



*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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Volume 14 Issue 5

May, 2006

**THE MAY MEETING WILL BE HELD AT THE DURFEE
CONSERVATORY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MASS.**

The New York Trip

By Carol Mentos

Thirty-eight eager souls and one American Staffordshire terrier, appropriately named Princess, boarded a bus on April 22nd bound for the Big Apple. Despite the pending rain, people were enthusiastic about seeing The 26th New York International Orchid Show at Rockefeller Center. For a number of people this was their first trip to the New York Show. About three hours and one pit stop later we arrived at a rainy Rockefeller Center. Strategically placed tents kept us dry as we waited in line to get inside the show. Once inside the dreariness of the day dissipated as our senses were filled with the wonderful scents, colors and varieties of shapes of the orchids.

Individuals went their own way to explore. Ellen Kennedy, Princess, and I began the day with our first stop being the show. We were joined by Douglas Mac Brien and all his photo gear. He was intrigued by what the orchids offered his camera lens, and paused for long moments at each display to click pictures of the flowers.

We made it about an eighth of the way through the show when Princess became bored and tried to sneak ribbons from one of the displays. We decided to take a brief rest, and Ellen distracted Princess with treats. The show was much busier than last year; visitors inched slowly past. An enormous spray of bamboo and giant cymbidiums arched gracefully over our heads, in the back round, the rush of the waterfall.

An open door near where we were resting led to the vendors. This proved much too enticing to resist. At this point we were separated from Mr. Mac Brien. We browsed the many vendors, and I quickly spent my quota on two plants, a *Renanthera Kalsum*, more commonly known as the Fire Orchid, and *Cirrhopetalum Daisy Chain* x *Cirrhopetalum gracillimum* also nicknamed the Daisy-Chain Orchid. Ellen kept tabs in her head on the plants she planned to buy. She impressed me with her memory of the many plant names. I know what I like, but I can never remember names. Time stood still for us as we roamed the many vendors occasionally running into other society members.

Our hunger reminded us that time was passing, and we stopped for a lovely lunch at a

restaurant in Rockefeller Center where we could watch the people wander both the show and the vendors. Princess enjoyed nibbles from both medallions of pork and filet mignon as we leisurely ate, sipped wine, and enjoyed good conversation. Marc noted later that another table was offended to be sharing a restaurant with a dog. Fortunately we were oblivious.

But where did the time go? As we paid for our meal we realized we only had 45 minutes left before boarding the bus. Ellen and I split company then. I made one last purchase for a Father's day gift, and then quickly toured the rest of the show. Most of the show was a blur, but I did stop to pause at the display by Andy's Orchids, which was quite impressive. Their display won the Best Display in the Show.

Ellen darted about with Princess collecting the various plants she planned to buy. Before she could make her last purchase Marc nabbed her to board the bus. I was embarrassingly the last to board. We departed for a long ride home. There was lively conversation at first which slowly turned into many open mouthed snores. Princess sprawled like an exhausted toddler over Ellen's seat. I left dreaming of the day when the Amherst Orchid Society not just visits the show, but also maybe someday does its own display. All in all it was a very enjoyable day.

May Meeting

The May meeting will be at the Durfee Conservatory at 1:00PM (note early time) on May 21st. We will have the regular show table and plant sale table. The Durfee will also have divisions of their plants and various flower and vegetable seedlings to sell to support the Durfee.

We hope that the refreshment people can bring some snacks. Armand will supply the drinks.

There will not be any formal program so the members will have plenty of time to tour the Durfee and inspect the plants.

Directions to Durfee:

The Durfee Conservatory is located on the campus of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

To get to the Durfee from I-91: Take Route 9 exit in Northhampton. Head East on Route 9 to Amherst. Turn left on Pleasant Street and drive through town.

Turn left at Triangle Street (3rd Traffic light). This street will then turn into North Pleasant Street. At the second light turn right, then immediately turn right again at the first street you come to (across from the Newman Center), this is Infirmary Way. Follow this up about .1 miles turning left at the guard booth. Parking is at the far end of the lot on the left marked for Durfee.

To get to the Durfee from I-90 (The Mass Pike): Take the Palmer exit off of the Pike, and follow the signs to Amherst and UMass. You will follow 181 to 202 North to Route 9 West. When you reach Amherst, turn right onto Pleasant Street and follow the instructions as above.

Parking for visitors to Durfee: There are parking spaces in the Durfee/University Health Services parking lot for Durfee visitors.

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ASK BILL

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 at 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<, The new web page is almost finished. I hope you will approve of the new look when it comes on line.

Q. How does one do stem cuttings of Phals? What's the technique?

A. First a point of clarification. The "stem" on Phaleanopsis is very compressed and is impossible to use without destroying the plant. So I assume you mean the floral scape. Culture of the scape is difficult because you must first decontaminate the growth and eliminate any and all organisms but orchid tissue. The problem is that compounds or treatments, which kill the foreign organisms, are often harsh and tend to kill the orchid tissue. Several methods can be used. One is to treat the cut floral scape with a 50/50 bleach/ boiled cooled water mixture for several minutes. Exactly how long is part of the experimental process. I would recommend 5 minutes as a starter. Then rinse with some of the cooled, boiled water to remove excess bleach and place in living sphagnum inside a clear 2-liter beverage container. This will work about 30% of the time. You may also purchase Keikii grow from several sources in the AOS journal and carefully peel back one of the scale leaves over the node and covering the incipient bud. After several weeks a small plantlet will develop and that you can treat it with some rooting hormone, all in all a long careful process. If you wish more detailed information let me know and I'll put together an article on tissue culture and meristeming.

