



# The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 47, Number 2  
February 2004

February Speaker:

## Our Own Bill Hale

Our February speaker will be our very own plant doctor, Bill Hale. As part of his talk, Bill will give a potting demonstration on Cattleya orchids, which are his favorites. If there is still a member left who has not ooh'ed and ahh'ed over Bill's lush and colorful Cattleyas, they are a sight to behold. Following the potting demonstration, Bill will present a slide program.

Bill and Ida Hale have been growing orchids for 40 years. Bill actually got his first orchid from Ida. He read in the newspaper that a nursery in

Reedley California was going out of business. The couple had never seen an orchid so, intrigued, they went to see what one looked like. The facility they visited was a large greenhouse with hundreds of cattleya orchids which were not then in bloom.

Well you guessed it! Ida bought Bill an orchid plant, and a love affair was born. By this time, you know you just can't stop at just one of these addictive plants. Bill joined the Fresno Orchid Society, then with Ida, built a small 9' x 9' greenhouse in

Hanford, California. When they moved to Monterey the greenhouse came with them.

Bill joined the Carmel Orchid Society in 1968. He has been very active in the society, serving as President, Vice President, Librarian, Director and Plant Doctor and now holds the more or less honorary post of Past President. He skipped a year or two between some of

those duties, but has been an integral part of the Society for well over thirty years, now.

In November 1984, when the Hales had a chance to rent a 25' x 40' greenhouse in Carmel Valley, they needed to find a way to cover the extra expenses for the greenhouse and supplies, so they

teamed up with Jim Nybakken, our current President, and started a business now known as Bakkehelle Orchids.

As Bill frequently admonishes his audiences: If you want to grow and bloom your orchids, you've got to give them good water, bright light, warm, not hot temperatures, fertilizer and lots of love.

For those of us who know Bill, he is love itself. Come and hear Bill talk about his beautiful beloved Cattleyas!



Photograph courtesy Pat Landee

## In this month's Backbulb

February Speaker, our own Bill Hale	page 1
Cattleya Culture	page 2
Treasurer's Report	page 3
Membership application	page 3
Events Calendar	page 4
Important!	page 4
Help Jack Blakemore Get Rid of Pots	page 5
February Goodies List	page 5
Hepful Hints from Bill Hale	page 5
Charles Lee of Blossoming Orchids in Aromas	page 5
Board of Directors	page 6



Photograph courtesy Pat Landee



## 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 Pat Landee

## Treasurer's Report, December, 2003



Checkbook Balance on December 1	<b>\$4,631.94</b>
December income	2,374.00
December expenses	(3,772.45)
Checkbook Balance on December 31	<b>\$3,233.49</b>
CD balance on December 15 was	<b>\$7,545.04</b>

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  
Monterey, CA 93942

Application for Membership — Please print

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Member of the American Orchid Society?

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  No

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ New Member  Renewal



## Upcoming Events

### **Carmel Orchid Society Monthly Meeting Monday, February 2, 2003, at 7:30pm**

The First Presbyterian Church  
510 El Dorado Street  
Monterey, CA 93940

Speaker: Bill Hale will speak on Cattleyas. A potting demonstration will be part of the lecture. Bill is always a charming and informative speaker; plan on attending.

### **Monterey Bay Orchid Society Monthly Meeting**

**Tuesday, February 10, 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**

#### **February Board of Directors' Meeting Monday, February 16, 2004 at 7:30pm**

At **Ken and Sharon Ashton's** home:  
26966 Laureles Grade Road, Carmel Valley.  
Tel: (831) 659 7387

#### **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](mailto: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



*Photograph courtesy Pat Landee*

## Important!

We have had several complaints from Matsui Orchids that COS members are attempting to purchase orchids wholesale without resale licenses, representing themselves as being "from" the COS. The Society could lose our wholesale privileges if this continues, so we urgently request that our members cease this practice. If you wish to purchase plants, or for that matter, any other item from a wholesaler, you must be prepared to give them your own resale license number. That of the COS is not to be used except for official COS business. Thank you.



