

THE GREATER LAS VEGAS ORCHID SOCIETY THE ORCHID COLUMN

CAROL SIEGEL, EDITOR

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2016 1PM

March 6, 2016 Guillermo Salazar
"African Orchids"
Saturday, March 12, 2016 "A
Passion for Orchids Show" West
Charleston Library 10-4
April 3, 2016 Greenhouse Tour
May Native Orchid Walk
May 1, 2016 Art Chadwick
"Large-Flowered Cattleyas"
June 12 2016 Cathy Loftfield
"Orchids of the Old World"
July 10, 2016 Mark Romansky
"Forgotten Orchids" 2nd Sunday
Aug 7 Mary Gerritsen "The
Orchids of Borneo"
Sept 11 Diana "What Kind of
Orchid Is It?" 2nd Sunday
Oct 2, 2016 Carol Siegel "10
Ways to Kill an Orchid"
Nov 6, 2016 Steve Frowine
"Growing Under Lights and In the
Home"
December 4, 2016 Holiday Party

GREAT MEETING IN FEBRUARY!

BIG NEWS IS THAT THE CLUB VOTED TO
HOLD MEETINGS ON THE SECOND SUNDAY
OF THE MONTH STARTING IN 2017 TO
ACCOMMODATE ALL THE HOLIDAYS AND
EVENTS THAT OCCUR THE FIRST SUNDAY.
REMEMBER THAT THAT IS STARTING IN
2017-NOT NOW. HOWEVER, NOTE JUNE 12
AND JULY 10 MEETING IN 2016 ARE SECOND
SUNDAY (HENCE THE CHANGE IN 2017)

MANY THANKS TO STEVE HOCHMAN FOR PICKING UP AND
DELIVERING FRED CLARKE, OUR FABULOUS SPEAKER.
THANKS TO THE GREAT FOOD TEAM- WANDA
LAFOLLETTE, KATHY WEBER, MARY KING, DIANA SMITH,
BOB FURTEK, AND BETTYE WILLIAMS FOR GREAT FOOD.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO A CHINESE FEAST IN MARCH
COURTESY OF STEVE HOCHMAN WITH HELP FROM CAROL
SIEGEL, MARILYN SHORT, DIANA SMITH, EILEEN
MCKYTON, AND CATHY LOFTFIELD. THANKS AGAIN TO
OLE, TONY AND JOEL FOR THE WONDERFUL HOTEL
PLANTS.

A Passion for Orchids

SATURDAY March 12, 2016
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

West Charleston Library Art Gallery and Lecture Hall
6301 W. Charleston Blvd.

With its hot summers, dry air and hard water, the desert is an unlikely place to grow orchids. Join the Greater Las Vegas Orchid Society for a magnificent display of fresh orchids and informative lectures.

Greater Las Vegas
Orchid Society

Lectures:

- 1 a.m. **Orchids of the New World with Cathy Loftfield** *Learn about the many different species of orchids in North, Central and South America.*
- 1 p.m. **The Barnum and Bailey Freak Show of Orchids with Carol Siegel** *Explore the freak show side of orchids including the weird and wacky species.*
- 2 p.m. **Orchids 101 with Diana Smith** *Learn how to keep the most popular orchids healthy and blooming on your windowsill.*
- 3 p.m. **Orchids in the Home with Mark Romansky** *Learn where orchids come from, how to acquire them, what varieties are available and what to do with them once you have them.*

Free and open to the public. For more information, please call 702.507.3964

We are setting up for our show on Friday, March 11 at 10 am at the W Charleston Library. We need your plants. We would love if you would come, too. We need you to drop off your blooming orchids either at my house before the show 702 254 4168 or that morning. We can't do a display without orchids. The following people have signed up for the display:

Carol Siegel, Diana Smith, Cathy Loftfield, Mark Romansky, Bob Furtek and Claudia Drake. You can come, too!

