



Newsletter of the National Capital Orchid Society

April 2021

NCOS Calendar of events:

- **Monthly Meetings**
 - April 19th: African Orchids- Tom Mirenda
 - May 17th: Orchids from flask, An Economical Launchpad for a Stellar Collection- Clark Riley
 - September 20th: TBD
 - October 18th: Bill Goldner, Woodstream Orchids
 - November 15th: Francisco Miranda
 - December: Holiday Party (fingers crossed)
- **Mini-workshop** April 19th 7-8 PM Help! My Orchids have Bugs! - Sarah Hurdell (information on Page 8)
- **Spring Plant Sale:** April 24th

2020 Throwback



One of the best from the 2020 season, Bill Elbert's *Chysis violacea*. Awarded an AM at the Virginia Orchid Society Show last year. Photo by Roddy Gabel

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Spring Plant Sale!

Are you looking for an excuse to add some more plants to your collection?

After the success of the fall plant sale, we will be hosting a plant sale this spring on April 24th.

Linus Chen has graciously offered to host the event at his home in Northern Virginia which also happens to be surrounded by a number of quality local horticultural destinations.

Join us for an opportunity to see great stock provided by fellow collectors and see some familiar faces outside and socially distanced.

Additional details will be sent to members via email with the address and information on how donate plants.



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April Meeting: Tom's African Adventure, Tom Mirenda



Tom Mirenda is our speaker this month and he will talk on *Tom's African Adventure*, where he found orchids while exploring parts of Africa.

Tom Mirenda has been cultivating plants since his early childhood and

lives to create beauty with plants in botanic garden settings for more than half of his adult life. Originally trained as a Marine Biologist, Tom moved to Hawaii in his early 20s to pursue that career and worked on the trophic relationships of denizens of Coral reefs in the Northwest Hawaiian Islands (Midway and French Frigate Shoals). There he realized he was better suited to horticultural pursuits and took positions at New York Botanical Garden, Brooklyn Botanic Garden and at the incredible Greentree Estate in Long Island where he cared for a first-class orchid collection. During this time, Tom also was the floor manager of the legendary New York International Orchid Show. Eventually, Tom accepted the Orchid Specialist position at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC where he cultivated and curated a huge diverse orchid collection for 17 years. The collection was used to create massive 4 to 5 month long educational orchid exhibits displayed to millions of visitors each year. For the past 15 years, Tom has contributed columns for the *Orchids* magazine, the *Bulletin of the American Orchid Society*, and has developed an international following as a writer, speaker and advocate for orchid conservation around the world. In 2017, Tom co-authored *The Book of Orchids* with two scientists from Kew and has done speaking tours in the British Isles for the last three summers. Tom is a founding member of the North American Orchid Conservation Center and continues his support of orchid conservation there, and around the world. Tom left the Smithsonian to take a leadership position at the Hawaii Tropical Botanical Garden, on the lush Hamakua coast just north of Hilo on the Big

Island (aka the Orchid Island!). What Tom found there was an orchid paradise where myriad spectacular orchids of all types, both lowland and mountain species and hybrids seem to thrive, simply planted in the trees or placed thoughtfully in the landscape. Ultimately, he believes the concept of growing orchids in garden settings to be a viable model world-wide for orchid conservation and encourages the ex-situ cultivation of orchids by diverse stakeholders in the orchid community. Tom believes it is only with the cooperation of Botanical Garden Professionals, Commercial Growers, academia and committed orchid collectors and backyard growers, that orchids will survive the vicissitudes of climate change.

Join the Meeting April 19th at 7:30

[Join meeting](#)

Or copy and paste link into your web browser:
<https://ncosvirtual.my.webex.com/ncosvirtual.my/j.php?MTID=m85a70018bdd98b3af0ba7b7f19b46a80>

Join by Phone:

Tap to join from a mobile device (attendees only)

[+1-415-655-0001](tel:+14156550001), [1827850575](tel:+1827850575) #67635677 US Toll
Some mobile devices may ask attendees to enter a numeric password.

