

Palomar Orchid Society

Dates to Remember:

- **June 1, Wednesday**
POS General Meeting
- July 8 - 10, 2011
Santa Barbara
International
Orchid Fair
- **August 6, Saturday**
POS Annual Auction
Mark it down!
- September 24 & 25
Fascination of Orchids
Santa Ana

July Meeting - 7:00 pm

Wednesday, July 6

Ben Machado, Calavo Gardens

“The Confused World of Schomburgkias ”

This month's speaker is Ben Machado, who is well known to many POS members. Ben has been growing orchids for the last 19 years, after having been introduced to orchids by one of San Diego County's leading growers, Harry Tolen. It started off as a concern for Ben finding something to do as his retirement was approaching. Now, after 10 years of retirement, Ben's initial dabbling in the world of orchids has turned into a hobby gone wild. Does that sound familiar to anyone?

Ben's orchid obsession started with Cattleya hybrids, moving on to Dendrobiums, Oncidiums, Paphs, Bulbophyllums, etc., etc., before settling in with a special focus on species orchids. Along the way, Ben began to take particular interest in one class of orchids within the cattleya alliance called Schomburgkias, primarily because of their conduciveness to his growing conditions in the East County of San Diego, where temperatures are higher and light levels are more pronounced than those on the coast.



Schomburgkia exaltata



Ben Machado speaking at the Newport Harbor Orchid Society.



Schomburgkia tibicinis

As Ben delved deeper into this fascinating class, he found that the world of Schomburgkias is not well defined and that there are plenty of misidentifications with numerous classification changes taking place. As a result, he conducted his own study to help him with identification and classification of the species. Ben's study has served as the basis of his presentation on Schomburgkias entitled "The Confused World of Schomburgkias". Ben is proud to say that he is one of the few orchid enthusiasts in the country who has the complete collection of Schomburgkia species. Of course, if anyone is interested in a specific Schomburgkia species, Ben will be willing to sell them, provided he has duplicate plants available.

As if orchid growing wasn't enough for Ben, Harry Tolen also got him started in the orchid supplies business. He and his wife, Susie, own Calavo Gardens, an at-home business specializing in the needs of the orchid grower. Calavo Gardens offers a multitude of products at reasonable prices, including media (orchid bark, perlite, charcoal, sphagnum moss), fertilizers, a broad array of decorative and standard growing pots, hangers, baskets, etc. Since Harry

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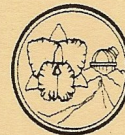
“Liberty is the right to choose, Freedom is the result of the right choice.”

July Culture Class 6:30 pm
Schomburkia Growing Techniques
 By Ben Machado



Ben will extend his presentation on Schomburkias by teaching us how to grow them properly! This is an excellent opportunity to learn from one of the foremost Schomburkia authorities. Don't miss this class if you like these types of orchids!

Don't be late...class starts at 6:30 pm sharp!



Palomar Orchid Society
Annual Orchid Auction

Saturday, August 6, 2011

Preview at 11AM, Auction at 12:00 noon

Location: Woman's Club of Carlsbad
 3320 Monroe Street, Carlsbad, CA 92008

Directions: Go east off the 5 onto Carlsbad Village Drive. Go .6 mile to Monroe and turn right. The Woman's Club is one block on the left. Parking is free in the rear of the building.

Monthly meetings: First Wednesday of the month at the Woman's Club.

Culture class at 6:30 p.m., regular meeting at 7:00 p.m.

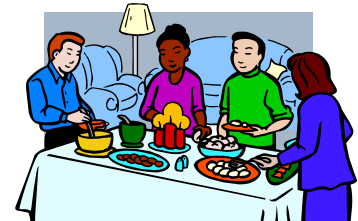
Reminder - There will be no regular Wednesday night meeting in August . Instead, we have our Auction!

From the Refreshment Committee:

Remember: All members with last names beginning with **H-M** share at break time!

We appreciate everyone's effort in supplying our meeting with goodies.

It makes for a great meeting all around!
 Thank you!



