

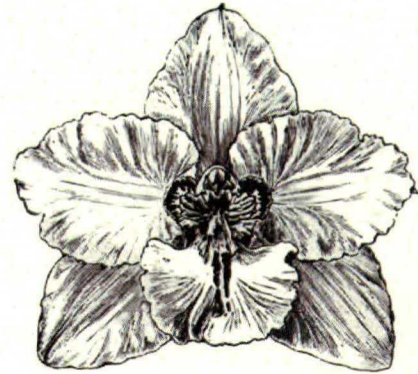
Odontoglossum Alliance Newsletter

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ODONTOGLOSSUM HALLII AND FRIENDS



Odontoglossum hallii in situ. Photo (1982) by the author.

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Odontoglossum hallii Lindl., was originally collect-
ed by Colonel Francis Hall, whose name it bears, in
the Valley of Lloa, Pichincha, west of Quito, Ecu-
ador. John Lindley described it in 1837, and called
it “A most beautiful species”. Had Lindley seen
the living flowers of the fine Hall specimen in the
Hooker Herbarium, he would probably have added
some even more flattering comments, because this
truly is a most magnificent species! For many years
after the original description was published, and
even reaching into modern times, plants of *O. hallii*
have been mixed-up with *O. spectatissimum* Lindl.
This is difficult to understand today when we have
ample access to live plants and excellent photogra-
phy of both species.

Odontoglossum hallii is distinguished by the large showy flowers with deeply furcate column wings and a large, pandurate lip with broad, fimbriate to lacerate front lobes. The flower is strongly scented and different parts of the flower have different odors (Dalström, pers. obs.). The southernmost popula-



The deforestation in the Imbabura province is as bad as everywhere else in Ecuador. Photo (1982) by the author.

tions have flowers with a yellow lip, described as *O. hallii* Lindl., var. *xanthoglossum* Rchb.f. (Reichenbach, 1879). This variety is sometimes locally referred to as “*Odontoglossum elegans*” (Andreetta, pers. comm.) but that name refers scientifically to a natural hybrid between *Odontoglossum cirrhosum* Lindl., and a species in the *O. cristatum* Lindl., complex. Strange looking flowers that resemble a cross between *O. cirrhosum* and *O. hallii* have also been observed, and since both species are sympatric, natural hybridization is possible. These flowers look quite different from *O. x elegans* Rchb.f., though and results from artificial pollination in cultivation strongly suggest that *O. x elegans* is a cross between *O. cirrhosum* and *O. furcatum* Dalström, which also are sympatric. There are still some lin-

gering questions about the parentage, however, because the type for *O. x elegans* (from Veitch) is slightly different from what has been referred to as *O. x elegans* (from Pollett) in older literature. I will get back to this issue in a separate article.

Between the city of Otavalo and the limestone quarry at Selva Alegre on the northwestern slopes of the Andes in Ecuador, once existed (and may still exist) a population of *O. hallii* that appears to have



The operation of the limestone quarry at Selva Alegre (in the background) has decapitated the mountain. Photo (1982) by the author.

hybridized with the sympatric *O. armatum* Rchb.f., or *Odontoglossum hirtzii* Dalström. I originally believed that the also sympatric *Caucaea olivacea* (Kunth) N.H. Williams & M.W. Chase was involved as a parent because the flowers display a poorly de-



Binoculars are useful in spotting odontoglossums. Photo (1982) by the author.

veloped lip callus and a hood-like structure at the column apex. But I have recently abandoned this inter-generic hypothesis and am currently convinced that *O. armatum* or the newly described *O.*

hirtzii really is the other parent. The latter species is less likely, however, because it has a very large lip callus unlike the alleged hybrid. The flowers of the hybrid are slightly smaller than of *O. hallii*,



Thomas Höjjer with plants of *O. hallii* in firm grips. Photo (1982) by the author.