The following people signed up for ambassador duty on Saturday, March 12 10-1

Franklin Stein, Mark Romansky, Claudia Drake, Myra Glassman
March 12 1-4

Jeri Lee, Eileen McKyton, Myra Glassman, and Mark for part of day
Ole, Tony and Joel will be there all day for potting demonstrations.
Cathy, Carol, Diana and Mark will do lectures in the lecture hall.

I will be donating a basket of live orchids to a free raffle for all of us and people coming to the show. It is a good way to get new members because they willingly give us their emails and names so we can contact them and invite them to meetings.

GREENHOUSE TOUR

On April 3, at 12:30 pm (earlier than usual), we will be having a greenhouse tour instead of our regular meeting. I will distribute directions in the next newsletter. We will be visiting FOUR member's growing areas, all with greenhouses of one sort or another. We will start at Christina de la Cruz's house at 12:30, move on to Ole Borresen's place, then on to Al de Ricco, finishing up at Dan Mumau's house last. It is so generous of these members to enthusiastically offer to share their knowledge, experience, and mistakes with us. I know I always learn from these greenhouse tours, and that is how, finally, you get some orchids to bloom.

GUILLERMO SALAZAR SPEAKS MARCH 6 ON “AFRICAN ORCHIDS”

WE ARE PLEASED TO HAVE GUILLERMO SALAZAR FROM FLORIDA VISIT US AND SPEAK ON AFRICAN ORCHIDS. HE IS COMING IN ON SATURDAY AND WANTS TO SEE THE NON-CASINO LAS VEGAS.

DIANA SMITH IS PICKING HIM UP AT THE AIRPORT AND TAKING HIM UP TO RED ROCK. JACKIE BRAVERMAN, GAIL HARRIS, JUNE CRAVENN AND MYRA GLASSMAN WILL JOIN HER. WANT TO JOIN THEM? JUST WRITE ME OR DIANA.

AT NIGHT, WE ARE TAKING THE SPEAKER TO FOGO DE CHAO IN DOWNTOWN SUMMERLIN. WE WILL EACH PAY FOR OURSELVES, AND THE CLUB WILL PAY FOR MR. SALAZAR. IT IS \$55 A PERSON FOR THE BRAZILIAN FEAST. IT IS A SUPERB MEAT-SKEWER TYPE RESTAURANT THAT I LOVE. STEVE HOCHMAN WILL PICK UP THE SPEAK AND BRING HIM TO THE RESTAURANT. SO FAR, MY HUSBAND AND I, DIANA AND TERRY SMITH, MARY AND BARRY KING, STEVE HOCHMAN AND GUILLERMO HAVE SIGNED UP TO GO. PLEASE TELL ME IN THE NEXT WEEK IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US. OTHERWISE I WILL MAKE THE RESERVATION FOR 8 PEOPLE.

Tropical African Orchids Species to Grow:

This presentation is an Introduction to the most beautiful intriguing and easy to grow and bloom tropical african orchid species that come from far jungles of African countries like Kenya, Congo and Zimbabwe! Despite the far origin of these orchid species these are orchids that we can all surely can succeed at blooming and growing. Some of the orchid species to be shown are amazing, exciting and colorful and not common in cultivation in America, others like the genus *Angraecum* are readily available at shows in the U.S. and around the world. This presentation would excite everyone as we discover the tropical orchids treasures of the remote African continent.

