



*The Greater Whorled Pagonia*

*Official Flower of the Club*

*Newsletter of the*

# AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY

*An affiliate of the American Orchid Society*

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## January Meeting

*By Nancy Goodman*

I had to get to the library early to get the area set up before the Directors showed up for their meeting at 1 pm. The Church group was still downstairs and they were running late, so we had a hard time getting everything out in time. We rushed to get all we needed out of the small room so they could start their meeting. The upstairs was also out for their meeting, since the church group was also running late upstairs. I am not sure what time they started, but it was later than they had wanted. We finally were able to set up the room and people started showing up early. It was a little crowded and trying to set up some of the room took going around all the members already there.

The actual meeting started a little late, but once we started, different club business was brought up. First up was trying to get a member to do the monthly write-ups for the meetings. It is not hard and all you have to do is write about what was said and done at the meetings. The next item brought up was getting members involved in doing the plant of the month write-ups. This is a great way to learn about the plant you pick to write about. You learn a lot by doing this research and not much is needed. We have books in our library that are for the members use and these can help you in doing the write-up. So why not try your hand at this. If you each do just one then we would be all set for a while. Let Carol the editor know if you want to help her out.

Next on the agenda was the trip to Longwood Gardens. It looks as if there is still space. This is a weekend trip and people always seem to really enjoy this one. If you have any question or know anyone who wants to go contact either Nancy Wight or Steve Reardon and send your money to Steve if you want to go. Time is running out so send in your money as soon as you can.

Ellen Kennedy then brought up doing displays at the other club shows. She will need help in getting plants to do up a display and if you would be interested in going and helping with the set-up that would also be welcome. Please contact Ellen at [E832847@aol.com](mailto:E832847@aol.com) if you have any plants for the shows that she wants to go and do. Mainly it will be the NH Orchid Society on Feb 22 or 23rd and possibly the Conn show later in the spring. She needs to get enough plants to be able to do a good display at these shows. Please help her out and contact her to see what you can do and also let her know what plants you have.

Ellen also has the shirts that members had ordered. They will be at the meetings and if you want to order a shirt contact her and send the money. She cannot order them until they are paid for.

After all the club business was dealt with we started our program for the month. A slide show from the Orchid Digest on "Forty Species Everyone Should Have in Their Greenhouses". Harold Norman showed it, since Lani was not able to attend due to recent surgery (Hope to see you soon Lani) and the backup person, Marje, was also taken ill. (Hope you are better also Marje). Seems like many of our members have been sick lately. Hope everyone gets better soon. It was a good slide show with some really nice looking flowers. Some of which I would have trouble growing since my sunroom might not be the best place to grow them. I have tried a few of them in the past, but they really might be happier in a humid greenhouse environment. But I can still dream of them and maybe one day a greenhouse might come my way!!!

Once the slide show was done we went onto the show table. I was actually amazed that there were people

who braved the cold weather to bring in their flowers and plants for sale. We actually had at least half the table filled up and there were some really nice plants. Steve Steiner presented the table with help from Kevin English and did a great job in showing off all the nice plants brought in. Carol had some very nice Dendrobiums and others brought in some very nice plants also. I loved the Masdevallias and the nice standard Cymbidium brought in by Steve, but I think the favorite of the day for me was the Dendrobium kingianum brought in, I think, by Keith Tibbets. I was sitting at the table working on updating something on my computer when he brought it in and I immediately knew what it was before I even saw it. I love that fragrance and especially during the winter. It really lifts my spirits and I just wish I had better luck in getting them to rebloom. What I end up doing is having to buy more just to enjoy the fragrance. So I hope one day I will learn their secret. I still have lots to learn and so much more to master in the world of orchid growing. I guess I will never stop learning, and that is half the fun of growing orchids. There is always something new to learn as in anything. So hope to see you all next month.



### Plant of the Month

*Pleurothallis restrepioides* Lindley; 1836 subgenus. *Elongatia* Luer 1986  
By Maryanne Laukaitis

(This orchid was also historically known as *Elongatia restrepioides* (Lindl.); *Humboldtia fritillaria* Kuntze 1891 and *Pleurothallis fritillaria*, 1855.)

At the November meeting, Bill Hutchinson brought his *Pleurothallis restrepioides* for the show table. While holding it up and showing off this distinctive orchid, he pulled off a few of the numerous keikis, and tossed them out to the waving hands of eager members. (Thanks for your generosity, Bill!) Steve Steiner brought his specimen to the January 2007 meeting, which attracted attention as well.

