

# ILLINOIS ORCHID SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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## President's Message

By Joe Dixler

We did it! Our first show at Oakton Community College was a resounding success. This was not easy. Thinking ahead and trying to plan for every contingency was a challenge. Ralph Minnis called to check if parking in the faculty lot was permitted on Friday while they were teaching—we never thought about that. Then it was reported the table skirts were being applied at 9pm Friday night after the exhibits were completed—this produced a few frantic calls. At set up time, Anne had to find room to add another table to a vendor sales area. But no one noticed these last minute panic attacks and the show went on without a hitch. Our publicity was incredible. Susan Crawford arranged for Lois, Martin and Barbara to speak on "Let's Talk Gardening" on WGN Radio, hosted by Michael Nowak. Then we were on several websites: [www.networkchicago.com](http://www.networkchicago.com) and [www.ChicagoTraveler.com](http://www.ChicagoTraveler.com). Did you see the outstanding feature article that Susan wrote in the "Home and Garden" section of Pioneer Press the Thursday before the show? And Carlee Drummer from OCC contributed her professional expertise to our publicity efforts with orchid banners, the OCC lit marquee, notices mailed to 250,000 homes in the area, and signs around the campus. Henrietta and her staff worked diligently with us to be sure that tables, supplies, and the judges' meals were in the right places, and they were always available to help throughout the show. Again OCC's cooperation made this first show even better than I had anticipated.

The layout of the show in one room was an improvement. What a challenge Anne had figuring out how to place all those rectangles in the right places on her 8 1/2 x 11 sheet of paper—and the jig saw puzzle actually fit together! Ed Gamson had everyone unloaded in record time in spite of the rain. The plant registration process went smoothly thanks to Pat Kralek and her staff of volunteers. With new plant categories this year, the job was not easy, but she was up for this challenge as she also organized the printing of the show booklets. Lois Cinert used her many years of experience to help wherever needed, and George was always ready to assist. The displays were first rate and congratulations go to Martin, Diane and Lois who coordinated the lovely IOS exhibit. It was quite impressive with so many of your top-notch contributions. The judges' breakfast and lunch were served right on time, and the judges did their job with the usual expertise thanks to Sue Golan's organizational ability. Our clerks did a super job assisting the judges with spotting plants, keeping records, and hanging ribbons. Allison and Dave Tribble's very professional looking signs added an elegant touch.

I noticed many happy faces on the vendors and exhibitors. All of the volunteers were busy with Anne calmly coordinating it all in the background. People left their e-mail addresses as a contact for future shows and admissions were handled with ease under Steve Lipson. Our members' sales table was expertly handled by Wally Zielinski. Larry Lubin's voice was everywhere - selling raffle tickets and announcing the door prizes. The supply of cut flowers seemed never ending, but fortunately the last few were sold at 5 minutes before 5 at a bargain price. Rich Unger's fragrance workshops and the instructional videos were well attended and were appreciated. We managed to sign up 18 new members, thanks to Allen Moor's efforts.

Clean up was accomplished quickly with no major disasters found on the rugs under the plastic wrap as Barry Lubin and Sandy Fuller manned the vacuum cleaners. Jerry Garner, our newsletter editor had very complete information for the show and Tom Franczak,

**2002-2003 IOS Officers -- Terms of office are from July 1 until June 30**

President	Joe Dixler	847-432-7708	( <a href="mailto:jmd@dixler.com">jmd@dixler.com</a> )
1st Vice President (Meetings/speakers)	Wendy Holtzman	773-395-1771	( <a href="mailto:wendyholtzman@netzero.net">wendyholtzman@netzero.net</a> )
2nd Vice (Home show chair)	Anne Kotowski	630-833-8042	( <a href="mailto:phrag207@aol.com">phrag207@aol.com</a> )
3rd Vice President (Away show chair)	Martin Taylor	630-682-0464	( <a href="mailto:dmtatcenca@aol.com">dmtatcenca@aol.com</a> )
Secretary (Recorder)	Linda Schubert	847-835-0799	( <a href="mailto:lshoobert@juno.com">lshoobert@juno.com</a> )
Asst. Sec'y (Newsletter editor)	Jerry Garner	847-864-8417	( <a href="mailto:garnerjl@attbi.com">garnerjl@attbi.com</a> )
Treasurer (Collects/disburses monies)	Diana Nielsen	630-894-9486	( <a href="mailto:dnielsen3@msn.com">dnielsen3@msn.com</a> )
Asst. Treas (Membership/ Dues)	Allen Morr	847-501-2532-	( <a href="mailto:ozone03@ameritech.net">ozone03@ameritech.net</a> )
Immediate Past President	John Stubbings	847-480-1532	( <a href="mailto:jstubbings@peoplepc.com">jstubbings@peoplepc.com</a> )

