



# Orchidata

## Message from the Executive

October 2015

Most who know me, know that I'm no wordsmith and writing is one of those dreaded tasks one must do. That being said I do love orchids and love to talk about the latest LEDs and anything to do with Phals. So let's stick with something I know, over the last few months we have had a lot of inquiries and new members after information about flasking. As such, I thought I could share some of my personal experiences.

My orchid breeding project started about two years ago when Bob Gibbon agreed to show me the ropes in OSRBG's flasking lab. My first attempt was a flop, no seed germinated. I was disheartened after waiting 4 month for the seed to ripen but that doesn't usual stop me. I spent the next several months researching techniques and equipment. I then decided to build my own laminar flow hood, a key piece of equipment in flasking and with a little help from Chris Foden I got it up and running. During the Laminar build I started making several new Phal primaries so they would be ready in time for the flow hood. Once the flow hood was ready I hit the road running and got 14 new hybrids flasked in the first few months.

It has quickly ballooned into 50 or so varieties.



Last month I deflasked my very first flask of Phal. tetraspis C1 x Phal. bastianii and will be hoping for flowers in a year or two.



So any new or old members who want to try flasking out, let anyone on the Exec know and we will try and get you started or plan a training session.

As a reminder, annual membership dues were due in June. Please make sure to check your membership status with Yvette

Drew

## Monthly Meeting Schedule

| Date                             | Location                |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| October 18, 2015                 | Room 5                  |
| November 15, 2015                | Room 5                  |
| December 13, 2015                | Room 5                  |
| January 17, 2016                 | Room 5                  |
| February 21, 2016                | Room 5                  |
| <b>February 27&amp; 28, 2016</b> | <b>Annual Show Date</b> |
| March 13, 2016                   | Room 5                  |
| April 17, 2016                   | Room 5                  |
| May 15, 2016                     | Room 5                  |
| June 12, 2016                    | Room 5                  |
| July 2016                        | President's Picnic      |
| August 21, 2016                  | Room 5                  |
| September 18, 2016               | Room 5                  |

## COOS SHOW RESULTS

Many thanks to Frank Washburn, Gavin Clark and Ann Stallman who, along with your reporter (Wendy Header-Moan), created the OSRBG display for the COOS Show, a display that earned a second place ribbon. The same team, augmented by Jocelyn Webber, dismantled the display on Sunday evening. Thanks also to everyone who contributed plants for the display; without them, there would be no display!

Linda Will and Peter and Sherry Decyk won "Best in class" ribbons for, respectively, Best Paphiopedilum: Paph Iona (fairrieanum x bellatulum) and Best Laeliinae, other than Cattleya: Epidendrum diffusum.

Plants from the RBG greenhouse were awarded ribbons as follows:

Cattleya bowringiana – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Cattleya bowringiana (another one) – 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Cattleya maxima – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Cattleya maxima (another one) – 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Epidendrum ciliare – 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Phragmipedium Cardinale 'Kilworth' AM/AOS – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Other ribbons awarded were as follows:

### Ben & Cindy Boers

Rth. (Potinara Free Spirit x Lc Golden Tangerine) – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Miltassia Dark Star 'Orchid Works' – 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Paph niveum – 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Greta Culley

Phalaenopsis hybrid (pink, no name) – 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Phalaenopsis hybrid (cream, no name) – 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 Phragmipedium Hanne Popow (besseae var. flava x schlimii) – 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Peter and Sherry Decyk

Epidendrum diffusum – 1<sup>st</sup> and Best in Class  
 Aerides quinquevulneris – 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Cattleya Golden Tang – 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Cattleya skinneri 'Debbie' FCC/AOS – 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Cattleya Peckaviensis (aclandiae x schilleriana) – 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Wendy Header-Moan

Phalaenopsis hybrid (pink, no name) – 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Pat and Lynda Vuurman

Phragmipedium Calurum (longifolium x schlimii) – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Cymbidium sinense – 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Jocelyn Webber

Paphiopedilum spicerianum – 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Phragmipedium Mini Grande (humboldtii x pearcei) – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Phragmipedium Jason Fischer (Mem. Dick Clements x besseae) – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Vanda Sensi Blue – 3<sup>rd</sup>