President's Message

Dear POS Members and Friends,

Summer is upon us folks, and it seems to be getting hotter! Not only are orchids like cattleyas doing their active growing (and some blooming), but also the POS will be getting busy. I'm sure you know what I am referring to...preparations for the big POS Annual Auction in August (see separate article). Nancye Doros graciously volunteered to be the plant collecting coordinator, making the phone calls and securing the donations. Now, we need volunteers to pick up plants! Please help if you can. See the other auction article in this newsletter for info on other volunteer needs for the auction.

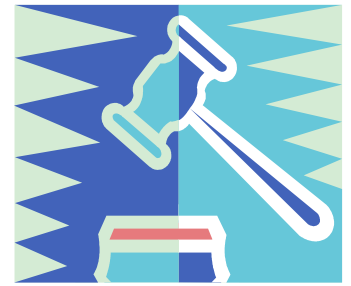
We are in the midst of revamping the website, and I wish to thank again, Helge Wessig, for his expertise, time and effort into doing this. There should be a preview coming up soon after we review it at the next POS board meeting on

June 29. It is substantially streamlined compared to our old site. And by the way, just a reminder, anyone is welcome to attend a board meeting, observe and provide opinions to the board if they wish, so this is a standing invitation.

Ben Machado is our speaker for the July meeting, which will be a great talk. He has been a local grower, vendor and hobbyist for many years, and is extremely knowledgeable about orchids (and generous too). The plant table will be excellent as usual. Please join us for the meeting. Look forward to seeing you there!

Happy Summer Growing!

Gil Ho



the 31st annual

Santa Barbara Orchid Estate

International

ORCHID

FAIR

July 8th - 10th, 2011

9am to 5pm Friday & Saturday ~ 10 to 4 Sunday
at Earl Warren Show grounds in Santa Barbara

Admission is Free ~ Parking \$5



Mark your calendars for this year's Auction -

Saturday, August 6th!

Our orchid auction is the major fundraiser for the society. A successful auction means the society will make funds to support meetings, speakers, activities, and plant tables during the year.

Every member should find a way to pitch in and help support the auction. There are many things to do: plants to pick up and hold for August, plants to donate from your collections, help with advertising, help with refreshments, early setup on Saturday morning, and jobs during the actual auctioning. This year, the auction is running by committee, and we need your help more than ever!

There is something for everyone to help with.

So, start thinking about the ways in which you can help to make this a most profitable auction. We want to continue to provide the great speakers and plant tables we've had in the past during the com-

ing months.

At the July meeting, please plan on volunteering to help in any way you can. Sign-up sheets and more information will be available at the meeting. If you aren't going to make the July meeting, or if you would like, you can **call Sandi Sandquist at 760-918-2408** and see what you can do.

And thanks in advance for all your help!



A special thanks to Derek Woodman for the donation of orchid supplies. He has given us coconut chips, fertilizer, perlite, sphagnum moss, and lots of cork for mounting orchids.

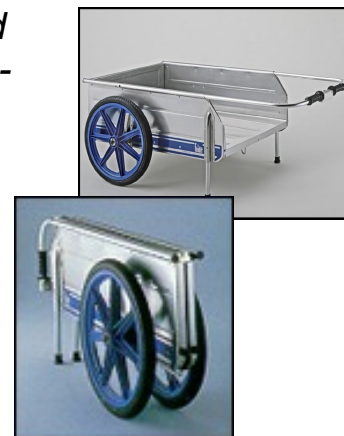
A special item will be up for bid: A folding garden cart, the Foldit by Tipke Manuf. This is not a new cart, but it is gently used, looks almost new. Tires are pumped up and it is ready to go to a new home and be put to good use! It belongs to POS, however, we have not been using it and no longer have a place to store it.

This cart retails new from \$250 to \$320. You can get it at the auction and save a bundle!

- ✦ Folds Easily for Convenient Storage
- ✦ Weighs Only 33 lbs, but can Haul up to 330 lbs.
- ✦ 20 inch wheels
- ✦ Completely Rust and Corrosion Resistant
- ✦ Sturdy All-Aluminum Construction
- ✦ Made with Pride in the USA

Specifications:

Hauling Capacity: 5.75 cubic feet, 330 pounds
 Inside Dimensions: 38" Long x 22.75" Wide x 11.5" Deep
 Overall Dimensions: 55" Long x 30.25" Wide x 23" Deep
 Folded Dimensions: 41" Long x 9.5" Wide x 22" Deep





Myrmecophila grandiflora

Certain tropical orchids are well-suited and often used as landscape subjects in frost-free areas of Florida. *Schomburgkia tibicinis* was one of them. I say "was", because although the orchid is still around, the name isn't. I will use it in this personal tribute until further down the page when we deal with new order of taxonomy.