Guillermo Salazar was born in Miami and grew up in El Salvador in Central America, as a child of a nursery owner Father and a interior and floral designer Mother, Guillermo was able to develop his natural design ability and appreciation for plants and flowers even before attending college. Later he followed his dream of becoming a professional landscape designer in Florida, receiving his degree in Landscape Design & Management, later he received a Master's in Science in Environmental Horticulture from the University of Florida. As a 9 year old living in El Salvador, Guillermo found orchids were the most attractive plants in this tropical environment and he started collecting them. He became the youngest member of the San Salvador Orchid Society, which is the largest orchid society in San Salvador the country's capital. During his college years back in Florida, he learned the importance of protecting natural resources especially orchids in nature. He is member of the AOS Florida Caribbean Judging Center; board member of several orchid societies. A Florida Master Gardener, Guillermo has worked for several years as a professional Landscape Designer in private, municipal and governmental capacities in the South Florida area. He currently works as a private landscape designer & consultant, adjunct faculty for the Landscape Technology Department for Miami Dade College & Landscape plan reviewer for City of Miami. His work entails reviewing all landscape projects of the city and teaching residents how to design a garden successfully with the use of adequate plants and orchids to create functional & environmentally conscious environment. He has published several articles on home gardening, design and orchid articles for South Florida and international magazines. His credentials include: ISA certified Arborist, Certified Landscape Inspector and Certified Horticulturist. His specialty in orchids is Angraecoids, Bulbophyllums, and rare and miniature tropical species. In his spare time, Guillermo is a breeder of pedigree Persian and Himalayan cats, enjoys gardening & exploring tropical regions of the world.

Pity Poor Hawaii
Carol Siegel

Pity poor Hawaii! Contrary to its image as the lush orchid capitol of the world, Hawaii has only three native orchids, the least of any state in the United States. Yet, orchids are a big part of life in Hawaii, and they are for sale everywhere. I recently visited the Big Island of Hawaii, and I came down the escalator at the airport, and our friends greeted us at the foot of the steps holding out purple leis of beautiful *Dendrobium Sonia*. The orchid industry in Hawaii amounts to more than 24 million dollars year, and orchids, leis and orchid plants are for sale everywhere. As Ted Green says in ORCHIDS IN HAWAII, “Even a ditch digger might be wearing a lei he got at a party the night before.” Let’s explore the orchid world that is Hawaii.

Hawaii would seem an ideal place to find native orchids. The Hawaiian islands sit in the northern tropics, about twenty degrees latitude, and the temperature usually stays between 75-85 degrees F, which is just ideal for orchids. Orchids love fresh moving air, and reliable trade winds blow fresh air against the northeast shores of all the major islands. That air has travelled thousands of miles across the open ocean, making it cool and moist, laden with rainfall and humidity in the ideal range of 50-80%. There are many different microclimates in Hawaii, and just a short drive will take you to rain forests, deserts, bogs, dryland forests, alpine peaks, and parched coastal dunes. Surely, an orchid would find a home somewhere in all that variety. In addition, there is excellent drainage in the volcanic rock and plenty of forest for epiphytic orchids to find a niche. Orchids of every type should just be growing wild everywhere. All the islands around the Pacific Rim like the Philippines and Indonesia, for example, are laden with orchids. Not Hawaii. There are just three native orchids. What’s the problem?

As Paul Wood says in ORCHID ISLES: THE STORY OF ORCHIDS IN HAWAII, “For orchids, though, getting to Hawaii was no more likely than getting to the moon...From a terrestrial point of view, Hawaii is the remotest land on Earth.” To get to Hawaii, an orchid would have to cross at least 2500 miles of sea. The majority of plants on Hawaii arrived in the feathers or intestines of birds, but orchid seeds don’t do that. Some plant seeds bob on the water, but orchid seeds are like dust and do not float, and they can’t survive being submerged in salt water for months on end. The only thing they could do was to float on the wind, suspended for days, weeks, or months.

Three orchids managed to do that out of the 25,000 or more orchid species. It is thought that they must have blown along on the jet stream of the Earth’s northern hemisphere. The jet stream is a high-speed, continuous band of easterly wind that goes faster over Southeast Asian and slows as it passed over Hawaii. If the seeds got up to 30,000 feet in a turbulent storm, the jet stream would get them to the islands in a few days. Even if two seeds did get there at the same time in the right habitat, the right kind of bee would have to ride the jet stream over there, too, in order to have a pollinator for continued survival. Amazingly, three orchids managed to do just that against staggering odds.

