



The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 46, Number 10
October 2003

Our October Speaker: Dr. Gerardus B. Staal

Gerardus is a Dutch native with a degree in tropical agronomy and a doctorate in entomology. He worked as a research entomologist for Bay area companies developing novel selective pesticides based on the insect hormonal systems, as well as more traditional ones. ENSTAR and MAVRIK were developed for greenhouse use and a variety of other compounds for household insect control. He retired from entomology in 1990.

His orchid interest started around 1975 and developed into a hybridizing and propagating effort that continues today. Flasks are commercially available under the Peninsula Hybrids label. The emphasis is on cool growing orchids from the tropical regions.

Many novel hybrids have been registered in the Odontoglossum, Cattleya and Pleurothallid alliances. More recently, a cross section of *Bulbophyllum* and cooler growing *Dendrobium* species was assembled, of which many hybrids and species propagations are now in the flasking stage.

The hybridization efforts have

been acknowledged by many AOS awards, of which three (joint) Awards of Quality for *Masdevallia* hybrids and several Awards of Distinction for novel directions in hybridizing stand out. In addition, a good many Certificates of Botanical recognition for species new to the judging system have been obtained. One new trigeneric hybrid genus was named *Staalara*. (The hybrid was *Staalara Gerardus*, AD/AOS.)



Bulbophyllum macranthum

Gerardus has served in various capacities on the boards of three local orchid societies (MOS, POS, OSC), a term as president of the Pleurothallid Alliance and has been a member of the AOS Research Committee. He still frequently lectures in orchid societies on topics such as pleurothallid

hybridizing, Pest and Disease Control in Orchids, Epidendrums and their allies, and *Bulbophyllums*.

He participated in several collecting trips to Ecuador. One species of *Masdevallia* from that country, *Masdevallia staaliana* was named in his honor.

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Photograph courtesy Howard Straus



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.



Cattleya hybrid



Photographs courtesy Howard Straus

Treasurer's Report, August, 2003

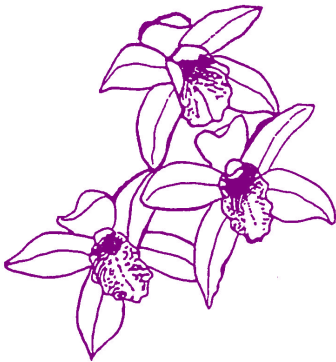


Checkbook Balance on August 1	\$6,434.84
August income	319.00
August expenses	(1,971.29)
Checkbook Balance on August 31	\$4,782.55
CD balance on August 15 was	\$7,508.58

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, I nc.

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 **\$ 15.00** for a single or **\$ 20.00** for two at the same address, **\$ 25.00** Vendor membership. Please make checks 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 _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email address _____

Member of the
American Orchid Society?
Yes No

New Member Renewal



Upcoming Events

Carmel Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Monday, October 6, 2003, at 7:30pm

The First Presbyterian Church

510 El Dorado Street

Monterey, CA 93940

Speaker: Dr. Gerardus B. Staal. (see bio on page 1)

Monterey Bay Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, October 14, 2003, at 6:30pm (second Tuesday of every month)

At the Community Bank, Community Room, 6th Floor, 301 Main Street, Salinas, CA. Entrance on Alisal. For more information, call (408) 375 6871.

Carmel Orchid Society October Board of Directors' Meeting

Monday, October 20, 2003 at 7:30pm

At Bill and Carol Easton's home

27525 Loma Del Rey, Carmel, CA

Directions to the Eastons: The first left after Chateau Julian Winery if you are coming from Highway 1, or the next right after passing Grigg's Nursery if headed towards Highway 1. After turning on to Loma Del Rey, we are the first road on the right, first house on the right. It is easier to come in to the second driveway. The address is posted on the side of the garage.



Swan Orchid, courtesy Carol Easton

Proposed COS Bylaw Changes

All of you have a copy of the current bylaws in your roster and if you cannot find your roster there is also a copy on the Carmel Orchid Society Website ([carmelorchidsociety.org/cos bylaws.html](http://carmelorchidsociety.org/cos%20bylaws.html)). We are currently operating out of compliance with the bylaws in several areas and several other areas are in need of updating. Hence we need to change the bylaws to bring us into conformity. The Board is presenting the following suggested changes. These will be voted on at the November, 2003 general meeting.

Article II. Membership

Section 3. Joint Membership is available to two or more members of the same family. We are suggesting changing the word family to household.

Section 7. Termination of Membership. The third line here contains the phrase "—on the vote of eight seven directors of the board". We need to changes this to "on the vote of seven of eight directors of the board."