Q. The new leaves on my plants appear to be eaten by the Lady Bugs on the plants. Can that actually happen?

A. It would be most unusual for Lady Bugs to eat your plants since they are carnivores and not herbivores. What you may be observing is the Lady Bug beetle eating very small organisms, which often tend to cluster at leaf margins. Since the vascular system often end at or near the leaf margin and is a ready source of nutrient leakage and hence is a location for the aphids and the like to congregate.

Q. What conditions do I need to make my *Dendrobium chrysotoxum* bloom?

A. This species is originally from the Sikkim region of India into Burma, Thailand, Laos and southern China. It needs good light but is adaptable to high light especially in the A.M. The temperature range is warm to intermediate with as much as a 30° F difference between night and day. Water heavily when plants are actively growing with gradual reduction in watering as the growth matures. Fertilize weekly weakly with high nitrogen fertilizer (2:1:1) and as growth mature switch to a high phosphate fertilizer (1:2:1). While dry in the fall and winter months it can tolerate temperatures near 50° F. Do not allow drying for extended periods during the winter and as you begin drying off reduce or eliminate the fertilizing program. *D. chrysotoxum* is considered to be a problem plant by many growers so careful attention to the suggested growth regimen is needed. Repot in the spring after flowering using an open fast-draining medium. Plants may also be mounted.

FRAGRANT ORCHIDS

From Lee Soule, 13 McIntosh Road, Brookline, NH 03033-2222 Tel. (603) 672-9676 e-mail>Lcsoule@aol.com< for assistance or other orchids which may be fragrant.

Below is a list of suggested orchids for those interested in a fragrant orchid collection.

Orchid Name	Growing Instructions	Difficulty
1. Eurychone rothschildiana	Humid, mounted, shade	Moderate
2. Amesiella philippinense	Bright shade, humid. Pots or slabs	Moderate
3. Angraecum Magdalena	Bright, pots.	Difficult
4. Cyrtorchis chailluna	Bright, pots.	Easy
5. Oeniella polystachyia	Bright, slabs or pots. Rambling habit.	Easy to moderate
6. Gastrochilus acutifolium	Bright, light shade. Pots or mounted.	Moderate.
7. Dendrobium trigonopus	Bright, pots: a small orchid.	Moderate. Rest in win-
8. Maxillaria tenuifolia	Bright, pots, slabs. Rambling habit.	Easy!
9. Oncidium ornithorhynchum	Bright, pots. (Some will not care for fragrance).	Easy
10. Lycaste aromatica cruenta	Bright, pots. Rest in winter	Easy to moderate.
11. Bifrenaria harrisoniae	Bright, pots only. Grow cool, drier in winter. Grow	Moderate
12. Cat, Blc, LC hybrids	Almost always fragrant. Rhyncolaelia (Brassovola)	Generally easy, grows
13. Encyclia citrina (formally	Bright, mounted only. Grows pendent.	Difficult, not for be-
14. Miltoniopsis hybrids (many	Moist, humid. Good air movement (hybrids easier	Easy
15. Miltoniopsis species	Small pots, shady and cool.	Moderate
16. Catasetum russellianum	Bright, dry rest in winter. Flowers short lived.	Easy
17. Cynoches warscewizii,	Bright, dry rest in winter, fragrance like commer-	Moderate
18. Brassovola nodosa, other	Species mounted. Hybrids will grow in pots.	Easy
19. Stanhopeas species and	In baskets only. Unruly and vigorous. Lots of wa-	Easy
20. Dendrobium rhodopteryg-	Pots. Dry and cool in fall and early winter.	Easy
21. Phalaenopsis violacea	Pots. Shady and humid	Easy
22. Chrysis aurea	Bright. Grows horizontal	Moderate

To find the bylaws of the Amherst Orchid Society go to: www.larchhillorchids.com and click on Amherst Orchid Society and then bylaws.

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Amherst Orchid Society **2006 Upcoming Events**

May 21st 1 pm Amherst Orchid Society Monthly Meeting to be held at the Durfee Conservatory at U. Mass.

AMHERST ORCHID SOCIETY MONTHLY MEETING

Our monthly meetings are held the 3rd 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.

Note to Members: Submissions for the June, 2006 newsletter must reach the editor by May 30, 2006 to be printed.



*The Greater Wooded Pagonia
Official Flower of the Club*

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NEXT MEETING:

1 PM

The May meeting will take place at the Durfee Conservatory at the University of Massachusetts. Note the different time. Directions are in the newsletter.

Refreshments

If your last name begins with I, J, K, or L it is your turn to bring refreshments to the next meeting.