

The BackBulb

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

September 2011



September Speaker: T.J. Hartung

Orchids of Mexico

T.J. Hartung will speak on “**Mexican Orchids - Orchids found ONLY in Mexico**” at our regular monthly meeting, Monday, September 5th and tell us about Mexican Vanilla Orchids at a cocktail party at Carol Easton’s home on Sunday, September 4th. After years of work in “Tech”, Mr. Hartung ventured from Oregon to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico to explore his passion for orchids. In 2006 he helped to found the Puerto Vallarta Orchid Society. He also is a major supporter of the Puerto Vallarta Botanical Gardens which



feature local orchids. The Botanical Gardens and particularly the Orchid Society are dedicated to rescuing and preserving the existing orchid species of Puerto Vallarta. There are about 240 indigenous species of orchids growing wild in the greater Puerto Vallarta area.

The next meeting is on **Monday September 5th, 7PM** at the Community Church of Monterey Peninsula. 4590 Carmel Valley Rd.



Left, TJ Hartung.

Right, a rescued orchid at the Vallarta Botanical Gardens.

1 August
Upcoming Events
September Meeting

4 Sponsors

8 Event Flyers

In order to provide a better selection of treats at our meetings, the board is asking members with last names that start with the letter **G thru L** to bring refreshments to our September 5th meeting. There is a raffle ticket in it for you, buy the way.

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Upcoming Events

September

9/4 Sunday. Cocktail party at Carol Easton's, See details below.

9/5 Monday COS September meeting. TJ Hartung talks about the Orchids of Mexico

9/17-19 Orchids in the Park. San Francisco.

9/26 Monday COS board meeting 6:30 at Ken's house.

October

10/8 Saturday COS BBQ, Carols house. .



Specimens in Dan Newman's greenhouse (photo's Jaclyn Kinney).



Special Offer, Vanilla Beans!

Carol is taking order for packages of Vanilla beans, about 3 beans per package, \$8 per package. TJ will bring them to us. Call Carol at 831-625-1565.

Party!

Carol will be having a **cocktail party** at her house on **Sunday September 4th, at 4PM**. TJ will make his famous guacamole, and give a short talk on Vanilla Beans and how to use them. RSVP Carol at 831-625-1565. Members are asked to bring a bottle of wine or an appetizer.

Greenhouse Visits

Summer is traditionally the “off” season for orchid show. It is a time for low key orchid fairs and greenhouse visits. Visiting a fair is nice, I made it to the one in San Jose this year, but greenhouse visits are better. Besides attending a big orchid show, like POE, visiting a good greenhouse is right at the top of my list of favorite orchid experiences. A visit to a good greenhouse gives you access to plants that you would never see at a



show or in a catalog, and a chance to see and hear how an expert grows their plants. Greenhouse visits are responsible for some of the most interesting plants in my collection and some of the very interesting ideas on orchid culture. If you missed our visit to White Oak Orchids and Hanging Gardens (Dan Newman's Greenhouse), I recommend that you make arrangements to visit next time you are in the Bay area, or make sure to make it next time the society does a greenhouse visit.

Just to give you an idea of what you may find on a greenhouse visit, most of the pictures in this issue are from several greenhouses that I visited this summer: Andy's Orchids, White Oak Orchids, and Hanging Gardens (Dan Newman).

John Picking out plants in Dan's greenhouse. Sometimes orderly, sometimes chaos, allways an adventure.



Andy's Orchid's – Sacrifices and Rewards

An orchid addiction requires sacrifices: time, space, money. My July visit to Andy's Orchids was no different: 1000 miles of driving, hotel bills, and then there was the bill for the orchids! There were less tangible sacrifices too: a few extra pounds (too much food, no exercise), regrets over orchids not brought home, and sights not seen while I was orchidizing (my wife tells me that the beach life was eye popping). But then the rewards were great too: a dozen cool, hard to find orchids and three hours of wandering through Andy's greenhouses seeing and hearing first-hand how he grows his plants. Andy's was worth the sacrifice because I have been buying plants from Andy since I started collecting over 10 years ago, and have always gotten interesting, unusual, and well grow plants from him, and Andy's is THE place to go for unusual species.



Andy's isles. 30% shade cloth on the left and crowded intermediate house on the right.

If you have not heard of Andy's orchids it is worth getting acquainted. Andy and Harry Phillips run perhaps the largest and best, species only orchid business in the USA. They are located about a mile from the ocean in Encinitas, just north of San Diego. Besides being a huge species only greenhouse (I will overlook the *Rossioglossum Rawdon Jester*, it arrived mislabeled), Andy is know for his mounted plants ("Orchids on a Stick") and his

iconoclastic ideas on orchid culture.

I have been buying and talking to Andy and his brother Harry at shows for quite a while and I knew the stats, somewhere from 5-7 thousand species, and half a million plants, I expected to be overwhelmed, but left more overwhelmed then I expected. You could go back several times and and see a completely different set of plants. The



"greenhouse" is really a set of 10-12 interconnected growing areas, only the warm and intermediate areas are enclosed, the rest is covered with only 30% shade cloth. The greenhouses are packed with plants, those needing close to full

sun are way up high, and shady growers are on or just over the benches, everything else is hanging somewhere in between. Some areas are rigged for automatic watering but most of the plants are hand watered. There must be a lot of hand weeding going on too. I saw very few weeds, just a few ferns growing here and there, Andy would grab one now and then and pull it out. All the greenhouses were very clean and neat. The lack of weeds extended to bugs, never saw one, I did catch an occasional whiff of insecticide, which explains the lack of insect life.