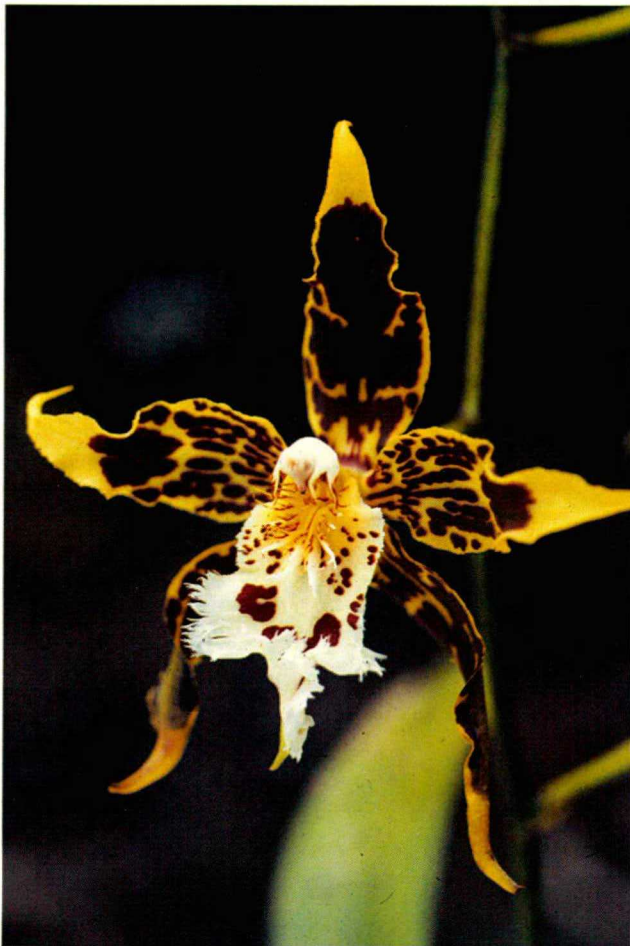
with less developed and irregular lip calli. The column is intermediate in length between the alleged parent species with irregularly serrate to lacerate wings, which in some cases superficially create a hood-like structure. The hood really is an enlargement of the lateral wings rather than a true dorsal structure as in *Caucaea olivacea*. The pseudobulbs of the alleged hybrid are to various degrees mottled with purple, similar to *O. armatum* and *O. hirtzii* but unlike *O. hallii*, which normally does not have any mottling on the pseudobulbs at all, only a soft orange or peach-colored hue if exposed to direct sunlight. In cultivation a plant of this alleged hybrid was difficult to establish and eventually withered and died. These morphological features correspond somewhat with the description of "*O. chaetostroma*" Rchb.f., which may be the correct name for

this taxon. But they also fit the description of an *Odontoglossum* plant that was exhibited by a C. J. Lucas, Esq. Warnham Court, at a meeting of the Royal Horticultural Society on June 18, 1901 at the Drill Hall, Buckingham Gate, Westminster, England. The plant was named *Odontoglossum x lucasianum* Hort., after its owner, and received an Award of Merit. This particular plant was suspected to be a natural hybrid between *O. hallii* and "*O. cristatellum* Rchb.f." (= synonym of *O. lehmannii* Rchb.f.). But since these species are not sympatric in their natural habitats, this parentage is unlikely to be involved. The description of *O. x lucasianum* does fit the alleged hybrid from the Selva Alegre road in the Imbabura province very well, however, and may be either a synonym of *O. chaetostroma*, or in fact the correct name for this taxon in case *O. chaetostroma* (a single flower is preserved as a type) simply represents a dark form of *O. hallii*. The alleged Imbabura hybrid apparently forms a swarm of individual plants that range from one species to



Distribution map for *Odontoglossum hallii*, including a questionable and unconfirmed location on the eastern slopes of the Andes

the other in terms of the flower morphology, which is most easily displayed by the length and shape of the column and by the irregular wings.



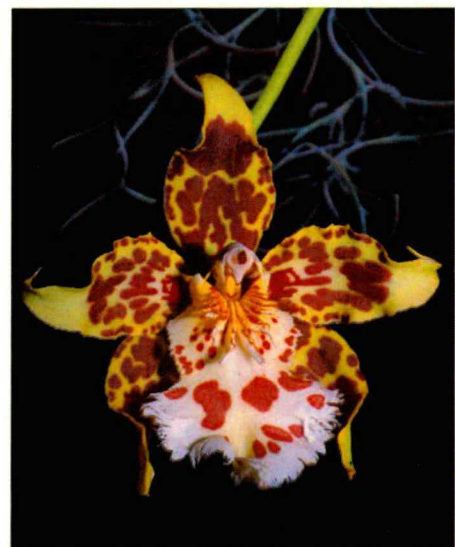
Odontoglossum hallii, flower measuring 15 cm horizontally.
Photo (1982) by the author.



