

The Sheath

June General Meeting

Date: June 24, 2011

Doors Open: 7:00 PM

Place: San Mateo Garden Center

605 Parkside Way, San Mateo, CA

Take the Alameda de las Pulgas exit off of Hwy. 92.
The Garden Center is located between 26th and 28th
Avenues

Mailing address: P.O. Box 6894, San Mateo, CA 94403-6894

Skill Session at 7:00PM

Tom Mudge

Mounting Orchids

**Meeting plus Show and
Tell Table - 7:45 PM
followed by**

Speaker: **Ken Jacobsen**

Orchids of Peru

Opportunity table by
Ken Jacobsen

Orchid Travels in Peru Speaker: Ken Jacobsen

Ken's talk will cover two trips to Peru, in 2005 and 2009, the Lima Orchid Society shows in both years, orchids growing in Machu Picchu, the Moyobamba Orchid Society show in both years, and a few orchid treks in various natural habitats.

Ken was first introduced to orchids by his uncle in the 1960's and has been growing Cymbidiums himself for over 40 years. Over time, he has added the Odontoglossum alliance plants and several other genera. Since his wife Amy joined in his orchid addiction, they now also raise Cattleyas and Laelias, Lycastes, Encyclias, Vandas, and Masdevallias. Together they even have a few Disas! Their collection now numbers over 2500 Cymbidiums, and about another 2500 of the other genera.

Ken is a judge in the AOS (American Orchid Society) judging program, and heads the CSA (Cymbidium Society of America) judging program. He has written many articles for the CSA Journal.

Ken is a past president of the Peninsula Orchid Society.

Skill session by Tom Mudge How to Mount Orchids

Many orchids roots are happier mounted than potted. (Examples: many species phalaenopsis, dendrobiums, comparettias, barkerias, and more.) Tom will demonstrate how to mount an orchid. And the best news is, mounted orchids don't need that constant repotting!

Opportunity Table

Ken Jacobsen will supply a fabulous opportunity table this month!

Sad News - the Greenhouse Bus Tour has been canceled due to lack of sufficient participation. **Thanks to Dan Williamson** for all of his hard work putting together a great tour, arranging for the bus, collecting the sign-up sheet, and notifying all those who signed up that the tour had to be canceled. Great job Dan! Wish we could have gone.



Cypripedium acaule
Randall Takemoto-Hambleton



Paphiopedilum Vanda M.
Pearman Fred Cox



Miltoniopsis Newton Falls
Gloria Bygnes



Baellara Marfitch 'Howard's Dream'
Janusz Warszawski



Phalaenopsis Cassandra
Fred Cox



Sarcochilus hybrids
Anna Chai



Nobile type dendrobium
Janusz Warszawski



Miltoniopsis Burt Field
'Eileen' Gloria Bygnes



Cattleya forbesii 'Clear Jade'
Fred Shull



Dendrobium stricklandianum x
Flower Baby Mary Gerritsen

Member News



A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO: John Benet, Rene Biggs, Ann Havey Cavender, Ginger Creevy, Mike Drilling, Joe Enos, Patrick Hoe, Olga Ostrovsky, Ron Parsons, Paul Simon and Jill Rodder, Tina Truong, Margaret Ziegler.

Welcome to New Members: Rosalie Dedo, Joe Enos and Annie Stoner.

Congratulations Mary!

Past POS President Mary Gerritsen has been elected President of the San Francisco Orchid Society.

Thanks to the people who brought treats to the May meeting! We appreciate you! Pat (sorry, no last name listed), Donna Horn, Annie Green, Phyllis Chim, Tony Gee, Gloria Bygdnes, Jung Hee Ra, Nick Hughes, Jon-Michael Irvin, Susan Tong, Doug (also no last name), Daniel Williamson, and Cordelia Wong!

AOS Judging at Peninsula Orchid Society July Meeting

by Ken Jacobsen (Start prepping those orchids now!)

I'm sure we've all had the experience of going to an orchid show and seeing blue ribbons on the showiest plants, and then seeing a plant right next to the showy plant with no ribbon at all, but an AOS award. Well, we'll have the chance to learn about different types of judging and understand how this occurs.