*P. restrepioides* is named for having some 'obscure' similarities to another "Pleuro" genus, *Restrepia*. Twelve inch long racemes of deep wine-red to purple, small (1") beak-like flowers arch gracefully from the main plant arising from a "spathe" structure at the base of a leaf. Each individual flower has a 'checkered' appearance (that I thought vaguely similar to the blossom of the commonly grown bulb, *Fritillaria meleagris*). The long racemes and the way the florets dangle pendant-ly from just the lower side, to me, resembles the way native Great Solomon's Seal carries its small, white, bell shaped florets. The flowers, however, are reputedly foul smelling, (although Bill's and Steve's did not have a strong scent that I noticed).

*P. restrepioides* is a medium sized species from Columbia, Ecuador and Peru, which grows as an epiphyte at altitudes from 3,280 feet to 9,180 feet, on steep slopes, in cool, damp forests, so it appreciates moisture and good air circulation. It is temperature tolerant, cool to warm growing, and may be brought outdoors in the summer, blooming in late fall to early winter. The plant has short rhizomes between elliptic petiolate leaves, but does not have pseudobulbs. Suggested medium for potting is a coarse bark mix.

A standard size variety is available named "Dragonstone," as well as a compact variety named "Elfin Beauty."



**Amherst Orchid society**  
**Show table January 2007**

**Maryanne Laukaitis**

Cool Greenhouse

NOID *Cattleya* – peloric?**Alex Loss**

Windowsill

*Stenosarcos Vanguard 'Fireball'***Carol Mentos**

Windowsill

*Beallara Marfitch AM/AOS**Dendrobium Princess 'Asai'**Encyclia polybulbon**Vanda Tokyo Blue***Janet Price**

Lights

*Epidendrum Beverly Sills**Paphiopedelum farrieanum* sib Merry Prankster X Kesey**Steve Steiner**

Cool to intermediate Greenhouse

*Cymbidium Arcadian Sunrise* "Golden Fleece"*Masdevalia Copper Angel**Masdevalia Copper Angel 'Highland'**Masdevalia hirtzii**Masdevalia mendoza**Masdevalia Pacific Gold 'Burnt Orange'**Pleurothallis restrepioides**Potinara Luna Jaune 'Taydra'**Restrepia brachypus***Keith Tibbetts**

Intermediate Greenhouse

*Dendrobium kingianum*

**Membership renewals**  
**Newsletter Notice Sticker**

As of this mailing if you have received a newsletter with a **red sticker** on it, this means this will be your last newsletter and your membership has expired. If by some chance you got a red sticker and you do not think you should have, please contact Nancy Goodman at [wildeyes@rcn.com](mailto:wildeyes@rcn.com) or Marc Gray at [orchids@together.net](mailto:orchids@together.net) ASAP to try and straighten out the problem.

**February Beginner Program**

This will be our first beginner program of this year. I am going to be doing this one myself on how I grow in a sunroom. I will be discussing the unusual stumbling blocks I have run against and talk about how I have dealt with them. We will also talk about how to start in your own growing space and different ways to deal with problems you might encounter.

I do have some bad news though for the rest of the year. I happened to find out that our club schedule had not been called in and many of the meeting dates we have, are ones that unfortunately the upstairs is already being used. It is not practical to have them downstairs as we found out in 2005. It was just too noisy and busy to do it there. So the only dates we will be able to be upstairs will be Feb, April, & Nov. I will be calling the town early in Nov. this year to make sure that this does not happen again. I will see if there are any other things we can do that might give us more dates. If you have any ideas please contact, Nancy Goodman at [wildeyes@rcn.com](mailto:wildeyes@rcn.com) me and lets see what we can do.



Questions for “ASK BILL” can be given to me at the monthly meetings. If possible write them out. If you prefer you may call me at 413-253-7036, write me a 52 Jeffrey Lane, Amherst, MA 01002-2532 or reach me via e-mail at >wa.hutchinson@comcast.net<. Answers to written questions may take one or two months to appear. The e-mail questions I nominally will answer within 24 hours or less. Keep in mind that if you are puzzled by a growing problem, etc. someone else is too.

Go to> [www.larchhillorchids.com](http://www.larchhillorchids.com)<, click on AmOrch and go directly an Amherst Orchid Society Web page. Additional information may be found on the Larch Hill pages. The web page now has the newsletter posted as a PDF file and most of them for the whole year are available.