**Board Members -- Terms of office expire June 30 of the year shown.**

Steve Lipson	2003	847-328-1837	( <a href="mailto:stevenlipson@attbi.com">stevenlipson@attbi.com</a> )
Nancy Jean Schoo	2003	630-837-3153	( <a href="mailto:nancyjean@earthlink.net">nancyjean@earthlink.net</a> )
Joel Edwards	2004	847-564-9537	
Allison Tribble	2004	773-728-4874	( <a href="mailto:allisont@rcn.com">allisont@rcn.com</a> )
Ed Gamson	2005	847-432-7825	( <a href="mailto:epgamson@welshkatz.com">epgamson@welshkatz.com</a> )
Barry Lubin	2005	847-432-5698	( <a href="mailto:BRLNo1@aol.com">BRLNo1@aol.com</a> )
Jim Spatzek	2006	847-498-4638	( <a href="mailto:jamcam@avenew.com">jamcam@avenew.com</a> )
Rich Unger	2006	773-685-2677	( <a href="mailto:aroma-imp@hotmail.com">aroma-imp@hotmail.com</a> )

*(President's Message continued)*

our web-site editor, reported that in the three days prior to the show, we had the highest number of hits ever recorded and we shattered the one-week hit total with two days to go in the week. Thanks for all of your efforts publicizing the show, passing out bookmarks, hanging posters and participating. Our outstanding volunteers made the difference. Please be aware that your efforts were appreciated and Anne will have more space in her column to add her thanks. I was so pleased to see so many old and new faces welcoming visitors with the hospitality that we want to be known for.

Photo courtesy of Francisco Miranda (Miranda Orchids)



**DEADLINE FOR JUNE NEWSLETTER  
MAY 17<sup>th</sup>**

**THE ILLINOIS ORCHID SOCIETY EXHIBIT  
AT "OAKTON ORCHID ODYSSEY"**

Martin Taylor

By all measures, this was a blockbuster exhibit, and for a time, a cliffhanger, too! The terrible weather on the setup afternoon contributed to a late start in assembling the display, and the arrival of a record number of plants threatened to overwhelm the setup crew. However, a hasty and bleary-eyed early morning session brought it all together at the last minute.

And what a display it was! 29 members provided no fewer than 145 plants to fit into our 100 square feet, and the sterling arranging efforts of Diana Nielsen, Sherry Maloney, and Lois & George Cinert eventually brought the vast array of colors into a harmonious flow. Although the judging teams found our exhibit vexing – there was always a politely elbowing throng of judges and clerks surrounding the display – the exhibit garnered a respectable number of ribbons: 12 firsts, 11 seconds, 4 thirds, and 5 best-of -class awards - a nice tribute to the "growing power" of our members! A heartfelt THANK YOU! to all who helped make the exhibit a success by bringing plants, assembling the background (Paul Passine, Ken Vrabel, George Cinert, and many others), arranging the plants, and registering & labeling them (a daunting task!)

We have good cause to remember the first display at Oakton, and look forward to more to come!



**Cattleya violacea** (Rick's Tropica)

## **PLANT JUDGING RESULTS**

### **LAST CHANCE FOR MONTHLY JUDGING POINTS!**

Listed below are the point totals you have accumulated through our Show in April. Our meeting in May and the last away show in Traverse City at the end of the month will bring this year's competition to a close. How are you doing? Have you surpassed your total from last year? If you're new to the judging, use this year's total as a benchmark to beat next year. It's a great way to assess your progress as a grower. If you had plants in a display other than the IOS display, please contact me with the number of plants and ribbons so that I can credit your totals. There is no judging in June and the new contest year begins in July. A copy of your totals from each month will be available to look at during the May meeting. Send questions to [smmaloney@earthlink.net](mailto:smmaloney@earthlink.net) or call 847/498-0249.

Sherry Maloney  
Monthly Judging Chair

### ***LIGHTS/WINDOWSILL***

Bennett, Barbara	184
Bestman, Jim & Gerry	10
Bloome, Cathy	146
Buckles, Betsy	37
Cinert, Lois	235
Crawford, Susan	36
Davis, Joan	23
Delvecchio, Pat	20
Edwards, Joel	80

