



**San Diego County Orchid
Society Newsletter
Volume 255:
August 2020**

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Cattleya purpurata
Plant by Tom Biggart

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General Meeting, August 4th, 7:30 pm
Meeting to be held via Zoom; details will be emailed to the membership before the meeting

Fred Clarke: Venezuela's National Flower, *Cattleya mossiae*

Text by Alex Nadzan, Palomar and San Diego County Orchid Societies

One of our favorite speakers, Fred Clarke, will be speaking on *Cattleya mossiae*, the queen of Venezuelan Cattleyas at our Joint Zoom meeting with Palomar Orchid Society on August 4th. Fred will present a beautiful exposé of *C. mossiae* in the wild with amazing pictures of thousands of flowers covering the trees. Once the most popular corsage flowers for Mother's day, *C. mossiae* is now rarely seen in collections and cut flower trade. Fred's PowerPoint presentation will feature magnificent pictures of *C. mossiae* in the wild as he discusses the habitat and the perils that await the future for the queen of Venezuelan Cattleyas.

As many of our members know, Fred Clarke is the owner of Sunset Valley Orchids in Vista. He has been growing orchids for over 42 years and has been hybridizing for 38 of those years. With over 34 years as a professional grower and manager in the horticultural industry, Fred applies these skills at his orchid nursery. He is a passionate orchid grower whose curiosity in orchids is broad and varied. Although developing *Cattleya* hybrids has been his sustaining interest, he is also actively creating new *Paphiopedilum* and Aussie *Dendrobium* hybrids plus some others to be named if they work out!

Fred's pioneering work in *Catasetum* intergeneric hybrids led to the development of several notable hybrids, most recently the grex, *Fredclarkeara After Dark*, which produced the blackest orchid flower ever witnessed. This grex has received more than 100 awards worldwide with nine FCC's and 30 AM's from the AOS judges!

Fred is a long-time accredited judge in the Pacific South Judging Region. His plants have received hundreds of quality awards from the American Orchid Society. In addition, Fred is a strong supporter of our local orchid societies and has generously provided plants for our opportunity tables and auctions.

Although we are not able to provide opportunity tables at this time, Fred has offered our society members a 20% discount offer to purchase plants online from his nursery, Sunset Valley Orchids:

<http://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com>

The special voucher code is **ZOOM**. When you check out, type **ZOOM** into the voucher code box on the shopping cart page and click 'RECALCULATE' to apply the discount. This special discount is additive to the existing discount schedule, making for an excellent opportunity. If members want to pick up plants at the nursery, please indicate so when you order and call (760-310-0778) to make an appointment to pick up your plants. The offer is good for a week before and a week or so after the Zoom meeting.



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President's Message

Text by Debby Halliday, President

Thank you for trusting me with the presidency of our club. I'll do my best to be a good president. This is a very strange time to take over, as we are not able to meet at the moment in the usual way. I am encouraged by the success of our last two Zoom meetings. We introduced the plant forum in July and will continue to make this a part of our virtual meetings. We also invited Palomar Orchid Society to join us and 55 people from the two clubs attended our last meeting. I'm delighted!

My goal is to maintain the energy and enthusiasm of this club and to ensure that the SDCOS survives this crisis with our membership intact.

Although the Casa del Prado just opened, your board does not feel we should resume meeting as a group in person until the Covid situation improves considerably in San Diego. We are paying attention and will re-evaluate our options monthly. In the meantime, we'll just keep Zooming along! Plan to join us!

We have also been discussing how to resume Culture Classes. I feel it is an important reason that people join a society. The passing along of our orchid growing experience from advanced to novice members is a big part of our purpose as an organization. We have decided to try a Wednesday standalone culture class via Zoom the night after our regular meeting (August 05). The meeting will convene at 7:30 PM and will use the same link as the

general meeting. The topic will be repotting. There will be ample time for questions. I would expect it to last no more than an hour.

PLEASE NOTE: If you have a topic you would be willing to talk about, let me or Stewart Walton know. We don't have a second VP at the moment, so your help matters more than ever. There is so much expertise in our club. We hope you'll pitch in and share your knowledge!

I will also try to be a regular presence on our Facebook page, and I encourage you to check it out. Just look for San Diego County Orchid Society. Keep enjoying your wonderful plants. Be grateful that you have them to make you smile. Stay safe and I'll see you on Zoom in August!



C. mossiae v. semi alba 'H&R'



C. mossiae v. coerulea ('SVO' x 'Good Lip')

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August 4th Plant Forum

Text by Debby Halliday, President

The plant forum was very well received at our July Zoom meeting. Many of you sent me beautiful images of your plants and just enough information to make an interesting presentation. We had 37 slides to admire. Thank you to all who participated.

I will be creating a Power Point presentation for August as well. Same guidelines as before. If you would like your plants to be featured, please do the following:

- Email me at president@sdorchids.com with photos of up to 4 different plants you currently have in bloom, no later than **Friday, July 31**.
- Please send large enough images that we can show them full screen at the meeting.
- Include the data that normally appears on the plant tag. (See picture)

I will put them all together and we will get to enjoy the fruits of everyone's labors once again. If you missed the last meeting and would like to see the July plant forum, it is posted on the website under the News tab. Check it out. There were some beautiful plants on display.



