



The Orchid Collection

Genesee Region Orchid Society
Volume 29, Number 5
January, 2008

www.geneseearchid.org

Beginners Meeting 6:30 p.m. * Social "Hour" 7:00 - 7:15 p.m. * Meeting begins at 7:15 p.m.
Senior Adult Lounge at the Jewish Community Center, 1200 Edgewood Avenue, Rochester, NY

NEXT MEETING: JAN. 7, 2008



Bulbophyllum lobbii
Photo illustration ©2007 Phil Matt

It was inevitable: sooner or later, all of my half-hearted sniping at the local weather had to make its way back to me. Our big holiday celebration was a bust, as Mother Nature threw an icy blanket on the proceedings and we all stayed home. (I guess I should stay out of the water anytime there's a ferryboat in sight, too, come to think of it...)

We'll try again this month as we welcome Tom Nasser of Carolina Orchids in balmy Fort Mill, SC. Tom will be presenting a talk on *Bulbophyllums*, a group of orchids that consists of a huge number of species that look wildly different. The species *bulbophyllum*, *cirripedilum*, and *megaclinium* are used interchangeably for quite a few of these intermediate sunlight and temperature growers, so we refer to all of them as *bulbophyllums*. Bulbos often get a bad rap since they are pollinated by flies. In fact, the fragrance of some bulbos can be truly appalling! The group of *bulbophyllums* in the greenhouses at Carolina Orchids is one of the largest collections you will find east of the Mississippi River.

Tom will accept pre-orders from his website, (no shipping charges) <http://www.carolinaorchids.com>, and will give all GROS members a 15% discount. Please note that Tom's greenhouses have many more plants for sale than the price lists indicate. If there is an orchid that you want and you don't see it on his list, please give him a call or send off an e-mail. He may have it! At Carolina Orchids, there is no mass-production of orchids. There are typically several different clones of a particular orchid rather than hundreds of plants of limited species or clones. Current specialties are *Bulbophyllums*, *Angraecoid* orchids, *Paphiopedilums* and *Phragmipediums*, along with a wide variety of other orchid species.

We will be taking Tom to dinner at 5:15 p.m. (before the meeting) at Mamasan's Noodle Caboodle, 2800 Monroe Avenue; if you'd like to join us, (everyone pays for his or her own dinner) please call Program VP Jim Marlow at 585-889-7983 to make sure that there will be enough space. The Show Table will be back, as neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night can stay this furniture from the swift completion of its appointed duties. So, bundle up your flowering plants (and yourselves) and bring them in. We'll see you there!.

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On Passing the Torch

One of the credos of the GROS is "Education." When I first began growing orchids back in the 1970's there were few orchid societies. The GROS was just forming and had only a few members compared to our more than 175 members today. Way back then, "newbies" or as we used to call them, "beginners," educated themselves by either reading books or by being lucky enough to find someone who knew about orchids and was willing to share.

Personally, I grew (and killed!) orchids for a number of years before I attended my first orchid show and met John and Dody Ellenberger, owners of Ellenberger's Orchid Eden. Their wonderful greenhouse was sanctuary for me for over 10 years. Dody had the knack of making everyone feel both comfortable and welcome. Along with that, and just as important, was her teaching talent. Dody always prefaced her demonstrations by saying "what works for me may not work for you." In other words, her way was not the "only" way of growing orchids. Both John and Dody were known for experimenting and trying new methods. Had it not been for the Ellenbergers and others like them (Jeanne Kaeding, Joe Kunisch, Alan Salzman, Dwaine Levy and many others...) who freely shared - and continue to share - their expertise, many of the orchids at our annual spring shows would never have been displayed. This was long before the Internet had arrived.

The early years of the GROS were information sharing times. Members freely discussed what worked for them while others experimented and tried for themselves - ever looking for better culture and growing success. I appreciate those earlier times. I believe that even today with the Internet and the plethora of orchid information available, there is nothing better than talking to other orchid growers.

I also believe that the real core and strength of an orchid society lies in the sum total of experiences and knowledge shared among all its members. I also believe it is each member's responsibility to help spread knowledge to those who are just beginning as well as to those who have grown for years. Everyone has something to contribute! Orchid growing is a lifetime learning experience and no one person, no mat-

ter how "advanced," can possibly know everything there is to know.

