



The

# Arizona Orchidist

Published monthly by  
The Orchid Society of Arizona, Inc.  
Founding Editor- Clarence S. Lindsten

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Volume 45

March 2009 Number 3

## NEXT OSA MEETING

The next regular society meeting  
will be **Monday, March 2, 2009**  
at **7:00 P.M.**

Meetings are held at the  
**Training Center**  
at the  
**Arizona State Veteran Home**  
**4141 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., Phoenix.**

OSA meetings are open to all  
plant enthusiasts

Refreshments will be provided.

Beverages by Ann Cherny

Snacks by

Sarah Heberling & Lou Ann Remeikis

Refreshment Coordinators:

Barbara Parnell (480) 948-0714

Mary Gannon (623) 878-4173

Carol Erwin (602) 996-1696

## **Show Planning/ Board Meeting**

March 29 at noon at the home of  
Barbara and Harry Parnell

## **GROWER ON CALL**

Bob MacLeod  
(623) 935-4059  
or cell  
(623) 810-3967

## March Program

### Repotting, Diagnosing, and Whatever: 2009 edition

Every now and again we aim to organize a meeting where we try to clear up a few of the routine "maintenance" issues concerning orchids, where we invite members to bring in a plant (one each) for repotting demonstrations, or to bring in any plants they have health questions about. The March 2 meeting will be it, so- bring 'em on in, but keep the sick plants away from the healthy ones, okay?

Although we try to bring in an extra pot or two along with some media, there are no guarantees; for best results, bring in your own pot and supplies, and we'll demonstrate what to do when that overgrown dendrobium needs a new home. Dumb looks are still free!

And if you have a burning desire to know when a species plant flowers, there will be a copy available of Robert Hamilton's **WHEN DOES IT FLOWER?**

AJ

## **BOOTH CHANGE NOTICE**

Please note that the OSA booth has been changed to **#2241** at the Southwest Flower and Garden Show to be held March 6, 7, and 8.

## *IN THIS ISSUE*

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK	Julie Rathbun	Page 2
COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT	Wilella Stimmell	Page 3
ORCHIDS AS TEACHERS	Stig Dalstrom	Page 5



From the President's Desk

Julie Rathbun

Everyone who attended our February meeting really enjoyed Peter Lin's multimedia program on mini-catts. Peter's comments on the culture of mini-catts were appreciated by the audience. For our silent auction, Peter brought healthy plants and answered questions about how to be successfully grow the plants on windowsills.

After the meeting, Peter said that he really enjoyed speaking to OSA.

During the meeting, I announced that we have **two events scheduled for March**. YOUR participation in one or both of the events will be greatly appreciated!

The **first Southwest Flower Show will be held on March 6, 7, and 8 at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale**. If I missed speaking to any members who want to help at this event, PLEASE feel free to contact me and volunteer!! Elsewhere in this newsletter, you will find details about the event. Our booth number has been changed to **2241**. Quite a few of our members can always be counted on to help when we need their help, but it would be appreciated if members who have never volunteered, take some of the burden off of the dedicated members who are ALWAYS "on call"! I understand when members have health problems, family problems, or day jobs and can't work at our special events, but for the unemployed and healthy members who choose not to volunteer, I really don't understand why anyone would be a member of a group with a well-known community service agenda and then not volunteer to help when we need it.

Our second event in March is the **Equestrian Special Olympics which is scheduled for Saturday, March 14**. Please contact me if you can help as a "spotter" (in the arena, two adults are needed - one on each side of the horse - as each participant on horseback rides around the course) or help serve food in the lunch line. For benefit of those who have never helped with this event: it is held at the **Western Saddle Club Arena, 12425 N. 7<sup>th</sup> St., Phoenix**. Hours of the event are 9 AM – 2 PM.

Our **first show planning meeting for our November, 2009 show** will be held at **noon** on MARCH 29 at the home of Barbara and Harry Parnell. The March board meeting will follow the show planning meeting. We would love to have planning participation from non-board members! OSA's board meetings are open to ALL OSA members, but if you have only enough time to attend the show planning meeting and share your ideas, that's okay!

See you at our regular meeting on March 2!

