

# Orchid Society of California

Next Meeting: Monday, March 21, 2005  
Lakeside Garden Center, Lake Merritt  
666 Bellevue Ave. Oakland, California

## PROGRAM TOPIC: CYMBIDIUMS 101...

### Trudy Hadler

...and how judges of both AOS and CSA look at them

This is an introduction to everything you wanted to know about Cymbidiums (and maybe a few things you didn't care to know). If you want to submit your plant for judging in either system, there are some things that you need to consider if your plant is to become a viable candidate.

Trudy Hadler first became interested in Orchids when she was about 10 years old. In her own words: "I read a Nero Wolfe mystery about a 300+ pound detective who never left his home, but stopped all work for several hours each day to enjoy his orchids in the greenhouse on top of his roof. The description of orchids was fascinating and I have been 'hooked' ever since. I have been growing orchids for about 35 years, both in a greenhouse and in my back yard. I grow mainly Cymbidiums, but also assorted Miltonias, Paphs, Cattleyas and other genera. For about 20 years, I have been an AOS judge, and went through the CSA judging system about 8+ years ago. My first orchid was a 'freebie' from a local garbage can, covered with scale and mealy bug. I rescued, healed and bloomed it (a Cattleya), and now have about 1,200 orchids, including my original rescue orchid. Growing orchids is an incurable addiction, but I feel no one can have too much 'soul food.'"

For extra credit: Can one of the members name the detective in the above mentioned Nero Wolfe mystery?

### Bowen Trophy

In March we will award the Bowen Trophy. It is awarded for the best Cymbidium displayed by a non-professional grower. This attracts many fine cymbidiums to the meeting, so start staking and preening your plants for competition at the March 21 meeting. To qualify, the grower must be a member in good standing (i.e. dues paid for 2005), and not be associated with commercial orchid production.

March 2005

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#### Meeting Details

- Plant sales will open at 6:30 PM.
- Meeting starts at 7:15 PM.

## Dinner with the Speaker

The Speaker's Dinner will be at the Ta Ke Sushi Bar, 357 Grand Avenue, just south of the park. The restaurant serves a variety of cooked Japanese dishes as well as sushi and sashimi.

**Dinner is at 5:30 PM**

### Raffle Table Volunteers

March – Bonnie Kraus & Russ Uabnado

April – Paula Shiu & Helen Ma

## Dessert Assignments

Members with last names from “Tchaikovsky” to “Zwilich” are responsible for bringing refreshments to the March meeting. If it is your turn to bring refreshments, you are also responsible for participating in the set-up and clean-up. If you are unable to bring refreshments, please make a monetary donation. Those that provide refreshments are entitled to participate in a drawing for the first choice of raffle plants.

## Calendar

### March 26-27

Napa Valley Orchid Society Show and Sale, Napa Senior Activity Center, 1500 Jefferson St., Napa, CA.  
Contact: Fredia Lloyd, (707) 224-6233

### April 2-3

Golden Gate Cymbidium Society Show, Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Ave., Oakland, CA.  
Contact: Loretta Rodriguez, (510) 538-8632;  
loretta193@aol.com.

### April 9-10

Santa Clara Valley Orchid Society Show, The Great Mall, 447 Great Mall Drive, Milpitas, CA. Contact: Conrad Kumata, 19987 Knollwood Dr., Saratoga, CA 95070; (408) 996-8335.

### April 16-17

Sacramento Orchid Society Spring Show, Scottish Rite Masonic Center, 6151 H Street, Sacramento, CA.  
Contact: Jose J. Rodriguez, 172 River Run Cir., Sacramento, CA 95833; (916) 927-1810.

### April 30-May 1

Carmel Orchid Society MayFaire, Crossroads Shopping Center, Hwy. 1 at Rio Rd., Carmel, CA. Contact: Ida Hale, 241 Lerwick Dr., Monterey, CA 93940; (831) 646-8724.

### April 30-May 1

Newport Harbor Orchid Society Show, Costa Mesa Community Center, 1845 Park Ave., Costa Mesa, CA.  
Contact: Richard Hara, 10749 La Terraza Ave., Fountain Valley, CA 92708; worknut49@aol.com;  
www.nhos.org.

