

# news

Volume 13.1 - February 2001

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- The Canadian Orchid Congress meeting will be held on March 4, 2001 at the Victoria Orchid Show and Sale. The Show begins with display set on March 1st, 2001; the Show ends on March 4, 2001. It is being held at the Student Union Bldg., University of Victoria. I hope to see many of the C.O.C. Representatives there. There are quite a number of issues to discuss and it would be helpful to have as many societies as possible represented. A reminder that the mounted medals are available from Ken Girard in Calgary.
- Cites - It is my understanding the *Lycaste skinneri* has now been removed from appendix one. *Cattleya skinneri*, I believe was removed from appendix one some time ago. With proper documentation these can now be imported. Added to appendix one is *Vanda coerulea*
- Speakers Tour 2001 - Mr. Francisco Miranda has agreed to return for a speaking engagement end of September, beginning of October 2001. I will be contacting all societies that have shown and interest in having Mr. Miranda as speaker for their society. If I have missed someone please contact me as soon as possible. I will keep everyone informed of progress.

*Lynne Cassidy*, President

## C.O.C. Show and Meeting 2001

University of Victoria - Student Union Building  
Mar. 3 - 4, 2001

Greetings from Victoria. Our show is coming up fast and the COC meetings need people to meet! I wish that at least one person from each of our twenty five (?) Canadian orchid Societies could attend. So far we have reps from only nine! although we have 24 registratons for the show. Could I bribe anyone? We will be giving each delegate a lovely canvas bag with lots of goodies inside. The COC auction during the Saturday (March 3rd/2001) evening banquet already has some great items for you to bid on. How about it? We would love to have you and treat you well - promise! - *Ingrid Ostrander*

## The COC Web Site Has Moved!

The Canadian Orchid Congress has had a web site for several years. The site was originally developed by Steve Saunders at the Orchid Society of Nova Scotia. A couple of years ago I was asked by the Executive to take over the maintainence of the files as they had become very much in need of updating.

The files resided as part of the Orchid Society of Nova Scotia web site and it was obvious that it was necessary to separate the COC files from the OSNS files. In other words, we should get our own file space even though that would change the web address that everyone had saved. Since the web address would change we decided that it would be worthwhile to get our own domain name at the same time as moving the files. We decided to stay with Chebucto in Halifax as they have a variety of useful services including domain name hosting. The files were all upgraded and relinked as they were moved to the new account. The new URL for the COC web site is <http://www.CanadianOrchidCongress.ca/>

- *Jerry Bolce*

## COC Newsletter on the Web

Please mention in your society newsletter that the COC Newsletters are available on the web at:

<http://www.CanadianOrchidCongress.ca/>

## Proposed Slate for Consideration at the COC Annual General Meeting

The COC Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the following persons have agreed to let their names stand for election to the COC Board at the annual COC meeting during the Victoria Orchid Society Show, Victoria B.C., March 1-4, 2001:

President (for re-election): Lynne Cassidy, Surrey BC  
(Fraser Valley OS)

Vice President (for re-election): Ingrid Ostrander,  
Brentwood BC (Victoria OS)

Secretary (for re-election): Terry Kennedy, Gormley ON  
(Southern Ontario OS)

Treasurer (for re-election): Janette Richardson, Regina SK  
(Regina OS)

Each Canadian Orchid Society which is a paid up member of the COC is entitled to a vote. Be sure your society sends a representative to this meeting to vote on its behalf.

*Marilyn Light*

*Past President*

*Chairman of the Nominating Committee*

## Slides Wanted

I am finishing my slide program on Cattleyas and am looking for good quality slides of *Cattleya guttata*, *C. leopoldii*, *C. harrisoniae* and *C. violacea*. Plus any other obscure species you think we should include in the program on *Cattleya* Species and their Culture. Please send a copy of the slide to Ken Girard, 630 Third Ave. N.W., Calgary Alberta T2N 0J1. Please include the following information on the slide: 1) Name of plant, 2) Name of Photographer, 3) Location if in natural habitat, 4) Clonal name and award (if pertinent).