Odontoglossum hallii, Imbabura, typical form with bifurcated column wings.
Photo (1982) by the author.



Odontoglossum hallii in cultivation (note the bifurcated column wings!).
Photo by G. Deburghraeve.



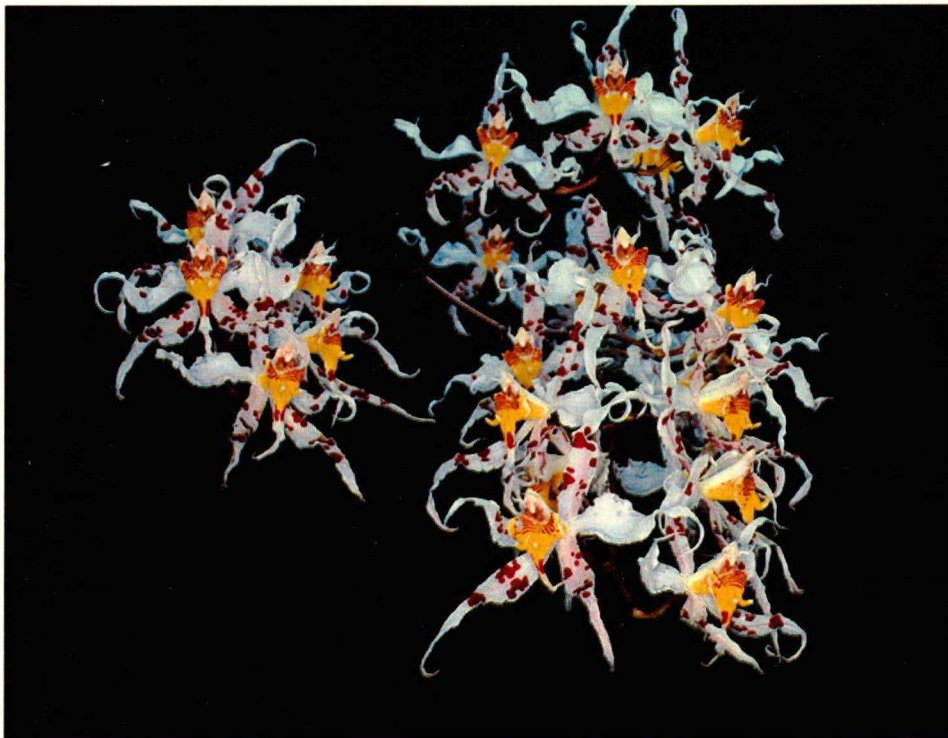
Odontoglossum hallii, Pichincha, an exceptional flower.
Photo by the author.



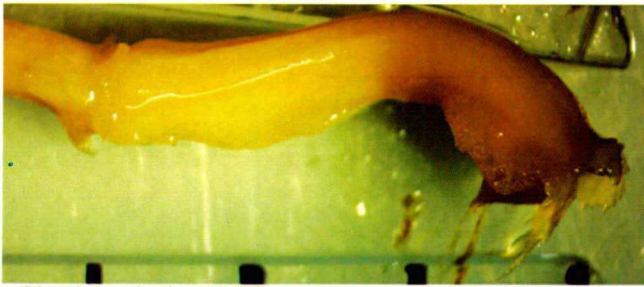
Odontoglossum cirrhosum, unspotted form, Carchi, with company Lars Danils. Photo (1982) by the author.



Odontoglossum furcatum, Pichincha. Photo by the author.



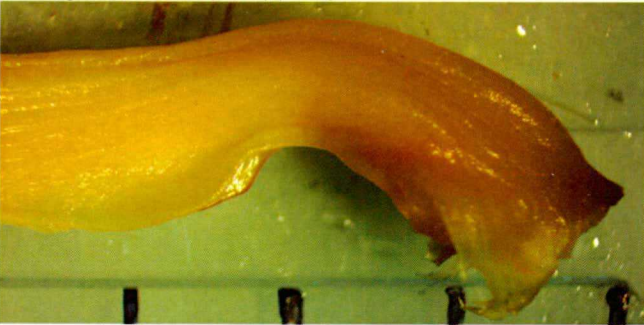
Odontoglossum cirrhosum, spotted form, Pichincha. Photo by J. Sönnemark.