Meeting number (access code): 182 785 0575

Meeting password: 6pnEKnSsx27 (67635677 from phones and video systems)



Newsletter of the National Capital Orchid Society

Message from the President: Roddy Gabel



Spring is a time of awakening and rejuvenation. While Mother Nature is putting on a fresh face, your Board is making changes that reflect the current needs and interests of our members, including

both long-term members as well as newbies who are looking to learn more about the world of orchids and hone their growing skills. Thanks again to those who responded to our member survey a few months ago; your responses have formed the basis for changes we are making, from the monthly newsletter to activities for members, like repotting and culture clinics. NCOS VP Jason Gebbia has analyzed the survey responses and is working with the Board and other members to enhance the NCOS member experience. As we explore and implement ways to make our society more relevant to its members, we are also experiencing some changes among the people who work the gears and levers to keep NCOS running. Mary and Jerry Rice are long-time members of NCOS who have been actively involved in NCOS' operations, but they are ready to step back and let others step in.

The Rices have been ever-present at NCOS meetings and events, but more importantly, have been key players in the functioning of our society. Together, they have held numerous positions over the years, with Jerry serving as NCOS Vice President and Show Chair (2005-2006), President (2007-2008), and Picnic Chair (2004-present)—in fact, Jerry led the effort to resume NCOS picnics after they had lapsed. Mary took on the duties of

newsletter editor around 2009 and eventually was responsible, as Chair of both, for Membership and Communications. Mary's tenure in these positions has seen our newsletter evolve to include color print and photography, and to become a digital publication distributed via e-mail. Similarly, she has converted our member directory into a digital format, allowing for quick updates and electronic distribution. In 2014, together the Rices received the society's Huntington Service Award, meaning at that time they had established a record of sustained service to our organization.

With this record of service, the Rices are now ready to retire from their duties. We have already transitioned Mary's duties to other members. Sarah Hedeane, NCOS Secretary, is taking on the Membership responsibilities, and VP Jason Gebbia has assembled a team, including Sarah Hedeane, Director at Large and Program Director Suzette Agans, Linus Chen, and Piret Lai-Neubacher, to take over the newsletter and communications. Jerry is looking for an "apprentice" to assist with our next picnic (whenever that is), so he can step back as Picnic Chair; anyone interested should contact him.

I'm sure everyone will agree, we owe a debt of gratitude to the Rices for their contributions!



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Volunteer Opportunities

- **Picnic Chair-** Plan the annual NCOS Member picnic. We are an in -person event this fall.
- **Programs Chair-** Plan and organize speakers at monthly meetings, workshops, and provide input on society events.
- **Finance Committee Chair-** work with the Treasurer and lead the Finance Committee to manage the finances of the society.
- **Articles:** if you are interested in contributing to the newsletter, let Jason Gebbia know (jasong1799@gmail.com) and we can include your piece in an upcoming newsletter.
- If you are interested in any of these opportunities, email membership.ncos@gmail.com

NCOS Announcements and News

- Don't forget to support NCOS on Amazon Smile. We are now a registered charitable donation. Once you select NCOS as your giving partner, Amazon donates a portion of your spend to the NCOS.
- Spring plant sale on April 24th. Come add plants to your collection, meet other members (socially distanced and outside).
- Plans are in the works for a workshop on growing orchids with semi- hydroponic culture (semi-hydro of S/H)
- If you missed April's meeting, *Twelve Orchids that Anyone can Grow* you can watch it by accessing the link on page #8



Welcome New Members!

Robin Collins- Virginia

Curtis Olsen- Virginia

Elizabeth Powell- Virginia

Daniel Justus- Washington, D.C.

Tamara Thompson- Washington, D.C.