I came to West Palm Beach forty years ago. I was growing a few orchids then and remember seeing a fairly robust specimen of *Schomburgkia tibicinis* growing high on a Royal Palm tree at Henne-gan's Garden Center on State Road 80. In those days I had thought most orchids were of a delicate nature and wondered about this orchid with a long inflorescence that was growing in nearly full sun. Years later, I would see this species growing in a similar, but even brighter, setting in its habitat in Belize.



The yellow pseudobulbs of *Schomburgkia (Myrmecophila) tibicinis* encircling the top of a tree in Belize.

By that time I was a far smarter orchidist and knew about the schomburgkias' preference for bright light. My early exposure to this dramatic orchid gave me an introduction to the diversity of orchids and *Schomburgkia tibicinis* has always been a favorite. I learned about the orchid's association with ants that its current name reflects. Although we never saw ants taking up residence in hollowed-out backbulbs, it seemed that ants always showed up on the inflorescences of flowering plants. I wondered if there were some quality to the sugary nectar on the flowers and pedicels that had a special attraction for ants, preparing the relationship

for future housing. As with that other species found in Belize, *Coryanthes macrantha*, the orchid provides the shelter and the ants provide the defense.

I also learned the folklore; the dried-out pseudobulbs are used as toy horns by native children, giving the orchid the common name, "cow horn orchid". I have always been drawn to orchids that have a history as well as a pretty face and *Schomburgkia tibicinis* fills the bill nicely. I picked up my first *Schomburgkia tibicinis* from a long-gone local business called Quiet Place Nursery. They were a small orchid firm behind a busy intersection in Lake Worth. There was nothing but white sand underneath the benches and one thin layer of shadecloth above the plants. Those orchids that weren't mounted were potted in cypress mulch topped with Osmacote. As the owner Marie explained, "Maybe these plants are grown a little tough, but we don't have to worry about people taking them home and killing dainty little things. If they'll grow here, they'll grow anywhere."

There are many other fine ant-associated schomburgkias to know and grow. The Kew Monocot Check-



Recchara Adele King 'Barbaree' AM/AOS

list shows ten species, four varieties and one natural hybrid. Some of these can be found in the trade and are popular among hobbyists, especially those living in mild climates. *Schom. thomsoniana* and *Schom. humboldtii* are popular on their own with

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

the former being a parent for a number of successful intergeneric hybrids; *Recchara* Adele King (x *Blc.* Waiki Gold) and *Schombocattleya* Trudy Fennell (x *C. guttata*) being awarded examples. At opposite ends of inflorescence length; *Schom. brysiana* is best used as a garden subject unless you have a high greenhouse roof, while *Schom. wendlandii* with its unique non-resupinate flowers and comparatively short inflorescence is most suitable for greenhouse growing.

The genus *Schomburgkia* was established by Lindley in 1838 with the type species being *Schom. crispera*. That species has not much in common with the ant orchids yet up until recently, was still a *Schomburgkia*.

The name honors Moritz Richard Schomburgk, a German-born gardener and plant collector who went on to become the director of the Adelaide Botanic Garden in 1865. Despite Richard being the honoree, it was his older brother Robert Hermann Schomburgk who dragged his little brother along on his second British-sponsored boundary-mapping expedition to British Guiana (1840-1844). There was also a middle Schomburgk brother named Otto who emigrated to Australia



Schom. wendlandii has a relatively short inflorescence suitable for the small greenhouse.

with Richard in 1849. Although Veitch reported that Robert discovered the type for the genus, this is reflected nowhere in today's nomenclature. As a matter of fact, of the eight species in the Kew Monocot Checklist bearing the Schomburgk name, all are attributed to Robert Hermann and only one was an orchid. That single orchid species is *Sobralia elisabethiae* R.H.Schomb. *Schomburgkia humboldtii* (left), described by Reichenbach in 1856, acknowledged the Schomburgk brothers long-standing friendship with the great naturalist and explorer, Alexander von Humboldt. As a note of trivia, it was Richard Schomburgk who discovered that Victorian rage, the giant waterlily, *Victoria amazonica*, described as *Victoria regia* by Lindley in 1837.