### Linda Will

Paphiopedilum Iona (fairrieanum x bellatulum) – 1<sup>st</sup> and Best in Class  
 Paphiopedilum (Hampshire Zoo x Winston Churchill) – 1<sup>st</sup>  
 Paphiopedilum Rosy Dawn (Astarte x Gwen Hannen) – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Phragmipedium Acker's Royalty (Twilight x fischeri) – 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Paphiopedilum Wossner Godeem (leuchochilum x emersonii) – 3<sup>rd</sup>

Below Photos by Wendy Header-Moan:



*Paph Iona (fairrieanum x bellatulum)*



*OSRBG Display*

## New AOS Awards Page

For more than 90 years the American Orchid Society has documented the best-of-the-best of the world's most popular flower through its premier judging system.

Each awarded orchid is meticulously described, measured and photographed.

Until now, viewing orchid awards and the stunning photographs that accompany them required a paid Orchids Plus subscription.

The AOS is pleased to announce public access to the latest orchid awards and photos thanks to the newly designed orchid awards page:

<http://www.aos.org/orchid-awards.aspx>

Six things you will absolutely love about the new awards page

1. It's free! Gaining access to orchid awards previously required a subscription to the AOS' Orchids Plus award registry platform.
2. You don't have to be an AOS member. These breathtakingly beautiful photographs haven't been available to non-paying visitors until now.
3. The page shows the 30 most recent orchid awards, including name, parentage, description, award, score and photograph. This information can help make you a better orchid grower.
4. Clicking on any photo in the page opens up a larger photo with a gallery feature, allowing you to click through all of the large photos for the latest awards.
5. The page also includes a social sharing function to allow you to share the page with your friends via your favorite social media or bookmarking site, as well as by email.
6. You can start exploring right now!



Photo by Wendy Hearder-Moan – Paph Rosy Dawn (Astarte x Gwen Hannen)

## Upcoming Events

**October 17 & 18, 2015** – ECOS ORCHIDFÊTE 2015  
CEGEP André-Laurendeau, 1111, rue Lapierre, LaSalle,  
Québec

**October 18, 2015** – OSRBG General Meeting, Room 5.  
**Plant sales commence at 1:00 pm & Meeting to begins at 2:00 pm.** **Programme:** Lauren Booklin – Orchis – History, Folklore and Art.

**October 25 & 26, 2015** – The Windsor Orchid Society  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Orchid Show and Sale, NEW LOCATION:**  
the Columbus Center of Windsor, 2401 Columbus Drive,  
Windsor, Ontario

**November 14 & 15, 2015** – The Essex County Orchid  
Society 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Orchid Show and Sale, Colasanti's  
Tropical Gardens, 1550 Road 3 East, Ruthven, Ontario

**November 15, 2015** – OSRBG General Meeting, Room  
5. **Plant sales commence at 1:00 pm & Meeting to begins at 2:00 pm.** **Programme:** Elizabeth Matheson – Floral designs incorporating various types of orchids as the main flower

**December 13, 2015** – OSRBG General Meeting, Room  
5. **Plant sales commence at 1:00 pm & Meeting to begins at 2:00 pm.** **Programme:** Christmas Auction & Social

*For anyone planning a Florida trip:*

***First fall Fakahatchee Tram Tour set for Nov. 19***

Thanks to the Ghost Rider Tram, you don't have to get your feet wet or drive your car down dusty roads to see the wonders of the Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park. The tram, named in honor of the famous Ghost Orchid found in the park, offers a naturalist-guided tour of the park that is home to more orchid species than any other place in the North America. The Preserve is also a haven for diverse wildlife and migratory birds.

Tickets for the 2 1/2 hour tour are \$25 per person. Tours begin at 10 a.m. Fall tours are Nov. 19, Dec. 3, Dec. 10, and Dec. 17.

An experienced guide leads each tram tour and points out interesting aspects of the park. The tour includes a 15 min. walk down an old logging path lined with air plants, ferns, and seasonally blooming orchids. The path is dry, but hikers need to wear closed shoes. The 20-passenger tram is wheelchair accessible and some seats face backwards. Participants will be required to sign a standard release of liability form. This is an outdoor event, so please dress appropriately for the weather.

