

THE GREATER LAS VEGAS ORCHID SOCIETY

THE ORCHID COLUMN

CAROL SIEGEL, EDITOR

May 14, 2017 1PM



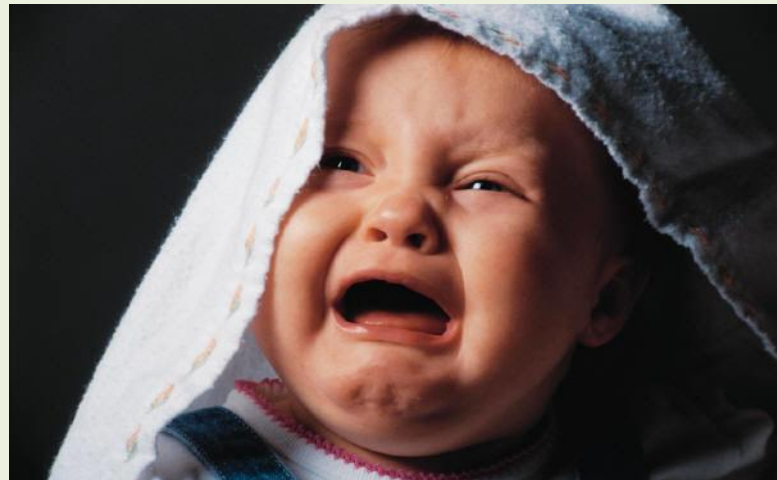
Epipactis gigantea growing
In Calico Basin, Red Rock

OUR PROGRAMS

MEETINGS 2ND SUNDAY EXCEPT JUNE 4
RAINBOW LIBRARY 3150 N BUFFALO

May 14, 2017 Ron Parksons
"The Orchids of Columbia"
June 4, 2017(1st Sunday) Art Chadwick
"The Great Cattleya Species of the
Cut Flower Era" & HAWAIIAN LUAU
July 9 Barbecue Diana's house
"Setting Up a Rainforest"
Aug 13 Mark Romansky "Judging orchids"
Sept 10 Mary Gerritsen "Orchids of the
Lost World"
Oct 8 Keith Davis "Orchid Growing Tips"
Nov 12 Steve Frowine Fantastic Phalaenop
Dec 10 Holiday Party
Jan 14, 2018 Tom Mirenda
Feb 11 Jason Fischer "Growing on a Log"
March 11, 2018 Ron Kaufmann
April 8 Greenhouse Tour
May 11, 2018 Harold Koopowitz "Modern
Slipper orchid hybrids"
June 3 Peter Lin
Oct 14 Fred Clarke "Modern Cattleyas and
How to Grow Them"

WE DIDN'T GET TO SEE OUR NATIVE ORCHID!



IT WAS A POOR YEAR FOR OUR NATIVE ORCHID.
FULL SUN AND A POOR LEAF COVER DECIMATED THE
SCANTY ORCHIDS THIS YEAR. AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS
OF GOING TO SEE *EPIPACTIS GIGANTEA* IN CALICO
BASIN, MARK ROMANSKY, OUR GUIDE,
THOUGHT THE SHOWING JUST WASN'T WORTH A
VISIT. ONE OF OUR FOURTEEN NEVADA NATIVE
ORCHIDS, THIS ONE USUALLY BLOOMS BY THE
THOUSANDS AGAINST THE WET RED ROCK IN THE
SHADE. WE HOPE TO GO NEXT YEAR. NATURE!

The native orchid grows in Calico Basin amid native flowers including amsonia, astragalus, hedgehog cactus, native ash, desert marigold, blue-eyed grass, yucca, Indian paintbrush and penstemon- and many more. (And they say this is a desert!) Sometimes known as the “Stream Orchid” because of its moist habitat, this native loves to grow in wet places from sea level to 7500 feet, where it is found in hot springs, road cuts and wet cliff faces. It occurs all over Las Vegas where there is a little water- First Creeek, LaMadre Spring, Pine Creek, Icebox Canyon, Blue Diamond, etc. It even grew in a puddle under a leaky water fountain at UNLV. The plant blooms to about 3 feet high with 12-20 flowers per inflorescence. The flowers are about 1 1/2 to 2 inches across. Part of the lip is elongated and quivers in the breeze, earning it its other name, the “Chatterbox Orchid.” In other luckier years, as we neared the cool, shady, wet sandstone cliffs, we thrilled to thousands of our native orchid in bloom. **We even saw a syrphid fly carrying orchid pollinia (captured by Claudia Drake BELOW in an amazing photo) and flying to deposit it on another orchid.** That was truly a first.



A BUSY SCHEDULE FOR OUR CLUB...

May 14th , we are looking forward to hosting Ron Parsons who will speak on “The Orchids of Colombia.” We love Ron, a famous photographer and orchid writer, who always wows us with his gorgeous images. We thank Mark Romansky, Connie Jones, Jeannie Powers, Tyler Janes, Lee Kirschbaum, and Shirley Greig in advance for the food and drink for the meeting. So nice of you. Fred Clarke and Sunset Valley Orchids will be providing the orchids to sell at the meeting.

Our June meeting is the FIRST week in June, June 4th to allow those of us who are going to Orchid Digest Day on June 10 to enjoy that event. That is the only meeting that will be held on the first Sunday of the month. Art Chadwick of Chadwick Orchids will speak on the “Large Cattleyas of the Cut Flower Era” and will provide some of his gorgeous cattleyas for sale. Our June food group, Carol Siegel, Cathy Loftfield, Al de Ricco, Joe Raba and Diana Smith will be hosting a Genuine Hawaiian Luau. Joe Raba has gotten his Hawaiian friends to come to the meeting and sing and dance to island tunes while we eat our feast. We will have a whole roast pig (cut-up, of course) and all kinds of island treats and lei’s. So fun!