### May 6-8

Orchid Society of California Mother's Day Sale, Lakeside Garden Center, Lake Merritt, 666 Bellevue Ave. Oakland, California. Contact: Paula Shiu, orchidchef@earthlink.net

### May 19

SGV Orchid Hobbyists Annual Plant Auction, LA County Botanic Garden & Arboretum, 310 N. Baldwin Ave., Arcadia, CA. Contact: Richard Lundine, (626) 335-6641.

### June 3-5

New Orleans Orchid Society Show, Lakeside Shopping Center, 3301 Veterans Memorial Blvd., Metairie, LA. Contact: Patricia Sander, 1237 Beverly Garden Dr., Metairie, LA 70002; (504) 835-7019;  
siberianorchid@cox.net.

### September 29-October 2

Hilo Orchid Society 53rd Annual Orchid Show & Sale, Edith Kanakaole Tennis Stadium, 699 Piilani St., Hilo, HI. Contact: Carol A. Siebenrock, PO Box 990, Kurtistown, HI 96760; (808) 968-8196.

### October 12-16

Sonoma County Orchid Society Show and AOS Members Meeting, Doubletree Hotel, One Doubletree Dr., Rohnert Park, CA. Contact: Dr. Earl Rathbun, 1920 Grace Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95404; (707) 528-1671.

Need more? See the AOS Calendar online at:

<http://orchidweb.org/aos/events/shows.aspx>

# March in Your Orchid Garden

## Cymbidium Culture Sheet from the CSA

In their natural habitats, cymbidiums grow at the higher altitudes in the temperate zone of mid-Asia (China, Japan) down through southeast Asia and extending south of the equator with a number of species in Australia. The climatic conditions found there are also found at sea level in the coastal regions of California (USA), along the coast in the Mediterranean and in part of New Zealand and Australia as well as South Africa. They are also grown under greenhouse conditions in many other parts of the world. The cycle of cool nights and warm days during the spring months in these regions is necessary for flower spike bud formation. Warmer weather in the summer enhances the growth and development of the flower spikes for the following season (winter into spring). Although they grow out-of-doors very successfully in these areas alluded to above, most commercial nurseries producing cut flowers grow in cool greenhouses to protect flowers from inclement weather.

Cymbidiums can tolerate considerable summer heat and winter chill. Lows of 29 degrees F and highs up to 100 degrees can be handled for short periods. Plant foliage usually will not freeze at 27 degrees if the weather includes some moisture and air movement. Flower spikes which are soft and tender will suffer damage if exposed. With extreme heat (90-100 degrees) attempts should be made to cool plants with misting or syringing mid-day. Although flower spike buds are visible often as early as summer through fall, the initiation of these buds is believed by many to be several months earlier when there are a series of 55 degree F nights and warm days along with or in addition to a 25 degree temperature between day and night temperatures.

During the spring, summer and fall growing season, plants should have as many hours of filtered sunlight as possible (approximately 50% or, if measured, 3000-4000 foot candles). The color of the foliage should be golden-green (plants with rich, dark green leaves are very likely not receiving sufficient light). As flower spikes break sheath showing the buds, many of the pastels, whites and greens will profit from shading to avoid "staining" of the sepals from dark pigments created by exposure to sunlight. This will improve the clarity of flower color. Polypropylene shade cloth of 55% density has proven to be ideal as a shade cover for cymbidium growing areas.

Cymbidiums are most frequently seen growing as pot plants (from small to large containers) although they can be grown in raised beds in the ground. In either case, the growing medium must be free-draining and acidic in reaction. Many combinations of both organic and mineral materials have been used through the years. Currently, potting composts contain one or more of the following in varying proportions: small bark pieces (Fir or Pinus radiata "down under"), perlite (Spongerok), redwood compost, coarse peat moss, sand, crushed volcanic rock, oak leaf mold, dolomite as a buffer for acidity and some nutrient material. Any potting mix should always be moistened

ahead of use. Plastic pots of various sizes are now the containers of choice for most commercial growers and hobbyists.

During the warmer months when actively growing, cymbidiums can handle copious amounts of water - the purer the better. One of the reasons for heavy watering in most areas is the need to leach out salts which accumulate from use of tap water. With clean, purer water, much less leaching is required. Plants can and should be kept drier during the colder months but never "bone dry". The fact remains that they are very sensitive to more than traces of the natural salts found in tap water. They will exhibit "leaf tip dieback" with continued use of "salty" tap water (defined as containing in excess of 500 ppm of dissolved salts) if not leached out. In the summer, watering 2-3 times per week is typical; once per week or less in the winter.