Judith Shapiro- Maryland



NCOS Member Brag Board



Brassavola nodosa:
Grown by Zita Winzer

I got the *Brassavola nodosa* years ago at a swap table and it did ok but wasn't so great. At one of the NCOS meetings someone explained that it would do better on a mount, so I mounted it! From then on, the *Brassavola* took off! I'm getting more and more blossoms each year! I grow it in my greenhouse next to the *Vanda*'s and I water it every other day! I fertilize with MSV or 20-20-20 and in springtime I add slow-release fertilizer. In summertime it goes outside and is hanging under some oak trees and enjoying fresh air!

Sedirea japonica
Grown by Piret Lai-Neubacher

I have had this plant for many years, but no flowers. Finally, I shared my concern about the plant in the orchid forum in Estonia. The advice I received: "Put the plant somewhere in between other plants on a windowsill. Do not talk to it, do not even look at it! All the roots which grow into neighboring pots, turn decisively back, and often forget to water. "Give light and warmth according to winter conditions, i.e., a little. In summer you can give a little bit more." Lo and behold, next season it bloomed profusely, and every following season even better. The conclusion: this plant thrives on neglect.



Have something blooming you want to share?

Send pictures and brief description of how you grow it to membership.ncos@gmail.com and we will include it in an up-coming newsletter.



NCOS Member Brag Board



*Fdk After Midnight and
Ophrys speculum
Grown by Bill Elbert*

Fdk After Midnight **(Left)** is another "black" orchid from Fred Clarke's breeding. It shares one parent with the famous Fdk After Dark 'Black Pearl' but has a different Catasetum for the other parent yielding larger and fuller flowers. Ophrys speculum **(Right)** is one of the European "bee orchids", with flowers less than two centimeters wide.

*Slc. World Vacation '5th Avenue'
Grown by: Ken Meier*

Blooming now, is one of my favorite miniature Cattleyas with three inch flowers and all the charm and character of a standard Cattleya. The full, round, flat flowers are produced on mature plants that stand about 6-7 inches tall. Within a few days they darken to a rich vibrant pink with a sweet fragrance that rivals any Cattleya – large or small. With one to three flowers per growth and flowers that last 2-3 weeks, you can't ask for much more from a miniature Cattleya. I've grown these under lights, on window sills and in a greenhouse, treating them like any standard Cattleya. I grow them in an open mix, allowing good air flow throughout. I allow the mix to go dry between watering which stimulates good root growth. I give these plants as much indirect light as I can throughout the day and if possible some direct sunlight if grown indoors. If exposed to direct sunlight, it's important to make sure the heat of the afternoon sun doesn't burn the leaves. Keeping a plant in the direct sun always makes me nervous, so I try to stick with bright indirect light or very early morning or late evening direct sun. This variety can bloom several times a year on every new growth, so the better you grow it and the bigger the plant gets, the more often it will be in bloom.





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Monthly Culture Checklist

- ☐ For most orchids, now is the time to finish repotting or dividing before new roots start to really grow.
- ☐ Check for newly initiated inflorescences on spring blooming plants and make sure they have room to grow without hitting anything. For spring blooming Cattleya look for yellowing sheaths that need to be cut to prevent bud rot.
- ☐ For orchids with a dormant period start looking for new roots or shoots indicating a break from dormancy.
- ☐ If you have scaled back your fertilization during the winter, start ramping it up as plants begin to actively grow.

For more resources check out the culture page at [AOS](https://www.ncos.us).

Culture Column: Slipper Orchid Series- Maudie Type

Maudie type slipper orchids are some of the easiest to grow and most commonly available slipper orchids on the market. As we begin our look at this wonderful group of orchids, we thought we would start with one of the easiest to grow. Collectors will be able to grow these plants on a windowsill or under lights as both the plants and the inflorescences are compact.

Light: These plants do well with medium to low light. Hold your hand about 1 foot above where your plants leaves will be over a piece of paper with your fingers spread out. If the shadow cast by your hand has sharp well-defined edges, you have high light (and probably brighter than you want for these plants). You want the edges of the shadow to be fuzzy but still be to see the shape of your hand and tell your fingers are spread.