Fuller*, Sandy	166
Gemeinhart, Ernie	132
Hall*, Julie	10
Hiebert, Brad	44
High, Charles & Jane	180
Holtzman, David & Wendy	14
Jaich-Westine*, Ann	6
Jehangir, Rusty	20
Johnson, Carolyn	11
Kotowski, Anne	6
Labahn*, Louise	10
Losert, Wilfred	263
Maloney, Sherry	614
Manuel*, Alex	277
Minnis, Ralph	15
Nielsen, Diana	312
Papiewski, Claire	85
Pollock*, Loren	15
Samuelson*, Helen & David	12
Schmitz, Barbara	185
Schordje, Leo	52
Spillers*, Kelly	20
Stam*, Leo & Gayle	9
Taylor, Martin	635
Teppel*, Ken	50
Tirzmallis*, Susan	5
Titterton*, George	17
Tribble*, Allison	26
Unger, Rich	154
Vrabel, Ken	109
Wallace, Dottie	22
Winfield*, Arlene	20
<b>GREENHOUSE</b>	
<b>Cohen*, Edward</b>	25
<b>Costello*, Brian</b>	10
<b>Dixler, Joe &amp; Rosalie</b>	1896
<b>Gamson, Ed</b>	174
<b>Golan, Sue</b>	416
<b>Hoel, Bob</b>	39
<b>Lipson, Steve &amp; Judy</b>	215
<b>Levin, Ken</b>	59
<b>Lubin, Barry</b>	80
<b>Morr, Allen</b>	41
<b>Nelson, Bil</b>	125
<b>Passine, Paul</b>	121
<b>Rogerson, Bill</b>	76
<b>Sahagian, Laima</b>	140
<b>Stubbings, John</b>	87
<b>Thompson, Carol</b>	99
<b>Wolf, Bob</b>	4
<b>Zielinski, Wally</b>	6

## **Volunteers Needed for Native Orchid Restoration**

**Cathy Bloome**

For the last 2-1/2 years I have been steward of a prairie at Schiller Woods southeast of O'Hare Airport. We are working on restoring the habitat to preserve the native plants and trees that are still there, which includes orchids. We are removing mostly buckthorn and garlic mustard, which are not native to Illinois. Come join us with our efforts. We meet the fourth Sunday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

For additional information or to volunteer, call me or e-mail me for information and directions. 847-455-4405 or [catbloome@core.com](mailto:catbloome@core.com)

**Workdays through the Summer are April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27, and August 24.**

### **May Meeting Notes** Wendy Holtzman

We have enjoyed yet another year of orchid adventures and our May meeting on the 18th will mark the end of the growing year for the IOS. We will not have an orchid workshop at this meeting but this is the time of the year for us to have some fun and learn from and about each other. I am asking **all** our members to bring in something significant to them having an orchid related theme. It can be the first orchid you owned, your favorite fertilizer, favorite orchid sweatshirt, whatever is significant to you. I would like some members who feel comfortable to stand up and briefly talk about what they brought and why. If you do bring something and talk to the group about it, you will be eligible to enter into a drawing for a couple of nice and some not-so-nice door prizes.

Our orchid speaker this month is Hadley Cash from Marriott Orchids. He is a well-respected orchid grower and speaker and the owner of Marriott Orchids. He will be talking to us on the trends and history of hybridizing *Paphiopedilums*. He personally specializes in growing and hybridizing complex *Paphiopedilums* in the pink and white color tones. If you have not been to his web site yet, I highly recommend that you do so before our meeting. It is one of the best designed orchid web sites I have seen. The web address is [Marriottorchids.com](http://Marriottorchids.com). If you would like to preorder plants from Marriott Orchids, just e-mail [marriottorchids@triad.rr.com](mailto:marriottorchids@triad.rr.com) or call them at 336-643-0085.

Now a quick note on our up coming orchid meetings - Oakton Community College will not be available for our meetings in June and July. The fate of the June meeting will be decided at the May Board meeting so watch your e-mail and check the June newsletter for information on that meeting. For our July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting we will be gathering at Natt's Orchids and more details on this exciting outing will be in the June newsletter.

### **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Please extend a warm welcome to the following members who have recently joined the IOS:

Nikki Turan ~ Chicago  
Trish Rice & Greg Masterson ~ Bloomingdale  
Sylvia Burns ~ Hoffman Estates  
Candi Boutwell ~ Northbrook \*  
Maria del Carmen Concha ~ Mt. Prospect\*  
Linda Juberg ~ Streamwood\*  
Joanna Slodowy ~ Evanston\*  
Norman Wolff ~ Chicago\*  
Mary Mounce ~ Chicago\*  
Drew & Jan Frosthalm ~ Deer Park\*  
Rob Hedrick ~ Chicago\*  
Priscilla McCarty Reed ~ Palatine\*  
Daniel Daszek ~ Bartlett\*  
Valerie Miller ~ Kenosha, WI\*  
Heidi Mayer ~ Wilmette\*  
Catherine Zwergel ~ Evanston\*  
Pamela Manta ~ Grayslake\*  
Steven & Catherine Long ~ Hoffman Estates\*  
Andrew Travis ~ Morton Grove\*

I would encourage our "old" members to introduce themselves, wear those IOS name badges, and personally welcome these newcomers to our Society.

