



# The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 45, Number 11  
November 2002

## Our November Speaker:

### Scott Dallas of White Oak Orchids

Our featured November speaker will be Scott Dallas of White Oak Orchids. The title of Scott's talk will be "A Tour Through the World of the Weird and Wonderful"

Scott Dallas has loved and grown orchids for 25 years. He fell into the early stages of the orchid collecting bug with species cattleyas.

Soon thereafter miltonia and paphiopedalums were added to the "must" list. One species led to another great hybrid and soon Scott found himself in the business of growing orchids professionally.

Currently, White Oak Orchids, Inc. has 25,000 square feet of growing space devoted exclusively to orchids. Scott and his partner, Gwen Watson, successfully cultivate some 300 genera with countless species and hybrids.



*Zygopetalum Louisendorf*

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## Viruses: A Reminder from Jim Nybakken

Study after study has shown that it is impossible to keep orchids virus-free in "captivity." This implies that, if you have orchids in your home or greenhouse, it *will* have some viruses present.

This is not a disaster, *but* it is imperative to remember when repotting and/or trimming roots, you *must* sterilize your tools

in between using them on different plants to give yourself the maximum protection against spreading viruses across your collection. Unsterilized tools are the most effective way, and the quickest way to spread dangerous viruses from plant to plant.

**Hints from Bill Hale:** From the October pre-meeting potting demonstration: Never repot a cattleya until its roots show, or you run the serious risk of killing the plant.

Don't repot your cymbidiums now. Wait until next year, preferably May.

When you repot a cymbidium, letting it sit and dry overnight will help to avoid bulb rot.

**Potting Demonstration:** There will be a potting demonstration before the November monthly meeting, about 6:45 PM. Bill Hale will repot a zygopetalum.



## Zygopetalum Culture

Zygopetalum have been successfully grown for more than 100 years.

This popularity has been based on their spectacular flowers plus their ease of cultivation. It is the latter trait that makes them fine candidates for the beginning and advanced orchid grower alike. Few types of orchids are so easy to cultivate. These ornamentals grow best under conditions that are comfortable for both the grower and the plant. Avoiding extremes in temperatures, light and humidity will satisfy the plants. Remember that all aspects of culture are interrelated and must be considered as a group of requirements.

**Light** - Zygopetalum prefer fairly bright light, though not enough to cause high temperatures. These plants have been long grown out of doors in the Manly Warringah area, making them great companions for Cymbidiums. Observe your plant when determining the proper amount of light rather than merely checking a light meter. Usually a healthy plant that does not flower is receiving inadequate light. The leaves should be light green. If new growths are too green and soft and weak, increase the light. An indication of too much light is a yellow cast to the leaves. In the home, look for a fairly bright location near a north-facing window.

**Temperature and Humidity** - Zygopetalum are native to the mid-elevation mountain tracts in the Neotropics where moderate conditions are the norm. They prefer day temperatures of 75 to 80 F and nights around 50 to 55 F.

The plants will tolerate much higher temperatures for short periods without damage. Also, they will survive temperatures close to freezing for a short duration (like Cymbidiums), but certainly will not flourish when given this treatment indefinitely. High night temperatures as experienced in the tropics can interfere with flowering. Provide 50 percent relative humidity.

**Air Movement** - Allowing your growing environment to get stale and stagnant will induce disease. This is an important factor for Zygopetalum because they thrive in a fresh and breezy atmosphere. Remember that orchids in nature experience tremendous air circulation around them.

**Watering and Fertilizing** - The frequency of watering depends on the conditions under which you are growing your plants, and the stage of growth the plants are in. Zygopetalum never want to dry out, nor do they appreciate constantly wet medium. Generally, water the plants once every five to seven days during the growing season, and every seven to nine days during the shorter days of winter. Spring and summer months are the active growing period, and the time to apply a fairly high nitrogen fertilizer (30-10-10) at every other watering. During autumn or winter, either apply the same fertilizer at half strength, or switch to a bloom formula that is high in phosphorous (the second number in the three-number ratio on the label). Fertilizers are salts and may accumulate in the medium, therefore periodically water with plain water to leach them away.



**Potting** - It seems that every grower has a different mix. Fortunately, Zygopetalum adapt to almost any type of mix as long as cultural factors are regulated to compensate. Generally, the mix must be available and economical for it to be practical. We use Werner Diesel's Cymbidium mix or Miscellaneous mix. The most important thing about the mix is that it should be fresh, no older than two years, otherwise the plants may begin to lose their roots. Repot in the early spring following flowering.

**Pests and Diseases** - Zygopetalum are relatively pest free, although occasionally scale can be a problem. Use an appropriate insecticide at the recommended dosage

and read the label regarding follow-up applications. The only fairly common problem with Zygopetalum is black leaf ticking or spotting. This occurs usually in the winter when the temperatures are cooler and air may become stagnant. It is our experience that such spotting is cosmetic and not threatening to the growth habits of the plant.

There is no teacher better than nature itself, so we urge all orchid growers who have not tried the Zygopetalum Alliance to keep an eye out for sturdy plants, and take one home. When the exotic flowers emerge with those wonderful patterns and purple-blue colors, and fragrance, you will be glad you did.



### Annual Dues to Rise

Your Board of Directors has finally taken a look at the Carmel Orchid Society's annual dues, and decided to increase them for the first time in over 15 years. The rise will be modest, certainly in comparison with the other price increases around us and in our expenses over the same period. The Board is convinced that we are getting our money's worth for the dues charged, which, for instance, don't even cover the cost of printing and mailing your monthly *Backbulb*.

Starting in 2003, the annual single member's fee will be raised to \$15/year, and the fee for two people at the same address will be \$20/year.