The tram leaves promptly at 10 a.m. from the ranger station at 137 Coastline Drive, Copeland, off Janes Scenic Drive. For directions and required advance reservations visit [www.orchidswamp.org](http://www.orchidswamp.org) and click "tours and events."

Courtesy of Naples Daily News: Oct 12/15 [www.naplesnews.com](http://www.naplesnews.com)

## There's Nothing Basic About Vanilla

By: Jane Lear

The second-most-expensive spice in the world has a history as complex and fascinating as its flavor.



Vanilla ice cream atop gooseberry crumble. (Photo: Flickr)

We tend to take vanilla for granted because it's everywhere—not just in baked goods, ice cream, and that indulgent Frappuccino but in perfumes, skin-care products, medicines, and more. But it is the second-most-expensive spice on the planet (the first is saffron), primarily because cultivation of the vanilla plant is highly labor-intensive (it's pollinated and harvested by hand) and requires a warm tropical climate, which makes this once-a-year crop vulnerable to cyclones and other natural disasters. Factor in political upheaval, war, competing ethnicities, and cutthroat wheeling and dealing, and you've got a spice that's anything but plain. Or cheap.

Vanilla is the fruit of a tropical climbing orchid native to Mexico, Central America, northern South America, and parts of the West Indies. The Maya used it as a flavoring in *chocolatl*, and the Totonac Indians, who were probably the first Mesoamericans to cultivate the spice, called it the “nectar of the gods.” To the Aztecs, vanilla beans were more valuable than the cacao beans that were used as currency; they were used as a medicine and aphrodisiac.

When the Spanish brought vanilla back to Europe, the *ciertas vaynicas de olores* (“various fragrant scabbards”) were the Viagra of the 16th century. Its reputation has legs, so to speak: A small 2014 study (“Human Male Sexual Response to Olfactory Stimuli”) by the Smell and Taste Treatment Research Foundation in Chicago, published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Neurological and Orthopaedic Surgeons*, examines the science behind the allure.

“The French, more than any other inhabitants in Europe, became passionate about vanilla,” wrote Patricia Rain in *Vanilla: The Cultural History of the World's Favorite Flavor and Fragrance*. “It graced the delicious new ice creams and sorbets enjoyed by the aristocracy in the 1700s, and by 1750 vanilla-flavored ice cream was sold year-round in Paris.”

“The French also expanded the use of vanilla into the perfume industry,” she continued. “By the late 1700s, perfumes were commonplace, and what would be more delightful than to use vanilla to soften the strong nuances of Oriental spices and highlight the sweetness of delicate herbs and flowers?”

I learned how tricky vanilla propagation is from pomologist and indefatigable “fruit detective” David Karp, who reported a story on the volatility of the vanilla market from Madagascar for *Gourmet* in 2002. The birds and bees that pollinate the flowers exist only in the New World (and are now largely extinct, along with much of their rainforest habitat), I learned, and all supplies came from there until the 1840s, when Edmond Albius, a former slave on the Indian Ocean island of Réunion, discovered a practical method of hand pollination. “Cultivation on nearby Madagascar soared after its colonization by the French in 1896,” Karp wrote. “Soil and climate conditions are ideal, and there was plenty of cheap land and labor.” These days, vanilla is grown in China, Indonesia, and Uganda as well as Mexico and Madagascar.



Vanilla beans drying at a Madagascar plantation. (Photo: Getty Images)

Ready for a fun fact? Well, at least I think it's fun. Orchid pollen is so delicate that it doesn't exist in fossil records, so scientists have turned to DNA to trace its history. According to University of Wisconsin botany professor Ken Cameron, who first used gene-sequence data to reconstruct the phylogenetic history of orchids at the New York Botanical Gardens, orchids were the first, or oldest,

plants in the order Asparagales, which also includes agaves, amaryllises, asparagus, daffodils, onions, and yucca, which is different from yuca (“yew-ka”) or cassava; orchids branched off from the group about 90 million years ago.