With a free-draining growing medium, nutrients are easily washed out of the mix. The goal of any feeding program is to maintain an even level of soluble nutrients in the soil water all of the time. Commercial growers have injection systems which enable them to achieve this by introducing nutrients as they water. Hobbyists have a more difficult time. A nutrient mix should be water soluble and balanced with nitrogen, phosphorus and potash in varying amounts and contain small amounts of the trace elements that plants require (copper, zinc, manganese, boron, etc.). An application once or twice per month with watering at less than full strength is usually adequate. Some hobbyists use commercial pelleted slow-release fertilizer with good results. Others use a top dressing once or twice per year (warm months) with organic not using excessive amounts of nitrogen any time of the year as it can encourage too much growth at the expense of flower spike production.

With good culture, cymbidiums are relatively pest-free. However, they are subject to infestations of several types of scale, spider mites (on the underside of the leaves), aphids of flower stalks, buds and flowers. Slugs and snails, while not a problem with the foliage, feed on the tender, new flower spikes, buds and flowers. With all of these pests, vigilance is the by-word. Check plants regularly. Insecticides and miticides available change with new products on the market and others no longer for sale or use. Obtain a reliable recommendation as to what is best to use and always follow all directions carefully.

It is generally true that larger plants produce more flowers proportionately than smaller ones but at some point it is necessary to divide the plant into pieces and repot usually for one or more of the following reasons: (1) the pot and plant are too big to be handled or housed properly; (2) there are too many "back bulbs" taking up too much space; and/or (3) the potting mix has been exhausted and the plant may be living on its old, decaying roots (three years is often considered an average limit). When

*(Continued on page 5)*

# AOS Awards

## AOS Awards, Pacific Orchid Exposition February 17, 2005

Cymbidium hookerianum 'Cinnabar'  
Exhibited by Anna S. Chai  
AM 81

Cymbidium un-named hybrid 'Simplicity'  
(Cym. Reginetta x Cym. Horizons)  
Exhibited by: Orchid Fiori D'Amore  
HCC 76

Dracula un-named hybrid 'Raven'  
(Drac. vampira x Drac. roezlii)  
Exhibited by: John Leathers  
AM 81

Epidendrum Pacific Eclipse 'Summertime'  
(Star Valley x Pacific Ember)  
Exhibited by Cal Orchid  
HCC 78

Masdevallia Copper Angel 'Highland'  
(Masd. triangularis x Masd. veitchiana)  
Exhibited by: Golden Gate Orchids  
CCM 84

Odontioda un-named hybrid 'Red Beauty'  
(Oda. Zorkola x Oda. Ingmar)  
Exhibited by: Golden Gate Orchids  
HCC 78

Odontioda un-named hybrid 'Gina'  
(Oda. Harrods Forever x Oda. Fort Point)  
Exhibited by: Golden Gate Orchids  
AM 81

Otoglossum brevifolium 'Hanging Gardens'  
species  
Exhibited by: Dan Newman/Hanging Gardens  
AM 80

Paphiopedilum Bruno 'Model'  
(Paph. Leeaunum x Paph. spicerianum)  
Exhibited by: Golden Gate Orchids  
CCM 83

Paphiopedilum Grass Valley 'Apple Tart'  
(Paph. Green Gold x Paph. Divisadero)  
Exhibited by: McLellan's Botanicals / Taisuco America  
HCC 76

Paphiopedilum Oberhausen's Rubin 'Dark Specter'  
(Paph. wilhelminae (syn glanduliferum) x Paph. sanderianum)  
Exhibited by Ramon de los Santos  
HCC 79

Slc. Dream Catcher 'Sonoma'  
(Slc. Bright Star x Slc. Beaufort)  
Exhibited by: Petite Plaisance  
HCC 76

For more information and pictures please  
visit the Pacific Judging web site:

<http://www.aospacificcentral.org>

## Contact Us

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# President's Message

This is the monthly meeting where we award the Bowen trophy to the best cymbidium brought in by a non-commercial grower. The regular culture session will not be held this month, to allow for viewing of the plants brought in by members.

Therefore, the general meeting will start at 7:15, followed by Show&Tell and the Speaker before breaking for refreshments. And somewhere in the proceedings we will have the judges' announcement for the Bowen trophy winner. Good luck to everyone who enters!