Q Growing orchids on bark – nitrogen? If I use `Dyna-Grow`®, it doesn't seem to be adequate. What should I use to get adequate nitrogen?

A I would guess that you've read the analysis numbers and noted that `Dyna-Grow` is a low level fertilizer. What you might ask yourself are some basic questions. Is the foliage on my bark growing orchid plants sort of yellow or is it dark green (like spinach); do the plants flower regularly; and does my medium breakdown every growing season? Orchids plants need not be too dark green to be healthy. In fact if they are very bright, dark green they are getting too much nitrogen. The only reason we tend to give bark grown plants a little nitrogen boost is that the micro-organisms on the bark chunks require a lot of nitrogen and if we don't give that little extra then they steal it from whatever source is available to the orchids. Also the more nitrogen, the more microorganisms and the faster the bark breaks down. In addition the source of the nitrogen is important. Urea derived nitrogen is slow acting while nitrate and ammoniacal nitrogen are faster acting and more immediately available to the plants

Q I have a Phal that spiked last year . The spike never fell off (or died back?) after the flowers fell off. Now, it is spiking again. Do I cut off the old one?

Should I have cut it off after the last blossom dropped?

A Without knowing the cross my answer is going to be sort of tongue in cheek. Most phals will often produce a secondary flowering spike from one of the lateral nodes on the flower spike. This may be modified if there are certain species in the parental lineage and the original spike often comes out and looks somewhat zigzag. This type will often flower from the tips and generally you would not remove the old spike because even with several spikes on a plant they may intermittently bloom. If it is one of the more upright spiking types then you can remove any `finished` flower spike but in such cases I carefully peel off the covering scale-leaf at the node and see if it will initiate another spike since the scale like leaves often produce hormones which suppress lateral bud growth. If this is not clear corner me at a meeting and ask me for clarification.

## Notes to members

This month the program will be a slide program 'Trends in Modern Cattleya Breeding' by Ned Nash, AOS Director of Education and Conservation. In this program Ned identifies and illustrates the seven most important modern trends in cattleyas. A must see!

For March Lee Soule of New Hampshire will speak on 'Fragrance in Orchids'. This will include some biology and botany and then goes on to help determine what is fragrant just by knowing something about why orchids are fragrant.

This should be quite interesting as it will take us to places we have never been!

### **New York Orchid Show Trip**

On April 21st there will be a bus trip to New York City for their annual Orchid Show. The price for this is \$38.00. Payment will have to be made by the March meeting.

There are still spaces for the Longwood Garden trip on March 31st and April 1st. So far 21 have signed up. The prices again are: **Single-\$201.00 Double-\$151.00 Triple-\$134.00**

Any questions please call Nancy Wight at 584-1733; on week ends at 549-0860

I would like to let you and the members know that University Health Services is planning a bus trip to the Rhode Island Flower Show on Sunday Feb 25th. If anyone is interested I can get you more info. Doris Goodwin at [dmgood@uhs.umass.edu](mailto:dmgood@uhs.umass.edu)

### **Treasurer's Note**

FYI: \$1417.94 is the current balance in the Club's checking account

To find the bylaws of the Amherst Orchid Society go to: [www.larchhillorchids.com](http://www.larchhillorchids.com) and click on Amherst Orchid Society and then bylaws.

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**Amherst Orchid Society**  
**2007 Upcoming Events**

February 18- Monthly Meeting 2pm  
March 31- Longwood Garden trip with the  
April 1 Amherst Orchid Society  
April 21- New York Orchid Show

**Note to Members:** Submissions for the March, 2007 newsletter must reach the editor by February 28, 2007 to be printed.

**AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY**  
**MONTHLY MEETING**

Our monthly meetings are held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of each month except the month of August. Most of the meetings (except June and July) are held at the Munson Memorial library in South Amherst at 1046 South East St. next to the Congregational church. Meetings start at 2 pm with beginner programs some months at 1:30 pm.



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*Official Flower of the Club*

Carol Mentos, Editor  
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Amherst, MA 01002

**NEXT MEETING:**

Sunday, February 18th at 2pm at the Munson Library in Amherst.

Leilani Norman will present a slide program 'Trends in Modern Cattleya Breeding' by Ned Nash.

Nancy Goodman will do a beginner's program on growing in a sunroom beginning at 1:30 pm.

*Refreshments: If your name begins with E, F, G, or H it is your turn to bring refreshments to the next meeting.*