After the pale yellow-green vanilla flowers begin to open and are pollinated by hand (this takes place in May and June in Madagascar), they remain on the vine during the long growing season. Nestled between the flower and the stem of the vine is an ovary, which slowly develops into a seedpod, or bean. When the beans grow to six to eight inches in length (which takes until July or August of the following year), they’re **harvested by hand**. Vanilla beans are bright green to yellow when ripened; they have no flavor or fragrance until they’ve been cured and aged for months.

The highest-quality vanilla beans—known as “black” beans to the cognoscenti—are glossy, supple, moist, and fragrant. Their seeds are abundant and are easily scraped out, and they’re what you want for cooking. “Red” beans are drier and thinner, with reddish-brown streaks; they’re typically beans that have been cured before their time or ones that have been dried more thoroughly. Low-grade “cuts” are snippets of beans that are blended with artificial vanillin. “This synthetic substance, made from wood pulp or petrochemical byproducts, has a strong but one-dimensional flavor, lacking the hundreds of minor chemical components that contribute a complex, mellow aroma to natural vanilla,” Karp wrote.

**So, Why Should You Care?** Well, the vast majority of vanilla fragrances and flavors that consumers buy are synthetic. Would you rather support the petrochemical industry or vanilla growers, most of whom are trying to claw their way out of poverty? I thought so. It’s also important to note that the boom-or-bust vanilla market is on the radar of businesses worldwide, and it goes hand in hand with climate change. “Vanilla is principally grown in tropical regions that are prone to violent storms,” wrote Evan Abrams in *Global Risk Insights*.

“As the oceans warm, such super storms will become increasingly frequent. This creates vulnerability for coastal producers such as Madagascar and Indonesia,” he continued. “Countries that are able to grow their crop further inland may have to pay high transport costs, but they will be protected from losing their crop to severe weather events. In this regard, places like **Uganda** and Mexico should win out.” Abrams also brought up the trade in synthetic vanilla, which is significantly cheaper than the real deal. “Recent years have given rise to consumer concern over the chemicals used in synthetic vanilla and a desire for organic or pure products,” he wrote. “How the

growing ‘natural v. synthetic’ debate plays out in the years to come will be a key market determinant.”

Depending on where the vanilla is grown, the flavor characteristics vary. Of the three main types listed below, one type isn’t better than another; it just depends on your individual palate.

### **Bourbon Vanilla Beans**

Bourbon vanilla isn’t named for one of the American South’s greatest gifts to the world but for the fact that Réunion was once known as Ile de Bourbon after the French royal family. It’s grown on that island, as well as in the former French colonies of Madagascar and the Comoros. Bourbon vanilla beans are mellow and rich in flavor and fragrance.

### **Mexican Vanilla Beans**

Mexican vanilla beans are a bit thicker, more robust-looking, and gloriously full-flavored, with a sweet-spicy aroma. Beware of buying inexpensive Mexican vanilla extract; odds are it’s synthetic and contains coumarin, a toxic substance banned by the FDA.

### **Tahitian Vanilla Beans**

Tahitian vanilla beans come from a different species, which is why they’re usually shorter, plumper, and more moist than other beans. They also have fewer seeds and are not as glossy. Tahitian vanilla has a stronger fruity, floral flavor and aroma that bears little resemblance to the Nilla Wafers of childhood. Anytime you see bargain prices for Tahitian vanilla, check the origin; they are likely the same species but grown in Papua New Guinea and don’t seem quite as flavorful as the true Tahitian beans.

### **Vanilla Extract**

When buying vanilla extract, look for the words “alcohol 35 percent”—a clue that you’re getting the genuine article. (Alcohol is a time-honored base for infusing and preserving, and it doesn’t turn rancid.) Avoid anything marked “vanilla flavoring.”

### **Sources**

My go-to source for beans and extract is Patricia Rain’s website, The Vanilla Company. Her products are fair-trade, sustainably grown, and organic. You have to buy in bulk (which makes your purchase even more sustainable), but I usually split an order with friends, and they all go home happy, especially when they realize how easy it is to make homemade vanilla ice cream. Rain (aka “The Vanilla Queen”) carries vanilla from Madagascar and Tahiti; for Mexican vanilla, check out Beanilla.com.

