basket and ultimately hanging down into thin air. If you grow an orchid like this, be aware that it will need to be watered every day – some Vanda growers water multiple times a day – because the roots dry out so fast. You will also have to use a fertilizer providing micro-nutrients.

Living Fossils. Back in prehistoric times, when dinosaurs roamed landscapes of giant ferns, orchid growers used to pot in osmunda. It's possible you may encounter a book whose author recommends potting in osmunda. Such authors are known as “living fossils”. No one uses osmunda these days.

Next Time: what kind of pot to use.

Larry Kuekes

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Hilo Orchid Society

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hiloorchidsociety.org