Allen Morr

Membership Chair



## NOTES TO MEMBERS

- Be sure to wear your member badge to all IOS meetings. We have a lot of new members, and the badges help people feel more at ease and welcome.
- We continue to have problems with members' address, phone, and e-mail information. Take a second NOW to make sure all of your vital information is correct and up-to-date.
- Our printing and mailing costs continue to rise. Why not try an electronic Newsletter? You get the wonderful color enhancements and photos, you get your Newsletter early, you save the IOS some printing and postage costs, and you probably save a tree or two over a year's time. Contact the Newsletter at [garnerjl@attbi.com](mailto:garnerjl@attbi.com) to switch to e-News or just to give it a try for one month. You may really enjoy it.
- Periodically check out the IOS website at [www.iosoc.com](http://www.iosoc.com) for news, old newsletters, and great photos!



Courtesy of Francisco Miranda (Miranda Orchids)

### **Deadline for June Newsletter Submissions May 17th**

### **Photo ID Contest Winner**

Claire Papiewski is the winner of last month's orchid photo ID contest. Claire wins a copy of *Orchid Fever* by Eric Hansen. Congratulations, Claire! Look for more contests in future newsletters.

### **2003 IOS Meetings Oakton Community College**

May 18, 2003 – OCC  
June 8, 2003 – TBA (not at OCC)  
July 13, 2003 – Natt's Orchids  
August 10, 2003 – Oak Hill Gardens  
September 14, 2003 – OCC  
October 11-12, 2003 – Fall Mini-Show  
November 9, 2003 – OCC  
December 14, 2003 – Hausermann's Holiday Party

### **May Board Meeting**

The IOS Board will meet Tuesday, May 6, 2003 at the home of Allen Morr, 253 Summerfield Road, Northbrook at 7:30 p.m. Any IOS member may attend the meeting but please notify Allen at 847/501-2532 if you plan to attend. Board meetings are held bimonthly the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. at a board member's home. Contact Joe Dixler for more information.

### **Members in the News**

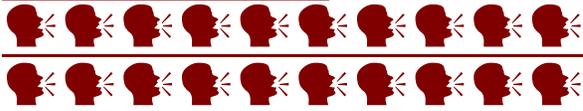
Ed Cramer and Barb Bennett have an article in the April 2003 issue of *Orchids*. The article titled "A New Indoor Garden" showcases Ed's orchid growing setup as an example of indoor gardening possibilities for persons with disabilities. Ed and Barb cover methods of growing and tools that can be used to accommodate special needs, among other things. Some of their suggestions are so unique that every grower should consider them to ease the labor required for growing orchids and other houseplants. Plus, the IOS gets a good plug in the article too. Congratulations to Ed and Barb!

### **AOS' Orchids Receives 2003 Garden Globe Awards**

The Garden Writers Association has awarded *Orchids* three Garden Globe Awards for 2003. The January 2003 issue won an award for Best Photography – Cover (John H. Lewis), Best Graphic Design – Cover and Magazine (James B. Watson). The January issue alone is worth the cost of AOS membership!

### **NEXT MEETING MAY 18<sup>TH</sup> AT OCC**

## IMPORTANT NOTICE



## IOS ELECTIONS IN MAY – BE THERE AND VOTE

According to the IOS By-Laws, in March 2003 Joe Dixler, current IOS President, appointed Allen Morr, Martin Taylor and Barry Lubin to the Nominating Committee to develop and present a slate of officers and board members for the May 2003 election by the IOS membership. Accordingly, the Committee has submitted the following names for consideration by the membership.

### 2003-2004 Officers

President	Joe Dixler
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President	Wendy Holtzman
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President	Lois Cinert
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice-President	Diana Nielsen
Secretary	Jim Spatzek
Asst. Secretary	Jerry Garner
Treasurer	Steve Lipson
Asst. Treasurer	Allen Morr
Past President	John Stubbings

### Directors

Joel Edwards	2004*
Allison Tribble	2004
Ed Gamson	2005
Barry Lubin	2005
Anne Kotowski	2006
Rich Unger	2006
Sandy Fuller	2007
Sue Golan	2007

(\*indicates year board position ends)

The above slate will be voted upon by the membership at the **May 18, 2003** meeting at Oakton Community College. Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor at that time. New officers and directors assume their positions July 1, 2003.

**Be certain to attend the May meeting to have your vote count in the governance of your IOS.**

## LOST AND FOUND

Several items were left behind at the Show in April. If you recognize or claim any of these items, please contact Anne Kotowski at [phrag207@aol.com](mailto:phrag207@aol.com) or 630-833-8042 in the evening.