At the end of my visit we ended up in the office which, like the greenhouses, was packed, but instead of plants the office contained every issue of Orchids magazine from the 70's on and Orchid Digest from almost as far back. On the walls and much of the rest of the shelf space is the largest collection of show trophies (Andy's show exhibits are dazzling) I have seen. Tags are printed on a special printer, invoices are generated from the computerized plant inventory. I commented that I was impressed that he was able to keep track of all those plants, and Andy confided that they don't. He thought that only about half of the species are in the inventory. There are lots that are waiting to bloom so they can be identified, or have resisted Andy's best efforts to identify them. I bet there are a bunch of undescribed species in those greenhouses.

Andy has some "unconventional" ideas on orchid culture. First of all Andy believes in watering, not spritzing, or a quick spray, but drenching, sometimes multiple times, sometimes in the evening so the plants stay wet longer. Heresy you may say, watering at night causes rot and fungal diseases. Andy says that's how it works in nature, in the tropics it rains in the afternoon and the plants stay wet all night. The tags on Andy's plants have some cultural information on them, most of it seems fairly conventional, like: *Masdevallia coccinea* shade to bright 1500-2500 foot-candles. I saw him growing these on benches under 30% shade cloth, a lot brighter than 2500 fc. There were a lot of plants growing right up at the top of



Above. Another crowded isle, hope your not too tall!
Below. Interesting Bulbophyllum.



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

this “greenhouses” under just that 30% shade cloth, many with tags that said intermediate temperatures which obviously were going a lot under 50 degrees in the winter.

I went to Andy's expecting to be overwhelmed, and was overwhelmed beyond my expectations. I could go back several times and not see everything, there is simply too many plants to take it all in in one visit. And Andy knows ALL the plants from memory and has stories or advice about most of them. Andy's is a greenhouse visit all orchid lovers should try to make at least once.

John

Scenes from White Oak Orchids, clockwise from bellow.

Shopping White Oak's wide aisles.

Mounted orchids.

Dendrobium cuthbertsonii, very nice.

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Mounted plants in Dan's jungle.



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Single	\$20	\$25
Couple	\$30	\$35
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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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The Razzle Dazzle Orchid Raffle

a special raffle offered by the San Francisco Orchid Society , a 501(c)3 organization

Actually, 3 separate raffles, each featuring a fabulous, rare, and highly collectible orchid, and an assortment of orchid related supplies (e.g. books, pots, baskets, potting media). Each prize has a value of well over \$200. Tickets \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Only 300 tickets will be sold for each prize, and tickets only available at San Francisco Orchid Society meetings (Tuesday Aug 2, and Tuesday Sept 6, OR at Orchids in the Park (Sept 17-18, Hall of Flowers San Francisco) OR through the Razzle Dazzle Raffle committee representative (razzledazzle@orchidsanfrancisco.org). Drawing is Sept 18, noon at Orchids in the Park. Winner need not be present



Phragmipedium kovachii

Touted as the most exciting orchid discovery of the last 100 years, *Phragmipedium kovachii* has captured the fancy of orchid growers around the world. With brightly colored flowers that have a spread of up to 8 inches across, plants of this highly desirable species are valued at hundreds to thousands of dollars for a well grown clone. Culture: excellent water, evenly moist media, bright indirect sunlight, intermediate conditions. Donated by Gary Meyer.



Cymbidium elegans

An unusual *Cymbidium* species, this plant is so different from most cymbidiums that some find it hard to believe it is in the same genus. The densely, many flowered inflorescence carries a display of beautiful, funnel shaped, butter-cup yellow blooms. Rarely seen in collections, there are few sources of this species in the US. The original clone of this plant was imported from the Nursery International in Kalimpong India, in 2003. Culture: Intermediate-cool, bright indirect sunlight, and a somewhat cooler winter. Donated by Cindy Hill.



Dracula Raven

Clones of this hybrid of *Dracula vampira* x *Dracula roezlii* have only been shown three times at an orchid show, and garnered two Award of Merits, one First Class Certificate (AOS) and, additionally, a BEST IN SHOW (POE, 2011). The larger flowers of this plant are extremely dark (nearly black) and are in fact, probably the blackest orchids available. There are very very few plants of this highly desirable grex in collections. Culture: cool-intermediate, humid in well draining medium, bright indirect sunlight, and water of excellent quality. Donated by John Leathers and Bob Hamilton.

San Francisco Orchid Society
presents

Orchids in the Park

A Sale and Exhibition



Photo of *Polystachya perrieri*
Ron Parsons

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Everyone Welcome!

Saturday, September 24th

Auction Begins at 1:30 PM

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All plants being auctioned are POS member plants or donations

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Doors open for previewing at 12:00 PM

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