## The ORCHIDS-CAN Mailing List

A mailing list provides a simple means of communicating with a large number of individuals having a common interest. A mailing list server maintains a list of the email addresses of all the subscribers to the list. When a subscriber sends email to the mailing list server, the server automatically forwards the email to all the email addresses in its list. The recipient can then reply to the message, writing back to the mailing list (so everyone gets a copy again) or privately to the sender's regular email address.

The "orchids-can" mailing list was set up to discuss Canadian issues in the orchid hobby. These issues include:

- orchid society events
- upcoming shows and show results
- local newsletters
- finding a specific plant or orchid vendor
- problems unique to keeping orchids in Canada
- native Canadian orchids including conservation
- Canadian regulations regarding importing/exporting of orchids

To subscribe to the list just send an email message to the server -

majordomo@chebucto.ca

and type in the body

subscribe orchids-can

and in a few minutes you'll receive a confirmation by email that you have successfully subscribed.

Messages can be sent to the readers of "orchids-can" by addressing email messages to

orchids-can@chebucto.ca

To be removed from the mailing list, send an email message to the server "majordomo@chebucto.ca" and simply type in the body of the message:

unsubscribe orchids-can

To get information on other commands, send an email message to "majordomo@chebucto.ca" and type in the body of the message.

help

## The COC Mailing List

The COC mailing list has been set up to discuss issues relevant to the COC organization and its member societies at the Executive level. The list would be used to convey information that is more immediate than the COC newsletter and to provide feedback from the societies and discussion among the societies. The purpose being the sharing of solutions to the problems of running of a society.

Issues discussed would include:

- discussion of programs such as available speakers, slide shows, etc.
- sharing information for newsletters
- assistance in putting on a show
- society announcements
- COC services
- showing at out-of-country shows

The COC Executive is on the list now. Would each society ensure that at least one representative join the list (usually the designated COC rep). Any other society members that wish to join are welcome.

To subscribe to the list just send an email message to the server -

majordomo@chebucto.ca

with

subscribe orchids

as the body of the email. Need to know who is on the list? Just sent the server the message:

who orchids

# WHAT IS AN ORCHID?

How many times have people asked me if an iris isn't some kind of orchid? No. Orchids are not lilies, amaryllids, ginger, cannas, bananas or irises, but all are closely related. These families are grouped together to form the monocots of the botanical world, and the orchids are noteworthy for having the most specialized flowers, habits and life histories in the entire group.

## Flower Characteristics

The major distinction of the orchid flower is the column, the single reproductive structure formed by a fusion of stamens and pistils that are separate in the flowers of the other families mentioned above. Though there are basically three stamens and three pistils, usually only the anther of one stamen remains functional, bearing its pollen at the tip of the column. The stigmatic surface, the part of the column that receives the pollen, is just below it. The orchid flower has three sepals, alternating with three petals. The sepals protect the flower in the bud, but become colored and petal-like when the flower opens, often giving the impression of a six-petaled flower, or five petals plus one that is different. The different petal (and one always is) is called the lip. The lip petal is marked by unusual form, veining patterns and usually a series of keels and protuberances called a callus. The shape of the lip and its callus - sometimes the whole flower - is highly adapted for insect attraction with resulting pollination. In fact, the evolution of the orchid family closely parallels the evolution of pollinating insects.

## Fruits and Seeds

If pollination takes place, a seed pod forms that may require as long as 14 months to develop. Usually about nine months will suffice, and the pod may have literally millions of seeds in it. The seeds are almost dust-like in size and are easily carried by wind and water for great distances. The embryo of the orchid seed is so tiny and underdeveloped, in comparison with other types of seed, that special conditions are necessary for its germination and growth. Until the little ball of undifferentiated cells becomes green, forms a growing point and finally begins to develop tiny leaves, it must live in symbiotic association with a favorable fungus. It is not surprising that from the many seeds produced in a single pod only a few survive to grow to adulthood - a process that may occur in a few months but with most species takes from six to twelve years.