*Courtesy of TakePart Column: Jane SAYS*  
[www.takepart.com/article/2015/07/15/growing-buying-vanilla](http://www.takepart.com/article/2015/07/15/growing-buying-vanilla)

## Membership

### Memberships were due June 1, 2015.

You can renew your membership at the next monthly meeting, or by mailing your cheque to:

Yvette Mondésir  
3010 Silverthorn Drive  
Oakville, ON L6L 5N6  
e-mail: [ydesir521@gmail.com](mailto:ydesir521@gmail.com)

Membership Fee: \$20.00

Receive a \$5.00 discount if you would like to receive the Orchidata newsletter via e-mail.

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## Greenhouse Volunteers Needed

As you may know, the Orchid Society maintains the collection of orchids in the RBG greenhouse. This is a significant commitment which cannot be carried out without the help of volunteers.

Currently a group of volunteers meets on Thursday mornings from 9:30 to noon, more or less, and another group meets on Sunday mornings from about 10 until 12:30. This schedule is dictated by watering requirements. Volunteers are currently being sought for both these teams. "On the job" training is provided if needed.

In addition to watering, volunteers look after repotting the orchids, cleaning any plants that are being attacked by pests, removing dead leaves, sterilizing pots and other equipment, preparing plants for display and many other small but important tasks.

Volunteers are not required to attend every week, but some commitment to the collection should be demonstrated. If you are able to devote some time to helping us maintain the orchids, please contact Pat Vuurman ([pvuurman@hotmail.com](mailto:pvuurman@hotmail.com)) regarding the Thursday group, or Denise MacLeod ([pmacleod5@cogeco.ca](mailto:pmacleod5@cogeco.ca)) if you can volunteer on Sundays.

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## Flasking Group

Anyone interested in flasking please give Ben Boers, Pat Vuurman or Bob Gibbon a call for details

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## 2015 – 2016 Executive & Contacts

|                            |                           |               |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| President .....            | <b>Drew Goddard</b>       | 905-635-6342  |
| Past President.....        | <b>Wendy Hearder-Moan</b> | 905-335-4055  |
| Vice-President .....       | <b>Vacant</b>             |               |
| Treasurer.....             | <b>Gavin Clark</b>        | 905-274-4888  |
| Secretary .....            | <b>Jacqui Arrindell</b>   | 905-528-1060  |
| Membership .....           | <b>Yvette Mondésir</b>    | 905- 825-1472 |
| Newsletter .....           | <b>Jacquie Goddard</b>    | 905-635-6342  |
| Publicity.....             | <b>Nancy Freckleton</b>   | 905- 628-4198 |
| Native Orchids .....       | <b>Scott Belton</b>       | 416-22-6091   |
| Show Chair .....           | <b>Jocelyn Webber</b>     | 905- 823-6815 |
| Sales & Raffle.....        | <b>Penelope Petrie</b>    | 905-383-3558  |
| Programming .....          | <b>Lauren Booklin</b>     | 289- 837-1462 |
| COC Rep .....              | <b>Peter Decyk</b>        | 905-632-1985  |
| AOS/Mid-American Rep ..... | <b>Peter Decyk</b>        | 905-632-1985  |
| Hospitality .....          | <b>Greta Culley</b>       | 905-648-0144  |
| Librarian .....            | <b>Wendy Hearder-Moan</b> | 905-335-4055  |
| Flasking .....             | <b>Bob Gibbon</b>         | 905-387-1993  |
| Orchid Collection .....    | <b>Olga Jokutaitis</b>    | 905-544-9894  |
| Orchid Collection .....    | <b>Pat Vuurman</b>        | 905-527-4951  |
| RBG Liaison.....           | <b>Ben Boers</b>          | 905-701-8102  |

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## Honorary Lifetime Member

Dr. James Brasch

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## Membership and Address Changes

Yvette Mondésir  
3010 Silverthorn Drive  
Oakville, ON L6L 5N6  
e-mail: [ydesir521@gmail.com](mailto:ydesir521@gmail.com)

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## Orchidata

### Deadline for the November / December

### Newsletter is November 5, 2015

Please note that Orchidata news and orchid society newsletters should be sent to:

Jacquie Goddard  
2037 Coral Crescent  
Burlington, ON L7P 3K4  
e-mail: [krackerjac@hotmail.com](mailto:krackerjac@hotmail.com)

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