We have never grown what were, until recently, considered the "true" schomburgkias; those from South

America. Some grow them successfully here in South Florida but I suspect many of them are from elevations higher than the ten-foot average across most of the southern part of the peninsula. Our summer night temperatures never go below 75° F. This group would include the type for the genus, *Schom. crispera* (now *Laelia marginata* (Lindl.) L.O.Williams) and many fine orchids such as *Schom. undulata*, *Schom. rosea* and others.

For years there has been confusion, differing opinions and rumblings about changes in *Schomburgkia* and *Laelia* so we can't say we weren't forewarned. Withner, in his 1992 Volume III of *The Cattleyas and Their Relatives* had not yet reached the conclusions that today's taxonomists have. He kept a slightly enlarged concept of *Schomburgkia* that included the South American species, the ant-associated species, and one Mexican (Guatemala, Honduras too) *Laelia: L. superbiens*. This is not so odd because the Mexican species has been passed around genera like a hot tamale, having visited *Cattleya*, *Laelia*, *Schomburgkia* and even *Bletia*. Withner was sharp enough to deduce that the Mexican *Laelia anceps* was different enough from the Colombian *Schomburgkia splendida* to not put them in the same genus. But today's taxonomists, who are heavily vested in DNA evidence as the irrefutable truth, have indeed lumped the South American schomburgkias into the same genus as the Mexican laelias - *Laelia*. Although I am happy to see such a pretty name preserved (*Laelia*, named after one of

the Vestal Virgins), I expect that some time in the future we may see this genus spilt because of floral and vegetative characteristics of certain species.

So the genus *Schomburgkia* is gone. The South America species have moved north to *Laelia* and the ant-lovers are now in the genus *Myrmecophila*. Withner addressed the latter move even though he himself used *Schomburgkia*



Schomburgkia humboldtii
'Ruben' CHM/AOS

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 5)

for all of them in vol. III: "The choice of using the segregate genus (*Myrmecophila*) for the ant-inhabited taxa, or keeping them altogether within *Schomburgkia*, seems to me a relatively arbitrary one". He goes on to propose keeping them all in *Schomburgkia* and dealing with the differences at the sub-generic level. Now



Laelia superbiens var. *alba*

Laelia - sections within the genus.

I suppose I will get used to it, but only if name changes stop coming so rapidly. I for one will be happy to say goodbye to those silly hybrid genus names from the everything-in-*Sophronitis* days, like *Thwaitseara*. But I will miss hearing the rich guttural sound of *Schom-*

there's a thought that appeals to me. I always liked Pabst & Dung's revision of Brazilian laelias (*Orchidaceae Brasiliensis*, vol.I, 1975). They presented a group of orchids that had some things in common (*Laelia*), yet some differences (*Cattleyodes*, *Hadrolaelia*, *Parviflora*, *Microlaelia*)

burgkia (or as one friend pronounced it, *Schromburgkia*). The name itself holds a special magic for me; remembrances of my early days as an orchid grower when every new orchid discovered was a source of excitement. I'll miss hearing the call of the Schombocat as I console myself watching ants crawl up and down the four-foot inflorescence of a *Myrmecophila tibicinis* next spring.



Greg Allikas - September 2009

References:

- Withner, Carl. 1992. *The Cattleyas and their Relatives*, Volume III. Timber Press. Portland
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- Linden, J., Linden, Lucien, Rodigas, E.M., Rolfe, R.A 1993. *Lindenia*. Naturalia. Turriers.
- Escobar, Rodrigo. 1992. *Native Colombian Orchids*, Volume 4. Compañía Litográfica Nacional S.A.. Medellín

Thank you to the American Orchid Society for allowing us to reprint this article.

(Continued from page 1)

Tolen moved his orchid supply business from Chula Vista to Oregon State several years ago, Ben is now the only local business that specializes in serving greater San Diego orchid hobbyists and growers (Calavo Gardens: Ph: (619) 948-5942; email: bmach16814@aol.com).

Ben is an active member of the San Diego orchid community, serving as a past Board Member of the San Diego County Orchid Society for over 7 years and past Show Director for the SDCOS Spring Show for 3 years. Ben is currently Show Director for the San Diego International Orchid Fair held at San Diego Botanic Garden, formerly Quail Gardens.