*Bl.* Morning Glory x *C.* Horace 'Maxima'  
*Phal.* Petite Spots x *amabilis*  
Mead Notebook, blue cover, writing in orange  
Blue ribbons for Classes 54 and 112  
Red ribbons for Classes 5, 50, and 108  
Best of Class for 46-48, *Phalaenopsis* and *Vanda* Alliances



(Photo courtesy of Aloha Orchids)

## Question of the Month

**Do my orchids need to be fertilized when they are in flower?**

The simple answer: yes, if anything, flowering plants need extra fertilizer. Your plants need to be fertilized with a product appropriate to the medium in which they are grown. In general, plants in a bark based medium need a high nitrogen fertilizer (such as a 3-1-1 ratio) but a balanced fertilizer (1-1-1 ratio) will do for all other media. If in doubt, use the balanced fertilizer. Remember – more is not better when fertilizing orchids. The adage “feed weakly, weekly” is the best advice, so fertilize every week with a dilute solution.

(Adapted from the AOS website)

## IOS SPRING SHOW AND SALE A BIG SUCCESS

Moving away from the Botanic Garden was a big challenge for everyone. Would there be enough room? Would there be enough time to get the show together? Would anyone know we had moved and where to show up? Do people come to our show just because it's at the Botanic Garden? The last few questions were answered Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. when there were already 50 or more people lined up waiting to get in before the show opened! And the crowds just kept coming all weekend. Rumor has it we may have made money on the show, but we won't know for sure until after all the bills are paid and the receipts counted. Everyone said that I did a great job, but what I did was only a small reason for our success. Without everyone giving their time, it never would have worked.

Special mention goes to Pat Kralik for doing the Brochures and redoing the folders for the judging After the AOS changed the original classes. Thanks To Susan Crawford and Jerry Garner for getting the word out to the media and the membership. No Matter that the Chicago Tribune published the wrong dates for the show! A big "thank you" to everyone who put up posters and distributed bookmarks. A number of people said they learned about the show from those notices. Thanks to Joe Rosalie Dixler for their help with OCC and the catering; to Martin Taylor and his crew for handling the overabundance of plants for the IOS display, and to Lois Cinert for finding just the right place for all those plants on Saturday morning at 6:00 a.m. A big thanks to Wally and his crew. Because of them things at the IOS sales table ran so smoothly I spent hardly any time over there. Last but not least Thanks to Barry Lubin, Paul Passine, Joan Davis, and Anna (I'm sorry but I've forgotten your last name), the vacuuming demons who made it possible for me to leave OCC at 8:52 p.m. Sunday. There are still so many people to thank for making the show such a big success and it's all still such big blur to me that I can't remember everyone. So a special "thank you" at the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting there will be a special raffle for all the volunteers. If you signed up on one of the volunteers sheets, you are already in the drawing. If you put up posters, helped clean, unloaded plants, or helped in some other way and didn't sign up on one of the sheets, let me know and I'll make sure your name gets added to the drawing. THANKS EVERYONE!

Anne Kotowski, Home Show Chairperson

## A FEW SNAPSHOTS FROM THE SHOW



Additional photos in the June newsletter and on the IOS website [www.iosoc.com](http://www.iosoc.com)

## **An Ecological El Dorado**

BANOS, Ecuador -- High in the Andean mountains of Ecuador are cloud-covered mountains that no satellite has ever observed and no cartographer has ever mapped. Up there somewhere, the Incas are said to have hidden their treasure when the Spanish came calling half a millennium ago. Bounty hunters have so far failed to find the hoard. But now, Lou Jost, an American scientist and botanical adventurer, states that he has found the mountains' real ecological El Dorado -- its vast collection of orchids that are found nowhere else on Earth. And his discoveries are changing our understanding of how and why endemic plant species survive.

Jost, who gave up life as a quantum physicist to take up botany, has spent six years living in the Ecuadorian Andes, collecting dozens of new orchid species in the remote cloud forests and valleys. He operates alone, without the help of any academic body. His tiny greenhouse, housed on the roof of his apartment in the tourist town of Banos, harbors a collection of unique plants. Most of his collection comes from the watershed of the River Pastaza as it carves its way through the Andes and down into the Amazon rainforest. The valley has more endemic orchids than anywhere else on the planet. Why? The Pastaza valley is the deepest, straightest valley in the eastern Andes. Every afternoon, a hot, wet wind blows up the valley from the Amazon. It brings volumes of moisture that evaporate to form near-permanent clouds over the precipitous mountain ridges that flank the valley. "Each ridge has its own microclimate in the clouds," Jost said. And in these wet, sunless environments, dozens of species of tiny, delicate orchids have evolved, with flowers often so fragile they would collapse in minutes anywhere else. "Each orchid species seems to specialize in a particular combination of rain, mist, wind, and temperature."