Odontoglossum x lucasianum (SD 977)

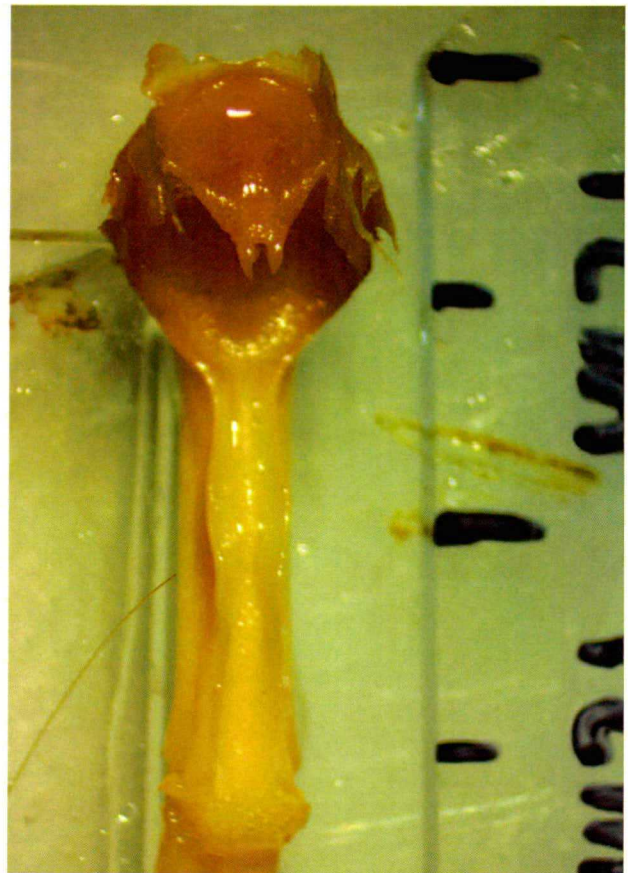


Odontoglossum x lucasianum (x hallii?), (SD 976)

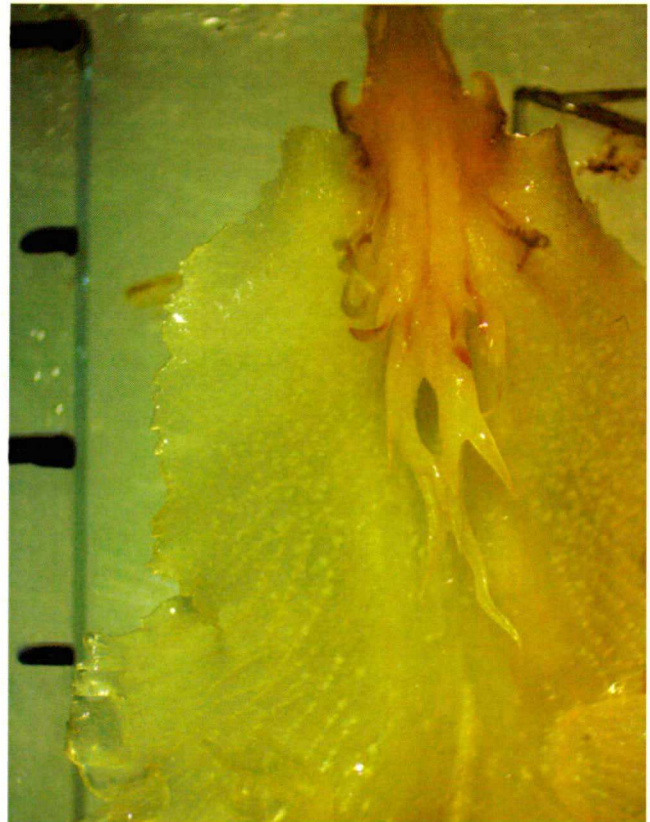


Odontoglossum hallii (SD 969)

Columns of alleged hybrids from top: *O. x lucasianum* (SD 977); *O. x lucasianum* x *O. hallii?* (SD 976); *O. hallii* or *O. x lucasianum* x *O. hallii* (x *O. hallii?*) (SD 969). Photos by the author.