Considering the value received, we believe that the COS is probably the best value around for the price.

### Treasurer's Report - September, 2002



Checkbook Balance on September 1	\$4,546.91
September income	350.00
September expense	(657.72)
Checkbook Balance on September 30	\$4,239.19

CD balance on September 15 was \$7,386.42

**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



### 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

### November Monthly meeting

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

**Bill Hale will be repotting a zygotetulum** before the meeting. If you enjoy his potting demonstrations, please arrive around 6:45pm.

### D&D Flowers Pre-Holiday Sale

Half Moon Bay  
Sunday, November 10, 2002  
from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM  
Lots of blooming plants for the Holiday decorations. Lots of seedlings, blooming size plants and backbulbs at prices that are below retail.

Directions to D&D Plants in Half Moon Bay:  
Take Hwy 280 or Hwy 101 north to Hwy 92 West. About 1/3 mile before Main Street, Half Moon Bay, you will see a woodpile yard, a house, a statuary and Spanish Village, a craft shopping complex. Turn left, taking the road between the woodpile yard and the house. Go over the bridge, and the first greenhouse on the right is D&D Flowers. Highland Tropicals is in the same area.

### November Board of Directors' Meeting

Monday, November 18, 2002 at 7:30 PM  
Ken and Sharon Ashton's house  
26966 Laureles Grade Road  
Carmel Valley

### Carmel Orchid Society Annual Christmas Party

December 8, 2002, from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM  
At the Cabrillo Room, the Monterey Beach Resort, Canyon Del Rey and Route 1, Sand City.  
Price: Currently being negotiated. Will include a sumptuous buffet, delicious desserts, plant table, and party.

A separate flier will be mailed when all details are set. Plan on attending!

## Membership Report

### New Members — Welcome!

**Huckle, Cristine**, 141 Carmel Riviera Dr., Carmel, CA 93923-9736. 622 9187

**Potter, Pattee**, 230 Dundee Dr., Monterey, CA 93940. 372 8587 patteep2000@yahoo.com

**Kirnon, Judith M.**, P.O. Box 1744, Seaside, CA93955. 643 7954

**Larson, Emily**, 163 Britton Ave., Atherton, CA 94207. (650) 327 6777 emagnolia@aol.com

**Sacay, Dolores**, 1710 Los Coches Circle, Salinas, CA 93906. 449 2097 asdrsac@aol.com

**Wire, Dale**, 1111 Del Monte Blvd., Pacific Grove, CA 93950. 655-4851 dpwire@earthlink.net

### Renewing Members — Thanks!

**Landee, Pat and Judd Grubbs**, 1037 Rodeo Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953. 655 4851  
patlandee@groundspace.com

**McElroy, Dennis**, P. O. Box 31, Monterey, CA 93942. 372 1250

**Okamura, Joseph I. and Hisako**, 595 Pine St., Monterey, CA 93940. 372 0204

**Segelbacher, Diane**, P. O. Box 2885, Carmel, CA 93921. 624 6730

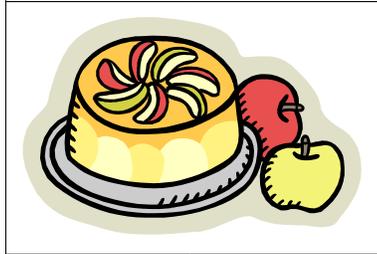


Photograph courtesy Sally Straus



## Thanks to our October Goodies Volunteers!

Once again, we would like to give a special “Thank You” and our compliments to the suppliers of the delicious table of treats that greeted us at our October monthly meeting. Our October goodies were provided by **Lupe Rubia, Tim Gordon, Ann Heim, Sandra Ruth Kalmbach** and **Ellie Mamon**. Ellie Mamon did her usual fantastic job of preparing and serving the spread. Thank you one and all!



### November refreshments:

**Cely Cruz**  
**Emelta Harvey**  
**Elizabeth Coelho**  
**Carol Easton**  
**Ophie Antonio**



Carol Easton sends us this photograph of her beautiful Cattleya Porcia, a hybrid of Cattleya Bowringiana. For more information, see the article in the Sept. AOS Orchids, page 822. It is unusual because it has a bulbous swelling at the base of the pseudobulb. Thanks for sharing, Carol!

## Random Notes From Your Editor

Your editor was completely delighted to attend the Society’s October monthly meeting, and not just for the goodies (which were terrific) either. Steve Koike of the UC Cooperative Extension Service in Salinas spoke knowledgeably and engagingly about plant diseases, gave out tremendously helpful handouts, and delivered a wonderful slide show that helped all who attended. In addition, he is a very personable young man, who grew up in a commercial orchid-growing family.

One of the more interesting items that we found out was that the Extension Service is an agricultural service provided to all residents of the county *for free!* That means that you or I could go down to Abbott Street in Salinas, and Steve could help us with any problem that we were having with plant diseases, just like he helps the grape and lettuce growers daily.

Steve emphasized that, while he is delighted to help out with orchid growing problems, he can only be as helpful as the information that he is given. Therefore, to get any plant problem diagnosed and a possible solution given, you must bring the whole plant, preferably multiple exemplars of the problem you are having, plus all relevant information regarding the growing and surrounding environmental conditions of the plant. That means noting how often it is watered, what kind of light it gets, is the next door neighbor spraying Roundup™, etc. The more information you can bring him, the more helpful he can be.

The UC Cooperative Extension is located at 1432 Abbott Street, Salinas, CA, and Steve invites you to take advantage of this service, which, after all, you pay for whether you use it or not.

Thanks, Steve, for a delightful and helpful presentation!



Photograph courtesy Sally Straus



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