You probably would never find one of these native orchids unless you were with a botanist and hiked into the mountains. They are found only in remote areas, far from roads, and are rare, endemic, and endangered. The most common one is *Liparis hawaiiensis*. In Hawaiian, it is called 'awapuhi a Kanaloa, the ginger flower of the sea god. With two broad leaves that cup around the pseudobulb, the flower spike shoots straight up, a foot tall, with 3-7 inconspicuous flowers with narrow cream-green petals and a broad flat white lip. Growing in moss and leaf litter in wet forests from 2000-5000 feet in elevation, it flowers from May to November.

The second most common orchid is *Anoectochilus sandvicensis*, which also grows in wet forests, forming flimsy, spreading colonies on shaded moss or tree trunks.

The most showy of the endemic orchids, its flowers are green outside, cream inside, with a bright yellow lip.

These two species occur on all the major islands, but *Platanthera holochila*, the third orchid, is truly very rare, known by only a few specimens. Most are found in a single population in the Alak'i Swamp on Kauai. It is three feet tall, with its flowering stalk, laden with tiny flowers, towering above the foliage. *Platanthera* and *Liparis* are single-growth plants, but the *Anoectochilus* creeps and spreads and looks like Wandering Jew.

There are, however, four more orchids growing wild along roadsides in the lower forests and lava fields. There are introduced orchids that have gone wild. *Arundina graminifolia*, the Bamboo Orchid, is five-feet tall, hardy, and cane-like. It is a terrestrial plant growing 3-6 feet tall with grassy leaves a foot long. The flowers are showy, almost like little cattleya, occurring at the end of tall stems, 2-inches long and pink with a reddish-purple lip. I walked outside the Visitor Center at the Volcano National Park, and I thrilled to finding dozens of them growing along the path. You can find acres of these in Pahoia on Hawaii. A sun-loving plant, they produce lots of keikis (baby plants) that readily root if twisted off. Native to Southeast Asia and Pacific islands, nobody is sure how these beauties came to Hawaii in the 20th century. There are pioneer plants on lava fields.

A second introduced orchid is the Nun's Orchid, thought to be brought in by Chinese workers imported to work the sugar plantations in the late 1800's. One escaped into the wild and established itself in the Hawaiian landscape. *Phaius tankarvillae*, the Nun's Orchid, is a two-foot tall plant with heavy pleated leaves growing in wet places. The flower stems can be up to five feet tall with gold, maroon and white flowers. You can find it growing on disturbed soil on Oahu, Kauai, Lanai and Hawaii.

A third introduced orchid is an *Epidendrum* hybrid created in 1888 (a cross between *E. ibaguense* and *E. secundum*) which was popular as an outdoor landscape plant with its copious small scarlet, orange and mauve flowers. It has naturalized in dry places on nearly all the major island, spreading from small plantlets along the older stems.

Finally, the Philippine Ground Orchid, *Spathoglottis plicata*, is found in grassy fields on most islands. An erect terrestrial orchid, it grows to over four feet tall; it has conspicuous long

pleated or plicate leaves and dark purple to pink flowers. . You can find this orchid at most highway cuts.

However, Hawaii does not get its name of “the Orchid Isles” from its native or naturalized orchids. Over the past fifty years, orchid culture in Hawaii has grown into a huge agribusiness. The orchid industry is on the rise in Hawaii. Total annual sales of potted orchids was \$2.2 million in 1980. By 2003, the number had risen to \$19.7 million dollars and is now thought to be \$24 million. Cut flower sales increased from \$0.2 million in 1970 to \$4.6 million in 2003.