Julie

## COMMUNITY SERVICE REPORT

Wilella Stimmell, CSP Coordinator

On Tuesday, January 20, SARAH HEBERLING, BOB MACLEOD, JULIE RATHBUN, LOU ANN REMEIKIS, and I presented repotting programs for three classes of second grade, enthusiastic students at Falcon Hill Elementary School in Mesa.

This wasn't the first time that we presented our programs outside, but it was the first time that several students were playing soccer in the field adjacent to the ramada where we were situated. The additional noise from the soccer players didn't disturb the students who were repotting their phal seedlings.

After each group of students finished repotting their seedlings, they took turns admiring and smelling our display plants. A breeze knocked over a couple of the plants, but no damage was done. The Oncidium intergeneric that I placed on our February raffle table suffered another "accident", but again, no harm was done. (That was about the 5<sup>th</sup> time that plant had been knocked over and fell out of its pot. I think it was trying to tell me something, so that's why I placed it on our February raffle table. I hope that it was repotted by the winner who liked the colors of the flowers.)

A parent of one of the students took MANY pictures during the programs. I'm lucky if I can take 3 photos during a presentation (it's hard to instruct and take pictures at the same time). The parent took **185 photos** and burned them onto a CD. Carla Berglund, one of the second grade teachers, sent us the CD and a packet of thank you notes from the students. Some of the notes are artistic, some are funny, and all were appreciated by our program team. My personal observation of the thank you notes is that the notes from boys featured more color on the outside of the notes and inside the thank you, comments were short; the notes from girls were more grammatically correct inside and also contained poetry!

For April, May, and June, we have 2 available dates per month for community service programs. If you know a teacher who would welcome our programs, let him/her know as soon as possible. Remember that we operate on a first come-first serve basis. The first teacher who contacts me will be given first choice of dates for programs. (We do **not** schedule programs for July or August.)

### Southwest Flower & Garden Show

**Reminder:** A new event has been launched in the Phoenix Metro area, and OSA has been invited to participate. The **first Southwest Flower & Garden Show** will be held **March 6, 7, and 8, 2009** at the **University of Phoenix Stadium**. The URL is: [www.swflowershow.com/](http://www.swflowershow.com/) To find mention of OSA (and other non-profit groups), from the SWFS home page, click on the Attend the Show tab and then click on The Club Forum. Scroll down to find mention of OSA. Hours for the show are: Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7 – 10 AM-7 PM. Sunday, March 8, hours are 10 AM-5PM. Also under the Attend the Show tab, you will find directions to the University of Phoenix Stadium (formerly Cardinals' Stadium). **We need volunteers** to work in our booth.

The population in the west valley is expanding at a fast pace. Participation in the SWFS is an opportunity for us to introduce OSA to residents.

If you want to volunteer for OSA's booth (**#2241**), contact me by e-mail or phone! I will gladly give you directions to the stadium.

Julie

## FEBRUARY RAFFLE DONORS

Bob MacLeod, Julie Rathbun,  
Cynthia Schnitzer, Wilella Stimmell,  
& OSA  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew) marks its 250th birthday this year. Long considered a mecca for orchid scholars, the Gardens were founded in 1759 by Princess Augusta, the mother of George III. Tropical Extravaganza is the first festival in a year of events celebrating RBG Kew's 250th anniversary.

Kew is thought to be home to one of the world's oldest and most comprehensive collection of living orchids. This includes year round displays in two specialised orchid zones in the Princess of Wales Conservatory. Two different climatic zones provide the growing conditions that different types of orchids require. A hot, steamy zone features tropical epiphytic varieties with showy flowers and specific adaptations to aerial living in the rainforest canopy. Of particular interest is the climbing vanilla orchid (*Vanilla planifolia*) from Central America, the only orchid used for industrial purposes in the food and cosmetic industries. The cooler orchid zone suits species from tropical mountainous regions.

Visitors will have the opportunity to see pressed specimens and jars of preserved orchid flowers from the Herbarium collection with Kew's Volunteer Guides. Kew's orchid experts will explain how they use these specimens to identify orchids, determine their rarity and catalogue orchid species from across the world. orchid enthusiasts will also be able to visit Kew's Micropropagation Unit, where microscopic orchid seeds are nurtured on nutrient-rich gels. Hands-on sessions are free and take place 2pm – 4pm Wednesdays and Sundays throughout the festival in the Secluded Garden Glasshouse.

The *Arizona Orchidist* is published monthly by the

Orchid Society of Arizona, Inc.

