



The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 47, Number 1
January 2004

Our January Speaker:

Charles Lee of Blossoming Orchids

Our January speaker will be Charles Lee of Blossoming Orchids in Aromas. For those few of you not familiar with the area, Blossoming Orchids is across Rte. 101 from the Red Barn, just down the road that goes off to Watsonville.

Charles is always a very popular speaker, not only for his skill and knowledge with our favorite flowers, but also because he is just such a *nice* person! We always look forward to having him here.

Charles started growing orchids as a 16-year-old boy in Taiwan, with his parents. In 1984, his family made the big move to the United States, ending up in Oregon, where, they continued

to grow orchids.

In 1988, Charles and his lovely wife Beatrice moved to Aromas, in a delightful little valley east of Watsonville, where they soon established their business, Blossoming Orchids. Charles has hosted

the Society for our Orchid Tours, and has provided the space for some lovely picnic memories.

Charles grows all kinds of orchids, with the exception of species. He has a wonderful collection of Cymbidiums, Ladyslippers, Phaleanopsis, and especially Oncidium Alliance and Cattleyas.

Let's give Charles a warm welcome!



Photographs courtesy Pat Landee

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Photograph courtesy Pat Landee



Cymbidium Culture

These orchids are prized for their sprays of large flowers, used especially as cut flowers or for corsages in the springtime.

There are two main types of cymbidiums - standards and miniatures. Where summers are warm (above 90 degrees F), only miniatures are recommended, because they are more heat-tolerant and bloom in warmer weather.

LIGHT is very important for growing cymbidiums. Coming from cool and bright areas in Asia, they need high light but cool temperatures. In many of our climates, the high level of light cymbidiums need is accompanied by high temperatures in the summer, which may cause the plants not to bloom. There are several ways to counteract this: spray the plants with water during summer afternoons to cool the plants down, shade more heavily and increase air movement. The maximum amount of light possible, short of burning, should be given to the plants. This means only light shade during the middle of the day, or about 20% shade. In cool areas (e.g., coastal California), full sun is tolerated. Leaves should be a medium to golden green in color, not dark green. Shade more in the winter, especially if in bud.

TEMPERATURE is the most critical factor in blooming cymbidiums of either type. During the summer, standard cymbidiums are usually grown outside in semi-shade, where day temperatures should be 75 to 85 degrees F (or more), but night temperatures in the late summer to fall (August to October) must be 50 to 60 degrees F to initiate flower spikes. Optimum temperatures in winter are 45 to 55 degrees F at night and 65 to 75 degrees F during the day. When in bud, temperatures must be as constant as possible, between 55 and 75 degrees F. Miniatures can stand temperatures 5 to 10 degrees higher than standards and still bloom well. Most cymbidiums can stand light frosts and survive, but it is not recommended. Bring them inside when temperatures dip to 40 degrees F; in mild climates they may be grown outside year-round. A bright and cool location inside is best for winter months.

WATER must be provided at all times to cymbidiums. As semi-terrestrials, they need a fairly constant supply of moisture. Since they produce all their vegetative growth during the spring and summer months, they need the most water then. Water heavily during the growth season, keeping the potting medium from drying out completely, and reduce water when the pseudobulbs are completed in late summer. Keep barely moist during the winter.

HUMIDITY outdoors is usually sufficient during the summer months, except in dry climates. There, evaporative cooling in a greenhouse, or misting outside, is necessary. Keep humidity at

40%-60% during the winter, especially if plants are in bud. Keep the air moving to prevent fungus (*Botrytis*) from spotting the flowers.

FERTILIZING at the proper time will help cymbidiums bloom. During the growth season (spring through late summer), high-nitrogen fertilizer (like 30-10-10) is used. In late summer, use a high-phosphorus, bloom-booster fertilizer (like 10-30-20), to help form bloom spikes. Fertilize at full strength every week to two weeks. In winter, fertilize once a month.

POTTING is usually done in the spring after blooming, usually every two years or when the potting medium decomposes. Shake all the old potting mix off the roots, dividing the plant if desired. Divisions of green bulbs with leaves must have 3 to 4 bulbs minimum to bloom; bulbs without leaves are considered backbulbs, and need special care to grow (see below). Pick a potting mix that will hold moisture well; a medium-grade fir bark with peat moss and perlite is a common mix.

Select a pot that will allow for at least 2 to 3 years of pseudobulb growth before crowding the pot, while planning on placing the active growing bulb(s) of the division farthest from the side of the pot. Spread the roots over a cone of the mix in the bottom of the pot, and fill the pot with medium, working it among the roots, tamping firmly. The junction of roots and pseudobulbs should be about 1/2" to 1" below the top of the mix. Keep shaded, drier at roots but humid, until new roots grow.