Ecuador is a planetary hotspot for plants. Peter Jorgensen of the Missouri Botanical Gardens reported in the journal *Science* last November that current records show more than 4,000 species native to a country the size of Nevada, with four out of five species threatened with extinction. And the Pastaza valley is the heartland of that diversity. Jost has identified 90 endemic orchids around the valley during six years of study. "There is nowhere like it, and I see no sign that the discoveries will stop," he said. On one recent red-letter day, he found four new species of *Teagueia* orchids -- one purple, one black with antelope-like horns, one orange, and one striped tan and purple -- in a single patch of moss on Mount Mayordomo. That one find raised the number of known *Teagueia* species from

six to ten. And since that day, he has found another 16 *Teagueia* orchids on the mountain.

Meanwhile, he and other botanists have found 197 unique plant species in all in the Pastaza valley -- more than the 180 found on Ecuador's other biological treasure house, the Galapagos Islands. "The Galapagos is fully studied, but up here we have huge areas that have never been explored."

The rarest orchids are no shrinking violets in their own habitat. They are often the dominant plants on their own ridges. "High in the clouds, you can come across whole areas of forest smothered in a single species of orchid that probably exists nowhere else on Earth. It is an amazing experience."

Jost believes that his findings conflict with conventional thinking about the evolution of endemic plants. "The usual view is that endemism is caused by geographical isolation: The plants could grow elsewhere, but they cannot escape the confines of their single habitat. That's not true for these orchids. They have tiny dust-like seeds that can spread easily. But the colonizations fail because they literally cannot grow anywhere else."

This might be good news for the survival of biodiversity if, as expected, the planet warms in the coming decades. Many endangered plants may be better at seeking new territory than botanists previously thought. But the question remains: If they are so picky about climate, will they find anywhere suitable to go? Now a widely respected and published botanical Indiana Jones, Jost is never happier than when clambering through the bone-chillingly cold and damp Andean valleys, skirting ravines and scaling cliffs in near-zero visibility. "The only way to discover the botanical secrets up there," he said, "is to walk every ridge and valley."

Some parts are guarded by Shuar Indians, descendants of the Incas. But most are empty, except for the occasional mountain tapir and spectacled bear. "Especially on the south side of the valley," he said, "there are mountain ridges that no scientist has ever visited."

But whether braving bears or frostbite, Jost rejoices in following in the footsteps of his hero, 19th-century English botanist Richard Spruce, who trekked through the Pastaza valley in the 1850s after crossing the Amazon basin. "He did things and went to places that no botanist has done since. He discovered plants that nobody has seen since."

I met Jost in mid-December, just after he had returned from his latest expedition. His apartment was strewn with plant samples. And in his tiny, makeshift rooftop greenhouse in Banos, he was ready to show off tiny, perfectly formed orchid flowers from past expeditions,

many of which had opened their petals under his tender care.

"You have to know what you are looking for when you go orchid hunting," he said. "The flowers are only a few millimeters across and usually hide under the leaves. Often the plants are not in flower.

If I spot what I think is a new species, I can often only be sure when I bring it back here to wait for the flower to appear."

The survival of these plants away from the cloud forests is precarious. Jost keeps the greenhouse's air cool with an electric fan, which is dependent on the town's fitful power supply, and a passive air conditioner that draws in air over permanently wet tiles.

Can Jost's Andean orchid El Dorado survive? The Pastaza valley is ever more vulnerable to development. Tourists flock to Banos for adventure holidays on the river and treks in the mountains. A new asphalt road soon will pass down the valley. Commercial logging is still rare, but farmers are clearing the hillsides for pastures and to grow crops. The valley is a growth corridor between two national parks, the Sangay and Llanganates, to its north and south. "The irony is that there are probably more unique species in the valley than in the protected parks," Jost said.

Last December, following biological surveys by Fundacion Natura, a national environment group, the mayor of Banos declared the valley an ecological corridor with a new development strategy aimed at preserving habitat such as cloud forests. One aim, said Xavier Viteri of Fundacion Natura, is to encourage more ecological and scientific tourism. "Local business is getting wise to the idea that these kinds of tourists bring money and fill hotels – but to keep them, you have to keep nature as well." Jost agrees. After all, he went to Banos as a scientific tourist, and stayed to put the valley on the ecological map.

**This story ran on page C1 of the Boston Globe on 2/11/2003.**

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### [Editor's Notes](#)

Thanks to everyone who submitted news items and articles for this month's newsletter. As you may have noticed, I've tried expanding the newsletter, but I need your expert input to continue this way. Keep sending your advice, opinions, stories, photos, etc. and we can have one of the most interesting newsletters in the orchid business!

