

The BackBulb

C A R M E L O R C H I D S O C I E T Y

February 2011



January Speaker: Ken Jacobson

Cymbidium Seedling Surprises

Ken was first introduced to orchids by his uncle in the 1960's and has been growing Cymbidiums himself for over 40 years. Over time, he has added the Odontoglossum alliance plants and several other genera. Since his wife Amy joined in his orchid addiction, they now also raise Cattleyas and Laelias, Lycastes, Encyclias, Vandas, and Masdevallias. Together they even have a few Disas! Their collection now numbers over 2500 Cymbidiums, and about another 2500 of the other genera.

Ken is a judge in the AOS judging program, and heads the CSA judging program. He has written many articles for the CSA Journal.

The February meeting is on **Monday February 7th, 7PM** at the Community Church of Monterey Peninsula. 4590 Carmel Valley Rd.



Above: John's first **Cymbidium**, **Cymbidium Miss Taipei Unveiled**.

Left: A generic, cascading "miniature" cymbidium greets visitors at her front door.



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Upcoming Events

February

2/5-6 Sonoma Orchid Society Spring Show and Sale, Santa Rosa CA

2/7 Monday COS Meeting, Speaker: Ken Jacobson

2/12 Saturday COS board meeting 1:30 John's house.

2/11-13 Malihini Orchid Society Show, Vallco Shopping Mall, Cupertino.

March

3/3-6 Pacific Orchid Exposition, San Francisco CA.

3/7 Monday COS Meeting, Speaker: Bruce Davidson

3/11-13 Santa Barbara International Orchid Show, Santa Barbara.

May

5/7-8 Carmel Valley Garden Show, This is it, it's show time!

Maxillaria pulla. When this flower first bloomed I thought that the water in the trays under my orchids had started to get stagnant. So I started cleaning the trays, half way into the job I realized that it was the flower that smelled like stagnant water. So despite Andy's intermediate temperature rating, it was exiled to the unheated greenhouse, where I expected it to perish. But jokes on me, it has thrived, growing and blooming like a weed!



COS On the Web

As many of you know The COS has a website: carmelorchidsociety.org take a look, all the BackBulbs from the past 6 years are there. Now it also has a [FaceBook page](#). So check out Joanie and the gang over at facebook.

Resolutions

I have never liked setting goals, it goes against my underachiever nature, but I occasionally get inspired. Since I started to run out of orchid growing space a couple of years ago I have been trying to keep my collection size under control. So last year I resolved to "Get rid of (almost) as many plants as I buy. Space is tight, give them away if I can't sell them ". I thought I was did a good job too, gave away a bunch of plants at meetings, sold some at the show, and I even came away with less plants then I brought at the otherwise disappointing September Orchid Flea Market. But when I went back to my records and counted the plants coming in and going out... 58 new plants last year! And 34 killed, given away or sold. That makes an increase of 24 plants (around 10%), not exactly what I had in mind. So once again that particular goal appears on my list. If anybody cares to look up my 2010 resolutions they are in the January 2010 BackBulb, and here are my goals for 2011:

- Once again try to keep the increase in the number of orchids under control (<10%, or 25 plants, a definite number this time). Cammie just laughs at this one.
- Set up a solar heating system for my greenhouse.
- Attend shows in Santa Cruz, San Francisco, and Santa Barbara. (Easy!)
- Find a way to get down to see Andy's Orchids (This will make #1 difficult).

All fired up with goal setting zeal, I asked the other members of the board what their goals this year are.

Joanie:

- Reduce collection by 50 or so plants by A. Sell or give away Duplicates; B. Toss Ailing plants that have not thrived for over a year.; C. Give away ALL backbulbs after dividing.



Ancistrochilus rothschildianu, a recent purchase of John's.

Phragmipedium besseae, John bought it at last years show, and it has been blooming ever since.



- Control impulse orchid spending. (Except at Andy's or Dan's since that is just not attainable).

Carolyn:

- I hope to fertilize my orchids more regularly.
- Throw away plants that just hate life.

Carol:

- I want to start to repot the hundreds of orchids that need to be repotted. If anyone wants to learn how to repot small, medium and large orchids, all kinds, call me, I will be happy to show you and you will come home with new orchids - I promise.

Well, maybe everyone else was out enjoying the fantastic January weather.

John



Carol with her prize **Cattleya Porcia**. This plant is huge, five feet tall in an 18 inch pot, and it's growing over the sides. This will be a major repotting project.

Orchid Talk

As I write this column today, the rain has come and gone. It looks like we are going to have our second dry spell. The slugs and snails will be out in force to go after all those young cymbidium spikes. I am trying not to use traditional slug baits and have looked for greener solutions. There is a good article at www.greenlivingtips.com. The next link will take you directly to the article. I also read in the Santa Cruz Society newsletter that one of their members uses cucumbers to attract them. He sets slices out at night and collects the slugs and snails in the morning. Hmm...