Of course, orchid judges for the AOS look for something different when judging flowers than do the ribbon judges for a society show, and in July we'll be able to see AOS judging in action. There will be two or three AOS judging teams set up to judge and score plants, and one of the AOS judges will explain the overall process. One judging team will be in the main room, and will judge several plants, while any other AOS teams will be in the Rose room. As judging starts, members are invited to gather around the main judging group to see the process in detail, or go to the Rose room to observe another team.

Because AOS judging is supposed to be an anonymous process, there are a couple things we'll need to do for this meeting that are different than usual. First, please bring in plants for the show-and-tell table in July as usual, especially if you think the flowers are exceptional for that particular type of orchid, but please don't stop to tell any of the judges about your plant as you do this. If a judge knows that a particular plant belongs to a specific person, they must excuse themselves from judging that plant. Also, please fold your plant tags so your name doesn't show.

The meeting will commence at 7:30 in July, and after announcements, we'll start the judging process immediately. Any plants where judging has been specifically requested will be judged – forms will be at the meeting for requesting judging. Also, the show-and-tell table will be viewed by the judges to see if there are additional plants they feel worthy of a closer look. Once judging is finished, we'll have a short break, introduce the awarded plants and the show-and-tell table, and then proceed with the raffle.

If the judges award your plant, then that's wonderful. If you don't get an award, that doesn't mean your plant isn't exceptional, only that the judges are looking at attributes of a plant and flower which may be different than you see when you look at the flower. Especially with orchids, beauty is very much in the eye of the beholder.

For Sale

Santa Barbara Greenhouse

7 foot x 12 foot Redwood and Double Wall Fiberglass Construction

Includes:

- 10" Exhaust Fan
- Automatic Airflow Shutters
- One 5-foot & One 12-foot Long Redwood Bench

Approximate Age 10 years old

Extremely clean, rarely used, like new inside/out

\$1000.00

Contact: Mary Jensen @ POSGROW@aol.com





Paphiopedilum Gloria Naugle
Trudy Hadler



Laelia tenebrosa
Fred Shull



Iwanagara Apple Blossom
Janusz Warszawski



Masdevallia coccinea 'Chris'
Anna Chai



Cymbidium Lambert Day
Paul & Phyllis Chim



Dendrobium hybrid
Jackie Becker



Neofinetia falcata 'Ranman'



Marlene enjoys
the coffee



Phragmipedium besseae hybrid



Paphiopedilum Macabre hybrid
Trudy Hadler



Upcoming Events

June 25 Carnivorous Plant Show & Sale at Lakeside Park in Oakland 12 PM - 4 PM. bacps.org
Free admission.

July 8-10 The 31th Santa Barbara Orchid Estate International Orchid Fair - Earl Warren Show grounds at Highway 101 and Las Positas Roads. Fri. & Sat. 9 AM to 5 PM, Sun. 10 AM to 4 PM. Admission is free, parking is \$5. <http://www.orchidfair.com/>

FYI...Should anyone would like to pre-order from Floralia and pick up their order in Santa Barbara on July 8-10, 2011. Great place to order Brazilian species and many other goodies. Go to their website (www.floralia.com.br) for a complete listing of plant available. (Submitted by Dennis Olivas.)

July 8 - 10 Hatfield Orchids Summer Open House 3793 Dufau Road, Oxnard, CA 93033. Rain or Shine! 9 AM - 4 PM each day. Hope you can join us, but if you can't, we can ship to you for free! Call George at (805) 901 0340-, email him at George@HatfieldOrchids.com, or check our the website at www.hatfieldorchids.com.

July 27 Golden Gate Cymbidium Society Auction & Potluck Dinner Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, Oakland, 7 PM. Bring a plant for donation and a potluck dish. Call for information at (510) 276-2851- or visit: www.ggcybidiums.com

August 6 Palomar Orchid Society Annual Auction - Women's Club of Carlsbad, 3320 Monroe St., Carlsbad. Preview 11 AM, Auction begins at noon. See flyer below.