If our current members do not offer future members their knowledge and growing experience, there will be little reason for others to join and "pass the torch" to the next GROS generation. Were this failure to happen in orchid societies everywhere, orchid growing could become a lost art. Future enthusiasts would never know the true wonder of orchid diversity. There might be no pool of local knowledge, and people would be back to learning for themselves or worse yet, trying to depend on the "Big Box stores" and their horticulturally-challenged employees for growing advice.

So we need to pass on our knowledge! With that in mind, I am announcing that our February and March meetings will be devoted to "knowledge sharing." Hands-on learning sessions as well as talks by seasoned members of our society will highlight both months. Stay tuned for more information regarding these future programs.

- Jim Marlow
Program Chairman

Uh-oh...

One of the things I have to face as newsletter editor is the variety of problems that can arise in making sure that our members receive their newsletters in a timely fashion. At a meeting early this Fall, I spoke to one of our members who lives in Livingston County. She was not receiving the newsletter on time, and I was trying to figure out what postal gremlin was afoot.

In passing, she remarked that she felt she was out of touch with the "clique" of people who run the Society - people to whom the scheduling and such were second nature, who knew what was going on without even having to look in the newsletter. Oh boy. This really stuck with me, as it speaks to how our Society might grow - or become stagnant - in the future.

I, too, was once a newcomer to the GROS. I can't remember a time when I wasn't interested in growing *something*, but my GROS membership dates to 1990. So I guess that I, too, must be "part of the problem."

Dody Ellenberger introduced me to orchid growing at a GROS show, but I didn't join the

Society until a few years later. (I do recall having briefly peeked in the open door at a GROS Auction held in the Castle at Highland Park, but the people dressed up in coats and ties looked pretty intimidating, and I never went in. (How times do change!)

At my first few meetings, I sat in the back of the room and listened to the presentations, not really understanding much of what was going on. I asked a lot of questions and met a lot of friendly people. *No one* ever made me feel like my questions were too basic or unsophisticated. The beauty of the orchids on the Show Table and the camaraderie of the members made me feel at home before long.

One year, when someone asked for volunteers to help put up the GROS show exhibit, I raised my hand. That was my first "job" at the GROS - and it was really a lot of fun. We were three volunteers, and it turned out that none of us had ever put together an orchid exhibit before! But we knew how to use a hammer and nails and we pooled our artistic talents to make the exhibit work. I helped the next year, and many years after that. I learned how to clerk for the judges. When Dody decided to step down as newsletter editor, I volunteered to take up the mantle. All of these volunteer jobs boosted my orchid knowledge tremendously, and I gained more and more friends at the GROS.

I think I know why we long-time members sometimes seem "clique-ish" to our newer brethren. The monthly meetings are not only great orchid growing experiences, what with the expert presentations, the Show Table discussions, and the raffles. They're also social gatherings for folks who've been friends for many years. We veteran members can become so "busy" schmoozing with our friends that we forget what it was like to sit by ourselves and feel out of place.

Is there a "clique" at the GROS? No doubt. But it's a clique of people who *volunteer* to help out with club activities. *That's* how to start absorbing orchid knowledge! As our President, Jeff Snyder has emphasized, the GROS is in constant need of members to help out with club activities. Are you a new member? Introduce yourself to one of our committee chairpeople. Sign up for something! Let's grow our "clique" to include everyone!

- Phil Matt, Editor



✿ Orchid Displays and Sales

✿ Potting Supplies

✿ Many specials throughout the greenhouse!

✿ Refreshments with wine-cheese tasting at 3p.m.



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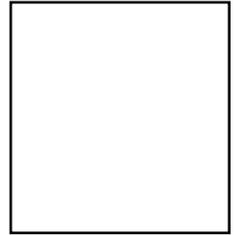
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The Genesee Region Orchid Society (GROS) meets every month from September through May at the Jewish Community Center, 1200 Edgewood Avenue, Rochester, NY, on the first Monday following the first Sunday of each month. (Dates sometimes vary due to holidays, etc.) The GROS is an Affiliate of The American Orchid Society and of The Orchid Digest Corporation. Material in our newsletter, *The Orchid Collection*, may be freely reprinted in other orchid society publications with proper attribution. Copyrighted illustrations, photographs or articles may not be reprinted without the express written permission of the artist or author.

GROS PHOTOS!



A new upgrade to our website will allow our Society to post photographs of various GROS activities in easily accessible picture galleries. Please contact Phil Matt, our Webmaster, if you have photos you'd like to add to the GROS site.