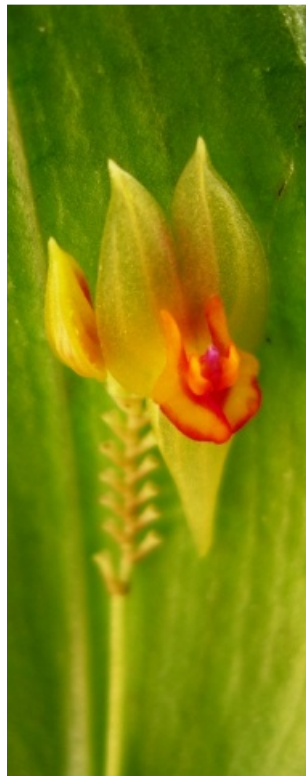
<http://www.greenlivingtips.com/articles/126/1/Controlling-snails-and-slugs.html>

I have taken advantage of the good weather to clean up individual plants, spray, water and fertilize them using a very dilute solution this time of year. I work extra hard on their hygiene, cleaning out oak leaves, removing older leaves. I look for matter that would hold water and cause bulbs to rot. With the masdevallias, it is very important to remove dried leaves and stems. You may notice the new growth and spikes that appear this time of year.

I actually have quite a few orchids blooming now. Several cattleyas, paphs, some pleurothallids and masdevallias. I have many masdes that

are intermediate that live in the greenhouse. Many hybridizers are trying to create more warmth tolerant hybrids that can be grown around the country and under lights.

The scale and mealy bugs are still hiding in the deep recesses of your orchids so keep a vigilant eye out for them. They love the warmth of your house. A pesticide called Safari, seems to be the new drug of choice for controlling these pests. The downside is that it costs 399.00 a gallon. Good time to form an alliance with friends and share a gallon. Word is you only have to use it three times a year for total control.



It is repotting season for draculas and probably masdevallias too. Do not repot orchids that are not in active growth such as cattleyas unless new roots are appearing. Miltonias should be repotted in the fall and May is a good month for cymbidiums. With our crazy weather patterns, there are no absolutes any longer. I just pay more attention to the weather. Normally I would tell you that winter dry rest for orchids like the nobile type dendrobiums would be over around Valentines

Day....but...I have noticed the past 2-3 years, our spring has been cooler and later. I feel

like there has been about a three week shift. I will probably delay upping my watering schedule until early March. By then the days are longer and the sun's

angle has noticeably changed.

If your orchids are indoors, they may need extra humidity if you have your heater on. The air can be much drier this time of year adding up to lower humidity levels. Use your mister or gravel trays with water in the bottom. Your blooms will last longer too. If you have phalenopsis orchids in your house, do not overwater them. If they are in moss, sometimes one watering a month is enough. The roots you see should be plump and white and bright

green when wet. You can mist the roots between waterings. In nature, they hang from trees without any mix at all. You can spray fertilizer on the leaves and roots since they have evolved to take up nutrients that way. The leaves should be firm, not flappy. If the spikes are still green when the blooms have finished cut them off at the first node. You may get a whole new branch to bloom in a couple months.

Carolyn Salmon



Masdevalia from the Santa Cruz show.

Membership Time!

It's that time again, time for your otherwise nice, friendly society board members to nag you about paying your membership dues. As much as we would like to have your money to pay for our fabulous monthly speakers, what we really want is for you to come hear the speakers, buy the raffle tickets and take home all the interesting plants on our monthly raffle tables. None of that will happen if you are not interested enough to pay the pittance we ask for or yearly dues. Most orchids that we will kill in less than a year cost more than a years membership! So all we ask is that you pay your dues, come to the meetings and have a wonderful time!

C A R M E L O R C H I D S O C I E T Y 2011 Membership Application

Please make checks payable to the **Carmel Orchid Society** and mail to: Carmel Orchid Society - Membership c/o Sharon Ashton 26966 Laureles Grade Road Carmel Valley, CA 93924

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Start Collecting Boxes

We will need lots of boxes and bags for the Plant Hotel at our Garden Show in May. If you do not need them for something else, please save your used grocery etc. bags and boxes and bring them to our February, March and April meetings. I'll collect them at the meetings and store them until May.

Kathie

Advertise in the BackBulb

If you have a business, or just want to advertise your yard sale, this may be the place. The COS is now accepting advertising in the BackBulb. Circulation is mainly to our members and visitors, around 100 copies per month. The rates are: \$5 quarter page, \$10 half page, and \$20 for a full page. If you are interested contact the BackBulb editor, John OConnell johnoconnell19@att.net.

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