



The Backbulb

The Carmel Orchid Society

Volume 45, Number 9
September 2002

Greenhouse Tour on Tap for September 15

It's the time of year again that brings us to our usually glorious September Greenhouse Tour.

This year we are going to start out by meeting at the K-Mart parking lot (Canyon del Rey at Rte. 1) at 8:30 AM on Sunday Sept. 15, 2002, where we will arrange carpooling for the tour.

The first greenhouse we will visit will be Maplethorpe Orchids at 3300 Maplethorpe Lane in Soquel. We plan to visit about an hour and 15 minutes. We ask that no one leave before that time. Maplethorpe's is the place you want to stock up on bark, pots, fertilizer, orchids and perlite.

Next, we'll head out to Rod McLellan Co. at 2352 San Juan Road in Aromas. We will hand out directions and map sheets to McLellan's before we leave Maplethorpe's.

Our last stop will be Blossoming Orchids just down the road, where we

will finish the tour with a barbeque. For this year's meal, we shall be offering chicken, beef and a vegetarian entrees. Our own Bill Hale, a professional chef for over 30 years on the Peninsula, has been polishing up his favorite recipes for all the entrees. Please make your selections on the

signup coupon. Our chefs have asked us for no early arrivals, please. The cost for the tour will be \$10.00 for members, \$15.00 for guests.

A maximum of 60 reservations will be accepted, so get your bid in early. Please use the form on

page 4. If you have any folding chairs, we would *really* appreciate your bringing them, as there will not be enough seating otherwise. We certainly don't want anyone having to eat their delicious barbeque sitting on the ground.

Reservations are due by September 5th.



Photograph courtesy Lori Lenz

In this month's Backbulb

Greenhouse Tour On Tap for September 15	page 1
Errata	page 1
Maxillaria Culture	page 2
Treasurer's Report	page 3
Membership application	page 3
Events Calendar	page 4
Greenhouse Tour Maps	page 4
Greenhouse Tour Signup	page 4
Random Notes from your Editor	page 5
Thanks to our "Goodies" volunteers	page 5
Membership Report	page 5
Board of Directors	page 6

Errata: In the August 2002 *Backbulb*, we announced that there would be a September monthly meeting of the Carmel Orchid Society. Unfortunately, your editor was unaware of the tradition of the September Greenhouse Tour *replacing* the September meeting. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused you.



Maxillaria Culture

Besides *Oncidium*, species and hybrids of the following genera are considered to be members of the Oncidium Alliance: *Aspasia*, *Brassia*, *Gomesa*, *Maxillaria*, *Miltonia*, *Ornithocephalus*, *Psychopsis*, *Pygmaorchis*, *Rodriguezia*, *Tolumnia*, and *Zygopetalum*. Extensive hybridizing among members of the Alliance has produced a number of man made genera.

LIGHT — Oncidium Alliance genera grow well in moderate (Cattleya) light intensity. Morning sun is best, until about noon. Observation of the leaf structure can be your best guide to the correct light conditions for which a type is particularly suited. The terete (ie; “rat-tail” orchids *Onc. ascedens*), or the heavy, fleshy “mule-ears” (*Onc. luridum*) will tolerate a lot more sun than the ribbony, grass like foliage (*Onc. flexuosum*). Lime green colored foliage is an indication of proper light. Dark green foliage, while very attractive, is not conducive to the plant reaching it's full blooming potential. Yellow colored foliage indicates too much light. The “mule-ears” Oncidiums will develop a purplish tint to their leaves in higher light, instead of the lime green coloring. The purplish tint indicates proper lighting for these types. Most members of this alliance can be successfully grown, and flowered, under lights. In very mild climates, most members of this alliance can be grown out of doors, with protection from the hot summer sun, and the colder nights of winter.

TEMPERATURE — The ideal annual temperature range for most members of the Oncidium Alliance are 75°-85°F. (24°-30° Celsius) during the day and 55°-60°F. (13°-16° Celsius) at night. Plants will tolerate temperatures to 45°F (10° Celsius) and up to 100°F (38° Celsius) for short periods. At higher temperatures, air circulation and humidity must be increased or damage can occur

WATER — Oncidium Alliance enjoy frequent watering, during their growing period, but will not tolerate wet feet for extended periods. However, when growth is completed, a two or three week rest period should follow to allow the growths to mature. Generally speaking, the growing season extends from March to October. The frequency of watering is relative to the container, the temperature, air circulation, and the amount of water retained in medium in the container. Watering should be done, so the roots are approaching dryness, before re watering. In the warmer periods, several waterings a week can be done, without worry, if the roots can dry quickly. The roots are sensitive to fertilizer salt build up, so clear water flushes are necessary for good growth.

FERTILIZER — Oncidium Alliance plants should be fed

consistently, when in full growth. During the Spring through early Fall, fertilizing every seven days, with several clear waterings in between, will make your Oncidium Alliance plants happy. In the late Fall through Winter, a light feeding once a month will suffice.

The fertilizer formula should match the potting medium. Use 20-10-20 with tree fern, charcoal, or various inorganic aggregates, but use 30-10-10 with fir bark. We recommend non-urea based fertilizers at half strength. Non urea fertilizers provide 100% immediately available nitrogen, which urea based fertilizers do not. We recommend Grow More fertilizers, which also have micro nutrients, to provide strength

for the new growth, as well as support for the flowers.