Article III. Dues

Section 1. Annual dues of the Society shall be for the calendar year. They are payable on the first of January and become delinquent on the first of April. We are suggesting that the dues become delinquent after the date of the May Faire or the first weekend of May.

Section 3. We suggest that this section be eliminated

Article IV. Directors and Officers

Section 1. The business of the Society shall be transacted by the Board of Directors composed of the president, 3 vice-presidents, recording secretary, treasurer, 4 directors, AOS representative and the annual orchid faire coordinator. We are suggesting that we change the wording such that there is one vice president. The rest remains the same.

Section 6. Duties of the officers

In this long section we are suggesting that the whole section be replaced by the following:

Duties of the officers shall be as follows: The President is responsible for conducting the general business of the society; the vice president is responsible for the regular monthly programs of the Society and shall preside in the absence of the President and succeed in that office if it becomes vacant; the recording secretary is responsible for keeping the minutes of the Board meetings; the treasurer is responsible for keeping the financial records of the Society; the May Faire coordinator is responsible for the annual May Faire. All officers and directors may have other duties assigned by the Board of Directors.

Section 8. Disbursement of money

"A yearly audit of all receipts, deposits, disbursements and the Treasurer's books shall be made within sixty (60) days after the close of the fiscal year." As far as we can ascertain this has never been done and we are suggesting that this sentence be removed.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. Meetings of members

"Notice of these meetings shall be included in the Backbulb, the bulletin of the Society, and mailed to all members prior to each meeting." We are suggesting the following rewrite: Notice of these meetings shall be included in the Back-

Continued on page 5, Bylaws



July Goodies Volunteers

Ellie Mamon, our wonderful goodies manager for meetings, tells me that our October Goodies Volunteers are:

Cely Cruz
Carolyn Lake
Gerda Chavez
Lou (Sougard?)
Diane Segelbach

As always, we thank the reliable and faithful volunteers who brought treats to our last meeting.



COS Annual Greenhouse Tour Visited Half Moon Bay, Pacifica

The Annual COS Greenhouse tour took place on September 21, a bright and warm Sunday, just perfect for a quick and uneventful drive up the coast from the K-Mart parking lot on Canyon Del Rey to Half Moon Bay. The bus was packed, with every seat full of orchid lovers. The organizers had done a splendid job of arranging both visits and transportation, so all we had to do was to sit back and enjoy the scenery.

The Pacific Ocean sparkled blue in the sunlight, and the relatively wild coast north of Santa Cruz was wearing its tawny late summer coat. Many of the coastal farm fields were filled with pumpkins being readied for harvest, colorful orange globes sprinkling the sere brown fields. Clusters of majestic Pampas grass dotted the dry hillsides above the coastal highway.

The two-hour trip went very quickly, helped along by breakfast pastries supplied by the Society, and by the good company in the bus.

We first visited D&D Orchids in Half Moon Bay, where many of our members took the opportunity to acquire beautiful and unusual plants from the Greenhouse. Piling back in the bus, we attempted to find a place to park at our intended beach picnic spot, but were frustrated by the crowds drawn to the beach by the spectacular and warm summer Sunday. So we continued on to our next greenhouse in Pacifica.

In fact, there were two greenhouses on adjacent plots, which made it very convenient for us. We ate at the first one, toured, acquired plants (and some beautiful and unusual ones there were), then walked down the hill to the next greenhouse, where we glugged ourselves on the beautiful plants there.

Finally, totally exhausted and laden to the gills with plants, we got back on the bus for home. Even then, it was not over, as there was a raffle on the bus that netted almost everyone on the bus an orchid. (Your editor got one of his favorites, an onc. Sherry Baby with a three-foot spike!)

All in all, this is one of the more enjoyable floral events of the COS year! Thanks to our organizers, Carol Easton, Joanie Linares and Tom Bremser, for their hard work, and to Ken Ashton for his able hand as both sommelier and raffle caller on the way home.

Pictures next issue.



Photographs courtesy Howard Straus

Bylaws, continued from page 4

bulb, the bulletin of the Society, as well as posted on the Carmel Orchid Society web site and may either be mailed to members or downloaded from the web site by the members.

Article VI. Elections

Section 3. Counting of ballots

“Ballots shall be kept by the Secretary for 30 days after the election and shall be available for examination by any member.” Since the preceding section says that the voting may be by written ballot or by oral vote if the voting is by oral vote, which is usual, there are no ballots to be kept. We therefore suggest that the above sentence be eliminated.



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Carmel Orchid Society

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