August 6 The California Sierra Nevada Judging Center's 3rd Annual Speaker's Day Odd Fellows Hall, 1831 Howe Ave at Alta Arden, Sacramento, CA 95838. 9AM to 5PM. Speakers: Marc Hatchadourian curator New York Botanical Gardens, Tom Harper of Stones River Orchids and Erich Michel of Michel Orchid Nursery. Cost is \$10.00 advance tickets for AOS members, \$15.00 at the door for AOS members and \$25.00 for non-AOS members. More information <http://www.facebook.com/pages/California-Sierra-Nevada-Judging-Center/104769679585467>.


Palomar Orchid Society
Annual Orchid Auction
 Saturday, August 6, 2011
 Preview at 11AM, Auction at 12:00 noon

Location: Woman's Club of Carlsbad
 3320 Monroe Street, Carlsbad, CA 92008
 Directions: Go east off the 5 onto Carlsbad Village Drive. Go .6 mile to Monroe and turn right. The Woman's Club is one block on the left.
 Parking is free in the rear of the building.
 Monthly meetings: First Wednesday of the month at the Woman's Club.
 Culture class at 6:30 p.m., regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.

I ♥ *Phragmipedium* Hybrids With Long Petals

The parents:



Phrag. caudatum



Phrag. longifolium. Photo Eric Hunt
Grower Howard Gunn



Phrag. besseae



Phrag. reticulatum or
boissierianum var. *reticulatum*.
Photo Roberto Takase



Phrag. caricinum. Photo
Matthew Gore Photography

The hybrids:

Right: Paul
Eugene Conroy
(*caudatum* var.
wallisii x
longifolium.)



Below: Court
Jester (*caudatum* x
reticulatum)



Right: Grande
(*longifolium* x
caudatum.)



Below: Nitidissimum
(*caudatum* x
Conchiferum
(*caricinum* x
longifolium.)



Right: Belle
Hogue Point
(*besseae*,
longifolium and
caudatum var.
sanderæ)



Repotting Phragmipediums

from a skill session given last year by Chaunie Langland

I have heard, and read, several times that Phrags should be repotted every six months. Perhaps that would indeed result in optimum growth and blooming. However, I have never managed to try it. In fact, I am probably one of the club champions in putting off repotting.

I have also read that Phrag roots need to be kept cool. That is probably why this now struggling *Phrag. schlimii* came to me in moss in a clay pot. Sphagnum has the advantage of holding a large amount of water. The clay pot has the ability to draw water from the potting medium and evaporate it, thereby cooling the roots in the pot. Unfortunately, Phrags need a lot of water, and this set up dries out too quickly in my warm greenhouse that also has lots of air movement. Still, I have left it to limp along for two years. It is not doing well, but it has survived, waiting for me to show it some kindness and repot it. (Note: I did finally repot it after giving this talk - it is still alive a year later. Won't be bringing to Show & Tell real soon.)

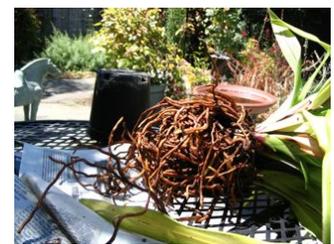


Phrag Cardinalis just pulled from old pot.

When you are choosing your pot, you need to consider your own situation. Clear pots seem to be helpful for phalaenopsis, which are known to use light on their roots as well as their leaves for photosynthesis. I have not heard anything about Phrags doing this, and I have decided that Dennis Olivas is right. Clear pots can result in slimy algae growth. So, for Phrags that I use plastic pots for in the future, I am switching to opaque plastic.

One potting method I have read about suggests that you place your Phrag in one pot, then place that pot in a larger clay pot with moss between them. Water the moss everyday, and the evaporation will cool the root area. This might work, but I haven't tried it. And actually, I don't know that the roots have to be kept cooler - because I have read that it is so, but I have never seen a controlled study that shows plant quality improvement due to keeping the roots cooler. So, that is what we are going to do today in a very small way. I saw these white clay pots, with a small water reservoir at the bottom, advertised on e-Bay by The Orchid Gallery. They claim that these pots keep the roots cooler and that they achieved twice the rate of growth that they saw in plants in plastic pots next to these on the bench. So, today I am going to divide this Phrag. Cardinalis in half, and pot one piece in this "Cool Pot" (\$11.99 + shipping) and the other in a plastic pot (about \$1). Both will have the same bark mix in them. Both will be watered daily. (End result of division - three divisions, two went into plastic pots and one into the "super" pot.)