Backbulbs may be left on the division to add strength, or re-

moved to propagate. Take single backbulbs, and bury halfway in a bark or peat/sand mix. Keep shaded and warm until new growth sprouts, and pot as above. It may take up to three years to produce a blooming-size plant from this method.

Prepared by: Education Committee, American Orchid Society, 6000 S. Olive Ave., West Palm Beach, FL 33405 (407) 585-8666.





Photographs courtesy Pat Landee

Treasurer's Report, November, 2003



Checkbook Balance on November 1	\$4,089.20
November income	1,120.00
November expenses	(577.26)
Checkbook Balance on November 30	\$4,631.94
CD balance on November 15 was	\$7,536.06

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 El 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

Application for Membership — Please print

Name _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Member of the
American Orchid Society?
Yes No

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Email address _____ New Member Renewal



Upcoming Events

Carmel Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Monday, January 5, 2003, at 7:30pm

The First Presbyterian Church

510 El Dorado Street

Monterey, CA 93940

Speaker: Douglas B. Pulley. (see bio on page 1)

Bill Hale will be do a potting demonstration before the meeting, at 6:45pm. This month, he will be repotting phalaenopsis. Plan on attending this always educational demonstration.

Monterey Bay Orchid Society Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, December 9, 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

January Board of Directors' Meeting

Monday, January 19, 2004 at 7:30pm

At Carolyn and Jeff Salmon's home:

1520 David Avenue, Monterey. Tel: 375 3748

Santa Cruz Orchid Society Show and Sale

Saturday February 7, 2004, 10am-5pm

Sunday February 8, 2004, 10am-4pm

Soquel High School, Old San Jose Road, Soquel, CA. Admission is free.

For Further Information Contact: Sirleen Ghileri, Santa Cruz Orchid Society, PO Box 1272, Aptos, CA 95001.

email: sirleen@hotmail.com

San Francisco Orchid Society Pacific Orchid Exposition "The Art of Orchids"

February 20-22, 2004

Benefit Preview Gala, Feb. 19, 6:30pm—10:00pm

Fort Mason Festival Pavilion

San Francisco, CA

150,000 orchids on display

Santa Barbara International Orchid Show

March 19-21, 2004

Earl Warren Fairgrounds, Santa Barbara, CA

For more information: 1095 N. Patterson Ave., Santa Barbara, CA 93111.

Tel: (805) 967 6331

Images from the 2003 COS Christmas Party

Photographs courtesy Pat Landee

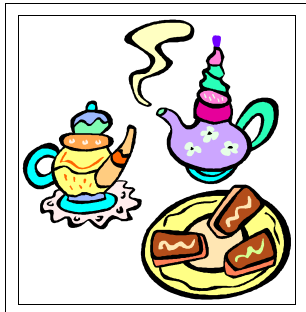




January Goodies Volunteers—Reminder

There will be no goodies for December, since the Annual COS Christmas Party will take the place of the regular meeting. Our faithful **Ellie Mamon**, however, tells me that our January Goodies Volunteers will be:

**Sylvia and Linda
Carol Easton
Tom Bremser
Diana Y. Paul
Emelita Harvey**



Thanks again to our generous November volunteers, **Elizabeth Coelho, Pat Landee, Frances Richardson, Geva Arcanin** and **Ellie Mamon** who brought treats to our last meeting.

Take a moment and sign up on Ellie's next signup sheet. The members all appreciate it! Thanks.

Raffle Ticket Notice

by Jim Nybakken, President

In light of the revelation about ticket tampering for the plant opportunity table that surfaced at the Christmas dinner the following changes will be implemented immediately. Once the tickets have been purchased those that are to be placed in the drum to be drawn for plants will be presented either to John Mockett or someone else so designated to be inspected for any kind of special treatment, mutilation or change that would permit identification by touch. Any suspected tickets will be immediately discarded and will not be placed in the drum for the drawing. Furthermore if by some chance an altered ticket does make it into the drum and is drawn it will be immediately be discarded and another one drawn.

COS Christmas Party Celebrated in Style

by Jim Nybakken

About 90 Carmel Orchid Society members, family and friends assembled on the evening of December 14 at the Monterey Beach Resort to kick off the Holiday season with our annual Christmas dinner party. We were greeted by a very generous plant opportunity table which was furnished by the Society. Most of the plants were in bloom thus making a colorful display and decorative background for the festive event. The initial cocktail hour was followed by a delicious buffet style dinner. Following the dinner the traditional plant raffle was held.

The Board and members of the Society would like to extend our deepest gratitude to Bill and Ida Hale for their tremendous work they did securing the venue, negotiating a very good price for the dinner and securing and transporting the plants for the raffle table.

Orchids from the Rose Garden Hotel, Thailand



*Pictures courtesy
Howard Straus*





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