Ben's presentation is surely one not to be missed, since Schomburgkias and their hybrids are becoming increasingly popular to orchid hobbyists due to their interesting and unusual flower shapes and color combinations as well as their overall hardiness.

In addition to providing the plant table, Ben will conduct the culture class on "Schomburgkia Growing Techniques" and have available for sale a few select plants and some orchid supplies during the meeting.

Photos from the May Meeting

All Photos by Debra Funakoshi



Anita Spencer's *Cuitlauzina pendula*, now called a *Cribbia pendula*



Jerry Spencer's *Lc. Canhamiana coerulea* 'Azure Sky'



Renate Schmidt's *Blc. Picotee Passion* x *Slc. Fire Fantasy*



Jerry Spencer's *C.. Time-Life*

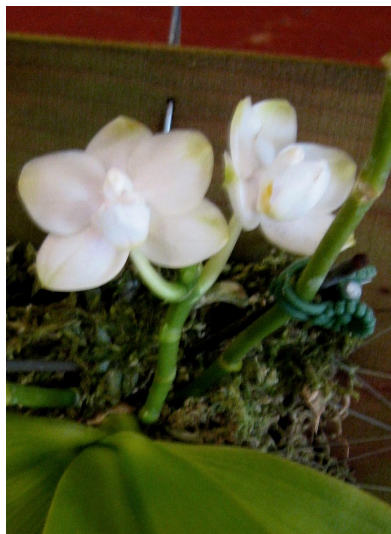
WELCOME

To our new members:
Mike & Patti Nelson

Welcome to POS!
We are glad you have joined us!



Renate's *Ascocentrum ampullaceum*



Nico Goosen's *Phal. Tristar Snow Princess*



Warren Stehle's *Cym. Mitzi Mable*



Dr. Hasegawa supplied us with a wonderful opportunity table filled with *Paphiopedilums* like this!



June guest speaker Dr. Norito Hasegawa and Cecily Bird talk about Paphs, while Nico Goosens listens attentively..

Fascination of Orchids Show and Sale

September 24 & 25, 2011 10 am to 5 pm
 South Coast Plaza Village
 1631 West Sunflower
 (Corner of Sunflower & Bear)
 Santa Ana, CA 92704

Exhibits • Seminars • Sales

Experience thousands of exotic orchids in a beautiful outdoor setting and learn how to grow and exhibit orchids from local experts.

Parking and admission are free

For more information please call 949.735.2930 or visit www.ocorchidshow.com

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Palomar Orchid Society
Membership Chairperson
5210 Frost Ave
Carlsbad, CA 92008

No Regular Meeting in
June:
**POS Auction,
Saturday, August 6**



It's All About Orchids!

Meeting Information

The Palomar Orchid Society meets the **FIRST WEDNESDAY** of every month at the Carlsbad Women's Club, 3320 Monroe, Carlsbad. Go east off 5 on Carlsbad Village Drive 1/2 mile to Monroe, turn South on Monroe to Women's Club. OR go west off El Camino Real at Carlsbad Village Drive to Monroe and turn south to the Women's Club. Beginner's Culture Class starts at 6:30 pm. The regular meeting begins at 7:00 pm. The next regular meeting will be on Sept. 7, 2011. There is no regular meeting for the month of August, as we are having our auction on Saturday, August 6 instead.

Other Nearby Orchid Societies

San Diego County Orchid Society: First Tuesday of the month, 7:30 pm, Room 101, Casa del Prado, Balboa Park. Membership: Bob Clark, 858-270-8352, email bclark@sdorchids.com

San Diego County Cymbidium Society: Third Wednesday of the month. Always a speaker, Q&A session and raffle. 7:00 PM. Free admission and refreshments. San Diego Botanic Garden, 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas. (760)732-0055.

Open Houses\Other Orchid Sightings

San Diego Zoo Orchid Greenhouses: Third Friday each month, 10 am to 2 pm. Free with admission. Contact: Janette Gerrity 619-231-1515, ext. 4306

Quail Gardens Botanical Gardens Judging Center: First Monday each month, 7:00 pm. Encinitas. Bring plants in to be judged.