Many thanks to all the members who brought plants for the OSC exhibit at the San Francisco show. We didn't win any prizes this year, but, as Jean Lee, President of the SF Orchid Society told me, it's exhibits by the visiting societies that make their show a real treat for visitors to Fort Mason and ours got more than a few favorable comments.

Preparations for our annual Mother's Day Sale are underway, and once again, please volunteer as much time as you can spare during the three show days and pre-show setup evening. At the March meeting, we will start circulating the clipboards asking for signups to help us plan our staffing for Plant Hotel, Plant Doctor, Security, etc. If you can't specify an exact time, put down your contact information and let us tell you where you are needed! More details about all of this will follow when our Show Chair, Paula Shiu, provides Show information at our meeting and in the April newsletter.

*Carol Klonowski*

## March in Your Orchid Garden

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dividing, an attempt should be made to create divisions of 2-3 green bulbs with one "back bulb" left for water and food storage. Removing the plant from its present pot requires a knock or tap or two to dislodge the root mass. Most hobbyists and commercial growers remove the lower 1/3 to 1/2 of the root ball using a sterile cutting tool. The plant mass usually can be broken apart at natural splitting points. Healthy roots should be shortened to 3-4 inches; all roots should be removed from back bulbs kept with a division. It is common practice to wash off the division with a brisk stream of water thus allowing a better view of the overall health of the root system. Dead or withered roots should be removed. Again, potting mix should be moist

at the time of use. Also, since there are always many cut exposed root tips, it is a good practice to allow the divisions to air dry for a period of time to allow the root tissue to heal over (not in the sun). Choose a container that best fits each division being careful not to overpot. Press the mix firmly around the root mass up to and around the first 1/3 or the green bulbs. Some growers do not water the potted divisions immediately allowing healing to take place at the root level; others water immediately until drainage water comes out clear from the container. In either case, fresh potted divisions are placed in a cool, shady protected area for about two weeks with occasional misting. They are then returned to a regular growing area and normal light and watering.

## March Greenhouse Tour

On March 26, we will be going to two greenhouses in the Richmond-El Cerrito area: Paula Shiu, and George McCrea. The tour to Top Hat Orchids has been postponed.

We will meet in front of the garden center on Saturday March 26 at 1 p.m. and car pool to the greenhouses. First Paula's, then George's. Instructions will be available at the meeting if you prefer to meet us at the greenhouses.

Paula Shiu is a past president of O.S.C. and is a professional chef.

Directions to Paula's Warehouse in Richmond: go right on Grand to the 580 west onramp (Left at the Grand Lake Theater ) Take 580 to 80 eastbound (past Albany) stay on 80, (it bears to the left) take Potrero Ave Exit, go straight to second light, take a left , on to San Pablo Ave. into the left turn lane. Go under ( not onto )freeway overpass, (you'll be on Cutting )

and make the first right, onto S. 50th street. Go one block to 4901 Wall ave. It's at the intersection of Wall and S. 50th. Please park outside gate, and walk in through gate. the street side door does not open. The Phone # there is (510) 232-5821

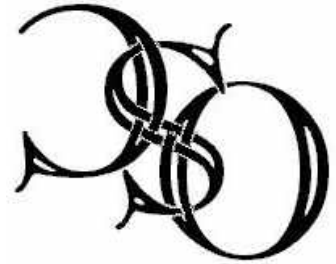
Directions to George's house: From Garden center: 580 west to 80 east towards Sacramento. follow 80E to San Pablo Ave exit. (after the 580/80 split). At the bottom of the off ramp, take a right onto San Pablo Avenue and the FIRST left at Barrett Ave. Go up hill on Barrett Ave to 5810 Barrett avenue, just uphill from Edwards. Total drive time from Garden center, if there are no traffic incidents on the freeway is less than 15 minute

If you have any questions, give me a call at 510 569-8683 See you soon ,

*Mimi Rose*

Next Meeting: Monday, March 21, 2005  
Lakeside Garden Center, Lake Merritt  
666 Bellevue Ave. Oakland, California

The first orchid society west  
of the Mississippi, est. 1937



Orchid Society of California  
360 Grand Avenue #129  
Oakland, CA 94610

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**[www.orchidsocietyofcalifornia.com](http://www.orchidsocietyofcalifornia.com)**

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