I don't use a carefully measured potting mix. I just use some bark, usually medium or large, add some charcoal and some perlite. I let it soak over night. Sometimes I let it soak for a week or two or more - but not on purpose. Better too wet than too dry. I don't really pack the potting mix tightly around the roots. I like to feel that the roots have plenty of spaces to grow into. Now, plenty of expert, prize winning growers do pack the potting mix in tightly and they have great results. So, do what feels best to you.



After more than an hour of untangling roots and pulling out old bark

After repotting, I water right away, and I water and fertilize normally.

One thing I have been reading about, but I have not done any testing for myself, is potting medium pH. You will remember from your high school or college chemistry, that the lower the pH number, the more acidic, like vinegar, and the higher the number the more basic, like bleach. The scale goes from 1 to 14, with 7 being neutral.

I have heard and read recently that the pH of Sphagnum moss becomes more acidic after six months. I haven't checked it nor read any actual studies to that prove this is true, but it seems possible.

I bought a *Phrag. kovachii* hybrid seedling last summer at the Speaker's Day in Sacramento. For \$75. It was potted in Sphagnum moss in a plastic pot. After 4 or 5 months, it started to lose its bottom leaves. I

(Continued on the next page)



Masdevallia John
Leathers 'Carlotta'
Mary Gerritsen



Angraecum magdalenae
Sharon Langan



Nanodes madusae
Dan Newman



Monica enjoys treats while
keeping the refreshments
organized



Speaker Dean Hung, of Paphiness,
brought a good selection of plants
to sell



Mike keeps us up to date on
upcoming events

Repotting Phragmipediums (cont.)

had heard that kovachii's needed a special potting medium, but not what it was. Fortunately, at this time, there was an article on Phrag culture, in the February 2010 *Orchids Magazine*, by Jerry Lee Fisher, including information on the pH normally found in nature for several types of Phrags, and his recommended potting medium for *phrag. kovachii*. *Kovachii*s grow in areas where the surrounding pH is 7.5 to 8. Jerry recommended using diatomite, which has a pH of 7.5. The other parent of this plant is *besseae*. *Besseae* prefers a pH of 5.5 to 6. What pH would this hybrid prefer? I took a chance and repotted it in diatomite and it has either done fine, or it is putting out a flower quick before it dies. Time will tell. We don't know whether this hybrid would have done just as well, or even better in a bark mix.

Should you use diatomite for your other Phrags? Probably not. Most of the Phrags listed in Jerry's article grew in a pH closer to that of bark. No reason why you can't experiment with something you aren't afraid to lose. Once you are looking at hybrids, things become very murky. Fortunately, Phrags are very hardy, and will give you warnings that they are not happy, giving you a chance to make changes, rather than just upping and dying on you in a couple of days.

The photo at the right shows the two pots, plastic on left, white clay on right, a year from the skill session repotting. The division in the plastic pot has 3 new growths, in the clay pot 4 new growths. We'll check again next year, but I'll be using plastic pots in the mean time.



Unclassifieds

Members may advertise orchid related items. The ad is free. E-mail your ad to the_sheath_editor@earthlink.net or mail to 878 Cashew Way, Fremont, CA 94536. Be sure to include your name and phone number. Ads must be received by the 1st of the month to be included that month's newsletter.

For Sale: New, still in box, Charley's Greenhouse Low Flow Water Valve System. \$85. (Paid \$130, too lazy to return it.) Chaunie Langland (510) 494-8850.

Have some unused greenhouse equipment? Bought some type of potting material that you decided you don't like? Have old issues of orchid magazines? Want to sell some plants from that flask you bought? Looking for a particular orchid? This is the place to put your FREE ad!

All uncredited photos in all issues of The Sheath are taken by Chaunie Langland. The photo's in this edition in the greenhouse ad were provided by Mary Jensen.

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*AOS Judging at the July meeting!
Start preparing your possible award
winners.*

*Peninsula Orchid Society
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