



The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 45, Number 10
October 2002

Our Speaker for October: Steve Koike

Our speaker for October is Steve Koike, Plant Pathology Farm Advisor at the University of California Cooperative Extension in Salinas. He will be speaking to us on the subject "Diagnosis of Plant Problems: A Key to Growing Healthy Orchids." Steve grew up on an orchid farm, helping his parents with the family business, Terry Koike Orchids, in San Diego County, California.



While working with his parents, he was involved with propagation and produc-

tion of cut flower Cymbidium and Phalaenopsis orchids. He also set up the company tissue culture lab.

Steve continues to work with diseases of orchids in California and has also worked on consulting projects with the orchid industries in Hawaii and Florida. Steve has authored numerous articles for university educational materials, university newsletters, trade journals, local media and other published material.

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Christmas Party Coming December 8

Oh, it just seems like one party after another, doesn't it? And ain't it great?!

The Board of Directors would like to remind us that our annual Christmas party will be held on Sunday evening, December 8, 2002. Though the exact time and place are still being negotiated, hold the date open for this gala event.

Last year's Christmas party, for those of you who are new or didn't attend, was catered at the Monterey Beach Hotel at the

end of Canyon Del Rey. There was so much great food, we almost (!) didn't save room for the many delicious desserts. The plant table for the raffle was to die for. The raffle left many attendees with spectacular new plants for their collections.

Watch the *Backbulb* for the announcement of all the details. Plan to attend, this great party!

Potting Demonstration before October Meeting

Bill Hale will be repotting a Cattleya before the October meeting. For those of you who have not come to one of Bill's potting demonstrations (and even for those who have), they are truly worthwhile. Come between 6:30pm and 6:45pm to make sure you catch it.



Cattleya Culture

Cattleyas are among the most commonly grown orchids, and their culture is often used as the basis for comparison with other types of orchids.

The flowers in cattleyas and their related hybrids come in many colors. Culture varies only slightly among most of these groups; this cultural information is a general guide to "standard" cattleya culture.

Like most other cultivated orchids, cattleyas are epiphytes, or air-plants. Because they are epiphytic, they have developed water-storage organs, called pseudobulbs, and have large, fleshy roots covered with a spongy, water-retentive velamen. They are accustomed to being dry at the roots between waterings, and therefore should be potted in a very porous, free-draining medium.

LIGHT is one of the most important factors in growing and blooming cattleyas, whether in a greenhouse setting or in the home. Bright light to some sun must be given to the plants, but no direct sun in the middle of the day. This means at east, shaded- south (as with a sheer curtain) or west window in the home, and 30% to 50% of full sun in a greenhouse (3,000 to 5,000 foot- candles). Leaves should be a medium green color.

TEMPERATURES. Recommended temperatures are 55 to 60 degrees F at night and 70 to 85 degrees during the day.

Seedlings should have night temperatures 5 to 10 degrees higher. A 10 to 20 degrees differential between day and night is recommended, especially for mature plants.

Higher day temperatures can be tolerated (up to 95 degrees F), if humidity, air circulation and shading are increased.

WATER should be provided in two ways: in the pot by watering and in the air as humidity. Watering in the pot is dictated by many criteria - size and type of pot, temperature, light, etc. Mature cattleyas need to dry out thoroughly before being watered again. Seedlings need slightly more constant moisture. Compare the weight of a dry pot of the same size and type of medium; it can indicate if a plant needs water. A freshly sharpened pencil inserted in the potting medium can be an indicator of moisture. If in doubt, it's best to wait a day or two until watering. Plants in active growth need more water than plants that are resting. Water below 50 degrees F may injure plants, as will softened water.

HUMIDITY. Cattleyas need 50% to 80% relative humidity. This can be provided in the home by placing the plants on trays of gravel, partially filled with water so that the plants stand above the water. Misting the plants in the morning only is helpful in dry climates. Air should always be moving around the plants to prevent fungal or bacterial disease, especially if high humidity and/or cool temperatures exist. In the greenhouse the humidity can be increased by wetting the floor. Evaporative cooling increases humidity while cooling the air.

FERTILIZER must be given to cattleyas on a regular schedule. In fir bark, a high nitrogen (30-10-10) formulation, or a similar proportion, is used. High-phosphorus or bloom booster (10-30-20) formulation may be used occasionally (every 4 to 6 applications) to make sturdy growths and promote healthy blooming. When in active growth,

plants need fertilizer every two weeks, and when not growing, once a month. Fertilizer can also be applied with every watering at 1/4 recommended dilution. Thorough flushing with clear water every month is recommended to prevent buildup of fertilizer salts.

POTTING is necessary when 1) the rhizome of the plants protrudes over the edge of the pot, or 2) the potting medium starts to break down and drain poorly (usually after 2 to 3 years). It is best to repot 1) just before new roots sprout from the rhizome, 2) after flowering, or 3) in the spring time.

Mature cattleyas are usually potted in medium-grade potting material; seedlings in fine-grade. Until a plant has six mature pseudobulbs, it generally should be put into a larger pot and not divided. If dividing a plant, 3 to 5 bulbs per division are required. Select a pot that will allow for 2 to 3 years of growth before crowding the pot. Place a small cone of potting material in the bottom of the pot, cut off any rotten roots, and spread the firm, live roots over the cone. Fill the pot with medium, working it around the roots. Pack firmly; stake if necessary. Keep the plant humid, shaded and dry at the roots for a while to promote new root growth. A vitamin B1 solution may help re-establish plants quickly.