Direct Inquiries to our website at:

[www.orchidsocietyaz.org](http://www.orchidsocietyaz.org)

Or to any of the Board Officers or Trustees:

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The Orchid Society of Arizona, Inc. is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization dedicated to community service and the study of orchids. It is affiliated with the American Orchid Society, The Orchid Digest Corporation, the Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs, Inc., and The Nature Conservancy.

## ORCHIDS...as Teachers?

by Stig Dalstrom, Research and Conservation, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens

“When they think about it, most people realize rather quickly that life on Earth depends on plants. The oxygen that we breathe, the food that we eat, clothes, fuel, building material, paper, medicines, etc., all originate in the plant kingdom. It really is redundant to ask: ‘What can be more important to us than making sure we maintain these resources in a sustainable way if life as we know it is to prevail for coming generations?’

Strange as it may seem, this irrefutable fact does not always resonate with our actions in a convincing way. All too often, we read and hear about depleting resources and endangered plant and animal species. This demonstrates that we fail in our role as stewards of the environment. I am convinced, however, that most people realize this but may feel a bit helpless in not knowing what to do about it. It is like being inside a running wheel of which we have lost control. Where can we look for guidance?

To answer this question, let’s look around and see if we can find somebody or something that does a better job than ourselves with regards to these issues. Is there anybody or anything that can show us how to survive on this planet in a sustainable way? How far do we need to go to find this ‘Survival Prophet’?

Well, actually, not far at all. How about the greenhouses at Selby Gardens? Our collections are teeming with little prophets in all possible shapes and colors. We call them orchids! Take a break in your daily race and stroll through our beautiful display house. Watch and listen carefully and you may ‘hear’ the orchids speaking to you in hushed but sincere voices. What are they saying? They tell you that orchids represent a highly successful life form. They prove this by their age (probably more than 100 million years), and by being the largest plant group on the planet that has adapted to almost all possible environments through highly-diverse life dynamics. How did this happen? What are their secrets?

The reason for the success of the orchid family is complex but can be partially explained by some basic (or true) principles: orchids adapt to the environment, they don’t change it as we do with little regard for the consequences. Orchids utilize other organisms without destroying them. We, on the other hand, often destroy and kill other life forms with little concern for their long-term survival. Orchids live in sustainable populations, which means that there are no more plants than Nature can support. This is probably the trickiest subject to approach and the most difficult problem to solve, but sooner better than later we really need to address the issue of our own population growth.

The natural resources on our planet are limited. Simple mathematics tells us that with an expanding population, each individual will have smaller and smaller shares. Is this where we want to go, or do we want to find ways to create sustainable conditions for all life forms? Do we engage and become active in solving problems, or do we just want to let go and see what happens?

Selby Gardens is launching a botanical collaboration with the National Biodiversity Center in Bhutan, Asia. There are many reasons why this is a very important and exciting project for both institutions and countries. Even though people have been botanizing the Himalayan region for centuries, remote areas are still virtually unknown to modern science, particularly in the Kingdom of Bhutan.

By focusing on orchids, our proven Masters of Survival, we will not only have a chance to find new species but also to learn more about the environmental health and the status of biodiversity in the entire country. The simple fact that much of Bhutan’s natural resources are intact and protected, and the forests are filled with a healthy flora and fauna, demonstrates that the people of this tiny country have a wise attitude towards Nature. Compared with the neighboring countries that have been clear-cut and depleted, the Bhutanese culture has adopted a different approach to life.

Maybe we, as representatives of a lifestyle that exhausts natural resources, can learn something from those who have proven they can exist in a more sustainable way?”

Source: Selby Tropical Dispatch, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, 811 South Palm Avenue, Sarasota, FL, Volume 36, Number 1, Winter, 2009, page 6. [www.selby.org](http://www.selby.org)

# OSA March 2009 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>Sara Heberling</i> 	2 <i>OSA Meeting</i> <i>7:00 PM</i>	3	4 <i>Wilella Stimmell</i> 	5	6	7
8 <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins</i>	9	10	11	12 <i>Chris Gubler</i> 	13	14
15	16	17 	18	19	20	21
22	23 <i>Sean Bacik</i> 	24	25	26	27	28 <i>Julie Rathbun</i> 
29	30	31				



Orchid Society of Arizona

c/o Keith Mead

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