On July 9, we are holding our tradition summer barbecue at Diana Smith’s house. Dan Mumau and Mike Lawless will be cooking our delicious meats and setting it all up. They are professional caterers (ACateredAffair.com). Aren’t we lucky. Jeri Lee will bring drinks, and Diana will provide paper goods and the venue, of course. She will also be doing a presentation on “Growing in a Rainforest,” all about how she grows in her greenhouse. The club will provide the meats, and each of us will bring a dish- side dish, main dish, dessert, salad, vegetable—like that. It is always great fun.

On August 13, Mark Romansky, an AOS judge, will be doing a presentation on “Judging Orchids.” The club will be having a pizza party and chocolate bar. I will donate the pizzas, and everybody will bring something chocolate. Jeannie Salles will provide the drinks and Jackie Braverman will do the the paper goods.

Did you know that Colombia has the largest number of Orchids in the world, with more than 4.000 different species?

Did you know that Colombia has the largest number of Orchids in the world, with more than 4.000 different species and 1.543 are only found in our country? Here are more interesting facts about **Colombia's national flower**

1. The Cattleya is the flower for which orchids are known worldwide. There are several species in Colombia, most of them endemic, but *Cattleya trianae* is the one most commonly found throughout the country.
2. *Cattleya trianae* was named after the Colombian naturalist José Jerónimo Triana and it was selected as a National symbol by botanist Emilio Robledo.
3. Orchids of different colors, shapes, textures and sizes proliferate in almost the entire country, although the area of greatest population lies in the Andes, at **altitudes between 1.000 and 3.000 meters**.
4. Orchids stand out among the thousands of flowers that can be found in Colombia. Roses, carnations, chrysanthemums, lilies and Michaelmas daisies are also very popular in the country..
5. The flowers are produced during the winter and early spring. New growth begins shortly after flowering finishes in the early spring and continues to August, but the flower buds do not start to grow until November.
6. A new orchid type, *Encyclia Parketri*, was found in 2015 in the districts of Restrepo and La Cumbre in Valle del Cauca. Researchers had initially studied the flora of 421,000 hectares of Valle de Cauca, but this research was extended to other departments with the help of the **Alexander von Humboldt Institute**.
7. **Orchids can survive up to 100 years**, and its shape, size and texture of leaves depend on their habitat. Orchids that live in dry climate have thick leaves covered with wax, while species that live in warm and humid areas have thin, elongated leaves. Some species do not have leaves at all.



COLUMBIA AND ITS MILLIONS OF CATTLEYA TRIANAEI Carol Siegel

The national flower of Columbia is *Cattleya trianae*, thought by some to be the most beautiful orchid in the world. It is treasured in the country, and every Columbian has his own collection of special varieties. The Cattleya expert A.A. Chadwick has remarked that Medellin, Columbia, is famous first for its *Cattleya trianae* and only second as home of the cocaine cartel. It is no wonder. Blooming in winter when color is needed most, the orchid combines all that is best in the Cattleya genus. It possesses the greatest range of colors, with lovely pastel shades, and varieties with flares, feathering in the petals as well as a glistening texture. Not only is it magnificent in form and color, but its blooms often last more than five weeks. It is a very vigorous grower making two growths a year, one right after the other, blooming on both growths for double the pleasure. It is what most people think of when they think of an orchid. It is a winner in every respect.

In 1851, the Columbian botanist Jose M. Triana found large numbers of the orchid in the Eastern Cordillera and sent them back to the Belgian orchid man Jules Linden who, absolutely captivated, soon sold it in his orchid catalogue for 150 francs each. Linden said the species was dedicated "to that erudite and modest author of FLORA COLUMBIANA, Jose M. Triana." This was Linden's favorite orchid, and he promoted it vigorously. He featured it at flower shows and produced a special exhibit of it at the Brussels Zoological Gardens where he displayed 240 different clones with over 900 flowers! Linden pictured 41 different clones on 28 full-color plates in his famous LINDENIA, including on page 8 a beautiful double page spread.

Everybody wanted one of these gorgeous orchids. The world could not get enough, but luckily, the species was widespread in Columbiaand, for a time at least, Columbia could keep up with the demand. At one time, there must have been hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of the plant. Tremendous demand for this Christmas orchid resulted in overseas orders for 5000 or more at a time, with hundreds of thousands being ripped out. The forests were ransacked, and numbers have been depleted although no one is sure if it is on the brink of extinction because of the lack of an adequate orchid census, according to Dr. Harold Koopowitz.

As far back as 1939, the orchid was being over-collected. In 1939, Macdonald published a book glamorizing commercial orchid collection and detailing the difficulties he had finding fresh sites containing the cattleya. Despite this, he naively maintained wild nature was there to exploit and that there was no great need for conservation. His only nod to conservation at all was the admonition to only pluck plants with more than eight leaves. Most of the orchids wound up in the dump. The cut-flower growers of the 1930's and 1940's imported plants, grew and flowered them for a year, and then just threw them out. They could still make a profit, but the toll on the wild was tremendous. This naïve attitude that orchid resources were limitless led to unnecessary and unsustainable orchid waste.