## Orchid Evolution

Orchids most likely originated in the warm regions of southeastern Asia and spread from there throughout the

world. While the majority remained in the tropics, others, in migrating, became adapted to colder climates by means of seasonal growth that responds to changes in temperature. In the tropics, some orchids can grow more or less continuously, but most are seasonal there, too, responding not to winter vs. summer, but to the effects of alternating wet and dry periods. Such factors must be considered in the culture of these plants.

## Growth Patterns

The orchid plant itself has a variety of forms that merge into three basic patterns, one terrestrial, the other two epiphytic (epi=upon; phyton=plant). Terrestrial orchids in both tropical and temperate zones form leaves and flower stalks from underground corms or rhizomes that enable the plant to winter over. In fact, the name orchid is from the Greek orchis, meaning testis, in reference to the appearance of these underground parts. Theophrastus, Dioscorides, and other ancients of Europe and Asia Minor were the first to describe such orchids. In those days people were interested in the presumed medicinal uses of plants and whether or not they had souls, and thought that the shape or structure of a plant "told" what it was good for.

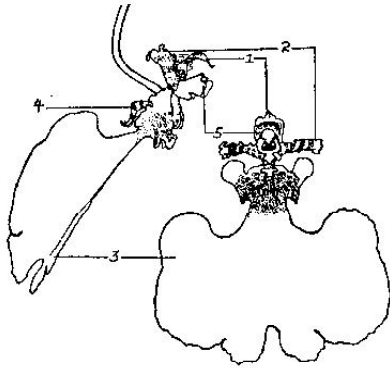
In the tropics, the habit of most orchids is to perch on the branches of trees, or sometimes rocks, from which they derive support but nothing else - they are not parasites. If the orchid grows constantly from the tip, and propagates itself by forming offshoots (known as "keikis" from their Hawaiian name) from the base of the plant, we refer to the growth pattern as monopodial (single-footed). Monopodial orchids are found especially in the forests of southeastern Asia, the Philippines, Madagascar (Malagasy) and Africa. If the plants grow seasonally, responding to wet and dry periods, sending up a new branch each season from the main rhizome, they are considered sympodial (with feet). Such orchids are found especially in the New World, but also where the monopodial types grow.

Learning to grow orchids in cultivation and to recognize the different sorts are among the intellectual challenges constantly presented by these plants. No other family involves so many aspects of horticultural activity, from laboratory to greenhouse or garden. No other family can present some 30,000 species and some 75,000 hybrids for the grower to choose from. To anyone who becomes attached to them, orchids soon become much more than botanical curiosities-they are likely to become a way of life. - *Carl L. Withner*

# DIVERSITY IN DESIGN

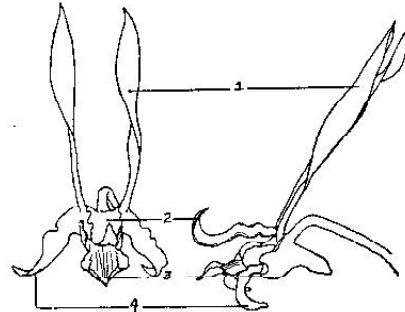
Some examples of orchid flowers of distinctive form  
 Key to the drawings 1-dorsal sepal; 2-petal; 3-lip; 4-lateral sepals; 5-column.

*Drawings by Sydney Kenna*



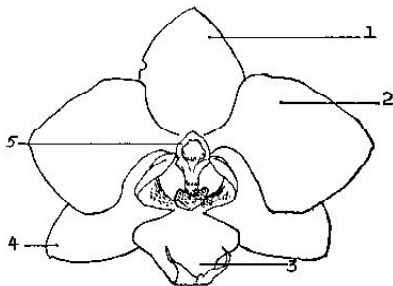
*Oncidium Java*

Note the heavy callus (the dotted portion, indicating tubercles) on the lip; also the tremendous size of the lip in relation to the rest of the flower.