Column of *O. x lucasianum* (SD 977), ventral view, showing the enlarged lateral column wings superficially resembling a column hood. Photo by the author.



Lip callus of *O. x lucasianum* (SD 977). Photo by the author.

ODONTOGLOSSUM ALLIANCE DELUSIONS

by Andrew Easton
New Horizon Orchids
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It always amazes me that people outside the Western states believe that Washington, Oregon and California are centers where various plants of the Odontoglossum Alliance can be found flourishing in profusion. Nothing could be further from the truth. Apart from a few tiny Odont. islands in a vast sea of other genera, the area is poorly served with both significant growers and plants. Take for example the 2015 Pacific Orchid Exposition in San Francisco, I did not see one significant hybrid in the Alliance there and I don't believe any were awarded. It makes a bit of a non-event to hold the annual Odontoglossum Alliance meeting in such an Odont. wasteland! The situation was no better at Santa Barbara, three weeks later.

If one looks at the annual Dugger Award plants selected by the AOS, one sees pot plant quality at best. OK, the selected plants may be considered the best shown when so few quality Odonts are entered, but they are objectively quite disappointing. Old hybrids too. One of the reasons for this is the ill-considered taxonomic nightmare inflicted on the orchid world by certain aloof and senseless RHS types. Some breeders no longer register any hybrids in the group and in my case, I will never register another one until the nomenclature returns to its previous time-honored order.

With these thoughts in your minds, I will make a few comments about orchids that piqued my interest recently which I trust you may find interesting also.

Wilsonara Holly Yager 'New Horizon'

A rather strange flower, very heavy substance, strong, branched inflorescence and fertile. We have not bloomed any seedling progeny yet but they are growing strongly. This Woodland Orchids hybrid is almost all warmer-growing *Oncidium* on the pod parent side with a traditional Oda. St. Clement providing pollen. I see where at least three have been

awarded but none that seem of a similar character as this flower. I suspect it may prove a very useful parent for Intergenerics that will be able to withstand some warm weather.



Wilsonara Holly Yager 'New Horizon'

Oncidioda Tricolore 4n

You don't need much skill in hybrid identification to see that one parent of this relatively recent primary hybrid is *Oncidium trilobum*. But I bet most AOS orchid judges would struggle to name either parent! The other parent is *Cochlidia noezliana* and the hybrid was treated with oryzalin so diploid and tetraploid seedlings were bloomed. I found the diploids to be weak-stemmed and insignificant so we kept only a 4n form for breeding.

Will this plant impart a degree of warmth-tolerance to its seedlings? Almost certainly, especially if the other parent has been selected for similar traits. The grex carries plenty of flowers yet the spike is not unduly tall. We hope to see inflorescences in the 30-45 flower range with bright reddish colors as the next step forward.



Oncidioda Tricolore 4n

Vuyls. Nova

How many Alliance folk understand the significance of what they are seeing here? Firstly Vuyls. Nova was an inspired hybrid and proved that the alba form of *Milt. spectabilis* would give 100% alba progeny when mated to a traditional alba Oda.

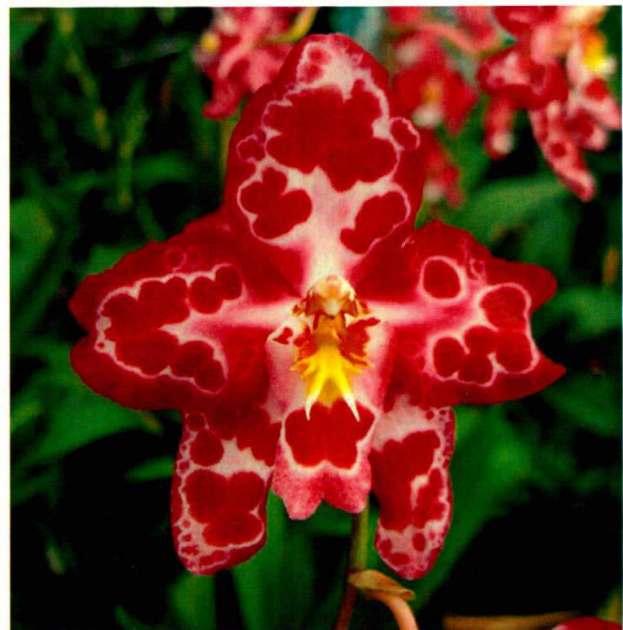
Then, despite misgivings, the triploid strain seemed to be reasonably fertile and already progeny are blooming, some very promising but that is a story for the next Newsletter! Bob was kind enough to make an oryzalin-treated remake of the Vuyls Nova and we bloomed the first 6n one last month, shown here with a 3n form for comparison. Most interestingly of all it seems to know be holding pods from pollen of an alba form of *Odm. pescatoreii* (*nobile*). What we anticipate is regular 4n seedlings where the cool-growing influence of the *Odm.* is outweighed 3:1 by the much warmer-growing hexaploid Vuyls Nova. Stick around, there's going to be some very interesting new Odonts in the pipeline!