Do you have a favorite orchid website, other than [www.iosoc.com](http://www.iosoc.com), of course? Send me your favorites for publication in the newsletter so that other members can enjoy them too.

I have one "new" book to recommend this month. If you haven't seen it already, pick up a copy of *Orchids in Color* by Brian and Wilma Rittershausen, originally published in 1979 and last reprinted in 1992. The book is filled with excellent photographs of species and hybrids and the text is both informative and concise. To date, I have been unable to locate a copy to buy, so if anyone has one to sell or knows where I can purchase one, let me know.

### **SUMMERING ORCHIDS OUTDOORS**

*Lois Cinert*

Someday when the snow ends and the temperatures outside even out, it will be time to let your plants have their summer vacation outside. We have three to four months to let our housebound orchids enjoy the great outdoors. It's good for them to be in a natural environment. The quality of the natural light and rainfall are, of course, perfect. It's what Mother Nature intended for them.

Just like us, our orchids may have problems adapting to life outside after a winter cooped up under lights. The things that bother us bother them too. Plants will sunburn if exposed to direct sunlight without a hardening period. If you don't have a lath house, you can use shade cloth. If you don't want the expense of that, you can also use cheesecloth, starting with three or four layers, and removing them one at a time over the course of several weeks. Cattleyas, Cymbidiums, most Dendrobiums, Oncidiums, and Odontoglossums will like the most sun. Paphiopedilums and Phalaenopsis should stay in bright shade, or mostly shady locations under trees.

Rainwater is wonderful for cleaning and watering, and there's nothing like a little lightning to provide natural nitrogen. Don't rely entirely on rain to water your plants. Be sure to monitor carefully the moisture level in your pots; they will dry out more quickly outside. The additional air movement will help keep fungus and bacterial problems away.

Your plants will need more fertilizer outside than inside because they will grow a lot faster and stronger in the natural environment. Summer is also an opportunity to use some of

the more exotic plant foods that you don't want in your home, like manure tea or fish emulsion.

Crawling insects can be deterred by putting the legs of your staging equipment in pots of water. I use small plastic sweater boxes, concrete blocks, and open shelving. I add a drop or two of Malathion and Physan to the water to deter swimmers and algae. Flying critters and those dropping from the trees need to be taken care of with whatever warfare you choose to use. You can use stronger pesticides outside; just make sure you stop using them before you bring your plants back indoors. Also be certain that pesticides are not accessible to pets or children.

Night temperatures should be consistently in the upper 50's or lower 60's before you begin bringing the kids out. Some of the warmer-growing ones only come out during the really warm days of July & August, and have a shorter vacation. Most can stand the hottest days if they have enough water and shade. I found out the hard way last summer that Masdevallias and Miltonias don't like the heat. You need to know the natural temperature ranges of your orchids.

I'll have a few pictures of my outdoor setup at the May meeting. I have nothing fancy, just equipment you can find at your local hardware store.

I know it sounds like a lot of work carrying plants outside and then back inside in the fall, but the extra growth potential and the extra flowers that follow make it worth the effort.



(Photo courtesy of Jewell Orchids website)

## LABELS AND RECORDS FOR YOUR ORCHIDS

(Adapted from The Royal Botanic Garden Website)

Be very careful to maintain a label for each plant. If you divide a plant, copy the label for the second plant. *You*

may enjoy an unlabelled flowering plant, but for any serious orchid grower it has ceased to exist! And you yourself are not a serious grower if you tolerate absence of labels or sloppy labeling. Note that many plants sold in supermarkets or home stores just have labels like "Phalaenopsis". If I were you, I wouldn't touch them.

The rules are: Genus names are capitalized, e.g. *Cattleya*. Species names are in lower case, e.g. *Cattleya skinneri*. A named hybrid is capitalized, e.g. Paph. Rosy Dawn. A specific cultivar is capitalized and enclosed in single quotes, e.g. *Brassia Rex 'Sakata'*. Hybrid crosses are joined by a lower case x. Most growers record the month and year of re-potting on the back of the label, e.g. 5/02. Be sure to keep a careful record for each plant of such information as date of acquisition, dates of re-potting and type of medium used, dates of flowering, number of spikes, branches and flowers produced, rest periods, problems encountered and dealt with, and any other items of interest. Some growers keep an index card or loose-leaf page for each plant. A general diary noting which plants are in flower on a week-to-week basis can also be useful. You may use whatever method suits you best, but the main thing is always to keep good records. You will find them increasingly useful and important as time goes on.