I was lucky enough to visit the nursery of Wei and James Fang while in Hawaii. They are the owners of Hilo Orchid Farm, where we get our holiday plants and plants throughout the year at a tiny price. Wei came in especially to give me a tour on Saturday, and she said that we are the only club she sells plants to at a wholesale price (She likes us). Usually, they sell hundreds of dozens of plants to nurserymen in the US for sale as vendors at shows. Her operation is state of the art, totally automated, with automatic sprinklers, fertilizing, moving tables, and temperature and humidity control. I saw five enormous greenhouses, with pristine plants, totally clean and green, with nary a brown leaf or bug. She has 20 employees, most of whom do the packing of plants for shipment. She said that the intergeneric hybrids are grown from meristemming (cutting off a piece of the growing tissue of the plant) in Thailand. They send her back the flasks, and they grow them from there. Her husband particularly likes breeding slipper orchids (*Paphiopedilum*), and she had beautiful tables of yellow paphs in bloom. Each year, they send their plants to a laboratory to find out what nutrients they need and what fertilizer to use for optimal growth. It certainly is working! You can't buy from her since she is only a wholesaler, but she will sell to the club.

I also was invited to lunch by Graham and Charlene of Lehua Orchids (www.lehuaorchids.com) where we get our slipper orchids. They are the most lovely people, with a warm and friendly operation, with Graham doing his beloved hybridizing. A former banker, he came to Hawaii to grow orchids, and he is famous for his *Paphiopedilum*. He likes them especially since you can't meristem them, and each cross is an adventure. He waters his plants by hand rather than being automated and has four employees. Orchids are his love, and he says he tries not to make a profit. His prices are sensational. You do have to buy a box or half-box (15 orchids), but you will be pleased.

Orchid folk are so nice. A few years ago, I visited Mike and Carol Blietz of Exotic Orchids of Maui (www.mauiorchids.com info@mauiorchids.com) at their gorgeous little nursery. Mike has delighted us with a talk in the past on the cattleyas he grows. He spent over an hour with us, graciously showing us his magnificent orchids. *Dendrobium*, *Phalaenopsis*, *Laelias*, *Mormodes*, acres of *Cattleyas*, and *Epidendrum* were all happily growing in sun-lit greenhouses. He modestly referred to the glorious Hawaii rain and sunshine as “my natural advantage.” (Annoyingly, *Vanda* and *Sobralia* were vigorously growing on shrubs outside his nursery. To Las Vegas desert growers, this seems profoundly unfair! Natural advantage, indeed!) Mike is a very successful orchid breeder and proudly showed-off his seed pods (which he harvests green to avoid contamination) and his sterile set-up with its many growing flasks of

orchids. He picks the best of his seedlings to grow on and has won many awards with his crosses. He sells to what he calls “the black hole” of the orchid world, the Home Depot and Lowe’s and Walmarts who buy tremendous amounts of his orchids and to the public. I have bought orchids from Mike, and they are inexpensive and just beautiful.

There are many other nurseries in Hawaii. In Oahu, you find, among others, Kawamoto’s, H&R Nurseries, Puanani Orchids, Marty’s Orchids, Hawaiian Floral Nursery, Orchid Center, Kodama, Hawaii Pacific Orchids, Honolulu Orchid Co, and Olomana. In Maui, there are I.N. Komoda, Exotic Orchids of Maui, the Tropical Orchid Farm, and Haiku Maui Orchids and on Kauai, you find Hanalei Orchid and Kaua’i Orchids. The Big Island of Hawaii has the greatest number of commercial growers with Carmela Orchids, Bergstrom Orchids, Hilo Orchid Farm, Cloudforest Orchids among many others. You can type the name of the nursery into Google and have hours of fun looking, learning and buying.

Two really good books on the orchids of Hawaii are

Paul Wood, ORCHID ISLES; THE STORY OF ORCHIDS IN HAWAII. Hawaii: Island Heritage Publishing, 2006

Ted Green. ORCHIDS IN HAWAII. Mutual Publishing. 2005



LIPARIS HAWAIENSIS

ANOECHTOCHILUS HAWAIENSIS



PHAIUS TANKARVILLAE



ARUNDINA GRAMINIFOLIA



SPATHOGLOTTIS PLICATA