Potting Media: These plants like a mix that provides good air and water movement. A mix of medium sized bark, charcoal, and perlite will give these plant's roots the conditions they need to grow. If your mix is too dense (either with small particles or a high moss content) the roots will likely rot over time.

Water: These plants do well being watered 1-2 times a week depending on your growing area humidity. Make sure when you water that you are not watering into the fans of the plant (this can cause rot at the crown and of newly forming flower spokes) and that the mix is able to fully drain. These slippers don't like 'wet feet' and the roots will suffer if they are allowed to sit in water.

Fertilizer: A quality balanced fertilizer will allow these orchids to pack on growth during the season. The adage of fertilizing "weakly weekly" works well with these plants. Give them fertilizer at 1/4 the recommended rate each week after you water, skipping fertilizer every 4th week to flush salts out of the pot.

Reblooming: These plants bloom on mature growths and the age of the fan will drive the ability to rebloom while the health of the plant and root system will help it grow bigger. If you have a multi-growth plant that is putting on size but isn't blooming, try increasing the intensity of the light. If it isn't getting enough, it won't have the energy to bloom. Happy Growing!



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Member Meetings Archives

Links to past presentations:

February 2021:

- Chilean Orchids
- Fred Bess
- Password:HuPYku6j

March 2021 (Available until April 19th)

- 12 Orchids the Anyone can Grow
- Greg Griffis
- Password FzyaF9x



COVID-19 continues to disrupt the planning and presentation of the 23rd World Orchid Conference but, like many events, it is going online. The organizers are still solidifying the online program and format, but the tentative dates are April 24th- May 3rd. This presents many of us with a unique opportunity to be a part of talks and presentations that normally we would be unable to attend. The 23rd World Orchid Conference is focused on conservation so expect of the content to be focused on preservation of natural populations and habitats. For more information check their website (www.woc23.com) for more details.

NCOS Beginner Orchid Series: Help! Bugs are Eating my Orchids!

Monday April 19, 2021 7pm to 8pm eastern

In this 60-minute Workshop, Sarah Hurdell, will help you figure out what is eating your orchids, as it can be tricky. Sarah will share her tips for identifying and preventing common orchid pests, including advice on choosing a treatment. This workshop is good for all orchid growers from beginner to more experienced.

About the Presenter: In less than 20 years, Sarah has gone from hobby grower to exhibitor and member of several local societies and recently added accredited AOS Judge to the list. She currently maintains a collection of over 600 orchids under lights in her basement and has received AOS award recognition for culture, flower quality, and exhibit design. Her presentations combine her love of orchids, photography, and illustration with experienced advice and a sense of humor.

This meeting will be on **Zoom**, different than our usual meeting. Please register to secure your place in this class, as the number of slots is limited. We will be opening up registration starting April 8.

Sign up with this link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_sPiElfJDTSmkjH61sQaMCQ





American Orchid Society News and Events



SEEKING AOS JUDGES

The American Orchid Society Judging Program is seeking highly motivated orchid enthusiasts to join the judging ranks.

Work with other such people and help maintain our awards programs and educational efforts.

For more information contact us at judges@aos.org

Have you ever thought about becoming an AOS Judge?

The American Orchid Society Judging Program is willing to teach you to become an AOS Judge and is actively seeking orchid enthusiasts.

If You

- Have a love of orchids
- Want to learn more about orchids
- Are willing to contribute to the long-term health of AOS and its Affiliated Societies
- Desire to teach the public about orchids

Then Contact the AOS Judging Program at judges@aos.org for more information about how to become an AOS Judge

Webinars-Coming Attractions!