Culture Sheet courtesy of: Education Committee, American Orchid Society, 6000 S. Olive Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33405 (407) 585-8666.



Photograph courtesy of Sally Straus

Treasurer's Report - September, 2002



Checkbook Balance on August 1	\$4,882.29
August income	553.00
August expense	(888.38)
Checkbook Balance on August 31	\$4,546.91

CD balance on July 15 was \$7,372.64

A Reminder ... If you are enrolling as a new member, or are simply renewing your membership, please make sure that we have your **current** address and telephone number (and email, if you have one). We want to make sure you get your *Backbulb* regularly! Use the form below to make any changes, please.



Carmel Orchid Society, Inc.

Affiliated with the American Orchid Society

Monthly meetings at 7:30 PM on the first Monday of each month (Except September and December) at the First Presbyterian Church of Monterey, 501 EI Dorado, Monterey. Membership \$ 10.00 for a single or \$ 15.00 for two at the same address. Make check payable to the Carmel Orchid Society and mail to:

Carmel Orchid Society-Membership
P.O.Box 2454
Monterey, CA 93942

Application for Membership — Please print

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____ Member of the
American Orchid Society?

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Yes No

Email address _____



Upcoming Events

October Monthly meeting

Monday, October 7, 2002 at 7:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church
501 El Dorado Street
Monterey

October speaker: Steve Koike, plant pathologist for UC Davis in Salinas. Steve will speak on problem diagnosis and solutions including bacteria and virus problems. He comes highly recommended, an enthusiastic speaker.

Potting demonstration: Bill Hale will be demonstrating the repotting of a Cattleya starting between 6:30 and 6:45.

October Board of Directors' meeting

October 21, 2002 at 7:30 PM
Carol and Bill Easton's home
...
Carmel

November Monthly meeting

Monday, November 4, 2002 at 7:30 PM
First Presbyterian Church
501 El Dorado Street
Monterey

Carmel Orchid Society Annual Christmas Party

December 8, 2002
Time and location to be announced.

The dilemma: Which of Blossoming Orchids plants to take home with us?



Photographs courtesy of Sally Straus

Images from the Greenhouse Tour

Booty from Maplethorpe's Orchids, Capitola



COS Members touring some of McClelland's vast greenhouses



"How to care for two million orchids."



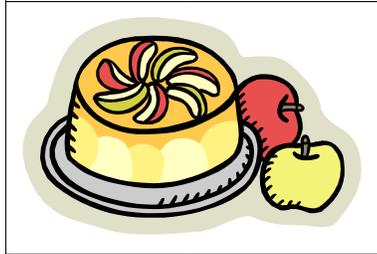


Thanks to our Valiant Barbeque'ers!

What a fantastic job our intrepid and incredibly hard-working chefs, **Bill Hale** and his son **John Hale** did for us at the Greenhouse Tour September 15. Not only did they spend much of the morning barbequing the beef tri-tips and chicken to perfection, they prepared excellent and plentiful vegetarian dishes, too, including both meat and veggie chili. Desserts were scrumptious, we all were stuffed. Beyond that, everything there had to be loaded onto the van and unloaded in Aromas, a *lot* of work. Bravo, and thank you both!

October refreshments:

Lupe Rubia
Tim Gordon
Ann Heim
Sandra Ruth Kalmbach
Ellie Mamon



Random Notes From Your Editor

Well, the 2002 Annual Carmel Orchid Society Greenhouse tour is behind us, and it certainly didn't disappoint, based on the number of plants that we collected from the three growers we visited.

Our first stop was at Maplethorpe's Orchids in Capitola. The facility is medium-sized, but the beauty of the plants there was anything but medium. Speaking for myself, it is the beauty, elegance and longevity of these plants that got me fascinated with them in the first place, and continues to make me a slave to my little (but ever-growing) collection. Maplethorpe's also sells potting and other materials, which many purchased.

We then continued to McClelland's Botanicals in Aromas, a large commercial grower who gave us a tour of their greenhouses where they grow two million orchids at a time. They weren't set up to sell, but the tour was impressive and informative. We saw several people madly scribbling notes about the care of phaleanopsis, oncidiums and dendrobiums, many beautiful examples of which were there.

Our last stop was Blossoming Orchids just down the road. Not only did we pick up lots of beautiful plants, but after the tour of the greenhouses, we sat down for a bountiful barbeque, lovingly prepared by our master chefs Bill Hale and his son John, both of whom did a huge job not only cooking but transporting it all, and catering to many diverse tastes. A full plant table was raffled before dessert, and many people got beautiful plants from McClelland's selection.

The enormous organizational job was done to perfection by Ida Hale, and we owe her a tremendous vote of thanks!

Condolences

The membership and the Board of Directors of the Carmel Orchid Society offer their deepest condolences to member Evelyn Russo, whose husband, Neno, passed away last month. Neno was also a member of the Society.



Photograph courtesy of Sally Straus



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