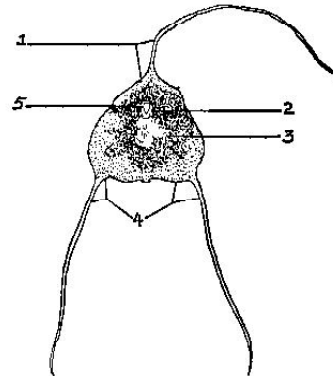
*Dendrobium d'albertisii*

Here the column is hidden. Petals are elongated. Keels replace the usual tubercles of the callus on the lip. The two lateral sepals form a spur at the base.



*Phalaenopsis*

In this typical hybrid, the lip is markedly three-lobed, with two short threadlike tips on the mid-lobe. Sepals and petals are similar in size.



*Masdevallia erythrochaete*

Note that the combined sepals form a broad-mouthed tube with three long tails. Petals and lip are in the center, greatly reduced in their dimensions.

*Reproduced from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden Handbook on Orchids with permission of the author.*

# UPCOMING EVENTS

2001

**February 10-11:** Southern Ontario Orchid Society, Toronto Civic Garden Centre, 777 Lawrence Ave. E at Leslie St., Toronto, Ontario.  
<http://www.theusualspot.com/max/soos2/>

**February 23-25:** Orchid Society of Alberta in the Grant MacEwan College, Millwoods Campus, 7319 - 29 Ave. Edmonton, Alberta  
Contact: [rmerz@telusplanet.net](mailto:rmerz@telusplanet.net) or call (780) 483-0137  
<http://www.freenet.edmonton.ab.ca/orchidab/>

**March 1 - 4:** Victoria Orchid Society Orchid Show and COC Annual Convention in the Student's Union Building of the University of Victoria. Contact: Ingrid Ostrander email: [ifl@telus.net](mailto:ifl@telus.net) Phone: 250-652-6133  
<http://www.members.home.net/bearman1/>

**March 10-11:** London Orchid Society Orchid Show, London, ON  
For show information: <http://los.lon.imag.net/losshows.htm>

**March 22-25:** Central Vancouver Island Orchid Society at the Country Club Center, Nanaimo, BC. Contact: Dora Glover  
<http://www.hedgerows.com/Canada/clubbroschures/CVIOS.htm>

**March 23-25:** The Manitoba Orchid Society. Contact: [mosorchids@home.com](mailto:mosorchids@home.com)  
<http://members.home.net/mosorchids/Index.htm>

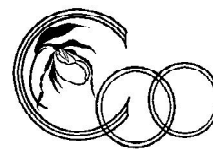
**March 24-25:** Les Orchidophiles de Montreal Show, College de Maisonneuve, 2700 Bourbonniere St., Montreal, Quebec  
<http://www.dunord.com/orchidophiles>

**March 31-April 01:** Orchid Society of the Royal Botanical Gardens, 680 Plains Rd., Burlington, ON. Contact: Jim Brasch at [jbrasch@mcmaster.ca](mailto:jbrasch@mcmaster.ca) or Alma Hasler at 905-823-5285  
<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Recreation/osrbg.html>

**April 6-8:** The Regina Orchid Society at the Core Ritchie Community Centre, Regina. Contact Bryan Hebb, President, ROS for more information. [bhebb@sk.sympatico.ca](mailto:bhebb@sk.sympatico.ca) (306) 586-4789 fax (306)586-4790

**April 28-29:** The Ottawa Orchid Society show, Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Ave., Nepean  
[http://tor-pw1.netcom.ca/~orchidae/oos\\_home.htm](http://tor-pw1.netcom.ca/~orchidae/oos_home.htm)

**COC Web Site - <http://www.CanadianOrchidCongress.ca/>  
Please send in your show information - date, location, contact, etc.**



news

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The purpose of COC news is to inform members of the meetings, policies of the COC, to profile members, and to provide technical information regarding happenings, trends and techniques in orchid cultivation across the country and around the world.

We welcome your suggestions and contributions. Deadline for each issue is one month before the issue dates previously announced.

Recipients of this newsletter are strongly urged to pass a copy on to other members of their society

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