Stanhopea tigrina var *nigroviolacea*
Debby Halliday



Phal. violacea v. *Indigo*
Debby Halliday

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY	
PLANT NAME	_____
PARENTAGE	_____
CIRCLE ALL CORRECT DATA -	
MINIATURE	FRAGRANT
OUTSIDE GROWN	HYBRID
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SPECIES - FROM WHICH COUNTRY? _____	
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Your membership supports our plant and animal collections and includes a monthly visit to our Orchid Odyssey on the third Friday of each month from 10am until 2pm.

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Suggestions for Being Quarantined

Text by Bruce Berg

Since I'm in the category of candidates for the virus, I've decided to self-quarantine until the hospitals have a cure or vaccine for the virus. I won't be seeing my many friends in the Society until then. In the meantime, I'll be working on my orchid collection. Here are some thoughts members might consider in the meantime.

There are many sources available online to give us information on topics on orchid care. This is also a good time to consider repotting some of our orchids. There are a couple hints our plants give us that they are ready to be repotted. The first one that comes to mind is the smell test. When the potting mix starts to smell like a rotten swamp, it's time. Also, if the roots are climbing out of the pot in search of water, that's a second clue. The plant should be out of bloom, Clue 3. The 4th clue is that the root tips should show a light bright green.

The next step is to gather your materials. We have had many beginner talks at our meetings. The next best option is to go to the internet to find videos that will show step by step what to do. I would recommend searching "potting orchids" on YouTube.

There is also variety-specific information at the AOS website, as well as the YouTube website. One site that I like is the Akatsuka website <https://akatsukaorchid.com/orchid-care-guides-1/> where they have orchid care topics available at the listed website. Plus, I like their orchids, especially the starter plants!

Several other vendors also have interesting websites where you can find information on orchid culture.

Andy's Orchids: cultural tips from the dropdown menu.

<https://andysorchids.com/Andytips.asp>

SVO: Their Orchid Culture tab

<https://www.sunsetvalleyorchids.com/html/culture.html>

Charles and Margaret Baker

<https://www.orchidculture.com/>

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Prosthechea cochleata
Debby Halliday

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Some California Native Orchids

Text by David Vandebroek

This month I found myself isolating in a cabin in Julian as a small change of pace from isolating at home. I looked around the forest and thought: I wonder what orchids could grow here.

If you've been with the society a while, you'll know that Bruce Berg and Nico Goossens have led hikes and campouts in the area checking in on local orchid populations for years. I hadn't had a chance to go on one yet, but I was curious, so I reached out to Nico to ask about what grows here. This led to an impromptu nine-hour hike through some local trails, first around Lake Cuyamaca (near Julian) and then further East through Noble Canyon.

The first orchids we saw were *Piperia transversa*. These orchids are deciduous and die back to underground tubers after blooming. We were lucky to see them still in bloom; they were nearly spent after the heat wave mid-July. These orchids seem to like the shaded areas under the oak trees where there is less competition and grow in the detritus/duff covering the forest floor. This species requires certain mycorrhizal fungi interactions to survive and is not currently found in cultivation.

The second orchids we saw were *Epipactis gigantea* (aka the Stream Orchid). As the common name suggests, these orchids grow in streambeds ... right alongside a LOT of poison oak. We were too late to see these in bloom, though the dried flowers were still attached to several stalks.

Throughout these hikes Nico and Cheryl, both Canyoners, spent time filling me well past my retention point with information about local plants, wildlife, and the impact that the 2003 and 2007 fires had on the local orchid populations. It was an amazing opportunity and, if any hikes are arranged next spring, I highly encourage anyone that can to take advantage.



Piperia transversa of the forest floor



Epipactis gigantea in a streambed

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Some Propagation Tips Text by Bruce Berg

Here's a quick culture tip for members; more info on these topics can be found by logging onto the AOS.ORG website. In [Orchid Culture: Propagation on a Small Scale](#), Stephen Batchelor shows you a couple of ways to multiply your collection.

- **Division** - After a mature orchid plant has grown and flowered for several years, it often becomes too large for the size pot in which it is growing. You can divide many of these plants, such as Cattleyas, into two or more separate individuals, often by simply cutting the plant into individual pieces during the repotting process.
- **Keikis** - Some types of orchids, such as Dendrobiums, will develop offshoots along the stem. They are small but individual plants. The young offshoot, or keiki as it is often called, can be removed from the mother plant and potted up.

When a plant becomes so large that it is unruly or when you have keikis that need to leave the nest, consider sharing them with your friends. Spread the orchid love!

The next lesson will be about those bothersome pests that sometimes pay our orchids an unwelcomed visit and how to discourage them.



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Cynorkis gibbosa; Betty Kelepecz



Dendrobium devonianum; Scott McGregor

From the Editor:

Hello everyone,

I hope you all are doing well. Not much new to report on my end, other than that I've been spending a fair amount of time up in the mountains for a change of scenery and that I was able to go on a pretty awesome nature hike (my article on page 6). I'm definitely happy with how the Zoom meetings are working out – a great way to stay connected during isolation.

If anyone has articles they wish to submit to the monthly newsletter, please continue to send contributions to me at SDCOSNewsletter@gmail.com. Deadline for submissions is end of day on the **second Friday of the month**.

I hope you all are staying well and safe.

Best,

David Vandebroek
SDCOS Newsletter Editor

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