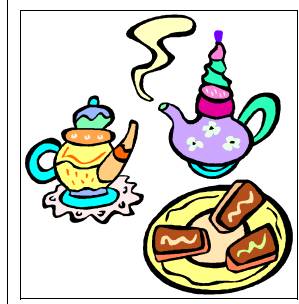
*Photograph courtesy Ida Hale*



## February Goodies Volunteers

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 the following people have volunteered to bring refreshments in February:

- Cely Cruz**
- Kathy Apodaca**
- Imogene Speiser**
- Ken Thomas**
- Kathy Scott**



Thanks again to our generous January providers, **Sylvia and Linda, Carol Easton, Tom Bremser and Diana Y. Paul** who brought treats to January's meeting. They were delicious!

If you haven't brought any treats in a while, please take a moment and sign up on Ellie's next sign-up sheet when it comes around. The members all appreciate it! Thanks.



Photograph courtesy Sally Straus

## Got Pots?

Every now and again, one or another of our members finds him/herself overstocked with orchid pots, and counts on the rest of us to help get them taken away. Such a time has arrived.

COS Member Jack Blakemore has told us that he has "too many" pots, and is willing to give them to whomever needs them. Please contact him at (831) 624 9003 for details.

## Charles Lee of Blossoming Orchids in Aromas

The Carmel Orchid Society would like to take this opportunity to thank Charles Lee of Blossoming Orchids in Aromas for his visit, chat and absolutely stunning plant table at our January Society meeting. Charles is a great friend, neighbor and delightful person, and we enjoyed his time here, as we always do.

Whenever Charles comes around, make it a point to get to the meeting. You will be sure not to be disappointed!

## Helpful Hints from Bill Hale

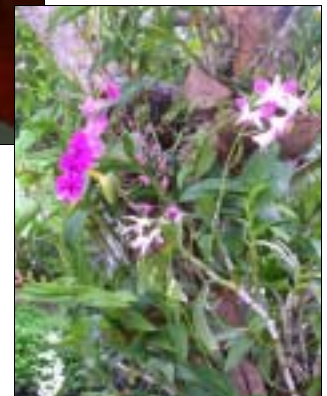
Oh, the pearls of orchid-growing wisdom that drop like rain whenever one "hangs around" Bill Hale. We probably learn more from an evening of standing *near* him than a year of orchid classes could teach us. Here's one:

The proper watering schedule for orchids has a lot to do with how fast the pots will dry out. A good rule of thumb to follow is: 1" pots, water daily. 2" pots, every other day. 3" pots, every third day, and so on up. Larger pots and coarser bark tend to hold onto moisture longer.

Now, this rule will have to be amended depending on humidity and potting material, but there's a good place to start, don't you think?



*More blooms from Thailand,  
Rose Garden Hotel.  
Photos courtesy Howard Straus*





The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 47, Number 2 February 2004

P. O. Box 2454  
Monterey, CA 93942  
www.carmelorchidsociety.org

(831) 646 8724



## Carmel Orchid Society

President	James Nybakken	659-4060	bnbakken@redshift.com
VP Program/Education	Susan Segal	375-5897	susansegal@attbi.com
Secretary	Kathy Apodaca	392-1558	
Treasurer	Shirley West	620-1001	spwest25@earthlink.net
<i>Backbulb</i> Editor	Howard Straus	625-3565	hdstraus@earthlink.net
May Faire Chairman	Ida Hale	646-8724	imaryhale@aol.com
Directors	Carolyn Salmon	375-3748	cargie@yahoo.com
	Danny Orwick	424-1886	
	Ken Ashton	659-7387	ashcas@email.msn.com
	Sharon Ashton	659 7387	ashcas@email.msn.com
	Carol Easton	625-1565	eastonce@aol.com
Hospitality	Ellie Mamon	883-8533	
AOS Representative	Carolyn Salmon	375-3748	cargie@yahoo.com
Hospice Cymbidiums	Peggy Purchase	624-8442	pegpaule@redshift.com
Ticket Sales	John Mockett	624-9596	
Past President	William G. Hale	646-8724	bakkehalleorchids@aol.com