When	April 8, 2021 8:30 PM EDT	April 20, 2021 (8:30 PM EDT)	May 4th, 2021 8:30 PM EDT	May 13, 2021 8:30 PM EDT
Topic	Green house Chat (Orchid Q&A)	Deflasking and Potting up Best Practices	Green house Chat (Orchid Q&A)	<i>Prosthechea karwinskii</i> in Mexico A study in Reintroduction
Presenter	Ron McHatton	George Hatfield	Ron McHatton	Julia Douglas





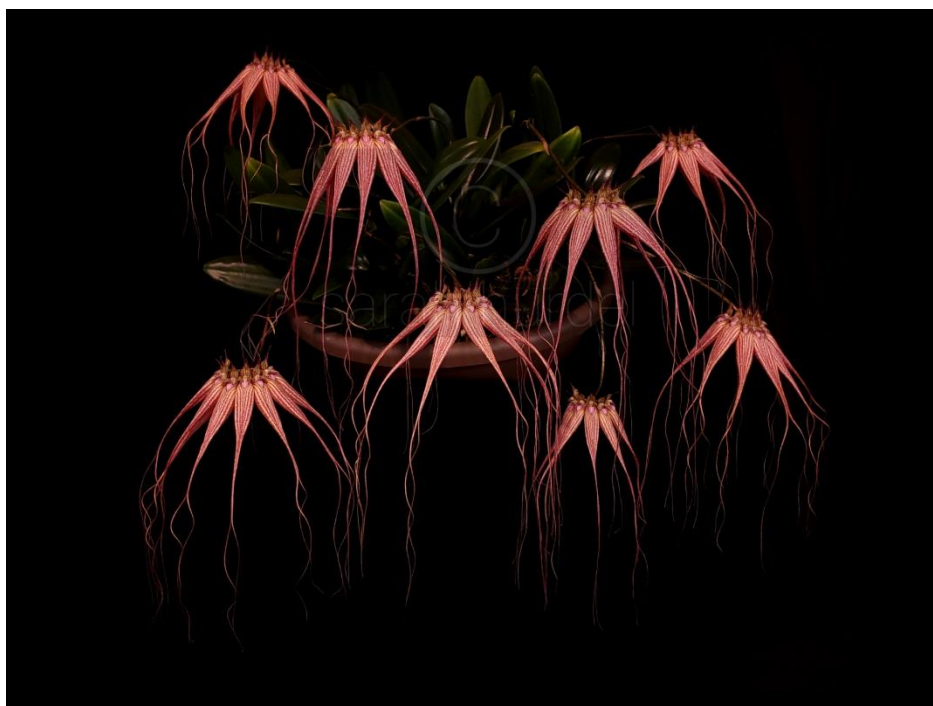
Other Orchid Resources

Neighboring Societies

- Southeastern Pennsylvania Orchid Society
www.sepos.org
- Susquehanna Orchid Society
www.susquehannaorchid.org
- Central Pennsylvania Orchid Society
www.facebook.com/CentralPAOrchidSociety
- Maryland Orchid Society
www.marylandorchids.org
- Catoctin Orchid Society
<https://catoctinorchidsociety.weebly.com>
- Lord Fairfax Orchid Society
 - Zita Winzer zitawinzer@me.com
- Virginia Orchid Society
www.vaorchidsociety.org
- Orchid Hobbyists of Delmarva:
 - DE- Mary Sherwood (302-628-3416)
 - MD- Lois (410-228-3804)
 - VA- Bill (757-665-4108)
 - www.easternshoreorchidlovers.org

Other Orchid Resources

- Slipper Orchid Alliance
www.slipperorchid.org
- International Phalaenopsis Alliance
www.phal.org
- American Orchid Society
www.aos.org
- Orchid Conservation Alliance
www.orchidconservationalliance.org
- Smithsonian Gardens
www.gardens.si.edu
- Missouri Botanical Garden
www.missouribotanicalgarden.org



Bulbophyllum 'Elizabeth Ann 'Buckleberry'
Grown by Sarah Hurdel