Whichever formula is selected, we recommend half strength at each application. As with most Orchids, Oncidium roots are sensitive to fertilizer salt build up. Oncidiums are particularly fond of organic fertilizers, such as fish emulsion and manure teas. The organic fertilizers eliminate concern of salt build up in the medium.

POTTING — Oncidium Alliance do not resent being disturbed, so repotting should be undertaken whenever necessary. The best time is after all flowering has ceased and new growth is just beginning. To minimize root damage, a warm water

soak for 10 minutes, will make most roots very pliable and easier to remove from the container.

While most oncidiums will do well in clay or plastic pots. Some large-growing types such as *altissimum*, *sphacelatum* are best grown in a wire or wooden basket. The baskets allow free air flow over the roots, and eliminate over watering problems. Others, such as the equitant (now *Tolumnia*) type species and hybrids, and the “rat-tail” *oncidiums*, may be successfully grown on cork bark or tree fern plaques. The equitant also grow well in small clay pot, with out any medium.

The potting medium must be well-drained, i.e. coarse fir bark, lava rock, pieces of broken pottery, chunks of tree fern, hardwood charcoal, etc. so that the roots can be wet, but then dry quickly.

When dividing Oncidium Alliance plants, always divide into parts with four pseudobulbs. Remove any dead roots from the divisions, then lay the divisions aside until new root growth begins. At that time, usually a week or so, repot the divisions in their new pots. Now the plants can be watered and fertilized as usual, without worrying about rotting them, because they retained no roots in the division. Newly repotted plants should be placed in slightly lower light for several weeks.



Orchids courtesy of Jim Nybakken
Photograph courtesy Carol Easton



Disappeared! Please Help!

We were embarrassed at our August meeting when our outstanding lecturer, Steve Gettel, told us that one of the plants from his *sales* table (plants he had brought for sale) had been picked up inadvertently by a member who thought it was on the *plant* table (raffle prizes).

This particular plant, a "dichea" is a very rare and expensive plant which had a price tag on it of \$55.00. The plant has the appearance of a braid, or plait, and had a large number of seed pods on it. Steve would very much like to have it back.

Now, we are aware that the announcement of the difference between the "plant" and "sales" table was made at the beginning of the meeting, and the person who took the plant most likely came in too late to hear the announcement. We apologize for the lack of clarity. Bill has a plant that he will be happy to replace for the dichea, but we do ask that the person who took the plant please bring it back and claim their replacement.

We thank you

**Treasurer's Report -
August, 2002**



Checkbook Balance on July 1	\$5,480.25
July income	138.04
July expense	(736.00)
Checkbook Balance on July 31	\$ 4,882.29

CD balance on July 15 was \$7,358.89

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?

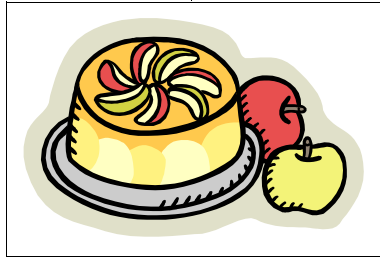
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Yes No

Email address _____



Thanks to our August "Goodies" Volunteers!

A grateful "Thank You" to our August Goodies Volunteers! Last month, our luscious snacks were supplied by **Patricia Wespiser, Lori Lenz, Howard Straus and Tom Bremser**. We thank them for the lovely treats they brought, and, as ever, our "rock-solid" Ellie Mamon for orchestrating everyone's efforts so consistently and beautifully.



October refreshments:

Lupe Rubia
Tim Gordon
Ann Heim
Sandra Ruth Kalmbach
Ellie Mamon

Random Notes From Your Editor

First of all, please accept our apologies for the error that we made in the last *Backbulb*, namely the announcement of a September monthly meeting, in ignorance of the fact that traditionally the September meeting has been replaced by the Greenhouse Tour. We sincerely hope that this error did not cause anyone any difficulty. I shall continue to strive to get my facts correct.

I would like to express my appreciation for the speaker at our last meeting, Steve Gettel of Sunset Orchids. His slides were breathtaking, and his knowledge of hybridizing and orchid growing were simply encyclopedic. He was definitely an inspiration to any aspiring orchid hobbyist.

And a good word for the ever-popular Greenhouse Tour. Last year was your editor's first in the Society, and his first tour. My wife and I agreed on a plant purchase total before the tour began, but the stunning, colorful, exotic and fragrant plants seduced us into purchasing far more than we intended. Hallelujah! These beautiful flowers continue to delight and amaze us. Do plan on joining the Tour this year. Get your reservations in early, as the total is limited to a total of 60 participants. We certainly intend to be there!

—Ed.

As of August 6, 2002: New Memberships — Welcome!

Elizabeth Coelho
2953 Sloat Road
Pebble Beach, CA 93953
ekc@redshift.

Ruth R. Andresen
1030 Kentfield Drive
Salinas, CA 93901

If you have renewed your membership to the COS, or have become a member, and are *not* getting your *Backbulb*, take a moment to ensure that we have your correct, current address, telephone and email.

Thanks!



Photograph courtesy Sally Straus



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Carmel Orchid Society

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