## May/June Orchid Checklist

- **Cattleya** The last of the spring-flowering types — those that flower from a ripened hard pseudobulb — will be finishing, while the first summer-blooming types will be showing buds on their rapidly growing, soft pseudobulbs. Both may need potting, as signaled by deteriorating mix, this month. The spring bloomers present no problems, as you will be dealing with fully ripe, well-hardened pseudobulbs. They will be ready to root on the mature front pseudobulb and will establish quickly. The summer bloomers will be brittle and may be in bud. Nonetheless, experienced growers know that unless potted now, they may not root later, as this type tends to be seasonal in its rooting behavior. Stake the lead growth to avoid breakage. May can still present some changing light conditions that can lead to burning of the foliage if the plants have not been properly

acclimatized. Allow them to build up their tolerance to higher light gradually. Changing light and temperatures can also be the source of some frustration when trying to determine when plants need watering. While Cattleyas will be entering into a period of rapid growth starting this month, they have still not built up sufficient momentum to be significantly slowed by your missing a day or two of watering owing to dark weather. As always, it is safer to err on the dry side than on the wet. It is important, though, especially to the summer bloomers. Too much shade will cause rapidly developing inflorescences to droop unattractively.

- ***Paphiopedilum*** The *Paphiopedilum* Maudiae types will be well into their season now, so a careful eye should be used toward staking. Do not be too anxious to stake, however. Many of this type, if staked too soon, will develop nodding flowers that do not face the observer. It is better to allow the flowers to ripen naturally, then support the spike right below the ovary for best display. This is especially common in *Paphiopedilum fairrieianum*—derived hybrids. If you have to do something when you first see the emerging spikes, just put the stake in the pot next to the spiking growth. Not only will this help you, but you will be able to see where the spikes are, so you can continue to pay attention to their development. The multifloral types will be entering their most active growth phase, so lots of light, water and fertilizer are called for to mature their large growths. Many will be spiking in the next couple of months, so be on the lookout for the emerging inflorescences. These may benefit from earlier staking than most, as the inflorescences grow so quickly in some cases that they can be quite soft. Again, best support is right below the ovary of the first flower. This will allow the most natural presentation of the blooms.
- ***Phalaenopsis*** Except for the latest-spiking plants, all *Phalaenopsis* should be ready for potting or already potted. Because *Phalaenopsis* are tropical plants, they tend to be seasonal in their

rooting behavior. The critical point for potting is when new roots emerge from the base of the plant. This is absolutely the best time to repot a *Phalaenopsis*. The summer-flowering types, based on *Doritos* background, have ideally already been potted and are becoming freshly established, ready to support their soon-to-emerge spikes for the summer season. *Phalaenopsis* potted at the right point in their growth cycle will reestablish almost immediately, with fresh roots growing into the new medium nearly uninterrupted. As soon as the flush of new root growth is seen, begin regular watering and fertilizing to make maximum use of the major growing season. Do not get over-exuberant with your watering, though, allowing water to splash between plants. This can be a source of infection for both water-borne pathogens and viral contamination. *Phalaenopsis* are much more susceptible to virus than was previously thought. Take extra care to keep your collection free of bacterial and viral problems, which you can accomplish by maintaining a clean growing area.

*Prepared by Ned Nash*  
(Taken from the AOS website)



(*Encyclia fragrans* – photo courtesy of Rick's Tropica)

## What's My Orchid Called?

The feeling is shared by many who own an unidentified orchid in flower: You have a shelf full of orchid books, a stack of orchid journals, you've called your friends and described the plant, and you've even taken your flowering orchid to a local nursery or perhaps an orchid show. But you still don't know what it is.

Despite years of study and the publication of hundreds of papers on the identification of orchids, there are times when a name eludes even the most informed orchid grower. When you've exhausted the options at hand, one remains: It's the [Orchid Identification Center](#) at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens in Sarasota, Florida.

For a fee (currently \$12 per orchid), a professional taxonomist will identify your orchid species (not hybrids). On request, the Center provides complete guidelines that explain how to prepare specimens and current costs for this service.

For details, write:

*Orchid Identification Center  
Marie Selby Botanical Gardens  
811 South Palm Avenue  
Sarasota, Florida 34236*



(Photo courtesy of Aloha Orchids)

**IMPORTANT ELECTION INFORMATION INSIDE  
FOR ELECTION AT MEETING MAY 18<sup>TH</sup>  
BE SURE TO READ CAREFULLY PRIOR TO THE  
MEETING.**

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### ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Jerry Garner, Editor  
623 Sheridan Road #1  
Evanston, IL 60202

**June Newsletter Deadline: May 17th**

**IOS OFFICERS & BOARD ELECTION  
AT MAY MEMBERS' MEETING  
DETAILS INSIDE**

**NEXT MEETING MAY 18th  
@ OAKTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE**