



# Victoria Orchid Society

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*Award photo by Judith Higham*

***This fabulous Masdevallia Confetti (Masd. strobilii x Masd. glandulosa), grown by Rick Rancourt, was voted the best plant on the display table at the September meeting. It also was awarded a CCE/AOS and named Reserve Champion at the Fraser Valley Show.***

**2018 Meetings:**

**Fall  
November 26<sup>th</sup>**

Members with last names starting with **A, B, & C** are asked to bring goodies for the November meeting.

## ***From the Editor***



***Dracula bella***

We have a guest who will be attending the November meeting and is prepared to take some pictures of the display table plants. I will be there to help her set up, so please take your plants to the usual table on the right of the hall. If you would bring a pre-written list of your plants, it would make this process much smoother for our new lady. Her name is Gena. The favourite plant on the display table, as judged by the coloured markers, will be photographed.

Please remember that volunteers run the society and we really need some younger members to take over some of the tasks that keep it moving.

*Contributions to the newsletter can be made up to 14 days before the next meeting date by contacting me by phone or email. (250-385-8888 or [enviroed@telus.net](mailto:enviroed@telus.net)).*

*Logo photo D. Rowles*

## President's Message



John Taylor

For the last week or so I have been travelling in Australia enjoying the Spring weather and abundant plant life, leaving, for the moment, the cold and wet Victoria Autumn behind. An interest in orchids can be indulged practically anywhere, but it is especially pleasant in Australia. Some years ago I had the opportunity to work at the University in Perth. All the orchids in that neck of the woods, the south-west corner of the country, are ground orchids often with delightful names such as donkey orchid, pink bunny orchid and blue fairy orchid. The most intriguing for me were the *Thelymitras* which include some of the most intense blue flowers in existence. *Thelymitra crinita* is the colour of some gentians - anyone seeing it would be embarrassed to talk about 'blue' *cattleyas*.

The current trip has been along the east coast where a great variety of epiphytic species grow. Many of these are in collections throughout the world. Australia is especially known for its *Dendrobiums*. One of the most vigorous species, found along the coasts of New South Wales and Queensland, is *Den. speciosum*. This species grows on rocks as well as on trees; it is quite stunning with broad leathery leaves, thick stems and plumes of white to yellow flowers. Another common *Dendrobium* with a similar range is *Den. kingianum*, native to open forests along the coast and occasionally naturalized on garden trees. *Sarcochilus*, from the same area, have also found their way into many collections.

**Fall 2018**  
**November 26<sup>th</sup> – Deborah Ward**  
**Thrips & Pitfalls**  
**December 10<sup>th</sup> – Xmas Party**

A third group of orchids in Australia are the outliers from the Asian tropics occurring in the extreme north; this group includes a number of rare species such as *Phalaenopsis amabilis* and *Vanda tricolor* as well as the more common *Den. bigibbum* complex.

As I write this I am sitting on the balcony of our tourist apartment in Airlie Beach looking out over an azure sea; a large sulphur-crested cockatoo keeps landing on the railing 4 feet away trying for a handout. Back to Victoria soon enough.

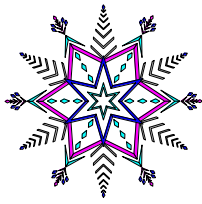
John Taylor

## Upcoming Events:

The monthly meeting of the Victoria Orchid Society is held on the fourth Monday of every month except July, August and December, starting at 7:30 p.m. The plants on the display table are presented by experts, followed by a short business meeting, a coffee break with a prize draw of plants and orchid related material, and a featured presentation. The meeting ends at about 10:00 p.m. Often there is a pre-meeting workshop or Question & Answer session from 6:45-7:30 p.m. There will not be one before the November meeting.

**November 26th general meeting:** Debb Ward will present "Thrips & Pitfalls"

Debb is a long time member of the society, an AOS judge and a grower of a wide range of orchids. She is sure to have some useful ideas about managing pests and problems.



## CHRISTMAS PARTY

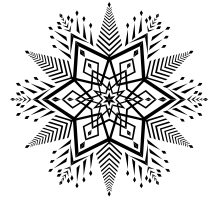
Monday December 10, 2018

7:00pm – 10:00pm

Gordon Head United Hall

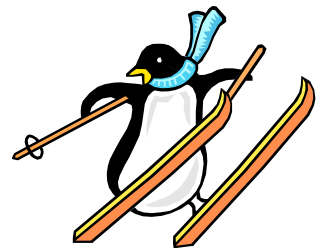
*I hope everyone can attend our annual Christmas party. It's a fun filled event and a great way to get to know other members of the society.*

*We will have a display table but there will be no business done so there won't be any plant sales, nor will the library be open.*



*It will start with a great pot luck, a sign-up sheet will be passed at the November meeting. The usual things we need are appys, salads, main courses, and of course lots of desserts. Further information on food preparation and facilities will be available at the November meeting.*

*There will be brown bag prize draws so please bring a prize or two. Unlike the regular meetings the prizes don't have to be orchid related.*

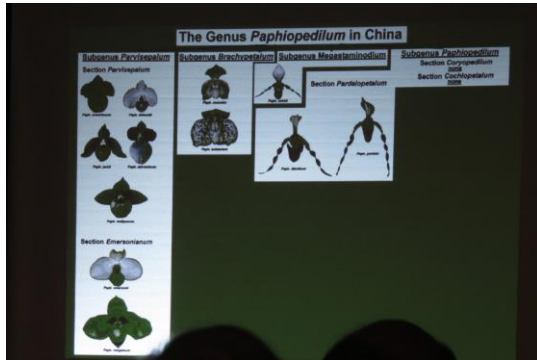


Pictures from previous Xmas parties:



## Past Events

**October 22<sup>nd</sup> general meeting** – Wenqing Perner, of the Hengduan Mountains Biotechnology Institute, spoke on the *Paphiopedilums* of China. She described the various processes that her company must go through to preserve various habitats and the ways in which they have been preserving threatened species of *Paphiopedilum*. She also talked about *Cypripediums* and showed beautiful pictures of both *Paphiopedilums* and *Cypripediums*.



LARRY PYNN Vancouver Sun, Dec 9, 2014

### Three plants endangered, panel declares

VANCOUVER — Three B.C. plants have been declared endangered by a federal advisory panel of scientists.

The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada said in its annual conservation review released Monday that while the limber pine tree can live up to 1,000 years, populations in B.C. and Alberta are undergoing sharp declines due mainly to spread of white pine blister rust. The non-native disease was first detected on limber pine in 2006.

Mountain pine beetle and climate change pose additional threats. The pine is restricted to high elevations in the western foothills of the Rocky Mountains.

The conservation status of the phantom orchid, previously listed as *threatened*, has been upgraded to *endangered*. The unusual plant obtains its nutrients from a fungus rather than through sunlight and photosynthesis. Found in southwestern B.C., it is at risk from habitat loss and cannot be grown through cultivation.

The southern mountain population of the toothcup has also been rated as *endangered*. The plant is known from just two local populations in the southern Interior. Some locations have been lost as a result of shoreline development. The species is limited by the availability of suitable seasonally wet *sites*, *and is threatened by invasive exotic plant species*.

The tiny tassel moss is rated as *special concern*. It has a narrow range in B.C., occurring only in the semi-arid shrub steppe of four valleys in the Okanagan.

Surveys have confirmed this species from only 20 sites on steep slopes associated with certain glacial lake deposits.

Threats include erosion due to recreational use of the habitat, and maintenance of road cuts. Climate change may also be a threat.

The B.C. seabird, Cassin's auklet, is ranked as *special concern* due to the introduction of predators such as rats and raccoons to breeding islands. Oil contamination and oceanic changes associated with climate change are additional threats.

The red-necked phalarope, a bird that breeds in sub-and-low-arctic wetlands and winters at sea in tropical waters, has also been listed as *special concern*.

### October 26 - /28 – Fraser Valley Orchid Society Show and Sale:

Don & Marilyn Mills delivered our plants to the Fraser Valley Show and set up a charming display



*VicOS display*



*FVOS grand Champion  
Paph. Sanders Pride at top right and  
in the award picture below.*

### They brought back this report

Congrats to Rick Rancourt and Leda Bower for their AOS awards and other ribbons (see below). Marilyn and Leda set up a winning table garnering the Best Visiting Club award. Sellers included J& L Orchids from State side, Ten Shin Orchids, Paramount, Tropical Gardens, and Forestview Orchids. Attendance was brisk on Saturday but slow on Sunday. Recreation centre construction on the main entrance made it an obstacle course to get into the show. Of the 37 orchids entered by our club, they were awarded 12 first, 7 second and 4 third ribbons. Well done!

Submitted sincerely, Don & Marilyn Mills



*Photo by Judith Higham*

### Awards:

Rick Rancourt's *Masdevallia* Confetti - CCE – AOS Award of 90 points  
Reserve Champion  
Best in Pleurothallis

Leda Bower's *Dracuvallia* Gualaquing x *Dracula roezlii* dark –  
HCC/AOS award of 79 pts

*Dracula* Dark Star – AOS nomination



*Masdevallia. Confetti  
Reserve Champion*

## ***December: The Month of Unbridled Joy***

by Thomas Mirenda

### **Gifting Your Friends with Orchids and the Joys of Growing Them**

I'm not ashamed to say that of all the people who've come and gone through my life, I miss my mother, Patti, the most. This might make me a sentimental mama's boy to some, but I don't care. Mothers throughout history have always gone to heroic lengths to bring happiness to their progeny. I'll never forget one holiday season when I was eight or nine. I was an avid collector of rare seashells (I still am) and mom took me to meet a famous local collector she read about in the newspaper to encourage my interest. There was a fascinating shell in that collection that was rare and probably one of a kind. After all these years, I've never seen another. It was beyond my imagination that I would find this rare creature inside a box under the Christmas tree that year. I don't think I can recall ever again being as ecstatic. I'll never know what she had to do, nor how much it must have cost, but that is what love is. And that year I knew I was loved.

We all have the power to create such unbridled joy. With our orchid friends, in this day of massive orchid propagation, such tasks are easy. Most adults won't indulge in that rare orchid for themselves, but you know what brings your orchid friends joy. With all the strife, division and despair we're feeling around the world, the gift of a young seedling or clone of that orchid your friend so desperately wants should go a long way to spreading much needed happiness and goodwill. This holiday season, I encourage you to spread that unbridled joy of orchid growing. You might be surprised at how good it makes you feel when full-grown adults jump up and down and run screaming around the room like beloved, happy children.

**BREAK THE ICE** The weather has taken a turn for the inclement with the winter season. It's bleak, barren and cold outside, but warm, buoyant and full of life in the greenhouse. Spikes are everywhere this time of year, particularly on *Phalaenopsis* and *Cymbidiums*, but also on many others triggered by cooler night temperatures and short day lengths. Collecting ice and snow can be novel ways of supplying pure water for your orchids, although you would want to melt them and allow the water to reach room temperature before applying to your plants because cold water will shock them. Imagine someone sticking your foot in an ice bucket while you're sleeping.

**UP IN THE AIR** There is one thing that we all tend to lack in our air this month. If you wake up with a scratchy throat and a dry mouth in the morning, it's a sign your humidity has plummeted, often to levels lower than a cactus might need. In the greenhouse, misting systems and wetting down gravel and floors can help alleviate this problem, but on windowsills this can be much more challenging. Pebble trays are one option, but any humidity that rises a few inches above the surface dissipates quickly. (A pebble or humidity tray holds wet pebbles on which containers are placed; the increased surface area of all the stones creates extra humidity around the plants.) Grouping your plants can help create a humid microclimate. Frequent misting can be beneficial, but is labor intensive. Placing plants behind a partition or shower curtain can create that humid terrarium effect, but beware of low air circulation under such circumstances. I never cease to be amazed by the ingenious ways people solve these problems for their individual conditions. If you have a novel solution you'd like to share with our readership, please send it to me.

**KEEN OBSERVATION** Because temperatures and day lengths have decreased dramatically over the last two months for most of us, it is more important than ever to monitor your watering, fertilizing and other proactive activities in your collection. Some frequently grown orchids, including *Cattleyas*, *Phalaenopsis* and most *Dendrobiums*, need significantly less water now than they did three or four months ago. It's okay for most succulent orchids, particularly those with large pseudobulbs, to dry out more thoroughly at this time of year. Some plants should barely be watered at all. This is especially true for deciduous dormant plants, such as *Catasetums*, *nobile* - and other deciduous-type *Dendrobiums*, many terrestrials and seasonally dry forest plants, such as *Prosthechea citrina* and *Prosthechea mariae*, that will rot if watered heavily at this time of year. Aside from books, the best way to know these things is to observe your plants daily, and learn as much about individuals as you can. At that orchid club holiday party, ask those more experienced growers about the plants you're having trouble with or don't know much about. With few exceptions, orchid people tend to be uncommonly nice. Most are happy to help.

This is a re-print of an article from Orchids magazine, December 2013. It's still as useful today as it was when Tom first wrote it. Tom Mirenda has been working professionally with orchids for over three decades, is an AOS accredited judge, recently coauthored *The Book of Orchids: A life-size guide to 600 species from around the world* and begins this month as the director of horticulture, education and outreach at the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden (email: biophiliak@gmail.com; www.htbg.com).

Tom Mirenda is the head orchid curator at the Smithsonian in Washington, DC. We are very fortunate to have him present his lecture on "Orchid Hunting in Central America" for our October, 2018 meeting.  
*From NWOS newsletter – December 2017*



*Den. Hibiki 'Paulwela' AM/AOS*

**Victoria Orchid Society  
Minutes of General Meeting, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018**

The General Meeting of October 22, 2018 was held at the Gordon Head United Church Hall. President John Taylor called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. There were some guests from the "Rock & Alpine Society" present to hear our guest speaker. Their names were Bernie, Janice, Colin, Joe and Charles Dool, a friend of Ingrid's.

Ingrid and Poul presented the Show Table.

**Secretary's Report:** Ingrid Ostrander moved and Bede Stenner seconded that the minutes from September 24, 2018 General meeting be approved as published in the newsletter.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**Treasurer's Report:** Jill Livesey presented her financial report for the month of September and moved for acceptance, seconded by Elsie Gerdes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

## Other Reports:

**AOS:** John reported that the next judging will be at the FVOS show, Oct.27-28. Plants for judging will be transported by Poul Hansen, plants for show display will be transported by Don Mills. Please have your plants delivered to Don's house between 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Thursday. Lioba Samer has donated the use of her van again this year.

**Library:** Leda has stepped down from this position, Elsie Gerdes and Bill Cleugh will take over.

**Membership:** Kathryn reported that 53 members have registered.

**Plant sales:** Coreen reported that they have some plants for sale, along with the ones our guest speaker has brought to sell. Please take some time at the break to check them all out.

**Program:** Rod reported that Debb Ward will be the guest speaker for November. Her talk is entitled 'Tips, traps and having fun while learning to grow.' In January, there will be a "Ribbon Judging" workshop.

**Shows:** Barb reported the committee had its first meeting on Wednesday, Oct.17<sup>th</sup> and chose a theme for this year's show. It will be World Wide Beauties following along the lines that Orchids can be found growing all over the world.

**Supply Sales:** Catherine will be placing an order. Let her know if you want to order anything.

**Website:** Melanie has resigned from this position. Chris Bauer has offered to take over this site now. Elsie Gerdes has a friend who is interested in taking display table photos for the website.

## New Business:

**By-election:** Joe Chow reported that some of the current directors had resigned from their positions and reviewing the by-laws that state an election must be held within 30 days of their resignation, a by-election must be held tonight. Astrid Firley-Eaton spoke, stating that seven people have submitted their resignations.

Melanie Norris, Sasha Kubicek, Rod Crutcher, Astrid Firley-Eaton, Leda Boyes, Debb Ward and Cat Frutiger have submitted their resignations.

Sasha Kubicek began to ask the President for more information but was ruled out of order by Joe Chow. Joe stated that 3 people have given their names to stand as new directors. They are Lioba Samer, Kathryn Collins, and Chris Bauer. Joe called for any other names from the floor, none were received. All 3 people were elected by acclamation.

Joe stated that there will need to be another by-election next month to fill the positions of those people who resigned in the last few days.

**Auction:** Diana will handle it.

John reported that the location of next month's executive meeting has changed, it will be now held at Ingrid Ostrander's home.

**Program:** Leda Boyes introduced our guest speaker from Sichuan, China, Wenqing Perner, who spoke on Chinese *Paphiopedilums*. Following her presentation, John thanked her for an informative talk.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara Davies

## Society Information

Meetings are held at the Gordon Head United Church Hall, 4201 Tyndall Avenue, Victoria, B.C. on the fourth Monday of the month. Members are encouraged to bring their orchids in bloom to display on the show table.

Guest speakers are engaged for these meetings and often, speakers bring plants for sale. There is also a sales table where plants brought in by members may be purchased. There is often a pre-meeting, basic workshop from 6:45 – 7:30 p.m. Plant sales begin at 7:15 p.m. and the meeting runs from 7:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Membership fees are \$25.00 for individuals, \$35.00 for households. The Society membership year runs from September to September, but meetings are not held in July and August. Name tags are available for \$9.00, magnetized tags are \$11.00.

Coffee and tea are available for \$1.00 at the meeting and goodies are provided by members in rotation, based upon the initial letter of their last names. Goodies are requested from those with last names beginning with **A, B, & C** for the November meeting.

The Victoria Orchid Society Newsletter is published monthly, around the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, excepting December, July and August. Newsletters will be sent by email to members with email access. Email addresses will be blind copied. Upon request, copies of the newsletter may be picked up at meetings for those not wishing to print off their copy at home.

Advertising, in the newsletter, is free of charge to members in good standing: \$2.00 per business card size ad per month to a member owned business (\$15.00 per fiscal year), \$5.00 per month to non-member businesses (\$40.00 per fiscal year). Businesses may also advertise on the Victoria Orchid Society web site *Classifieds* page for the same costs.

The Society's mailing Address is 195 Maddock Avenue West, Victoria, B.C. V9A 1G5.

### **Officers:**

President John Taylor  
Past President Ingrid Ostrander  
Vice-president Diana Rowles  
Secretary Barbara Davies  
Treasurer Jill Livesey

**Newsletter Editor:** Diana Rowles

**Web Master:** Chris Bauer

**Proofreader:** Joe Chow

**Librarian:** Elsie Gerdes/Bill Cleugh

**Membership:** Kathryn Collins

**Spring Show Chairs:** Barb Davies

**Programs Chair:** Rodney Crutcher

In emergencies, call John Taylor at (250) 250 479-0146.

### **Directors:**

Lioba Samer  
Kathryn Collins  
Chris Bauer  
Poul Hansen



*Phragmipedium Joan Montmorency*



*Epidendrum Joseph Lii 'Kultana'*

### About the Victoria OS Executive council

#### *Please be aware of the following:*

There are five executive positions: President, vice president, secretary, treasurer and past president. There can also be directors, invited or volunteered and voted in by the membership.

The following positions do not need to be executive directors: Plant sales, Show chair and show committee, Membership, Library, Host of refreshments at meetings, Plant orders, Speaker programs, Newsletter editor, a team to look after out-of-town displays, some electronic communications and Prize draws. And please also keep in mind that each and every one of these is a volunteer.

We use some professional services that do get paid – they are not volunteers:  
Post office, printers and website manager.

Ingrid Ostrander

### Reminders & Opportunities

Membership renewal: If you have not paid your membership fee for 2018-19, please see Kathryn Collins at the November meeting. It is your last opportunity to renew your membership as December 1<sup>st</sup> is the end of the grace period for the current year.

**Donation of plants for the Prize Draw table.** The prize draw is an important feature of our meetings. Recently, very few people have brought in their extra divisions for this purpose. Please check your collections for plants that you could donate to the table. It makes a big difference to the meeting.

### Classifieds



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