Vuyls. Nova

Oda Shelley Anne

There were a couple of stunning clones of this hybrid awarded some years ago now. It breeds freely but when we dispersed our Odonts in 1999, they largely went to someone who neither could grow them nor knew how to hybridize with them. Such a pity that so many active breeding lines were lost but this particular Shelley Anne will be worth revisiting and we hope to start working the *Cda. sanguinea* and *Odm. cirrhosum* influences back into lines like *Odm. Rolfeae* 4n. Watch this space as they say!



Oda Shelley Anne

Odcdm. Tribbles 4n

I'm not sure that this is necessarily the clone of Tribbles that produced Wils. John Miller, likely not, but when you see a vigorous first generation tetraploid *Onc. trilobum* hybrid that has already shown it will breed bright reds in the next generation, one should not fret that it is unlikely to be a parent of largely undiscovered potential. When the English Odonts went sour at Charlesworth, largely because of inept hybridizers and growers who could not see the inbred loss of vigor, the Alliance gained, in some people's minds, a reputation for being finicky and ephemeral. Hybrids made with Odcdm. Tribbles 4n are the exact opposite. They grow strongly, handle stronger light and will not sulk if they get some warm patches during the Summer months. Like all the Odont. Alliance they enjoy good water quality but are less fussy than Odm./Oda. in this respect.



Odcdm. Tribbles 4n

Oda. Niobe 'Perfection'

I love classics... my car when I was at University in New Zealand was a 1930 Chevrolet straight six and Oda, Niobe 'Perfection' is an Odont classic. Of the simplest parentage with just three species involved, Odm. crispum, Odm. pescatoreii (nobile) and Cda. noezliana, at just the second generation. It amazes me that someone still has the foresight to keep this plant alive.... and flourishing! Could it be used to breed interesting new lines today? I always explained to people that one of the main reasons I made so many hybrids with Oda. Heatonensis was because it grew like a weed and was almost always in bloom. When one sees an Odont that has been in cultivation for ninety-nine years as this one has, it should be a strong signal that the plant is tough and given that it has seedling registrations, also fertile. The color is rather appealing too.



Oda. Niobe 'Perfection'

Oda. Castle de Noez

This quaintly named recent hybrid incorporates the traditional line of Oda Castle de Stro with its Nicky Strauss/Stropheon background and a bold infusion of Cda. noezliana at the tetraploid level. It is to my eye one of the most beautiful colors in modern Odont. breeding and must offer many interesting avenues for a sensible Odont. hybridizer, should such a creature still exist hereabouts! You see so few modern Odm./Oda. hybrids that are imaginative and not boringly similar to the previous three generations but the key here will indeed be what might be teased out from this vigorous if not widely-available breeding line.



Oda. Castle de Noez

Odm. Rolfeae 4N

I have shown several pictures of this wonderful primary around, to a quite wide range of comments. Firstly, consider the diploid original was first registered 117 years ago! There were two McCully hybrids registered from a non-tetraploid form in 2010 but prior to that Odm. Rolfeae had not been used in any registered hybrid since 1931!

The main negative comment I hear is that the color is so-so. Indeed it is but the 4n form has fabulous shape and as hybridizers know, the simplest addition in the Odont. world is that of color. In fact we are using the Rolfeae 4n to try and breed some green Odonts so in a couple of crossings, the palest Rolfeae selections were deliberately chosen. But just the inherent vigor of these plants encourages hybridizers to add them into a wide range of new crosses. It is not unusual to see the seedlings carry two spikes on their second bulb in a 3" pot. Now I rarely bet these days (Derby Day being the exception!) but I will bet Bob Hamilton a thousand dollars there are going to be at least three high awards to progeny from the tetraploid Oda. Rolfeae in the next decade! Doubt he will be making that bet.....



Odm. Rolfeae 4N

Oncidioda Cooksoniae

This plant came from a Howard Liebman remake of a 1912 hybrid between *Cochlioda noezliana* and *Cyrtochilum macranthum*. I see where one of the remake was given an AM/AOS in 2011, I'm not sure, if the hybrid had not been converted to a tetraploid, how judges might justify their rationale of finding improvement in something which would seem to be predictably exactly what one might expect from the parents! It is an interesting if not spectacular flower and as there is ample evidence that this line is able to be bred with *Miltoniopsis*, it will be worth making some further hybrids to see if "fire-engine red" Mtps. lookalikes might be within reach.



Oncidioda Cooksoniae

Tim Brydon – Odont hybridizing par excellence.

by Bob Hamilton

Tim Brydon is a noted San Francisco Odontoglossum grower with more than 40 years of growing experience. Tim is noted for maintaining a collection of extraordinary quality Miltoniopsis, Odon-todas and Odontoglossums. His frequent trips to the United Kingdom, often several times a year to attend shows and visit nurseries is responsible for importing a considerable number of extraordinary plants and seedlings in-vitro. What is less known is Tim's knack for creating great hybrids.



Oda Jim Mintsiveris

Tim grows in two greenhouses. One is built onto the rear of his restored San Francisco Victorian house. The other is in Pacifica, a town just South of San Francisco and adjacent to the Pacific Ocean. In addition to his avocation of growing orchids, Tim Brydon is considered an international authority on the lamps and windows of Louise Comfort Tiffany and others of the period as well as a renowned stained glass artist and lamp maker.

On a recent Sunday I took the following photos of a few of Tim's creations, a small sampling of his art to share with Odontoglossum Alliance colleagues, via our Newsletter. These photos were taken with a cell phone and therefore not the best quality. One thing people note when visiting Tim's greenhouses is the extraordinary number of plants he manages to always have in bloom.

While Tim makes relatively few hybrids what he does make is top-tier! Tim Brydon has this uncanny knack for turning out consistent high quality hybrids. A particular cross of note, Odm Jim Mintsiveris became the progenitor of an extraordinary line of black-on-white Odm's exemplified by Tom Per-lite's subsequent breeding while operating Golden Gate Orchids.

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Odm (Laura Hett x Tordais)

More of Tim's hybrids



Oda (Tiffany x Joe's Drum)



Oda (Tiffany x Joe's Drum)



Oda (Tiffany x Joe's Drum)



Oda Clement Land



Oda Joe's Drum x sib



Oda Joe's Drum x sib



Oda Joe's Drum x sib

Odontoglossum Alliance Officers

We are pleased to announce that Steve Beckendorf who has been President will now become Chairman of the Board. Bob Hamilton, who has been Chairman of the Board, will become the President. Congratulations to both of them.

Odontoglossum Alliance Dues

For those members whose dues end with this news letter, May 2015, it is time to send in your payment for the coming year (s). If you have a mailing letter to PO Box 38 along with this newsletter, it is time to pay for the coming year. You may pay for the coming year at \$15.00... You also may pay for multiple years at \$15.00 per year. Enclosed is an envelope to send in your desired payment. Please do so promptly. You may use the Odontoglossum Alliance PayPal account. The Account address is below:

Paying Dues using Paypal

The Odontoglossum Alliance now has a Paypal account which is available for the payment of dues or other monies to the Odontoglossum Alliance. To use this account, the individual making the payment must have a Paypal account. They can set up on an account on the Paypal website. Once that is done, to make a payment to the Odontoglossum Alliance they enter their account and make a payment to: jemiller49@aol.com. In the future I will make it known that we have this facility available for payment of dues as an alternative to mailing in checks.

John Miller
Treasurer